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Remarks Remarks On Three Tracts Entitled “Signs Of The Coming Of The Lord: For Whom Are They Given?”

Introduction

I should not, I confess, have felt it needful, nor, under the circumstances of their publication, desirable, to answer the three tracts of which the statements are here called in question, had they appeared supported only by their intrinsic merit. I understand the effect in an upright mind of an appeal to a righteous jealousy against error, especially error which is stated to shake the foundation of Christian faith. Still the confusion and futility of the statements, I should have hoped, would have sufficed for their refutation in the mind of the reader; but they are in fact the expression of the sentiments and the sanctioned publication of those whose opinions are looked up to by many, and come with their authority. It is this induces me, though reluctantly, to publish these remarks upon them. It is a most wearying thing—controversy. And I have had the MS by me weeks before I could make up my mind to publish it. I do so as owing it to those whose minds are influenced by the tracts, and who have asked for an answer. They were mentioned indeed to me originally by a brother to comment on, which led to the form of the answer—a form in general I dislike. Here it was the simple truth of the case; though, when written, I publish instead of sending it in manuscript.

My dear Brother,

I have read the tract you mentioned to me. I shall not express to you the effect it produced on my mind, as I should fear to be ungracious or untrue if I attempted it. I should not judge it demanded a comment, were it not the expression of a system adopted by many, and that this tract helps to prove on what very slender grounds. I am yet unconvinced by the reasonings I have heard and read on Matthew 24; and, while I recognise, as I have ever done, in this chapter and elsewhere, that the church may use a great part of it for itself, as general principles, that it would have availed preciously to the disciples in the siege of Jerusalem, though Luke much more, and that all of it belongs (as everything does) to the church in general for her instruction, yet I still believe that it is not occupied with her as such. Nay, with I trust very moderate views, and open to receive every instruction from any brother on the subject, I confess that the more I read the Scriptures, and the more I read the writings of those who so stoutly denounce views which, it seems to me, they do not understand at all, the more I am convinced of certain distinctions they seem to me to be unable to appreciate, though they loudly condemn; and the more also I see such inattention to Scripture facts, and contradiction in their own statements as quite destroys all possibility of what they state having much weight with any one who examines calmly anything before he receives it. Other opportunities will occur of examining the subject more at large. Meanwhile, I shall take up this tract on the “Signs of the Coming of the Lord,” that we may see, in some very brief remarks, how far the writer is justified, by the solidity of his reasonings, or the proofs he affords of their importance, in charging (as others also have done) brethren (some of whom have suffered for Christ,

and preached the truth for years before he knew Christ or the truth either) with “subverting the first elements of Christianity.”

First, in attacking the expression of Jews as Jews, he is, it seems to me, saying a great deal about nothing. All his first letter, which treats of this, is a mere harmless thunderbolt. It would have been as much to the purpose, when Paul says, I write to you Gentiles inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, to have shewn the dreadfulness of addressing heathens in such a way, seeing heathens were idolaters, and judgment come upon the world and the like, all which would be entirely beside the mark, and prove only that those who made the remark did not understand the generic or abstract use of the word Gentile, as the writer of the tract does not that of Jew. A Jew who believed in Jesus might be addressed in his character of Jew, as a Gentile in that of a Gentile. It is possible that some of our brethren have not been as guarded or as perfect in their expressions as the blessed Spirit made Paul; but it does not follow that those who attack them are wiser or more correct than those who would have objected to analogous expressions of the Spirit of God Himself.

I still believe that Matthew 24, at least to verse 31, is addressed to the disciples as Jews, as believing Jews no doubt, but as Jews; and the more I examine it the more I think so; and I do not think it addressed to the church as the church. Nothing indeed was addressed to the church by the Lord in Person, because the church did not yet exist to be addressed; though all was left for the church to use by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.1 The writer insists much upon the expression— “this generation,” “no sign shall be given to this generation

but the sign of Jonas the prophet," connected with the statement "this generation shall not pass away," etc., and that consequently signs were not to be given to the Jews as such. This seems to catch him much. To me it has no weight at all. I admit the moral unity of "this generation "in Matthew 24. It is an interpretation long accepted and taught by those who are blamed in this tract. Still his reasoning is wrong and contradicts itself. It is clear first, as to the passage, chapter 12:38-45, that the Lord was speaking of signs as proofs of His mission, and not of coming judgment. In chapter 16:1-4 they are accused of not discerning the signs of the times that were then before them. But no sign could be given them from the Lord but the sign of the prophet Jonas for the ground of their faith. But these signs spoken of were still signs as grounds of faith.

Next, the greater part of the signs spoken of in Matthew 24 are not given to the disciples, the only one that is so given being absolutely inapplicable in any case to the church in general, or to any but a very small portion indeed, at a particular moment of time, namely the inhabitants of Jerusalem and its neighbourhood at the moment of Antichrist's open rebellion. The body of the church must have expected Christ without this, or not expected Him at all. But believers in Christ, he says, "have a series of signs given to them, commencing with the one sign refused by the nation, and closed by a host of unprecedented distinctness, immediately preceding, and introducing, the great sign itself, the sign of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven." Now, omitting Jonas and the resurrection, which is not mentioned here, and is entirely another kind of sign, and on another principle, and the unnamed series which is only a

flourish, the signs of “unprecedented distinctness” are not given to the disciples as such. Indeed they are already, according to his own system, fled. And I suppose that he does not deny that these terrific signs are seen by, and a sign to, the nation. At any rate the great sign itself is clearly given as such: “Then shall appear, etc., and they shall see.” So that it ends in the appearing of Christ making the tribes of the earth mourn, Christianity being gone far away three years and a half before,2 and the harvest even over, having taken place elsewhere; so that, on his own shewing, in all this he is certainly wrong. That this is a provision for all whom it may concern, who believe and receive the testimony, I do not deny. But when he says that they, the Jews, are blinded, he seems to forget that it is only “in part.”

And here it is that the system breaks down altogether, as I shall shew more clearly hereafter; for after all that is said about blinded Jews, and about the church only having the signs, if I am to receive the teaching of those most taught in the system, Christianity (the church) will have left Jerusalem, and indeed the whole Roman Empire, before the terrific signs appear; and [there will be Jews in Jerusalem who will have received the testimony that Jesus was the Son of God, the promise of protection through the tribulation, of acceptance in Jesus after He shall have appeared, but who are not Christians at all.3 But further, as to the signs, it is quite clear that the writer has not at all considered the actual state of the disciples whom Jesus addressed. “Any,” he says, “among that nation who received that one sign, and so came into the church, would indeed be thus introduced where these many signs were taught. But as

Jews they rejected," etc. Now the disciples, when Jesus addressed them, had not received that one sign. They did not believe yet in the resurrection, but when stated to them, and that after Jesus had said "I will build my church" (and in the same chapter on purpose to make the contrast clear), the one most specially taught said, when this sign was proposed, "that be far from thee, Lord." And afterwards it is said, "they saw and believed, for as yet they knew not the Scriptures, that Christ must rise from the dead." Others said, "we thought that it was he that should have delivered Israel"; "and certain women also of our company made us astonished, saying, that they had seen a vision of angels which said that he was alive." The disciples therefore were not yet of the "any among that nation who received that one sign," and consequently were not so come into the church. They reasoned among themselves sometimes, wondering what the rising from among the dead should mean; but, as far as they expressed any thought, they "rejected" it as involving His death— whether as Jews I leave you to determine. The effect then of the writer's reasoning upon my mind is to shew me that (theorising upon our faith who are in the church of God and God's judgment on the blinded nation) he has entirely left out what the scripture actually states of the condition of the disciples; and that he has never taken into consideration, nor seen perhaps, the transitional state in which they were— believing in Christ, and not believing in His resurrection at all. They were in this state when they were addressed, and therefore according to his own statements were not "come into the church." Nothing of all this (that is, of the actual state of things spoken of in Scripture) comes into his calculation at all. All his reasoning on Psalm 74 is nothing to the purpose, as

there is no question in Matthew 24 of “our signs.” As in the mouth of a Jew, the words have evidently a totally different sense. The truth is, he has not understood the question. It is not whether the blinded generation sees the signs or has them— though they will have all of them, but not receive the instruction of the Lord about them (as they had the sign of Jonas just as much as the disciples; and as they will have all that God is pleased to mention here—I do not say the unnamed series of which the writer is pleased to speak). The question is, Are there not persons—not in the full privileges of the church— who may receive and understand these signs? Are there not persons in the condition of, or even more advanced than, the disciples, but. who are not, when they receive the instruction, actually in a church standing? In a word, are there not those who will be what, he must confess, the disciples then were to whom these instructions were given? for they had not received the one sign, and consequently were not come into the church!4 As to the second letter, and expecting the return of Christ, it seems to me that the coming of Christ, also, is spoken of to the disciples in a way which he has not considered. It is written, “Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.” He was there for the secret faith of His disciples; but He does not treat that as the coming of the Son of man; and He speaks to them as exclusively occupied with the cities of Israel, which they could not have time to go over before the Son of man should be come.5 And now I beg attention to the chapter in which the passage I have alluded to above is found, as it contains one of those statements of which the use in Mark 13 and Luke 21 is particularly referred to in the tract to prove that the apostles must always be, and actually were,

addressed as the church, or representing the church. The idea that they could be addressed in a peculiar character as connected with Israel (while many general principles are admitted to be applicable to the church, at least to those labouring in the work of the ministry during the time of the church, as well as any other)—such an idea, I say, is treated as subversive of the first elements of Christianity. The passage quoted (page 7) from Mark 13 and Luke 21 to prove that Matthew 24 is absolutely addressed to the church as such is, “it is not ye that speak but the Holy Ghost.” In page 4 will be found a summary of Matthew, with the particularities of this chapter 10 among others, produced (page 6), as clear and conclusive evidence of the gospel by Matthew to the character the twelve sustain therein; that is, that the Lord addresses them as the church.

Now this is the commission in chapter 10: “Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go ye to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” etc. They were to provide nothing for their journey; and to shake off the dust of their feet against the city that did not receive them; enquiring who was worthy where they went. They are then cautioned to beware of men: that they should be brought before governors and kings for His sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles: but, when delivered up, the Spirit of their Father would speak in them. The members of the same family would betray one another. They should be hated of all men for His name’s sake; but he that endured to the end the same should be saved. When persecuted in one city, they were to flee to another, for they would not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man were come. Now, will any one

say that this was addressed to the church, as the church? or to the apostles as representatives of it; when they are forbidden to go into the way of the Gentiles, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel? And while undergoing persecutions, such as did eventually happen to them in the land of Israel when the church was formed, they are told, when persecuted in one city, to go to another, for that they would not have got over the cities of Israel till the Son of man should be come. Has this to do with Jews as Jews? Yet they suffer for His name's sake. Nor can it be doubted, on the other hand, that their bringing before kings and rulers was accomplished after Christ's ascension. Yet it is certain they are not here addressed as the church.

Again, we are told, in a note, that, in a New Testament sense, only true believers are Jews. This is certainly new. The discussion, be it remembered, turns on the application of passages in Matthew. Does the writer adopt the idea that Matthew is Old Testament scripture? or is he in the system he states to be subversive of Christianity, that in Matthew the addresses are not to the church in the New Testament sense of things? For I suppose Jews are sometimes mentioned in this gospel, and in the three others, and even in the Acts. Yet I do not remember where this word is used in the sense of true believers. So that clearly, according to his statement, in these books the word has not a New Testament sense. But we have here a palpable proof of the absurdity of the system which assumes that everything that is said in the New Testament must have reference to the church viewed in its proper and highest privileges.

I understand what the writer means—that, viewed in the light of New Testament privileges, carnal Jews are not recognised as the people of God. And who questions this? But to say that in a New Testament sense only true believers are Jews, is merely to say that we have closed our eyes to its use in a great part of the New Testament, because occupied with a theory of our own minds.

Nor can the writer escape by saying he means new covenant, because the use of the word in the gospels remains there as a fact, so that it would be merely asserting that Matthew does not write in a new covenant sense. And, further, new covenant thus becomes worse than ambiguous: for, in Jeremiah, Israel and Judah are spoken of in their usual sense in connection with the new covenant. And, further, it is a confusion between the church's blessings and Israel's under the new covenant under the millennium: for all Israel will be saved, and saved as Israel, under the new covenant. Moreover, as to the Jews being cast off, page 12, Tract 3, the apostle uses the salvation of the believing remnant as a proof that this people, gainsaying and rebellious as they were, were not "cast off" —concluding, that blindness in part was happened to them, but, that in result all Israel should be saved. And moreover, those of whom the writer thus speaks as cast off are not mixed up with the evil and adulterous generation, as Daniel 11, 12 and Isaiah 66 plainly prove.

The writer states they will have "refused all other testimony till the glory bursts on them like the glory on Saul. Most will perish, though a remnant shall be spared; but those who have believed in Jesus crucified and risen, and who have waited and watched for His

appearing, etc., will find the consummation of their redemption."

Yet I find in "Thoughts on the Apocalypse," page 125, that, after Christianity is withdrawn from Jerusalem, God raises up a new testimony—a testimony of judgment, and not of salvation, but which will be received by a spared remnant, so that it is clear that there are those who will not have refused all testimony, and yet at a time that Christianity is withdrawn.

Nor can this be contested. For the Lord Himself says, speaking to the nation as such, whose house was left desolate, "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye say Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord." So that they certainly will have received some testimony before He comes. I confess it seems to me very clear indeed, that if the writer says that the coming of the Son of man will burst on that rebellious generation which has refused all other testimony, when the Lord says that they will not see Him till they have received other testimony, "this is to derange and confuse all the order and truth of God concerning these things." I prefer believing in Scripture, that they will not see Christ till they say "Blessed be he that cometh."

The writer of the tract has clearly lost sight of a body of people, a remnant of whom the Scriptures distinctly speak, and whom God owns—certain wise ones who do understand. He says, I am simply speaking of the body of Christian people, as the only body amidst which this idea, or hope, of the second advent of Christ could exist, and to which alone therefore, etc., "not entering into this distinction between the professing church and the true church."

But, here again, the system, built up on one side to condemn all others, is knocked down on the other; because, after the withdrawal of Christianity from Jerusalem, there is a new testimony raised up, whose grand object will be the coming of Christ. We have therefore instructions6 addressed to some one else than the church about Christ's return. But Christ does not, in the passage we are considering, speak of His coming as His return, no more than in chapter 10. On the contrary, it is spoken of there, and here, as if it were His only coming, though we know He has come. Nor is there a word about His resurrection or departure.

Again, it is stated that, of the threefold division of Jews, Gentiles, and church of God, the disciples were the church. But there was no such division made at that time. Nor could there be, because Christ was not crucified, nor the church established. Such classes did not exist, nor could they be addressed therefore as such. They were apostles, when ordained to be with Jesus and to go only to Jews, as truly, though in another order, as when set to commence the church.

It is denied that they represented one set of people in Matthew and another in John. But John himself makes the same distinction as to the difference of the presence of the Comforter; nor does mere denial, nor believing to be very fanciful, prove much. I should think that a person who could not distinguish between the tone of spiritual teaching in the last chapters of John and Matthew 24 must be very incapable of explaining either. It seems to me that the difference between "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you": and, "but when ye see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, then let them

which be in Judea flee to the mountains," is very great indeed; and that it is neither fanciful nor injurious to perceive that one relates to union with Christ in heaven, and the other to the circumstances of Jerusalem on earth, prophesied of by Daniel the prophet as that in which a Jewish remnant were interested as such. We may find the same difference in Matthew and John in the testimony of John the Baptist, in Matthew 3:12, John 1:29-34. Further, they were not addressed as the church in John, though many things might regard the church. So, in Matthew 23 they are told to be subject to the scribes and Pharisees as sitting in Moses' seat. There, clearly, they are not addressed as the church. I admit there is a difference between this and Matthew 24. But this just proves that the same persons may be addressed almost exactly at the same time (the circumstances were much more different in John, for there it was after the Supper), and yet addressed in a different character.

This is the writer's own theory as to Matthew 23 and 24; but it is fanciful and injurious when applied to John, where the whole tenor of the gospel is different, and the circumstances much more contrasted. For in one case we have disciples in the temple before it was pronounced desolate, and out of the temple asking about it, and looking at it, and enquiring of its desolation. This is said to be different, and what is Jewish and of the church contrasted. Whereas in the other case John speaks of heaven, and union with Christ there; and yet this must be identical with Matthew 24. Again, it is said, in explaining Matthew, "the rock on which the church is built." But the Lord says, "I will build" —clearly shewing He did not address them as if the church existed then. In chapter 23 we are told He directly addresses them "as

the heavenly family" —as ourselves, for that is the point; for the grand evil alleged is depriving the church of certain scriptures. Consequently, the heavenly family and ourselves ought to obey the scribes and Pharisees of the evil and adulterous generation, as sitting in Moses' seat (i.e., the church ought).

The rest of page 5 is really too bad. The Lord tells us that they would all be offended because of Him that night, and leave Him alone; and this is slurred over by saying, They linger near the cross. This is really shameful. Apostles, to be sure, they were. So they were when forbidden to go to the Gentiles, as well as when sent to evangelise the nations. But was it the same thing? or are they instructed on the same ground?

Again, when it is said (page 6), "His heavenly flock," heavenly or not, the subject that occupied them, and to which Jesus replies, was Jerusalem, Judea, and the temple. But we are told that "hated for my name's sake "proves that it is the church after His ascension. So they do then in chapter 10; but there, it is confessed, they do not represent the church. So that it proves nothing here either. The same remark applies to the expression of, "It is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit"; and what has been said of the two witnesses also.

And so as to "thirdly" (page 7), we are told in the biggest letters that "behold, I have told you before "is the proof that He made known to them in confidence every device of the enemy, that they and their brethren might walk safely and confidently though surrounded by snares and terrors innumerable. But alas! they, the church, are not to be there. In the elaborate exposition of this view in the "Thoughts on the Apocalypse" we are

told, at this period, according to the directions of this chapter, Christianity will be withdrawn from Jerusalem and Judea, and even from the Roman Empire; and it is clear from the chapter that those who obeyed the directions here given would not be in the way of the trials of the last three years and a half.

As regards the history of the Acts, I agree that some of these things had a fulfilment in the Acts. But it is quite clear, that some of the more important and solemn parts are not touched upon at all in the Acts. Neither the subjects which gave rise to the conversation, nor the time it alluded to, “the end of the age,”7 in the remarkable circumstances by which it was to close: so that, though there was a partial fulfilment in the Acts, yet with the proper subject of the chapter the Acts have nothing to do.

Universal consent, which is appealed to by the writer of the tract, cannot have much weight here; for by “universal consent” the chapter has been applied to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and the end of the world—to which universal consent the writer is entirely opposed. He does not believe a word of what it teaches, and I know not on what principle he quotes it here.8 That all Christians are taught to watch is clear. But I have no recollection of the moral or verbal identity of this instruction with the teaching of the churches in the epistles, especially the epistles of Paul. This latter is added because it has been affirmed that Paul teaches the unity of the church, out of all reach of the question of Judaism. I put it to the conscience of the reader, whether he remembers the verbal identity of this instruction to “watch” with the teaching of the epistles of Paul. For my own part, I have not trusted my memory,

but have searched; and the only passage I find where watching is connected with the subject is 1 Thessalonians 5. “Of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you; for ye yourselves know certainly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. But ye are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all children of light and children of day; we are not of the night nor of darkness. Let us not therefore sleep as the rest, but let us watch and be sober.” The more this passage, and what follows, is examined, the more it will be found in contrast with “this instruction.” There, Christ “would trace out every device and web of the enemy, even in the day of his fearful power,” and gives dates, and seasons, and times to flee. But the apostle had no need to write to them of this. They were of the day, and, whether they waked or slept they would live together with the Lord. In Peter, who addresses the circumcision only, we may possibly find something at least more analogous.

And now, after all this representing of the church, it appears that it has no application to the immense body of the church at all, but, for the most part, only to those located in Judea, etc. But do we therefore pronounce these Jewish scriptures? No, to be sure we do not. But we may consider them as not relating to the church at large, though given to it, as all the Scriptures are. That it was not addressed to the church is clear, for the church was not yet founded on earth. That it was given to the church is blessedly clear, for through grace we have it. That is not the question yet. The question is, what it is about—to whom it applies. Well, and what is the writer’s own answer? To those located in Judea. Is

the church, in its church standing, located in Judea? Are not all the subjects Jewish, as well as the facts, save the one of the gospel of the kingdom going to all nations, and that before the end?

It is stated, that “the peculiar features of such parts of scripture may have received undue attention.” This certainly is a curious charge. I suppose the Holy Ghost put them there to be attended to, and that there cannot be undue attention to any part of scripture. If it is meant to say too exclusive, I can only say that I apprehend those who have attended to these peculiar features have attended to and understand the peculiar privileges of the church quite as much as those who complain of undue attention to the peculiar features which the Holy Ghost has stamped on this chapter.

The statement, that in John 14-16 these same features are found can prove nothing but the determination not to see, or the spiritual incapacity to distinguish, of him who makes it. They were not standing here around Jesus as His heavenly flock j and they were not as yet placed in the position of sons. They were not spoken to as the church. For the church did not yet exist in a standing in which it could be addressed as such. He speaks to disciples, not only about what would occur in Jerusalem, but about what regarded it as such, as foretold by the prophets, though additional light is thrown upon it, and the fact revealed that the gospel of the kingdom would first be preached to the nations before Jerusalem would be finally judged. But it is all the light of Christ’s prophetic knowledge, thrown on subjects already in part treated of by the prophets, and not regarding the church as such.

Saying that the church of God is scattered over the world, and that this provides for its sojourn and service on earth, and therefore the Lord speaks to it of things earthly, human, local, is not a true representation of the matter. The Lord does not give, in general, local instructions for the church. This passage cannot be alleged; for it is the thing in question. The passage treats of local dangers, and local circumstances, and local snares, and of none others, and of which the most important, it is allowed, do not apply to Christians; but none of which, it is clear, apply to the church at large, and only to persons in Jewish circumstances to whom false Christs might be a snare as coming on earth (how should that be a snare to those who are to be caught up to meet Him in the air?), to those who would be embarrassed if they had to flee on a sabbath; and the days are shortened for the elect's sake, which elect are not the church—they are gathered from the four winds after Christ's appearing.

To say that in Matthew 24 only two facts are mentioned as to Jerusalem, does not deserve really an answer. Is not the whole scene from verse 15 at Jerusalem, or in Judea? and, before that, connected with the destruction of the temple? Moreover, "the end of the age "is the period referred to—not of Christianity, but of the age in which the disciples lived, and which the Jews expected to end by the coming of Messiah.

The reasoning of page 6 (tract 3) is again contradicted by the "Thoughts on the Apocalypse." "His beloved church "will not be there at all; and yet, remark here the "ye" and the "you" are continued just the same. So that either no inference can be drawn from the continuous expression "ye" and "you," or it is certain that it is not

as the church they are addressed. Because it is admitted that at verse 23 it does not apply to Christians, for it applies to the hope of relief from the tribulation from which Christianity is withdrawn.

I do not agree in any particular application of Isaiah 599 to the remnant. And, if there be a remnant who abide faithful to God, and to the hope of a Messiah, it is one which is not ignorant of who that Messiah really is. For, on their system, the two witnesses have declared who it is. If therefore their testimony be received, they are not unbelieving as regards Christ,10 though they may not enjoy present salvation. So that after all, according to their own statements, we have a remnant, not Christian, and yet represented by the word “you” in this passage of Matthew 24.

And now what shall we say to such a passage as this? “Those only who, besides knowing Jesus to be the Christ, find present forgiveness” and hope of glory through His blood, and who hold fast His faith and testimony—such only are owned by God in the New Testament.” Now—not to speak of the two witnesses to whom we have so often referred— what shall we say of the gospels? “Present forgiveness and hope of glory through His blood” the disciples clearly did not find during the period embraced in the four gospels, and consequently were not owned by God. And this monstrous statement is the more remarkable, because the point mainly insisted upon to prove that they represented the church is, that they were owned by God as safe under the name of Christ: which, according to this statement, it is quite clear they were not. But the truth is, it is a mass of confusion.

Again, we read in page 9 (tract 3), of the election according to grace of this present time. But it was not in Matthew 24 this present time; nor were they brought out from their nation by faith in the crucified and risen Son of God.

When is it said (page 10), the standing and character of believing Jews in the New Testament is a matter vital to ourselves, for we are grafted in with them—we are fellow-citizens with the saints, the answer is simple: the Lord had not in Matthew 24 yet broken down the middle wall of partition, nor reconciled both in one body by the cross. So that to talk of the character of believing Jews in the New Testament is merely misleading by equivocal words. For the New Testament speaks of believing Jews before, and believing Jews after, the middle wall of partition was broken down.

The standing, therefore, of Peter and his companions on the mount of Olives was clearly not our standing at all. If any were, it was that of Moses and Elias on another mount. When the writer has heard, say the Jewish nation, or Jewish remnant, it must be remembered that he has given his account of this remnant, which I believe to be entirely a false one; for I find that those persons who walk in darkness and see no light are called upon to listen to the voice of God's servant. I suppose no one will doubt who this is (Isaiah 51). They are owned of God in Isaiah 66. They are prepared to say "blessed be he that cometh" (Matt. 23). They love the name of the Lord, and take hold of His covenant (Isaiah 56). They understand (Dan. 1211); and further, in the New Testament (Rev. n), they are found (or, at any rate, a remnant is found), after "Christianity is withdrawn," giving a clear distinct

testimony, which upsets all that is said about this Jewish remnant here.

Again, “The New Testament ground is new ground: none enter thereon save through faith in Jesus as the Saviour, the present Saviour of sinners.” This clearly was not the faith of the disciples. “The cross of Jesus is the line of demarcation between the old things and the new.” “A Jew who fears God, but who trusts not in the blood of Jesus, is still on the old ground. Such may be preserved by God’s power from apostasy, but they have no communion with the things into which faith in Jesus now introduces.”

“In the New Testament they are known as amongst those who are ‘cast off,’ those lying under wrath ‘until the end,’ as identified with Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children; though if I step without the circle of New Testament ministry, I do find,” etc.

After referring to two elections, one suffering from men for confessing Jesus, the other from God for rejecting Him, we are told that if we do not clearly distinguish these two, then we should apply much of the New Testament to “a body, which, perhaps we should, if called on, feel it difficult to define, but which we should call Jews as distinguished from the church.” “But in Matthew 24 I see the Lord leading forth a remnant; then —a converted, believing, saved remnant.” It is to these He speaks on the Mount of Olives. They are a present, a manifested, election—they stand in grace—they had the depths of Jesus’ love and the Father’s opened up to them —they were constantly and only addressed as the church — they actually preached Christ crucified, and so “to confound these with any yet unmanifested remnant of

righteous Jews … is to apply a principle to the New Testament which, it may be easily shewn, would subvert the very first elements of Christianity."

I shall not make any comment on the charge here made against brethren walking for years before the writer was converted, as they still are, in godliness and truth; because it seems to me that such a charge as "subverting the first elements of Christianity," made without any proof at all but "it may be easily shewn," is an immoral thing: it does not demand an answer, but, as a personal wrong, forgiveness. Those who would believe it on such a charge, have only to be prayed for as under the evident influence of party spirit.

But let us consider the matter of these statements, and not the charge. And here I know not whether to take some of the statements of the writer as proof of the views he opposes; or others in proof of the gross misstatements that are offered as truth; or both together to shew the contradictions into which he falls; or many, or all of them, to shew that he has overlooked all the real facts of the case in order to follow out his own ideas. Such a mass of confusion and contradiction I never met with.

"All such are still on the dark side of the pillar of testimony—whatever their condition. The cross of Jesus is the line of demarcation between the old things and the new." On which side of this line of demarcation were the disciples whom Jesus addressed? But it will be said, Oh! but being with Jesus they were the other side of the cross really, though not in knowledge or faith. This itself, as to the dealings of God, is dangerous ground, because it sets aside the difference of the work being

accomplished, and the value of faith in it. For, let us remark, that the question is not here, were they saved? but on what ground the Saviour made certain communications to them.

But the writer does not leave himself even this plea. He says, “a Jew who fears God, but who trusts not in the blood of Jesus, is still on the old ground” … “they have no communion with the things into which faith in Jesus now introduces.” Certainly one would suppose that the writer was writing expressly for the views he opposes.

On which side of the cross were the disciples? Did they trust in the blood of Jesus? Why, they earnestly hoped he would not die; and had no idea whatever of trusting in the blood of Jesus. It had not been presented to them by the Lord as the object of their faith, and could not be, because He had been presenting Himself to the Jews as the Messiah. Obscure intimations, or express statements, of His rejection had been made to them, but nothing about the value of His blood; and even these statements they had repudiated. The last supper itself had not yet intimated it to them, incapable to understand it as they were. One thing is clear—they did not trust in the blood of Jesus, and they had therefore no communion with the things into which faith in Jesus now introduces.

And thus they were clearly to be dealt with not upon the ground of the church, nor, as having anything to say to that “into which faith in Jesus now introduces.” They were on the dark side of the pillar of testimony, so that they ought to have been addressed, if at all, as a Jewish remnant.

Yet they were then—the italics all through these citations are the writer's, not mine—they were "then—a converted, believing, saved remnant." They are a present, a manifested, election—they stand in grace—they had the depths of Jesus' love and the Father's opened up to them—they were constantly and only addressed as the church—they actually preached Christ crucified and so gathered the church. Can there be a more complete contradiction than that between the principles of demarcation stated and the statements of the writer as to the condition of the disciples?

Can anything be a greater perversion—at any rate what is never important, a more light neglect—of the most important scriptural truths, than to say the disciples were then, etc., in italics, and to go on and say, "they actually preached Christ crucified"; without noticing the descent of the Holy Ghost, which changed their whole condition, without which Christ could not tell them many things "into which faith in Jesus now introduces," and without which they were forbidden to preach the gospel, being desired to stay at Jerusalem and wait for it—not to mention that the resurrection of the Lord intervened, which changed their whole position; nay, which was the "line of demarcation between old things and new." What does the writer mean by saying they were "then a converted, believing, saved remnant," "they actually preached Christ crucified?" Is it true that they actually did so? To say too they were only addressed as the church is, as already stated, untrue. They were desired to obey the scribes and Pharisees, and sent out with an order not to go near a Gentile, or a Samaritan; so that they were not always addressed as the church—I might add, they never were. For the church, of which they

afterwards formed the basis, was not formed. And John's gospel (the teaching of which is taken very erroneously, I think, to explain their position in this) distinguishes very clearly between their then state and their state after receiving the Comforter.

Further, the New Testament, instead of treating the Jews as cast off, positively asserts (in the chapter that treats of the rejection of the branches) that, as a nation, they are not "cast off," but beloved; and therefore, certainly, the remnant who fear God are not.

Again, they did testify concerning Him, and did hold fast His faith, and are supposed by the Lord not to be received, and so far to suffer for His name's sake, when sent out in His life-time, and when they were forbidden to go to any but Jews. Consequently the supposition is not strange, nor an error, that such could be without being the church. For they were not the church, nor allowed to act on the principle of the church, nor to preach Christ's blood as the hope, nor His resurrection, when all these things which are supposed impossible took place. The truth is, the writer has not attended to the facts of Scripture. He has chosen to have two remnants— one, the church, and only the church—the other, Jewish, lying under wrath, and known as amongst those who are cast off.

Now the scripture speaks quite otherwise, and presents other facts which the writer does not think proper to consider. First, he forgets entirely one thing, very important to remember; and hence a fundamental fallacy runs through all his statements. Christ died for that nation, as well as for the church, and that, because they were beloved of God according to His counsels of

peace, notwithstanding their disobedience; and therefore Christ, and the Holy Ghost too, could and did deal with the nation as such, as well as with the church as such. And, therefore, the Holy Ghost would not consider them as cast off, even where the branches were broken off.

Neglect of this makes all the writer's statements on the subject false, and the language generally used on this subject by those of his school most unscriptural, and painful to a spiritual mind. Next, he has neglected the facts connected with this subject.

"A Jew who fears God but who trusts not in the blood of Jesus is still on the old ground," may be preserved, but is amongst those who are cast off. Now, if we take this division, we have seen to which class the disciples must belong—not to that, clearly, in which the writer places them; and we have seen the contradiction of this with his account of their condition, and the falseness of that account itself. But the fact is his division is wrong too; for I say so for this simple reason, that the disciples, the very persons in question now, and whom the Lord addressed, were in neither of the cases thus abstractedly stated in order to judge their condition: a judgment, therefore, completely false, as is proved by the facts themselves. The disciples did more than fear God, they believed in Jesus as Messiah—nay, in Peter's case, as Son of God, with whatever clearness of light—I think we might say all did. They are not known in the New Testament as amongst those who are cast off. They were not to fear: it was their Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom. They were a remnant separated from the nation by faith in the Messiah, and yet they did not trust in the blood of Jesus. They were on the hither

or dark side of the line of demarcation, the cross of Jesus. So that they were in neither one nor the other of the states supposed, but in another entirely left out of consideration by the writer, and on which the whole question depends: while all the writer's reasonings run on the supposition of two cases, neither of which states the facts which actually existed. And yet, unless a person can embrace this mass of contradiction and carelessness and substitution of personal views for the patient following of the word of God, he is to be treated as holding opinions which subvert Christianity! Next, we are told that the word "ye shall not see me till ye say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," points prophetically to that day when the Lord will spare unto Jerusalem a "very small remnant" who shall see Jesus in His glory and be converted unto Him.

Now, if neglect of scripture be indulged in, and an "undue attention to the peculiarities of a passage" is to be avoided, at least Scripture ought not to be changed to make out a system.

It is stated here that they shall see Jesus in glory and be converted, as it was stated before, that that glory should burst upon those who had refused all previous testimony. Now the passage does not say they shall see Jesus and be converted; but that they shall not see Him till their hearts are changed, so as to say Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

So that the scripture states the contrary of what is asserted to be its declarations in order to make out a system. Even Psalm 72 is entirely misquoted and the misquotations given as authority.

I know not that I need add any more. My object is not in this short paper to treat the subject fully, but to explain to you why the statements of these three letters have the contrary effect on my mind to what the writer intended: because the statements he has made seem to me entirely unscriptural— some of them, if taken as truth, to prove, in their application to the disciples, the very contrary of that for which they are alleged; and, finally, that he really has entirely overlooked what is the material point on the subject, so that his remarks are of no value at all, except to prove on what sort of grounds a system of so much pretension is built.

Affectionately yours,

Postscript

I am unwilling to pass over a collateral point, confirmed, as it has been, by many like statements which I have heard and connected with other points of a similar tendency.

It is in page 3 of tract 2. “Lastly, please consider the fact that from the day these chapters were first spoken, there never has been the slightest question raised of their true and exclusive address to the church, until the last very few years.”

You know I am no traditionist; but here at least is “universal consent” on one point.

This statement is not true in the use to which the writer applies it; because “universal consent” took the passage away from all present and future application to the church, and considered it as accomplished at the siege of Jerusalem, the coming, in any further sense, relating to the end of all things.

But it is not in view of this that I quote it now. It is with reference to the principle, the popish principle, of universal consent. Universal consent has nothing to do with tradition, nor tradition with universal consent. But universal consent is another form of the substitution of man's authority for the word of God and the teaching of the Spirit of God in and by the word, and the responsibility of each saint to receive that word by such teaching; which alone constitutes faith. Universal consent is a rule of other men for binding to an opinion without scripture, or in the interpretation of Scripture. In either case it is the judgment of men, be they ever so many, and not the direct responsibility of the soul to God in receiving the word; nor the direct operation of the Spirit of God on the soul in respect of the word, which alone produces divine faith. It is faith in men. No matter if it is all the saints "from the day these chapters were spoken." For the mass of saints it must result in faith in the statements of the teacher, which is not faith in God at all. It will always be connected with canons of interpretation made by men (or rather it is the thing itself), with receiving from teachers what they teach because God has raised them up, and with ecclesiastical authority, the process of which is connection of teaching with office—the result, office giving authority to all teaching. Now this is Popery, whose force lies in the practical denial of that to which the apostle appeals in the saints. "Ye need not that any one should teach you." "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." He did teach them; but he owned the Holy Ghost in them. The spirit of Popery is the spirit of the age as to religion. Self will soon in divine things work itself out to nothing, because it cannot hold men together in the things of God; but Popery can in form.

Now the first grand principle which introduced Popery, and on which Protestants inclined to it always rest, is that announced here. It was first stated by a “father,” Vincentius Lirinensis, in these terms in Latin, “Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus” (what [has been believed] always, everywhere and by all); and became very famous in the church.

Let the saints be on their guard. Self-will is always evil. Affectionate confidence in those who labour in the Lord is always happy. But “universal consent,” and the authority of teachers, are the instruments of the enemy for the church’s departure from God. In the perilous times of the last days the known security of the saints is the doctrine of the apostles themselves, and the written word of God (2 Tim. 3)—both now concluded in this last—the sole and sufficient resource available through the teaching of the Spirit to the saints of God. Teachers may aid them in it, but can never take away each man’s own direct responsibility as to what he receives. But when “universal consent” is thus publicly appealed to, it is high time to see where we are going.

Let no one suppose I allude here to individuals. On the contrary, I am very anxious to draw attention to a system—a system which has been the bane of the church for thirteen centuries. The demon of Popery is the active demon of the day. Its leading introductory principle is advanced in the passage on which I comment. I have noticed some of its other elements, because the introduction of this general one shews that the door has not been kept closed against it. Hence the saints will do well to be on their guard, lest they be mixed up with it before they are aware. I would urge them, if need be, to

get their minds off individuals, and to watch against the principles everywhere.

May beloved brethren remember that the written word of God, and the grace and teaching of the Spirit of God, are the only security against error, and the devices of Satan—that ascribing authority to teachers, to "universal consent," or anything else but to the written word of God, is departing from the only security of the saints in these dark and evil days; and yet, if dark and evil, blessed in the resources of grace to him that has faith. If the Spirit of God be looked at as residing in the teachers and not in the whole body, it is the full-blown principle of Romish clericalism. If saints do not prove for themselves all they hear, they cannot have faith now; but they cannot help being made answerable for it hereafter, because God has commanded them to do it, and given His Spirit to the whole body, and to each individually, to enable them to do it, and they will be held responsible for this whether they will or no.

I fully recognise the blessing of having those who can help us in learning the truth, or apply it in exhortation to the soul. But this does not alter the truth of what I have said. I do not in the least accuse individuals of being popish. But I say that the principle here printed and published, and which I have heard elsewhere appealed to, is an important popish principle, well known as such, one especially made use of where there is a tendency among Protestants to it—always connected historically with the authority of official teachers, and derogatory to the sole authority of the word of God, and the individual responsibility of the saints, and thus a departure from the ground of the faith of God's elect—a very little beginning perhaps, but a beginning of a very great evil.

1 It must be remembered that all the gospels were given by subsequent revelation to the church of God: but it is for the church of God to discern by the teaching of the Holy Ghost what was for ever and essentially available for itself, what was for the disciples in the state in which they then were, and what was prophetic of some future state of things. This is not to take anything from the church. It is not, and cannot be, denied that there are passages which apply to the disciples in their then state, and not to the present state of the church. So that the principle of some passages not applying is admitted; and therefore to say that the supposition that in certain other passages the Lord speaks prophetically of certain events beyond the church's history, is taking the gospels from the church, is quite an unreasonable accusation. It is merely denying spiritual discernment to the church of God—to say that it cannot judge of What was for the disciples then, what is for itself now, and what may be prophetic of some future state of things.

2 See "Thoughts on the Apocalypse," B.W.N., page 135, as to the harvest being ended, page 207 of the same work.

3 See "Thoughts on the Apocalypse," B.W.N., pages 125 and 133.

4 Indeed up to this, as far as they had heard of it, they had refused it, andVere denounced as Satan, and savouring the things that be of men.

5 In Matthew 24 and 25 also He does not speak of His return till He speaks of the talents.

6 See Tract 3, page 2.

7 The statement of page 6 (tract 3), that the Lord is speaking of the end of the age, from Matthew 24:15 to the end of chapter 25, is quite an inaccurate statement. But it is impossible to notice everything.

8 See Postscript at the end of this paper.

9 See page 7 (tract 3).

10 See “Thoughts on the Apocalypse,” B.W.N., pages 124, 133.

11 See also Psalm 80.

A Few Brief Remarks On “A Letter On Revelation 12”

My dear Brother,

I have read the tract you gave me. I confess to you such reading is an unwelcome task. I do not speak of this tract in particular, but in general of those that are written to maintain particular views, and not to act on souls. I am not blaming— I leave liberty to—those who think it right; but it is a very ungracious task, that of examining a brother’s views to see if they are right, instead of learning what one can, and leaving the rest aside. However, as various views are maintained, it may be well to examine them with all patience, that brethren may, on the one hand, judge quietly; and that, on the other, there may not be the uneasiness in the minds of those who think these views wrong, of supposing mistakes current unanswered—a feeling which often produces restlessness of mind; and the fruits of righteousness are sown in peace.

Many points, which seem of importance when undiscussed, dwindle wonderfully when all that is to be said is brought out; for saints, as all men, are apt to be fonder of their own ideas than other reasonable people are of them, when they see the light. On the other hand, the most unfounded have weight with many when unexamined; and are supposed to be unanswerable because they are unanswered—a supposition that it is natural enough their authors should be prone to encourage—a sorrowful ground this for saints to be on, but this does not make what I say untrue.

But to proceed to the examination of the tract, the first paragraph struck me as shewing considerable inattention to the force of phrases in Scripture. The throne of Jesus promised to him that overcomes is spoken of as being to the same effect as the man-child being caught up to God and His throne. Surely there is little or nothing in common between these two passages.

Sitting on the throne of God is never promised to the saints overcoming; nor does catching up seem to me the same thing at all as being seated on Christ's throne as a reward. The man-child was saved from the mouth of the dragon ready to devour it as soon as born; and was caught away, and the woman left to be persecuted. Yet if this interpretation be not right, the whole structure of this chapter, on which the entire argument of the tract is founded, falls with it.

I also have a word to say about hope. I am very happy to say that I do believe the hope of the saints is quite independent of the question, "How long will it be before what we are hoping for will be realised?" But, is it independent of it, if it is laboriously sought to be proved that I must not expect it before a certain course of events is accomplished? This seems to make my hope dependent on these events. I do seriously believe our hope to be the bride's hope of the Bridegroom in virtue of the Holy Ghost dwelling in her, and not to be founded on mere prophetic testimony as to events. She is waiting for God's Son from heaven, independent of all events, and ignorant of how long it will be ere He returns. But, if it be a delusion— hoping to see Him before certain events occur—my hope is hardly independent of these events. And, if there seem delay, God is careful to assure us that He is not slack concerning His promise; and this

reason and no other is assigned for the seeming long procrastination, that God is not willing that any should perish. This is God's way of treating this subject. It never occurred to the Holy Ghost to say it was all imagination to expect the Lord from heaven until certain earthly events should occur.12 If the accomplishment of the hope be dependent on certain events, its effect in the soul cannot be entirely independent of them. Nor do I see, if its moral power be really entirely independent of them, why so much pains is taken to press them as necessarily happening before it arrives. If it be not important to think it near, it seems at any rate to be so to prove that it is not. I do not call this its being "quite independent of the question, How long' will it be before it is realised?" I believe it is so. But, if so, why so anxious to prove it cannot yet take place?

But there is another point which is important, and that is not merely that the thing promised is sure. The Lord considers it important that the saints should be always expecting it as a present thing, and wishing for it as a present thing—I say expecting it as a present thing, uncertain when it will come. Thus He speaks in Luke 12:35-40: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately… And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants… Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." And again, verses 43, 44: "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all

that he hath." Here surely they are told to be expecting always. Now, would the certainty that it must be two or three thousand years off not affect this state of mind?13 I say also, wishing for it as a present thing, as it is written, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And … He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus," Rev. 22:17, 20.

The certainty, glory, and heavenly character of the hope, most important as it is, is not all. The Lord insists a great deal on a constant expectation of it, uncertain when it will be; a great deal on the tone and character of mind connected with this state of expectation of the Lord, coming and finding us so in our service. Now I do not deny that particular revelations may have been made to individuals, which shewed them that they should depart first, and so far modified their individual apprehensions. And I do not doubt that a saint may have a just and true conviction that his service is not yet finished, and yet be always waiting because he knows not when the Lord may come. But this does not the least affect the general state and expectation of the church. And is there the least analogy between such a particular revelation, and putting a whole train of events on earth as necessarily to happen before the church can expect the Lord?

And, indeed, were I to adopt the system proposed to me, I should not expect the Lord at all until a time when I was able to fix the day of His appearing. And this is what we are told is a sober and true way of expecting Him. I say fix the day, for I cannot expect His coming until the abomination of desolation is set up at Jerusalem, and then I can say, Now in twelve hundred and sixty days the Lord will be here. And this fixing by signs and dates, I

am told, is the sober way of waiting. But it is quite clear that it is contrary to the way the Lord Himself has taught me to expect Him. It is clear that, if these signs are to be expected for the church, I have nothing to expect till they are fulfilled. I may expect them, and have my mind fixed on them, but not on Christ's coming. And, when one particular one happens, I can name to a day His coming.

This is not what Christ has taught me, and therefore I do not receive it. And remark how, in predicting to Peter that he would be cut off—not telling it to the church, but to him— the Lord, by His reply to his enquiry as to John, leaves the church again in this vague expectation. "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" This was soon disseminated; and the rumour spread that he would not die. But the conclusion, like most drawn from Scripture, was very wide in fact, though plausible in reasoning, from what the Lord meant, or had said. There is not, nor can be, faith in a conclusion, because a conclusion is not a revelation.

Note, moreover, that a particular revelation to an individual about his death is the strongest possible proof that the ordinary doctrine of the Lord to the church as to His coming was such, that it could not be expected that such persons should so die before it, and that this ought not to be expected, since it required a special revelation to make them think they would. "I must shortly put off this tabernacle as the Lord hath shewed me." Was it not curious that there should be such a revelation of an individual's death, if the sanctioned [? constant] expectation was, not that they were not to expect it [death], but the Lord's coming in their life-time? Though it was never said positively when. Hence the apostle

says: “We which are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord.” And this expectation was so vivid that, while he sanctions it by saying “we which are alive,” etc., he has to reassure them by explaining that those deceased would be raised first, and enjoy the same coming and glory.

I find then the positive teaching of Scripture quite contrary to the reasoning that it makes no difference. Scripture teaches me otherwise, and I reject the reasoning. I pass over the triumphant argument which was used by the millenarians against the opposers of the personal reign, that if there were certainly a thousand years to come first, we could not be expecting the Lord from heaven.14 It appears that this was all a delusion. It served its turn. But, as any rate, it would be more honest now to tell them it was all a mistake.

And now, before I examine the critical explanation of the chapter, let me advert to some other important statements— admissions of truth I would say, though the grounds on which others have affirmed these truths are disputed, as (for so we shall see by and by) those of the champions of this system are contradicted also. And I notice this, because I am sincerely glad, while noticing freely that with which I do not agree, to bring forward that with which I do.

The whole body of the saints treated of in the Revelation are recognised as being quite distinct from what is commonly spoken of as the church. I do not mean that it is stated that they do not form part of the church; but that both classes of sufferers noticed in this book are treated as quite distinct from us—considered perhaps superior; but quite distinct. The book of Revelation does

not apply to the church in its present state save in principle. The saints spoken of in it are not the primitive church, nor the church in its fallen state since (save in chapters 2 and 3), but an entirely new class of persons, and a different state of things. It is not stated whether there will be saints of the old or actual class of believers at the same time; but if so, they are not mentioned. Nothing can be more positive or decided than the writer's statement on the subject.

But what is there for us in all this? Nothing, except for the principle of the unity of the body.

Again, "Thus it would appear that the latter part of the Revelation, that is, from chapter 4 to the end is, as far as the history of the saints in the earth is concerned, a history of a certain company of saints, born in the latter end of this dispensation, that is, a short time before Christ comes with His saints to execute judgment," etc., "that this part refers to the closing period of our dispensation—the last few years of it, and that it is all unfulfilled." I do not dwell on its being our dispensation or not now—it is quite a new company which does not yet exist. So that there is nothing for us in it all, save on the principle of the unity of the body.

"The primitive church as a body had failed, but in the last part of this book we have the history of a company of saints who do overcome."

"Who this company are, further, time can only shew. They are such as have not been from the beginning hitherto. For their sakes I believe this book of the Revelation was very principally written, to lead them up to their gory bed, though, of course, in principle, it

belongs to all who are appointed unto sufferings for Christ's sake and so to all the church."

Further: "The martyrs seen in chapter 20:4, etc., are two parties of martyrs belonging to the company represented by the man-child," etc. We are going to discuss the man-child in a moment; but here we have the two parties of martyrs, besides the church in general and previous martyrs who are clearly to sit on the thrones that were placed, but who are not, as regards the saints in the earth, the immediate object of the Revelation. So that we have the church in general, and two distinct parties of martyrs, to whom, as regards the saints on earth, the Revelation specially belongs in its statements. Having then the distinct common ground, that there are these three classes (namely, the church in general, primitive and fallen; those beheaded for the witness of Jesus, etc.; and those who had not worshipped the beast), let us now enquire as to the detail of these last two classes, as there is no difficulty as to the primitive and fallen church: and indeed these two parties form the subject of the tract.

The author begins by telling us, that the original literally translated would be "those that remain of her seed." Now I humbly suggest that it would not. I am not indeed exactly aware of the difference sought to be established between the remnant "and those that remain," unless it be meant to convey the idea that, some of her seed having been cut off, certain others remain. Otherwise it is a distinction without a difference. At any rate "those that remain "may convey this meaning to a reader who must take on trust that this is a more literal translation. But I would very much caution the unlearned reader against these new translations, unless they are

accompanied with reasons which other competent scholars can weigh. I avow broadly here that I have hardly ever found they could be trusted. Now I judge here, that “the remnant of her seed” is much more correct than “those that remain of her seed,” so far as there is any difference between them. There is no verb used as in the new translation, nor word answering to “those.” It is true that the word translated “remnant,” is plural and not singular. But in English, whenever “remnant” is used of what relates to individuals, it has a plural signification. We may say “a remnant of a piece of cloth”; but when I say “some of the men did so and so, and the remnant so and so”; or “one of the men did thus, and the remnant thus”; that would always in English convey the idea of several. If I meant only one, I should say, in the first case, “another”; in the latter case, “the other.” But “the remnant” or “the rest” would never be used for one. The translation therefore is perfectly exact. The Greek word used, for sense, may always be translated “others” or “the others.” The English idiom would hardly bear “the others of his seed,” “the others,” in English, being generally used absolutely.15 The writer then takes the man-child as identified with “her seed,” and so as a company, but considers “the remnant of her seed” not to be those besides the man-child (which would seem the natural use of the words: inasmuch as this child having been mentioned, the rest of her seed would seem to mean others besides the one who had been spoken of), but the man-child to be a whole company, and those that remain to be part of that company, left after another part have been martyred: to wit, those of verse 11. But first, these are never said to be her seed at all. Nor are they in any way whatever connected with the woman. There is a manifest break

between verses 6 and 7, as is clear from this consideration, that the woman flies into the wilderness in verse 6 (up to which, I believe, the account is characteristic more than historical), and she does not flee into the wilderness (v. 14) till after the consequence of what happened in verse 7. Hence it is clear that verse 7 precedes verse 6 in historic time. Now, when it is said the dragon persecuted the woman, it is repeated (v. 13), "which brought forth the man-child"; and, after having again brought her on the scene (only on earth), as mother of this particular child, it is said, when she fled, that the dragon went to make war with the remnant of her seed. I believe the remnant of her seed to be characteristic, and to refer to the woman, intimating the seed was hers; but as far as it relates to any other seed, the only seed of the woman mentioned is the man-child. And any specific reference to verse 11 I believe entirely a mistaken one; though in a very vague general way I should recognise every saint as the woman's seed,16 as far as I have any definite notion of what the woman means.

But I do not believe the man-child to be properly a company of saints.17 I believe the term to be characteristic, and not, so to speak, aggregate. What the woman (whose weakness as on earth, whatever God's counsels were, was afterwards apparent) brought forth was a male son, to be a man of might; a male that was to rule with a rod of iron. The woman was left to be persecuted in her weakness; the one who was to be the mighty holder of the rod of iron was caught up out of the way. This is to me evidently characteristic. That Christ will hold this place is certain from Psalm 2, and that it is given to the church along with Him is clear from the

promise to Thyatira. But this only proves their adjunction to Him, without shewing that this man-child is a company,18 which seems to me to be entirely unproved; because the expression “remnant of her seed” does not in the smallest way prove that which was mentioned of her seed before to be a company.

I have already said I believe the term more general, and to bring the woman more forward than the previous seed; but, so far as it refers to it, it is to me characteristically, not as a company. At all events the only seed mentioned, and that repeated immediately before, is the man-child. But if this fall, as the proof does to me, entirely, then all the system of the writer as to these two remnants goes with it—as he says “adopting this … we come at once to those conclusions.” But then, not adopting it (and I think it entirely false, of which every one will judge for himself), all the conclusions fall with it. For all the peculiar views as to these remnants are founded on this—a slender base it seems to me for such important conclusions. But this is not all: I admit the two parties, or remnants, besides the body of the church in general. It is only their character which is in question.

First, “The man-child does not mean Christ.” If Christ is to be excluded, it is very singular that this child should be designated by the title which is intrinsically Christ’s —a man-child who should rule, etc. This is the way he is to be known. Now this title properly belongs to Christ.

Next, “The brethren mentioned in verses 10 and n are those represented by the man-child; a part of whom having been slain,” etc. Now the brethren, verses 10 and 11, are spoken of as a distinct and complete class, who

had been in a given position previous to the casting down of the accuser, and had overcome therein: not of a whole company, part slain, part left. Nor, indeed, is there anything said of the slaying of the remnant of her seed in the chapter. At any rate the brethren are not a company, partly slain, partly left, but a distinct class definitely described whose case is ended.

This third allegation is sustained by a reason (assumed, as we have seen, without proof) that the remnant of the seed are a part of those represented by the man-child; and that, as we shall see, contrary to the word itself: thus confirming the incorrectness of the whole supposition. Because, if the man-child be caught up before this war against the remnant of the seed, it is clear that this remnant cannot be a part of the man-child, so previously caught up as its final reward. Now what does the word say? The child was caught up to God and His throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness. The order here is pretty plain, I apprehend: that these two events take place on the birth of the male child, He is caught up, and the woman flies. And in the order stated. Now it is upon the woman's fleeing into the wilderness, that the dragon proceeds to persecute the remnant of her seed. Now against this very plain statement of Scripture, what is the reason given why the catching up of the man-child is after the making war with the remnant? Simply that it must be so because the remnant is part of the man-child. Would it not be much safer to conclude that it is not a part, because the scripture places the catching up previous to the woman's flight, and the woman's flight previous to the war with the remnant?

But, further, deliverance from the devouring mouth of the dragon is not surely our ultimate destiny, nor catching up to God's throne either. It may be a general idea of glorious security and honour, but it is not what is anywhere presented as our ultimate destiny. As to our sitting on a throne (that is, on Christ's throne as a Son of man), this is an important point, because if so (and I have no doubt of the justness of the objection), the whole system of the writer entirely falls with it. For my own part, I am satisfied that the catching up of the man-child has no kind of reference to any final state at all: whereas it is assumed as the basis of the argument, and then the brethren and the remnant made the different parts which compose it in their previous condition. It seems to me that reading the chapter attentively would refute this. At least the basis of it ought not to be assumed, to wit, that the catching up is the final glory.

The fourth conclusion is a like argument. The remnant are assumed to be a part of the man-child, and therefore he cannot be caught up. The answer is, The scripture says he is. Moreover, the war of the dragon and the persecutions of the beast are assumed to be the same: or at least that the saints of God and the remnant of the woman's seed are the same, and the time spoken of the same. This may be, but it is a great deal to assume without any proof. The fifth merely assumes what we have been discussing, and therefore I pass it over.

As to the sixth, I do not understand why it is said that the blood of these saints is mentioned (chapter 17:6; chap. 18:24; chap. 19:2), and that the martyrdom of the first part takes place under her reign, part being under the beast's, when the passages quoted state that the blood of all the saints was found in her.

Seventh: I admit fully that the martyrs of the two last classes, though “they are such as have not been from the beginning hitherto,” are the brethren of the saints previously at rest. But I would ask why it is said, “hailing the casting out of the accuser through the martyr spirit of those represented by the man-child.” There is not a hint of this in the scripture. That, in general, God considers His saints in His judgments is true; but here, the casting out is attributed to another thing entirely—namely, a certain war in heaven, whereon those above rejoice, because a company whom they call their brethren are thus delivered. Where we may remark that there is a company in heaven who can rejoice in this, who call these others their brethren. Moreover, if this were so, it seems strange that what delivered the one, if this were the reason for it, should plunge the remnant into war and persecution at the same time. And why “the morning star of their expectations”? “Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down,” etc. And, let us remember, that this proclamation of strength and power is consequent on the victory over the dragon, by which he was finally cast out of heaven. All the statements made here are really merely figures of speech. Again, twice it is repeated that the souls under the altar were long since martyred. Perhaps so: but there is not a word to rest this on, save the cry, “How long, O Lord?” We are also told, that the answer is given “to make us know that the former must wait for the latter.” Wait for what? Not for everything clearly. For white robes were given to them. What they had cried about was vengeance on those on the earth: and they are told they must wait till their brethren were killed.

How “we come at once” to the eighth conclusion I cannot tell. I can only say, I do not see one word of the paragraph borne out by Scripture. They are, it is said, this, and they are that. But in vain I search why. The term virgins is clearly misunderstood. Believing a lie, and guile in the mouth, are hardly the same thing. And I would humbly ask how a remnant at the end are the first-fruits. Though there is nothing for us, in all this, still, the terrors of that day are sought to be inflicted on the soul,19 by being told that we should not be unprepared for all this: though I know not why, if there is nothing for us.

We are again told that the circumstances of the saints under the former of the persecuting powers were not so bad as under the latter. Scripture, I repeat, tells me that “in her was found the blood of all saints”: that “she was drunken” with it. The rest of this page tells us that the chapters of Revelation before this chapter 12 are a preparation, by the display of millennial glories, and the judgment of the ungodly, of these precious ones for their trial. Is this the great object of the Revelation? That it may be so used I will not dispute. But is the church at large not instructed by these millennial glories? “The unnumbered multitude who came out of great tribulation, I consider to be the whole church of God.” But why is the word “the” great tribulation, so much insisted on elsewhere, omitted here? But I pass over this.

But I must ask, Why is the woman the new covenant? Is the new covenant to flee into the wilderness, while those who are born of it do not, war being made against them? Or why is the moon (Israel) put under the feet of the new covenant? Or why is the moon Israel? or the crown

of stars a heavenly family? There may be some elements of truth in all this, but a system thus arranged (might I not say, previously in the mind, and passages thus adapted to it?) cannot inspire confidence, when they are accompanied by no proof at all. And what is the meaning of the dragon's knowing how to cast down the saints of the heavenly places? The dragon does cast the stars to earth. Is he able to take Christ's saints out of heavenly places? And here, page 3, we find the contradiction too of the order on which all the previous argument of the tract was based; and the plain order of the passage, to which I already adverted, is recognised. The child is caught up, etc. "Next the woman has to flee." But then how is the catching up the final destiny of those who are persecuted after the woman has fled? or how can it take place after their martyrdom?

And again I ask, How do the saints ascribe this victory ("now is come the kingdom") to their brethren in the earth? They had overcome while he was not cast down. That was their victory; and a glorious one it was, to overcome by blood, and testimony when the kingdom was not come; but that is not what is celebrated here. That these saints overcome is clear, or they would not be crowned; but I see nothing at all of a company that overcame. Their brethren overcame; but they are spoken of as all other overcomers. Nor do they cause the accuser to be cast out of heaven. Nor is it said that they cause the beast and the false prophet to be cast into the lake of fire. That dreadful fate happens to them because they are found openly opposing and making war on the Lamb. No doubt they had sadly treated the saints in the way, and thus accumulated guilt- on their heads; but the cause of their casting into the lake of fire was their

being found in open arms against the Lamb. “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb,” is not said of those under the beast. See chapter 15:2.

Nor is the difference unimportant. The saints had gotten victory over the accuser through that blood, when he was not cast down. That is very intelligible; nor is any other victory ascribed to them, unless we add victory over the fear of death: nor other instrument of victory besides the blood, but the word of their testimony. All this part of the statement therefore is unfounded too. When it is said that the church’s faithfulness casts him out, I am not aware upon what it is founded. Christ’s power casts him out; and I am not aware, save what we have already discussed, where its exercise is attributed to the church’s faithfulness. I used to hear quoted, “when the Son of man cometh will he find faith on the earth?” The promise to the church of Philadelphia, which is connected with the promise of His coming quickly, is connected with a very different description of the state of the church.

The latter end of this first paragraph of page 10, is very strange. The accuser is cast out only by the flowing of the blood of the saints. No doubt this is avenged therein; but how does this cast him out? Or why has all the blood previously shed not done so? Besides, how is going out used here? Again, if this flowing of blood casts out Satan, how is it he makes it still flow when he is cast out? It is in vain to say, “verse 11, I consider, belongs to the whole company (I might ask, why so?) the others being in the first struggle though not put to death in it”: because, according to the writer’s system, they are put to death after the accuser is cast out, and that casting out they have obtained by identification with those who

were joined with them in casting him out in the first struggle.

Lastly, we are told, “the view which counts those not of the church at all who are among the noblest of her sons, or if of the church, that their brethren will be caught up before their martyrdom, thus nipping in the bud the noblest ambition on the earth, namely, that of being of the company of those who, with their lives in their hands, go forth in testimony against earth’s chiefest destroyers. This view, I believe, a more careful reading of this book will shew to be utterly without foundation.”

Now all this may, forgive me the word, sound very well. But let us search the scripture as to this same period. Are not those who listen to the Lord’s words (and I suppose these are the noblest sons of the church, assuming now that it is the church) desired to flee when they see the abomination of desolation, because the time of their testimony against the earth’s chiefest destroyer is over? Are the disobedient then, who do not escape from the tribulation through the neglect of Christ’s counsel, to be considered as cultivating a noble ambition? They are told to go forth from, not against, this chief destroyer.

But there is another difficulty. The writer refers to Mr. Newton’s “Thoughts on the Apocalypse” as giving help on this subject. But a nipping frost sets in from this quarter also; because there we are taught that, during the reign of the beast, Christianity will be removed according to Revelation 1220 and Matthew 24 from Judea, and even from the whole scene of his power,21 though a few disobedient Christians may be found, and a new testimony, which is not the church’s at all, will have

been raised up, namely, that of the two witnesses who testify of judgment, not of peace, etc., and cannot give Christian blessings, nor Christian promises. So that the second class, which had the most difficult and so the noblest part, turn out not to have the testimony against earth's chiefest destroyer at all. Their brethren, indeed, Mr. N. will not allow to be caught up; but they are bound to flee, and the testimony is to be decidedly in other hands. I know not whether putting another testimony in other hands on the flight of the remnant be better than the catching up of the saints who may be faithful before the great tribulation; or whether it more encourages the noble ambition of the saints. But of this I am sure, "the more careful reading of the book" cannot sanction, actually nor morally, both these views; perhaps, as I fully believe, neither. And let me be forgiven for saying that a more careful, humble reading of the book, with less of a system, would (at least so it seems to me) decide a good deal less and learn a good deal more.

I feel the spirit and tone of this tract to be incomparably superior to the others that I have read in support of the same system, but I find the same essential fault: a principle, deduced itself from a train of reasoning that has the support of the system in view, is laid down; and then, assuming this as a basis "we come at once" to a whole train of conclusions, instead of learning from the direct text of the word. And then something is urged that suits the natural and so popular feeling, such as here the noblest ambition of the saints, which I find contradicted in every way the moment I turn to the word. This carries away many. But where? A system takes the place of godly subjection to the word. And alas! this is suited to a decline of spirituality. As this

becomes feeble, the exercise of mind, and the play of the mere natural feelings, become a necessary aliment. But to the soul, fresh in its spirituality, the word of God (and oh! how can it be otherwise?) has more sweetness in its least statements (for they come from God) than any indulgence whatever of the mental powers.

I know not what has led the author to publish this tract. For my own part, I desire the freest communication of the brethren's thoughts. It seems to me desirable. They correct and are corrected. There is more confidence and all are helped on. Still, where they are to be published, I cannot help thinking that what one would desire would be, either the fresh, even if imperfect, communication of powerful truths calculated to act by the Holy Ghost on the soul, or the matured result of spiritual enquiry. Such seems fitter to see the public day than every thought that suggests itself. At any rate, it will be owned that that which we publish, we should do so by the guidance of the Spirit of God. If it do not flow from this source, and if it be not done under His direction, it can be but the working of the flesh. I trust I have not erred against this rule in what I now commit to the press. In the particular subject which now occupies attention, I, for my part, desire the fullest publicity of every one's thoughts. Even in human affairs things generally find their level in the long run; and in the things of God surely their level in His sight.

I do not feel it necessary to say much on the postscript or last page of this tract. I agree that chapters 12, 13 and 14 are to be kept apart. It is indeed material to the understanding of the book. But I think it will be found that chapters 15 and 16 are a separate part too, "another sign in heaven." I do not see that the

announcing the blessing first hinders the chronological order; and, after the general introduction of chapters 4 and 5. I do not see but that all is in orderly narration to the end of chapter 11. I do not exactly understand, however, how there is not particular difficulty in the order of this book, when three chapters in the middle are to be kept apart, the first seal is to be taken last, and the sixth seal, nobody knows why, is later than the seventh seal, and indeed, though in chapter 6, comes after chapter 19:19.22 This seems tolerably intricate. Further, what is there about the tares in chapter 14? It may be so, but what proof have we? And, if so, does not the harvest apply to the same sphere of judgment, namely, the earth, as the vintage? But that upsets all Mr. Newton's system, referred to in the same page as affording much help: because, according to him, the harvest of Matthew 13 is of Christendom, outside the earth where the vintage of chapter 14 takes place. Again, is it in order without difficulty to have the great whore destroyed first as a moral system, chapter 17:16, and then as a city, chapter 16:19, and chapter 18? I do not see any very great difficulty in the order of the book myself; but surely it is not putting the first seal last, and the sixth after the seventh, that will render it clear and easy.

I think also anyone reading attentively Revelation 12 will find its structure not very difficult. Certain mystic characteristic personages are first given: the woman ready to bring forth seen in God's view and purpose as to her; the dragon; then the man-child (he who was to rule) being caught up, the woman is obliged to take the place of weakness on earth and flees to a place prepared of God.

Then, verse 7 begins the historical part of the chapter from heaven downwards—the war of Michael with the dragon and his victory over him. The dragon is cast from heaven to earth, and, he finding no more any place in heaven, they who belong to it triumph, and are called upon to triumph; but woe is on the inhabiters of the earth. Then we have the dragon's doings upon earth, in order to shew us specially the woman's place, and, historically, what drove her into the wilderness. She having escaped, the dragon goes to make war with the remnant of her seed, who, as I have said, are characterised as her seed (the dragon making his attack upon them because he was wroth with the woman). I confess I do not see a trace, either of the catching up being the final destiny, the man-child being a company, or the two classes being described afterwards as composing the man-child.

The heavenly history from verses 7-12 inclusive being given, the history on earth of the woman and the dragon is resumed, to wit, the woman who brought forth the man-child.

Regarding the reference to the "Thoughts on the Apocalypse," I think it will be found by an attentive reader, that there is an entire discrepancy, on almost every point, between that work and the "Letter on Revelation 12." But I cannot enter into the detail of the comparison here.

12 It may be alleged he does so elsewhere in 2 Thessalonians 2. But I do not hesitate to affirm that he does exactly the contrary, and contrasts the presence of the Lord for the church, and His day for the world, so as

to leave the present hope untouched, and set the saint's mind free from all uneasiness as to the day.

13 As the letter says, "Nor should we say it at all the less if we were sure his coming would not take place for thousands of years."

14 "We should not say it ('a little while') at all the less if we were sure His coming could not take place for thousands of years." There is nothing like saying a thing plainly. But is that the way Scripture speaks?

15 Where the class first mentioned, with which the Greek work 'loipoi' is used has a characteristic force as a class, it generally includes also, I think, the idea of another character. But this depends on its use, and not its meaning.

16 And in this sense the remnant of her seed would be connected with those mentioned in verse 2 as a remnant. But this is quite another view of the matter.

17 Still less a company of saints divided into these two parts by the chapter, namely, those of verse 11, and the remnant of her seed.

18 It is curious to compare the apostle's reasoning in Galatians with the author's in pages 2, 3—where it is clean contrary on the same word. The only symptom of proof alleged is, that then the remnant of her seed would be also symbolic children representing companies. But it is the author's assumption that the man-child is a symbolic child representing a company. He recognises that some consider it to mean Christ: and, as the apostle reasons in Galatians, therefore them that are His; but merely by a subsequent process of reasoning. I have already said it is characteristic in my

judgment. Besides the remnant of her seed is to me a general idea of relationship with the woman. Nor are they necessarily used as a symbol because the other is—no more than the very same word in chapter 19:21, “the remnant were slain,” proves that they were all symbols like the beast. There is no force whatever in running one symbol or figure into another where they are not used together. But this is the only argument attempted. Christ as the seed of Abraham, in a. certain sense, represents a company. We are Abraham’s seed by faith in Him. Do each of us represent a company of Abraham’s seed?

19 It is worthy of remark, that wherever the New Testament speaks of latter-day trials and signs, it tells disciples not to be troubled, to lift up their heads, and so on. Let this be compared with the use often made of things with saints.

20 See “Thoughts on the Apocalypse,” B.W.N., pages 124, 125. The whole subject of the man-child is interpreted entirely otherwise in the same work: see note, page 146.

21 See “Thoughts on the Apocalypse,” B.W.N., pages 148, 149.

22 I do not see any possibility of connecting these two passages, or how chapter 19:19 leaves any room for flight.

Elements Of Prophecy, In Connection With The Church, The Jews, And The Gentiles

The first grand and capital point is to have the end and design of God clearly and settledly in mind, so that it should be constantly before us as the key and test of all. For “no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation… but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” The divine glory is ever the end of all things; but I speak now of the effect of divine counsels in which God glorifies Himself. Now this is altogether in Christ, known in the various glories in which He is revealed. In the church the office of the Holy Ghost, who moved the holy men of old, is to take the things of Christ and shew them to us. Hence, though Jerusalem, or Israel, or even the church, may be that in connection with which Christ may be glorified, it is only as connected with Him that they acquire this importance. So of the word even of the Old Testament scriptures: they are all to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. On the other hand, as it is evident that this alone gives, to whatever subject may be mentioned, its true and just importance, so, if Jerusalem is connected with Christ, with His affections and glory, Jerusalem becomes important; and I get in its connection with Christ, so far as I understand His glory, the key to interpret all that is said of it. It has, in the mind of God, its development in connection with the manifestation of His glory.

There may have been in the times of Israel certain manifestations of the governmental dealings of God,

important for their faith and subjection to God by the way, which were partial accomplishments of such or such a prophecy. But these, though true, and though research may discover them, are, in a certain sense, comparatively lost now in the sum of the whole scheme of all which closes in Christ. It may be interesting and instructive historically, as regards God's dealings, to observe them in their place, but they become history—important, interesting history—not prophecy, for us.

The first point, then, important to understand is, that neither the church, nor Jerusalem, nor the Gentiles, are in themselves the objects of prophecy, still less Nineveh, or Babylon, or the like, but Christ. But this is what gives us the true scope and intelligence of the real importance and place of each subject; namely, as Christ is to be the centre in which all things in heaven and earth are to be united, various subjects become the sphere of His glory, as connected with Him, and each subject is set in its place in its connection with Him, and by this connection I get the means of understanding what is said about it. Thus, if the church is the Lamb's wife, it is in this character and in this relationship I must apprehend what regards it. If Jerusalem is the city of the great King, it is in this that I shall get the key to the dealings of God with it. If the saints are to live and reign with Christ, and to be kings and priests unto God and His Father, here I shall find the intelligence of what concerns them in this character: not united with the Bridegroom, but associated with the King and Priest. And so of the rest.

Not only is this the only way of understanding prophecy as to the objects of it, but, the affections being right, the understanding is clear—the eye is simple and the body

full of light. I see with God in the matter, for He regards Christ; and thus prophecy becomes sanctifying, not speculative, because what it teaches becomes a part of Christ's glory for the soul. The importance of this cannot be well overrated. I ought not to have to persuade Christians of the truth of this; I gladly would of its importance. This, however, is the work of God. Objectively, I may cite Ephesians i:9-11 as stating this great truth according to the purpose of God.

I may now endeavour to present some of the main subjects or landmarks for the study of prophecy; that is, of the revelation of God's ways for accomplishing His glory in Christ. No present circumstances, note, though they may be historically instructive and also confirmatory of faith, can be the proper accomplishment of prophetic truth; because, though they may be conducive to it, under God's superintending government, and a lesson at the time and afterwards, they are not identified with the manifestation of God's glory in Christ, nor the immediate objects in which that manifestation takes place (for we are supposing things precedently accomplished). This shews that, in accomplishment, all necessarily is found in the actors of the scene at the close, when judgment will fully manifest, not in measure to intelligent faith, but by the public acts of God, what His judgment is; and as this judgment is on ripened evil, the full character of this (whose principles have from the beginning been working, been discerned spiritually, judged partially so as to stay their power for the accomplishment of God's gracious designs)—the full character, I say, of their fruit will then be shewn, and God publicly justified in His judgment before all, as well as bringing in blessing, by

setting aside in power the evil, and replacing it by His own reign in good. And this is the vast moral difference of our present state, as well as of true saints in all times, from the world to come. We have the power of God internally, through grace and by the Spirit, to make good the will and glory of God in the midst of evil while subsisting; whereas then, i.e., by the presence of Christ, the evil will be put away by power, and good be at ease.

The next simple remark that I have to make is that, though the relationship of heaven with earth may be discovered to us, in so far as heaven and those there are revealed as the established governing power (that is, that there are, in the seat of government placed above, objects of special revelation), yet the proper subject of prophecy is the earth, and God's government of it. And it is only so far as the heavenly company are connected with the government of the earth that they become a collateral subject of prophetic revelation.

Further, providence is not the subject of prophecy. By providence I mean the ordering of the course of all things by divine power, in such sort that all results which happen in the world are according to the divine purpose and will. Often inscrutable to us in its reasons and even the means it employs, and leaving the government of God obscure, still it is certain to faith, and that by which it remains true that God is not mocked—what a man sows this will he reap. Faith will recognise the hand of God in many things, and believes it in everything; but to the world all of it is hidden. Certain principles, universal with God in their application, by this means are verified, as "righteousness exalteth a nation." The men of this world see nothing of the bearing of the moral causes on the

effect, or, if they do see the causes, the result issuing thence is that they ascribe the effect to them, and God is shut out. His immediate action and government is excluded. Now the subjects of prophecy are the contrary of this. The public products of God, coming in in power, are revealed. They are either the day of the Lord, or the characteristic results which bring it about—a judgment which man has to acknowledge as of God. Now it is evident that the day of the Lord, properly speaking, closes the history of this world; it is the opposite of that secret course of government which is carried on, and from the checks of which the pride of man rises again to pursue his course of evil. When God sets to His hand, the proud helpers do stoop under Him.

I do not deny that certain grand and remarkable judicial interventions of God are called, in a subordinate sense, the day of the Lord, in virtue of their practical analogy with that time of which it shall be said “the Lord alone is exalted in that day.” But even these are in contrast with the course of providential government, which, in its very idea, does not interrupt but regulate the ordinary course of events. There are prophecies which may, to some, seem to refer to the course of providence, but these confirm, in a remarkable way, the distinction.

Take the ten horns. What is the providential history of these horns, taken as usually applied by commentators? Scourges, which continued some one hundred and fifty years, from first to last, working the overthrow of the Roman Empire, as previously settled, and establishing themselves as conquerors in all its Western territory. We may enquire, if done humbly, with profit, why this scourge was permitted. Whether it was the public civil evil, or the corruption of the church. What moral causes

led to it. How it executed the moral judgment of God on the evil. Why the East was spared. How it led the way to a more terrible spiritual tyranny than had yet been seen in the world.

Take the prophetic account. A beast rises out of the sea with ten horns all full grown, after which a little horn comes up, and the beast, horns and all, are the subject of God's judgment, not the executors of it. This is prophecy; that was providence. We have what characterises the object of prophecy and its judgment, and the reason of it. All the providential part, out of which commentators have woven an immense system, is left out—so of the statue. It is all there at once, the application of it to the empires given, the character of four, the closing object of judgment in the feet and toes, and the execution. Of the providential course of events, by which one takes the place of the other, we find nothing.

I have taken the cases which would seem to give the greatest room for it, and of which in this respect men have said the most. And with what result? Such that, if taken as a literal accomplishment, a child can see the discrepancy. What analogy between one hundred and fifty years' war to destroy an empire, and ten kingdoms, all in full energy and growth, arising out of it and forming part of it as the symbol of its force?

In the Apocalypse, before the end, we find summary judgments executed with progressive severity in the seals, trumpets, and vials, before the King comes forth to destroy the beast: judgments inflicted of God; but not, in Scripture, providential history. They are all proper immediate judgments, though they be but preparatory,

and introductory, inflicted on either the circumstances or the persons of the men of this world—on the wicked. The hand of God is seen. But there is no explanation of causes or providential course. We find their moral state, exceptionally, in that which they refuse to repent of in one case; but, in general, it is not the course of events guided by providence to order all things well, but the earth subject to the judicial vengeance of God. No careful reader can question this. The end of providence is the present ordering of God's government to bring about His designs. The Apocalyptic history consists of judgments inflicted.

Further, we may add, that providence is occupied in the daily discipline of the children of God. Prophecy treats of the judgments of God (removing out of His sight those whom He judges), and of the full blessing of His people. I do not think any prophecy can be alleged speaking of a course of events applied to His people while they are owned. The nearest approach to it is Isaiah 9:7 to 10:2$; but these are inflicted judgments, and no course of providence.

Having thus spoken of the subjects of prophecy morally, I may turn to the positive subjects it embraces.

Besides the creation, of which He is the Head, in which we may comprise angels, there are three great spheres in which Christ's glory is displayed—the church, the Jews, and the Gentiles. The church, properly speaking, is not the subject of prophecy. As to Old Testament prophecy, the New declares in the most absolute and positive manner that it was a mystery hidden in all ages, and now revealed to the apostles and prophets by the Spirit. The church belongs to heaven, is the body of

Christ seated there, and while He is so seated. Prophecy relates to earth. The church is viewed, it is true, when it takes part in the government of the earth for that reason; and the marriage of the Lamb and the description of the heavenly Jerusalem give the epoch from which dates the character of this relationship with earth.

In the New, the relationship of the church with Christ caused the Holy Ghost to remain in it, and communicate the needed light on its position while waiting for the Lord. There was no presence of God attached to formal institutions subsisting, to consistency with which a series of prophets was to recall a people (necessarily, while they subsisted, the people of God). In one respect, however, though the church was not the proper subject of prophecy, while it subsisted as owned of God, certain things connected with it are predicted; that is, its decay and corruption, as a present moral warning; but this passes into mere apostate wickedness, as a distinct object of judgment.

Hence when, as I doubt not, and as a vast number of Christians believe, the Lord would give a picture of the church's history as an external body in the world, in a state for the most part in which He could not at all own it as His heavenly body, He selects, with divine wisdom, seven churches which afforded the moral character of the states into which it would successively fall, and presses His judgments morally on them. But it is not made a positive subject of prophecy. Whatever may be our judgment of the subsequent part of the Apocalypse, which treats of events subsequent to the period of the seven churches, it certainly consists of judgments on the world, not of any prophecy of the church, save as stated

at the close. There is the simple fact, that the beast overcomes certain saints, and that he puts to death two witnesses. No general prophecy of the church itself is found in the course of the Apocalypse. It was right to give these facts.

The reason is evident to one who knows what the church is. It is not of the world. It, as such, sits in heavenly places in Christ, where prophecy reaches not. It never will be established on earth, as the Jews. It is not its calling. The government of God will never settle it there in peace. His blessing for it will be to take it away from earth, to be with the Lord in the air. A partial application of the Apocalypse to what has the name of the church, but is the power of evil in the world, I do not deny; but this does not make the church a subject of prophecy. Accordingly, we find, as we have said, the church in heaven at the end in connection with the earth, when all is united in Christ; but no account of any dealings of God to establish it, or a progress towards a result of any kind. She is to reign with Christ, and suffer with Him.

The remaining spheres of the display of the glory of the blessed Lord are the Jews and Gentiles, subjects in different degrees of His earthly government, as the church was the full exhibition of His sovereign grace in redemption, which places her in heavenly places in Christ, that in the ages to come God might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. This distinction is full of interest. Man is not governed in introducing him into the church. He is taken as a rebellious lost sinner, a hater of God, a child of wrath, be he Jew or Gentile, and set in the same place as Christ. This is not government, it is grace. The Jews are the centre of God’s immediate government, morally

displayed according to His revealed will. The Gentiles are brought to recognise His power and sovereignty displayed in His dealings with them. I speak of the thing, properly speaking, in its revealed character; for every sinner in all ages, is saved as such, individually, by grace, and every Christian is under the immediate government of the Father as of the heavenly family; but even so the object of government is different. With the Christian, it is to prepare him for heaven; with the Jews, on the contrary, it is to display God's righteousness on the earth: I speak of them as a body or people. Christ and the church suffer for righteousness, and reign. The Jews, as a people, suffer for sin, and the result of their history will be, "Verily, there is a reward for the righteous; verily, there is a God that judgeth the earth."

Further, prophecy does not apply to a state where God's people, responsible under the government of God, walk well, so that He can bless them as walking under His own eye in testimony of His favour. This special intervention, for such prophecy is, applied to the case of their failure. Hence, when Shiloh was overthrown and the ark taken, Samuel was raised up, of whom the Lord therefore says, "Beginning at Samuel and all the prophets." This character of prophecy is completely evident in reading the prophets, who addressed their prophecies to the people in general. Indeed, its principle is evident. But, if they shewed the people their transgressions, they pointed out constantly the Messiah, the great Deliverer. Thus it is in Hannah's song (1 Sam. 2:9, 10), where the government of the world by Jehovah in sovereignty23 and the exaltation of Messiah are fully brought out. So, historically, Samuel was raised up on the failure and ruin of Israel, and introduced David.

Prophecy judges the people in their responsibility, and announces the sovereign purpose of God.

But this leads me to note two characters of prophecy, arising, as regards the Jews, from two different positions in which we find them in Scripture: first, a people more or less fully owned of God (God acting amongst them on known principles of government); secondly, rejected for a time (the sovereign power in the earth being confided to Gentiles). This last period forms the times of the Gentiles.

For the moment, I confine myself to the Jews. God, while He could in any sort own His people, addressed Himself directly to them. Until Nebuchadnezzar's time, God's throne and presence was in the midst of Israel. From that period, the sovereign power in the earth ceased to be immediately exercised by God and was confided to man, among those who were not His people, in the person of Nebuchadnezzar. This was a change of immense importance, both in respect of the government of the world, and God's judgment of His people. Both lead the way to the great objects of prophecy developed at the close—the restoration, through tribulation, of a rebellious people, and the judgment of an unfaithful and apostate Gentile head of power. However the previous relationship of Israel and the nations is not left out; but we must introduce, another all-important point for the development of this.

Israel, we have seen, as between it and Jehovah, had been unfaithful, and Ichabod written on it; the ark of God, His glory and strength in Israel, delivered into the enemy's hand; enemies left in the land by their unfaithfulness. But God comes in, in sovereign grace,

and raises up David, figure of Christ, who descended from him according to the flesh, king of Israel in grace and deliverance. Evil arising in his descendants, the major part of Israel revolt from the king of his family: two tribes remain, and to a residue of them brought back from Babylon, Christ is presented and rejected. Hence two things gave occasion to Israel's judgment—idolatry and rebellion against Jehovah, and the rejection of Christ.

Having brought out this second ground of judgment, I leave it for the moment, in order to consider the former ground, rebellion against Jehovah. Israel ought to have been the witness of the blessedness of being in such a relationship with the Lord. "Happy are the people who are in such a case; yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God." Israel, on the contrary, learnt the ways of the heathen; yea, became more corrupt than they, and the Lord allowed the surrounding nations to attack and distress them. This had its full development in the ten tribes; the house of David, raised up in grace, being for a time a stay to Judah. Though all the surrounding nations had their share in these attacks, the principal in result was Asshur. Accordingly, in the end, this power prevails entirely against Israel and overruns Judah, the Lord only at the close defending Jerusalem, where the son of David was a stay in righteousness. Still, if Israel had deserved all this chastisement, these rods of chastening had in their animosity despised the Lord, His people, and His throne. Asshur especially had exalted himself against Him that hewed therewith. Hence they become the objects of destroying judgment themselves.

All these elements are found at the close, though they have a partial historical fulfilment, Nebuchadnezzar executing the judgment at that time. The nations will overrun the country. The Assyrian, in particular, will be the scourge of God as an overflowing flood, and the double event will take place; first Judah and Jerusalem then (by an attack before the end24— proof of its application at the close) the whole people will be overwhelmed; but afterwards, when the true Son of David shall be there, and the land will be actually Immanuel's land, Jerusalem will be preserved and all these nations judged. Jerusalem shall tread them down as sheaves upon the threshing floor. These vast circumstances, under God's teaching, open out a vast mass of prophecies, of which Isaiah gives the most complete and orderly course, other prophets taking up divers parts of it.

But the family of David itself, as placed responsibly on the throne of the Lord at Jerusalem, was, we know, unfaithful, and the sin of Manasseh made their government insupportable to Jehovah. Judah was removed out of His sight, as Israel had been. But, then, what remained of the sphere of the direct government of God on a given law? Nothing. His glory left Jerusalem and the earth, for it had filled the temple of Jerusalem. (See Ezekiel 1-10.) This judgment then was of a far weightier character and import. It removed the government of God from upon the earth, and confided power to the head of the Gentiles. Israel was laid aside for a time. But Judah, providentially restored in a partial way, have Messiah presented to them, but, as we have seen, reject Him, declaring that they have no king but Caesar. This placed Judah under the Gentile power, not

only as a chastening for their rebellion against Jehovah in the person of their King and of David's race, but on the ground of their own rejection of the promised Messiah and taking the Gentile for their head. This also consequently has its accomplishment in judgment in the latter days. The special Gentile part of it is scarcely alluded to in the prophets, who address Israel as more or less owned. It is the subject of Daniel, and we may add of the Apocalypse, for a reason we will add just now. Judah is seen in prophecy in the latter days under the oppression of the head of Gentile power, deceived by a false Christ, and oppressed. But God regards Israel still as His, having caused it to pass through the deepest tribulation. Those who, through grace, cleave to the Lord, call upon His name, and receive the word of the Spirit of Christ, instead of joining idolatry with the Gentiles and their chief, will be delivered, and the apostate Gentile power and the false prophet judged.

Another element introduces itself here. On the rejection of the Jews, as we know, Christianity came in. But alas! man was as unfaithful here as in Judaism. Early in the apostles' time, the mystery of iniquity began to work, resulting in an apostasy, and the ten kings of the Gentile world make war with the Lamb. In a word, a public apostasy in the sphere of Christian profession and the revelation of the man of sin, the open war of the beast and kings associated with him against the Lord, came in as an element of the latter-day events, completing the character and description of the Gentile power, which had taken the place of God's throne at Jerusalem, and to whom He had confided authority in the world. This, with its antecedents, is that which the Apocalypse furnishes of the prophetic volume.

The result of the destruction of this power, as well as of that of the Assyrian and other nations, is the establishment of Israel in blessing under Christ upon the earth, the throne of the Lord being thus re-established in surety at Jerusalem. The destruction of the Gentile power does not reach this latter period entirely. Hence Daniel, who treats of the period of Gentile power, never speaks of the millennium. He is made just to reach the deliverance, and stops there. The effect of the destruction of the Gentile power is to reunite the Lord, Jerusalem and Israel, and then comes the judgment of the Assyrian and the various enemies who have risen up against the Lord and His people. This brings in the full reign of peace.25 Their connection with Israel has led in many respects to the anticipation of what regards the Gentiles. However, it will be well to speak of them also.

We have a double character of the Gentiles in Scripture, as will have been already seen: their opposition to the people of God when they had this character, at least externally; and their pride, and rebellion, and oppression of those who had borne the name of His people, when power was given to them of God. The difference of these two states was great. Until the time of Nebuchadnezzar, various kingdoms and nations were owned as such in the providential government of God, though left entirely, morally, to themselves, their existence being the fruit of His own judgment in Babel.

Israel was the centre of this general system, being owned as His people (known alone of all the families of the earth), the Lord having, in separating the sons of Adam and dividing to the nations their inheritance, set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. But Israel having failed in this

position, and the nations, and especially Assyria, having been guilty of wrong, God judges them all, for “it contemneth the rod of his son” (Ezek. 21:10), and how should the rest subsist? The whole governmental order is set aside, and with Israel the independence of all the nations is lost; and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the dominion of Adam is placed in the hands of the head of the Gentiles. Of all these nations, which existed previous to Nebuchadnezzar (besides which Isaiah 18 refers to some unnamed people outside their limits, and Ezekiel introduces the northern Gog in his inroad in the latter days), the history and judgment in the latter day is given in the prophets; and they are found in one way or another hostile to Israel, and gathered against Jerusalem in the latter day. In general, we find Zechariah 12 and 14, Isaiah 30, Micah 4, and other passages, reveal the gathering of the nations against Jerusalem. But these passages reveal also that it is taken once, and a second time is not, because the Lord is there and defends ft. The nations themselves are judged. In this the haughty pride of the nations is broken, as that of Israel (who, save the residue, have sought help far from God, and have been broken and oppressed) is brought down by their own trials. And, however the nations may have exalted themselves, they are found to bow to the sovereignty and power of God, and own that He is in the midst of Israel whom they have despised. Those spared of them will own Jehovah in Zion when He has appeared— Zion established in peace by the presence of Jehovah.

Such is the history of the nations, as such, but the statue (or the beasts) is besides all this a distinct history, as we have seen, and also a distinct prophetic subject. Man

used the power confided to him of God to exalt himself against Him, to oppress His people and trample down His sanctuary. Nor was this all: the last beast in particular imbrued his hands (vainly washed before men) in the guiltless blood of the Son of God, and thus associated himself with the apostate part of the Jewish people.

Alas! this was not all. The mystery of iniquity working in the midst of the church brought on apostasy there, and evil men, crept in, brought out the peculiar character of those to be judged by Christ at His coming in the last day. This apostasy gave occasion to the rise of the man of sin, the full expression of the wickedness of the human heart under the full power of Satan. Owning no God, setting up to be God, deceiving as a false Christ by signs and wonders; such is the religious end of man left to himself; all this associated with and maintaining the public power of Satan on the earth. Such is the last character of the power of the Gentiles where Christianity had been introduced. It will have at once an atheistical and an apostate Gentile form, growing out of and accompanied by apostate Christian forms. The last rebellious and self-exalting actings of power at Jerusalem will bring down ruin on the chief and his supporters by the manifestation of the Lord Jesus. Thereon will follow what we have already spoken of—the taking up of royal power in Israel by the Lord Christ, and the destruction of all the enemies who will have gathered together against Him.

Here it is we find the church in prophecy. The marriage of the Lamb having taken place with the church already gone up on high, the saints come forth with the Lord on the white horse to the triumphant destruction of the

beast and the false prophet. And then the church is seen in her relationship with the earth in blessing, as the heavenly Jerusalem: striking contrast with the corrupt and corrupting intercourse of Babylon with the kings of the earth, which ends in the nations and the beast hating and destroying her.

In this scene of woe, which precedes the destruction of the beast, we find in the prophets a remnant of Jews, who, in the depth of their distress, look, and learn more and more to look, to Jehovah, being animated by the prophetic Spirit of Christ and taught by it. To this the whole body of Psalms apply, giving us, besides Christ's sympathy with them, the various expression of it. Isaiah 65 and 66 dwell upon this remnant. One other circumstance must be noted here, of which prophecy speaks. Before the execution of judgment, there will be within the circle of special evil, and without it, a testimony of God. These must not be confounded. In the earlier half of the last week of Daniel, there will be a testimony rendered to the God of the earth. The beast, rising up in his last form, will put an end to this, adding this to his other wickedness, in order to please men and pursue his career of evil unchecked. During the last half week there is none, save the refusal to adore the beast. At the same time, there will be a testimony of the coming kingdom sent abroad among the nations, that all who have ears to hear may, through grace, escape the coming judgment. This gives occasion to the judgment of Matthew 25. For this the reader may consult Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14; Psalm 96.

The result will be the full establishment of what was shadowed, or rather connected with the responsibility of man, in the previous condition—namely, the full blessing

of that people and the throne of the Lord at Jerusalem; but there is added what was shadowed out in the Gentile power—the full dominion of the Son of man over the world. It remains to add, that Old and New Testament prophecy alike declares that Satan will be bound, driven from on high (whence he has corrupted even the good that God has placed in the hands of men), and from earth soon after. He is shut up in the bottomless pit, and the blessing of the world is uninterrupted till he be loosed again. Even then it does not appear that the saints will suffer. They will be assembled together apart from those seduced. The judgment of the dead follows, and the new heavens and the new earth, the mediatorial kingdom being closed and delivered up, and the family of the last Adam enjoying the full everlasting blessing acquired for them by their Head.

23 It will be well for the reader to consult this passage, which, as the introduction of the new order of Israel, gives the character of prophecy in a very remarkable manner.

24 There will be two attacks. Jerusalem will be trodden down by the first; at the second, Christ will be there, and the judgment takes place. Isaiah and Zechariah are clear as to this.

25 As regards Israel, the moral effect is this. In order to save themselves from the overflowing scourge, Judah, who had rejected Christ, will associate themselves with Antichrist and the apostate Gentiles, and even join in idolatry; but the scourge will for all that pass through. A residue, despised, suffering, and rejected, will recoil from this, own Jehovah, and gradually grow up into more light, but in the midst of such distress as never

was. When all hope is shut out and the enemy is coming up again in pride, the Lord will appear and save them, and take them up against all their enemies.

As regards the ten tribes, at least the great body of them, this will not be their history. Having determined to be like the Gentiles, God has not suffered it; they are not under Antichrist and not cut off in the land, but brought, like Israel coming out of Egypt, under God’s rod, and the rebels cut off, so as not to enter. Israel and Judah will then be under one Head, Christ, who will gather from all sides any left in divers lands.

Brief Analysis Of The Book Of Daniel

Editor's Note26

I send you some analyses of books of prophecy, which I may be enabled at some future period, with the divine permission and blessing, to fill up with some further details. I feel this to be a more satisfactory method than framing any system which the study of Scripture makes me feel I possess. What does appear plain and distinct to me, I trust may be occasion of study and of information to other minds.

I would begin with Daniel. The book is clearly divided into two distinct parts. The former comprises visions and dreams of unrenewed heathens, or circumstances connected with their conduct. This ends at chapter 6. The latter consists of communications to the faithful prophet of the events in their moral character connected with the people of God; many of them in point of time, antecedent to what is related in the former part, but separated into a distinct portion or book of themselves, as having a specific character. Thus the visions of chapter 7 and 8 clearly precede in point of time the circumstances in chapter 6, or we might, I think, add even chapter 5. But they are revelations to Daniel instructing him in the bearing of the subjects of previous visions on the state of the saints. The former portion shews the history of the world in its outward character, its manifested forms, and the question thereon raised between their powers and God. The latter (as might naturally be expected in revelations to a prophet standing as the representative of the people of God) reveals the position and character of the agents in

relation to the saints, their full moral character, and all that internal history in which those saints were most especially concerned. The latter part is from chapter 7 to the end.

I shall give the briefest outline of this structure now. We have then Daniel's visions only from chapter 7 inclusive; the former are facts, er the king's visions. But in the former we shall find distinct portions. Chapter 1 merely gives us the character of Daniel as separated from the pollution in which he was mixed up by the judgment of God on the nation; and the privileges of him and the three other children; and Daniel's continuance to the year of deliverance to his people. We have then, in chapters 2, 3 and 4, Nebuchadnezzar's history. In chapter 5, the destruction of the remainder of his empire, for the profane usage of what belonged to God. And then, in chapter 6 another scene—the kingdom of Darius.

In chapter 2, the first prophetic one, properly speaking, we have the divine wisdom setting forth distinctly the man of the earth, in all his varied characters; beginning with, and represented by, the head of gold—Nebuchadnezzar; that which attracted the attention and comprised the power of the visible world beneath. The destruction of this by the agency of power in its last form; and the substitution of that power which filled, not merely awed and overlooked as it were, the whole earth. Daniel's God owned therein in the acknowledgment of Him; as it is written, "that seek thy face, O Jacob": and Daniel's exaltation over the known world—he stood there as the Jew.

We have in chapter 3 the general character attached to this period in the person of the golden head of the whole. It was connected with religion—that was not left out. It was not merely secular power: and while the man was the power in the world in the previous dream, here is that which it did openly: the exercise of its power, or Satan's power by it would not be complete. It was not infidelity, in the common sense of the word, or atheism, but a compulsory religion; in which the power and will of this man of the earth was shewn, to which the honours of the state were compelled to bow; an image all of gold set up—a most beautiful and gorgeous display, and calculated to attract by its own excellency, and illustrate the honour of him who had set it up. It was, however, an image in the province of Babel—a furnace to the faithful: not however, I remark, to Daniel, who I believe to have represented the Jew distinctively, but those whose help was found in one like to the Son of God being with them in the furnace, while they were thus in it, making them free.

Chapter 4 states the external glory of a tree, the symbol of exaltation in the earth, which God had made to flourish; and this change takes place. Instead of subduedness and intelligence (to wit, of God), there is given to this exalted representation of power a beast's heart—ravening and ignorance of God, till they should learn that the Most High ruleth. That a man's heart signifies this quietness and subjection, is shewn chapter 7:4. The result is, that those that walk in pride He is able to abase. Compare Ezekiel 17:24.

In chapter 5 it seems to me (sorrow is it to think) that profaneness against God in a degraded state, will be the mark of final judgment on this apostate state of things.

We have then in chapter 6 another state of things entirely— an utter open casting off of God; bringing Daniel, the prophetic representative of the Jew, into the-den of lions. That which had taken the place of the previous state of things, seized on Babylon, but was not it, in its power or its source; openly throwing off God in folly, and thereupon the Jew made a prey, but delivered, and the everlasting kingdom acknowledged, and the princes taken in the net which themselves had laid. I do not excuse the Jews from the former similar case; but this seems exclusively and definitely to belong to them. The character of the apostasy is different. Darius sets up himself as God, or at least as alone to be prayed to, not setting up in his glory an image to be worshipped. Both perhaps may characterise, in some form, the apostasy of the latter day. This seems in all its character confined to it, and to make way for the everlasting kingdom. The King of heaven, the Most High, is the acknowledgment of the former; the everlasting kingdom of the living God, of the latter.

All these things are consequent upon “Lo-ammi” being written upon the Jews, and the manifest throne of God amongst the Jews, having ceased and been cast down. Then, I take it, the beast’s heart properly had its rise. Man could be given up to folly, and Babylon become the seat of exalted madness and folly of heart: he might exercise it uncontrolled, save by the watchful eye of God ruling from the heavens; for Jerusalem was cast down— the throne of God had departed from the earth—His earthly care was now hopeless. (See Ezek. 10:19, and the reasons in the previous chapters; chap. 11 and the statements following to the end of chap. 12) Daniel 4:30

shews what took its place; and then properly came in the beast's heart for the seven times.

We have now arrived at the second portion of the book, wherein their general characters and characteristics of apostasy are brought into far greater detail in connection with the saints; and the book assumes the form of regular though symbolical prophecy, being direct communications to the prophet himself. We had before the beast's heart—we have here the beasts described.

But in this portion also there are distinct and definite parts: chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10 to the end, are all distinct visions—four distinct visions, as may be seen by their dates. However, we shall see there is further order amongst them. Chapters 7 and 8 describe the conduct and circumstances of the four beasts, with interpretation and prophecy added. Chapter 9 is the specific consideration of the desolation of Jerusalem, with its appointed time.

Chapter 10 to the end, what shall befall Daniel's people in the latter days, preparatory to this; as God had not taken His eye off them, and yet they were "Lo-ammi." The circumstances through which they should be passed until connected with the prince that should come, as given in chapter 9 at the close, are detailed most accurately and minutely in the former part of chapter 11 —the real history, God's history, of what is given apocryphally in the uncertain books of the Maccabees.

Thus chapter 9 also, it appears to me, more particularly connects itself with chapter 7; and chapter 11 with chapter 8— the close of it, however, connecting both in "the king," and the king of the north, and the king of the

south (the last being the conclusion of the whole matter). Thus chapter 9, like the judgment on Belshazzar, comes in, dividing the general history of the beasts, and the specific detail of the last climax of deliberate open apostasy. The king shall do according to his will, not regarding any god.

Let us turn back to chapters 7 and 8; and here I must remark as to what is called interpretation in the prophecy, that it is by no means merely explanation, but a use and application of some previously declared general symbol to specific results; often involving therefore material additional revelations, or omission of circumstances, not affecting those particular results. This we shall see plainly in those two chapters. I turn to their analysis. Chapter 7 contains three distinct visions, and then interpretations. The first vision is from verse 2 to verse 6—four beasts, but the description only of three (the last being reserved for a distinct vision). The second vision is from verse 7 to the end of verse 12. The third is contained in verses 13, 14.

The first vision sees the first beast reduced from violence to subserviency, and is so disposed of—it ceased to be a beast. The other two are merely described. The second describes the fourth beast, its little horn, and the judgment of the Ancient of days upon the life and body of the beasts because of it; but only considered as between it and the judgment. The third is the subsequent and consequent giving of the kingdom to the Son of man brought before Him, with its character and extent. Verses 15, 16 contain the request for interpretation. Verse 17 is the interpretation of the first vision—kings arising out of the earth, with (v. 18) an additional revelation, that the saints of high places take

the kingdom. Verse 19 is the request of the truth about the second vision, with some additional character in verse 20 of the little horn; and an additional vision in verses 21 and 22; for it is to be remarked that, in the visions, the outward position of the beasts in the world with the saints, or their internal history, is not at all introduced.

From verse 23 to the end of verse 26 is the interpretation, with many additional particulars. Verse 27 gives the result of the third vision on the earth; but, being identified and involved in its causes with what precedes, it is given continuously. The interpretation, in a word, is the bringing in of the heavenlies into the subject, though only as known in effect upon earth; but attaching that name which implied the possession of heaven and earth—the Most High. It has been already observed, I believe, in some previous paper, that this word, when connected with “saints,” is, as in margin, “high places,” or “things”; the same, I doubt not, with the heavenly places of Paul. I would also refer the Christian reader to Psalm 2:4: to me it opens a distinct field in Revelation 13:6. This is all connected with the fourth beast, which, as well as the first, was thus far previously passed over.

In chapter 8 there is quite a distinct vision. We have two active powers, with characters sufficient to identify them with the beasts, but given in distinct and peculiar forms—their own actings to the exclusion of the other two. We are told that they are, the kings of Media and Persia, and of Grecia. The vision continues to the end of verse 12. In verses 13 and 14 there is testimony as to the continuance of a given point of it.

Verse 15. The prophet seeks the meaning of the vision. The vision is to be at the time of the end (the former part being merely designative of character, for it includes the first king); and the interpreter is only occupied in shewing as his object, what shall be in the last end of the indignation. This connects itself, in my mind, with Isaiah 10:25. It appears to me, that the accomplishment of the indignation is a distinct thing; as the fulfilling or accomplishment of a storm, and the end of a storm, would be different. Having then identified the parties in verses 20-22, verses 23-25 give the account of the person who is to appear when the transgressors are come to the full; the people are to suffer under or be destroyed by him, and he is to stand up against the Prince of princes, but be broken without hand. In verse 26 the vision of verses 13 and 14, which was told, is declared to be true; wherefore it was to be shut up, for it was manifestly for many days.

It is remarkable, that in the vision there is no mention of the putting an end to the practices of the little horn. In the interpretation, no mention whatever in his misdoings of anything to befall the daily, or the place of the prince of the host's sanctuary, but he is to stand up against the Prince of princes. I do not mean to say that nothing has struck my mind in connection with these circumstances, but I prefer leaving them at present to the consideration of my brethren taught of the Lord. I would just add that in verse 11 "from him" appears clearly the right translation; and I confess I should read in verse 12 "a settled time of affliction was appointed to the daily." This I leave to better critics to enquire into.

On chapter 9 I have little to add, as a continuous prophecy, including petition and answer. Only I would

refer to verse 7, that it involves all Israel as well as Judah and Jerusalem; so in verse 11, “Thy city and thy people,” and the matter of supplication. I would only remark, how intercession in the time of intercession holds the expression, “Thy people” (as with Moses in the mount), in spite of Lo-ammi written upon them, or a broken covenant; but the reference is at once in Moses to God’s covenant, not the people’s: so here the confession is complete.

The answer includes, after the decree to rebuild, Messiah, the people of the prince that should come (i.e., the Romans), and I believe Antichrist27 as that prince therefore, and consequent desolations—a desolator, till the consummation, and that decreed shall be poured upon the desolate. This is the portion of Jerusalem. Where defined it is connected more particularly with the fourth beast, but merely under the character “of the people,” etc.

In chapter 10 we have a much fuller account of all the doings of the ram and the he-goat, founded upon the statement that the full exercise of the angelic providential power of God was continuing for the Jews, for the purposes of God, however as a nation they might be tossed to and fro in the times of the Gentiles: the power of evil in Persia was contending against, and though the prince of Grecia should come, all his doings were measured and understood in the counsels of God; the difficulty was felt, but measured. Michael their prince stood with the angelic messenger in these things, and he was now sent to let him know what would befall his people in the latter day. The history is complete, but abrupt, whilst Jerusalem stands restored; all the actings of the kings of the north and the south are detailed

particularly, but the whole scene changed by the introduction of the ships of Chittim. It was not as the former, or as the latter. Sword, flame, captivity, and spoil, many days await the people, though those that understood instructed. The sanctuary of strength was polluted; so they continued to the time of the end. Then one well known in Jewish history (i.e., prophecy), “the king,” is seen in his wilful career, one whose character is infidelity, disregard to what is loyal to God, and the honouring a false god—who that is we may well know. The previous powers of north and south shall push at and come against him: still he28 shall pursue his career, till tidings from the north and east arrest him; he shall come to Jerusalem, set up in blasphemous array on the mountain of God’s holiness, and come to his end with none to help him. Here it appears to me both the parties we have spoken of before are brought before us; the prince that should come and the king of the north, and the king of the south, of the which, save the king, nothing is told us here.

But there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, and then every one written in the book shall be delivered; it is then Michael (leaving it previously to the service of angelic messengers, merely standing with them in these things in ministrations, counteracting and controlling the power of evil) himself stands up, in connection with the people immediately, for the people; and deliverance comes. Many scattered ones are brought in, and all receive their just place. I speak entirely of Jews, to which this prophecy refers. It is sealed to the time of the end; and again we have, not a vision, but a distinct separate account of periods connected with, first, the finishing these things when the

scattering of the holy people was finished; and then, after further petition and sealing these things, the period from the setting up of the abomination, and till the blessing is told; with this word added, that the faithful prophet should in the end of the days stand in his lot, making known to us (i.e., revealing) the resurrection of the expectant Jewish saints; and though he told not then the precise times revealedly, he did tell that he should be then in his lot at their conclusion.

I remain, sir, yours, etc.

J.N.D.

26 “Christian Witness,” Vol. 2, Plymouth, 1835.

27 [The author would now probably say the beast.—Ed.]

See “Enquiry as to the Antichrist of Prophecy,” in Prophetic Vol. 2.

28 The author holds this to be, not “the king,” but the king of the north.—Ed.

Short But Serious Examination Of The Fundamental Principles

Issued By Mr. Gaussen In His Book Entitled “Daniel The Prophet”29 The form of this pamphlet sufficiently indicates that I have no intention of replying in a detailed manner to Mr. Gaussen’s book, nor of discussing the points on which there are differences with him. I do intend to shew that the bases of his system have no solidity, no foundation whatever. I believe there has been up to a certain point an accomplishment of the prophecies in question in the ages which have just expired. Circumstances morally analogous may be found in them, or at least systems and an activity animated by the principle which will have its entire development only in the last days. The word authorises me to judge thus when it says that there were already many Antichrist in the time of John.

I believe also that the irruption of the barbarians furnished the elements of that which by and by is to be the accomplishment of certain prophecies as to the Roman Empire; so that I have no desire to combat ideas a long time since spread abroad, and now reproduced, discussed, and embellished by Mr. Gaussen. But since the system of [Bp.] Newton and his successors, there have been different views published on several important points. If these views are not false, the reproduction by Mr. Gaussen of the old doctrine of Newton and others is but a step backward, a retrograde course calculated to turn aside souls from light that God has given.

However, though I do not accept the old system, I should not have been drawn in to contest its solidity by the mere fact that people have sought to support it with new arguments; I should have preferred to unfold the truth directly. Here are the passages which induced me to shew in few words the nullity of the reasonings which Mr. Gaussen has laid down as the foundation of the capital points of his system.

“Now it was very natural, as you will understand, dear children, that at the reading of such a lecture, the Christians of Thessalonica should imagine that the return of Jesus in the clouds was very near, that our gathering together unto Him (as St. Paul expresses it) might happen during their life.”

With respect to this expression the most complete confusion is found in the ideas of Mr. Gaussen between the presenting of the Son of man to the Ancient of days, and the coming of Jesus from heaven to earth. The passage of Daniel 7 is applied by Mr. Gaussen, sometimes to the one, sometimes to the other, of these two things. (See vol. 3, pages 24, 26, 29-31, 157, 162, 165.) The confusion of the coming of Jesus in the clouds with the rapture of the church is also found in the book; so that these three things, the presenting of the Son of man to the Ancient of days, the rapture of the church to meet Jesus in the air, and the appearing of Jesus with all the saints to judge the world, are confounded together by Mr. Gaussen. The practical effect of the confusion of these last two events is shewn in page 86, and also in 172 and 173. Here is a part of this last passage. “Yes, if the coming of Jesus filled with so much emotion a soul so pure, a man of so many prayers, a prophet so holy, to whom the angel said, ‘O Daniel, a man greatly

beloved'—if the great Daniel saw this day with so much concern, twenty centuries before the event, what must it be for those who shall be there personally, who shall hear the trumpet, and see its brightness?"

Is this the Christian's hope? Nothing more opposite. I pray the reader to pay heed: it is of all importance for the system we are examining. What a difference between this language and that of the Saviour: "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." We shall "go to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then also shall ye appear with him in glory." "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe… in that day." But, however sad the pages of Mr. Gaussen may be, I bless God that they lay bare for him who loves the Lord the system he is supporting.

'Hence it is that the apostle, learning that in fact such was their mistake, hastens to write a second epistle to them, in which he tells us the first words this dear child has just read to us': "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at

hand." 'Here again, dear children, a word of explanation. The day of Christ is always very near for each believer, since we are all at once transported thither at the hour of our death, time thenceforth being nothing for us, and a thousand years less than a day. But for the church it is not so. For the church this day of Christ is at a distance; and even in this sense the day was certainly many ages off from Paul and his contemporaries. You will understand then that this false notion of the Thessalonian Christians (who believed the church to be only a few days from the return of their Master) could easily, as St. Paul told them, shake their minds and sadly trouble their faith.'

Pay attention to this expression ["transported thither at the hour of death"], which neutralises wholly the force of the phrase," The day of Christ." It is also found again in page 173. Assuredly, at the hour of death, the soul is not transported to the judgment of the habitable world, which is the scriptural sense of the words "day of Christ" (or "of the Lord"). I know not whether this goes along with the sad opinion of some Christians that the soul sleeps at death. Because it is said in speaking of the death of a man living in this world that he fell asleep, they have concluded that the soul sleeps in the other world. But these two things have no connection whatever. The language of the Lord as to Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," proves that it is only a question of his bodily death—an expression of which He made use to explain it to His disciples. Were this idea true, the Christian would not be transported to the day of Christ. You have only to take a concordance and search the phrase, "day of the Lord," and you will soon see that it is God's judgment on the inhabitants of the

earth, whether partial or final. Now for the execution of this judgment Christ must appear. But, when He “shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory.” “Those who are with him are called, chosen, and faithful.” “The armies which were in heaven followed him.” Thus, we shall be in the full enjoyment of glory before the day of Christ. All is confusion in the teaching of this book on this point.

Besides, Mr. Gaussen tells us that the reading of the first inspired letter of the apostle made the Thessalonians fall into an error. I will not characterise this reasoning: but there is no room at all for such a supposition. The apostle attributes this error (which besides was quite another thing from what Mr. Gaussen says) to deceivers and to a pretended letter. Mr. Gaussen has here abandoned the version of Lausanne, which renders the sense correctly (“the day of Christ was there”), to adopt the word “at hand.” Now the Greek word (enestecke) is always, without exception, employed in the New Testament for a thing present, and even in contrast with things to come. The translation which says “is there” (present) is good; that which says “is at hand” is false.

The deceivers troubled the Thessalonians by affirming that the day of the Lord was come—probably (see 2 Thess. 1) taking advantage of the violent persecutions which had fallen on the church in Thessalonica, and certainly pretending that they had inspiration, the word, and even a letter of the apostle’s, to confirm what they alleged. The apostle gives two reasons wherefore that terrible day could not be there. The first is our gathering together to Christ. The rapture of the church had not yet taken place. We shall be in heaven before that day

arrives—a truth taught in the clearest way in the word, to which we shall recur. The second is, that the object of the judgment was not yet there, and consequently the judgment could not possibly take place.

Here are proofs in support of what I have said. First, it is certain that the sense is not that the day is at hand, but that it is arrived. Here are all the passages of the New Testament where the word in question is employed: Romans 8:39, where it is translated “things present”; 1 Corinthians 3:22, “things present”; 1 Corinthians 7:26, “present necessity”; Galatians 1:4, “this present evil age”; Hebrews 9:9, “time then present”; and 2 Timothy 3:1, “shall come” (i.e., shall be present or there). These passages prove, so as to leave no doubt whatever, that the sense of the word is “present” in contrast with “things to come.” Besides, the Greek for “at hand” is another word. Mr. Gaussen in other places approves of the version of Lausanne: why has he abandoned it here?

Moreover, in 2 Thessalonians 2:1 the true force of the word is certainly “we beseech you by” and not “as concerning.” The English version, that of Luther, that of Geneva in 1605, Desmatet’s Bible, and the Vulgate, have rendered it thus. It is true that huper in certain cases signifies “as concerning”; that is, it has almost the sense of peri. But it is unquestionable that, when it is employed with words of prayer and request, its regular meaning in Greek is “by,” “for the sake of.” No person who is at all familiar with the Greek tongue, or who is willing to take the trouble of using a good dictionary, would deny it. Here then is the passage in its true force: “Now we beg you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, nor be troubled, neither by

spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as [if it were] by us, as that the day of the Lord is present. Let not any one deceive you in any manner, because [it will not be] unless the apostasy have first come and the man of sin have been revealed," etc. That is, the apostle gives two reasons why they should not believe that the day of the Lord was come: first, the rapture of the saints is not yet; and secondly, the object of the judgment is not revealed. It is this passage which, twenty years ago, made me understand the rapture of the saints before— perhaps a considerable time before—the day of the Lord (that is, before the judgment of the living.)

I add what is found at bottom of the last column of the Pentables. "After Babylon has been burnt by the ten kings, and the ten kings themselves, the beast and the false prophet have been judged in their turn, then comes the first resurrection; the saints reign with Christ a thousand years." Then again the third column, under the title of "Eternal Monarchy," says: "The stone, after smiting the image, becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth"; and on the mountain, in the engraving which accompanies this passage, we find inscribed— "the church."

Such are the passages which, with many other similar ones, have induced me to bring out the utter want of foundation which distinguishes Mr. Gaussen's book. I do not reason upon the passages themselves. It is evident that the object of the first is to hinder souls from waiting for the Lord, to destroy the waiting for Him, as a practical truth. The present and practical waiting for the Lord, according to Mr. Gaussen, was nothing but a false notion of the Thessalonians: "For the church, this day of Christ is at a distance." Paul had said, "We, the living."

And it was quite natural they should be led into error by the inspired epistle which he had written to them.

It is true that those words “we, the living” had naturally this effect, to lead them to await the Saviour continually. That this was an evil is the very thing I question, for they had “turned to God” “to wait for his Son from-heaven.” But my only answer to such reasoning is this: It is certain that it is not to this that the apostle attributes their error; neither was it this error which he feared for them. Whatever might be their error, the apostle attributes it to a source totally distinct from his own epistle, namely, to the seduction of other persons, who alleged inspiration, and pretended to have the apostle’s authority in a letter, he says, “as [if it were] by us”; so that the real source of the error was not the true epistle of the apostle, nor his words, but those of some seducer and a pretended epistle. Mr. Gaussen attributes their error to the first epistle, which, he says, would naturally enough produce it. The apostle attributes it to a false epistle.

Mr. Gaussen mistakes again when he says that time is no longer an object with those who are asleep in Jesus. The souls under the altar say, “How long, O Lord, dost thou not avenge …?” “And it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season.”

But I will not notice all that is to be found in this passage: it contains nearly as many ungrounded assertions as it does phrases. My object in quoting it is to shew why I make these remarks. It is this: one main design of Mr. Gaussen’s book is to make people believe that the day of the Lord is at a distance for the church, by varnishing over a very old system, and carefully

confounding the hope of the church with the day of Christ. I confess I do not understand the difference between this and “My lord delayeth his coming.” If there be any, I should be very happy to learn. Let us come to the proofs which the author gives of his system.

With the design I have pointed out, Mr. Gaussen seeks to shew that it is a question of papal succession in the little horn of Daniel 7 and in other passages. We shall examine in a few words the grounds he lays down for the support of his proposition. First of all, he will have it that it is a theologian king. It is on this he greatly insists, and, in effect, it is the main point of his system. Where is the proof of it? He thinks “to change times and laws.” But why should the one who changes the times and the laws, be a theologian, or even an ecclesiastic? Jeroboam did change the times and the law; he was not a theologian. The French Revolution abolished Christianity and established decades in the place of weeks. Was that theology? This proof, which is the basis of his whole system, is no proof at all; it is absolutely worthless.

Moreover, to demonstrate that the little horn is papacy, he insists on this, that it continues to remain little as regards territory, whereas the ten others are great. It is the political side of the character of popery which he makes to be one of his proofs. Now, according to Mr. Gaussen, that little horn destroys or brings down three others, that is, three of the great ones, and appropriates to himself their territory (2, pages 26, 27); how then does it remain little? The proof that the passage applies to the civil character of the pope is null and void; it destroys itself.

Another main point for Mr. Gaussen is, that the twelve hundred and sixty days indicate a period horribly long, necessarily twelve hundred and sixty years. It is evident that his whole system is at stake. He repeats, even to satiety, that the time is horribly long. Now I open my Bible, and I find that, speaking of the twelve hundred and sixty days, it says, Satan, being cast out of heaven, comes down, “having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time”; that is, the Spirit of God tells me the very contrary of that which forms the basis of Mr. Gaussen’s system. In another passage it is said that “except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; this is said of that which, on our Saviour’s own authority, refers to the twelve hundred and sixty days which follow the setting up of the abomination of desolation.

The reader will observe that I only touch upon the main points of the author’s system. The moral or civil character, and the duration of the horn, are the points on which his whole system hangs. However, I have scarcely found in the book any assertion which has more foundation than those I have just pointed out. He says that the fathers agree with him. In what? Mr. Gaussen believes that the horn is a succession of persons. This point is necessary to his system. The fathers believed that it meant an individual; and this utterly destroys his system. The fathers believed that the days must be days; Mr. Gaussen believes them to be years.30 They believed that the end was near; Mr. Gaussen believes the contrary. They believed that the man of sin would give himself out to be the Christ, not his vicar; two things which are incompatible, whatever Mr. Gaussen may say. They believed that he would sit in the temple of God,

which he would raise up again in Jerusalem; Mr. Gaussen believes quite the contrary.

In a word, the principles of the fathers utterly subvert Mr. Gaussen's whole system in the points on which he insists, and on which he differs from the system he opposes. They only agree with him on the points which his adversaries admit as he does. All believe that the fourth beast is the Roman empire. All believe that the ten toes of the feet are ten kingdoms. All believe that the Antichrist will continue till the coming of Christ. The questions between Mr. Gaussen and the opposite system are these: Is the Antichrist an individual who will have dominion literally twelve hundred and sixty days at the end of times? or is it a succession of individuals, which will last twelve hundred and sixty years? Now it is this last proposition which is absolutely necessary to the Gaussen system (or, rather, that is his system). The fathers maintain the other, that is, the opposite of his. Their system and that of Mr. Gaussen are incompatible; they are antagonistical on his own avowal.

Besides, the word says that ten kingdoms are to arise out of that empire. But Mr. Gaussen tells us of enemies who attack the empire and take possession of it. They do not in any way arise out of the Roman empire. If one would consider them at a later period, when they have become kingdoms, his system of dates is subverted. I would here add that his reasoning on the date of the appearing of the little horn is also without any force. He says (vol. 3:15) that it cannot have appeared later than the year 711, later than the time when the last three of these ten kingdoms were plucked up by the roots. But this proves nothing, because, according to his system, the horns which were plucked up by the roots have

always been succeeded by others, so that there might always be ten (vol. 2, page 190), and thus, at any moment, it might have plucked up by the roots three of them, without its being among the ten first kings who divided the empire. And so true is this, that the horns which Mr. Gaussen believes to have been plucked up by the little horn were all the successors of others which had already been plucked up. (See vol. 2, page 189.) This reasoning, then, has no force whatever; for if the little horn could subdue three of them, when two were already succeeded by others, it could do it when this had even happened ten times. The date then is worthless.

Moreover, enemies who divide the empire are not kingdoms which arise out of the empire.

Mr. Gaussen insists on this, that a horn is always a succession of kings; but it is no such thing. A horn is a power; sometimes, it is true, a succession of kings who have a moral unity. But this expression is applied to Christ. He is called a horn elsewhere.31 He has seven horns on his head, the perfection of power; assuredly there is no question of a succession in this case. It seems to me clear enough that, when it is said that the great horn is the first king (Dan. 8:21), the application to Alexander personally is the thought of the Spirit. In 2 Thessalonians 2:9 the words “whose coming,” an expression by which the lawless one is put in personal contrast with the Lord, shew clearly enough that the object in question is an individual. However that may be, the assertion that a horn is always a succession of. kings is without foundation.

Mr. Gaussen is anxious to shew that the true church is an invisible church. Such is, according to him, the true

character and nature of the church of God, of the body of Christ.32 What is the proof of this? Here it is— “It worships (vol. 3, page 257), as we have seen, in the inner temple”: that is, that the state of believers, six hundred years after Jesus Christ (when, according to Mr. Gaussen, the falling away was already come, “the great apostasy, the all but universal apostasy of the Roman world,” the place in question in the passage; when the little horn had established its power; when God had given up the holy city to be trodden under foot by the profane)— that that state, I repeat, is the expression and the proof of the true character of the normal state of the church of God. How truly sad is all this!

Moreover, the question is, for Mr. Gaussen’s system, to apply Revelation 12 to the history of Christendom, and particularly to the time of Constantine. How does he make use of that passage? “At the time of the great red dragon, it (the church of the one hundred and forty-four thousand) was to bring forth a man-child, that is to say, a people politically and corporately united as a nation, and victorious over their adversaries … when two out of the three emperors who divided the empire between themselves, Licinius and Constantine, published at Milan their edict of toleration, then, at last, did the woman bring forth that man-child, which was soon to rule heathenism with a rod of iron, and who is one day to govern all peoples. Nevertheless,” etc. What can be said of a system which is obliged to rest upon such a use of the word, or rather, which is obliged to alter it in such a manner? The reader must remember that the passage of Psalm 2, which is here alluded to, is one of the most striking prophecies of the glory of Christ, when He shall rule all nations in glory, which the church is to share

with Him (Rev. 2:26, 27) in the age to come. And they turn this into an edict of toleration, “a people politically united”!

The reader must also remember that, according to the word, the “child was caught up unto God and to his throne.” But even with that alteration the passage cannot yet have such an application; it must be changed. The passage says, “who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron”—one sole idea, for which Mr. Gaussen substitutes,” who is soon to rule heathenism with a rod of iron,” and “who is one day to govern all peoples” — two distinct acts. This distinction, which separates the government of all peoples from the rod of iron, deprives that government of the character which the word has given to it; and, besides, introduces two objects of the prophecy where there is only one, and two dates where there is only one. To authorise this last change Mr. Gaussen adds, “one day,” giving these words as a quotation. And, mark it well, all this was absolutely necessary to the author’s system; because “to govern all peoples” cannot in any way be applicable to the period to which he applies the rod of iron, according to the explanation he gives of it.

Constantine accomplished the judgment, of which Mr. Gaussen speaks, in the same year that the edict of toleration was published; whereas the people, politically united, has never to this day governed all peoples. Quite the contrary. The twelve hundred and sixty years of apostasy awaited it. According to Mr. Gaussen “the triumph was only for a time.” Can one listen for a moment to such a system and to such reasoning? And, I repeat, all this cleaves to the root of the system. These are not accessories which one may lay aside, while

preserving the system in the main. It is the system itself which is in question, and the system is found to be incompatible with the word: it mutilates and changes scripture. If one wishes to have an instance of the reasoning, one has only to read pages 257 and 258, where the author presents the Roman empire as sending forth the barbarians against the true church; but this again was necessary to his system of interpretation.

With respect to the computation of times, we see (pages 68 to 76 of vol. 3) an examination of Daniel 7:12. In page 72 Mr. Gaussen says, “You will presently see that we can also, as to the little horn, draw a conclusion which will give us the tenth feature of its description. And here is that conclusion: it is, that its duration will be very long, horribly long.” Thus (page 73) we see that the tenth feature is the duration of its life.

Now what is the proof of this capital point? It is that “a time and a time” form seven hundred and twenty years, that is, that the interval from the foundation of the Babylonian empire to that of the Roman empire; or, more exactly, a time is a season (that is to say, five hundred and forty years, taking a zeman for the half of a hiddan). But if it be more exact33 to say a season, and to take this word as the half of a year, it is clear that the other sense is not exact. But why do I use so many words? Mr. Gaussen makes use of the same phrase to mean seven hundred and twenty, and five hundred and forty years; one of these figures giving, according to him, the duration of the three empires, reckoning from the foundation of the first; the other, that same duration, taking as a date the seige of Jerusalem. This has the appearance of confirming one of these applications of the passage by the other; but in reality they contradict

one another. If one be true, the other is false; for if the phrase means seven hundred and twenty, it cannot mean five hundred and forty. For the rest, it is certain that the word is not that which is elsewhere translated by “a time,” and consequently that the computation is entirely false according to the author’s system. He acknowledges that the duration of the three empires has been seven hundred and twenty years. But according to that interpretation of the word which is the most exact according to him, one hundred and eighty years are wanting in the passage which he applies to that duration; that is to say, that the passage is not applicable to it at all. There is nothing here but a false translation to support the author’s conclusion as to the duration of the little horn; and what is the proof that zeman means the half of a time? There is none. Zeman signifies a fixed appointed time. Ostervald translates the two words together by “for a certain time.” I have no doubt this is the true sense, and for my part I am fully assured that it is no question of the duration of the empires, but of their existence after the cessation of their imperial power. This is the sense—very evident and simple— according to the translation Mr. Gaussen approves, and which I believe to be true. Dominion is taken away from the other beasts, but a prolongation of life was granted to them; whereas the life of the fourth beast was taken away at the same time as its dominion. The beast itself was destroyed. This was not the case with the others: they still subsisted, but not ae empires. But this I say by the way.

I leave what I have said to the judgment of the reader who. is taught of God. What I have to do with is the reasoning of Mr. Gaussen, who finds in the same words

the figures seven hundred and twenty, and five hundred and forty—a reasoning which destroys itself, and which acknowledges that the first figure is merely the result of a false translation. And this avowal overthrows the use he makes of the passage he is treating of, since, historically, one hundred and eighty years are wanting, so as to fill up the interval, the era of Nabonassar and Augustus. Thus every basis fails as to the duration of the horn.

Moreover, what Mr. Gaussen tells us appears to me to rest merely on a false idea he has formed of the use of the word “season” in English. It is used, indeed, in that language, as in French, for winter, summer, etc.; but in English it has another sense, which is much more vague. It is used to designate any period; when taken alone, it is rather used for a short period. With an adjective it receives the sense of the adjective. The English translation used it in this passage so as to leave the thing undetermined, as Ostervald (French) did. I do not, however, think that Mr. Gaussen would maintain that zeman signifies a season of the year: otherwise, his whole reasoning is without force. But what can one think of a system founded on a computation (the basis of all, mark it well; for these twelve hundred and sixty years are essential to his system) in which the same word is taken in two senses which destroy one another, and one of which Mr. Gaussen acknowledges to be false, whereas the one which he considers to be true makes an error of one hundred and eighty years, out of seven hundred and twenty, in the period on which he founds himself, as being, according to him, historically fixed? The fact is that, in Hebrew, the word has not the sense of any period whatever.34 The distinction made, page

62, between “the duration of the persecution,” and “the end of the power of the beast,” is worthless, since it is said (v. 21, 22) that the horn is to make war with the saints and prevail against them, until the Ancient of days come and judgment be given to the saints of the Most High. Now I do not think that Mr. Gaussen will pretend that the empire subsists after the coming of the Ancient of days, and after judgment is given to the saints of the Most High. Thus, a simple comparison with this passage is enough to destroy another important part of this system. The persecutions terminate by the coming of the Ancient of days and judgment given to the saints. Besides, Mr. Gaussen formally contradicts himself on this point. In pages 181, 182, he applies the verses we have just quoted in the same sense which our reasoning attributes to them; he makes out “that the church is oppressed, until at last the time arrives when the monarchy of Jesus Christ and His saints commences on earth.” In pages 181, 182, he says as much of the little horn, “that ungodly power which is to prevail against the church until the end of times.” See also vol. 2:4, the same thing. In vol. 3, page 234, Mr. Gaussen tells us, “It now then remains for us to see it again in chapter 13, under the decem-regal form, and in chapter 17, under the democratic form. It will be the time of the little horn.” Now in chapter 13 the duration of the decem-regal beast is “to continue forty and two months.” The little horn makes war with the saints until the Ancient of days come and (Daniel 7:25, if the words are applied to the saints) they are given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of times. Mr. Gaussen tries to make a distinction between “made war with the saints, and prevailed against them,” and “shall be given into his hand” —an unwarrantable distinction, as we shall see,

but which, at all events, does not remove the contradiction which I point out here. One has only to compare pages 62, 181, and 182. The distinction was necessary for his democratic beast, but it is evident that the little horn and the ten-horned beast go together and perish together.

It is well to pay attention to another thing; it is this, that the most important possible point is treated in the author's system as an admitted truth, as an uncontested principle, namely, that it is the church which is in question in these prophecies. Now many persons believe that it is a question of a Jewish remnant, and they quote the word to prove it. This is a main point. Mr. Gaussen does not take the trouble to discuss it. He keeps on this point an absolute silence. It is necessary to his system that it be the church; he cannot prove it, and he asserts it without any proof. On this subject Mr. Gaussen lays down a principle that is entirely false, namely, that God is leading the world with a view to the church. It is Christ and His glory which are the object of the counsels of God. The church will share that glory, and thus it is also included in the counsels of God.

But the difference is complete; because, if Christ be the object, the Jews, whose head and sovereign He will be, are the object of the government of God with respect to the world, and even of the arrangement of nations. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance," Deut. 32:8, 9. Now, this revealed object of God's arrangements on earth is

left aside, and the church, a heavenly people, is put in the place of Israel by Mr. Gaussen.

It will be understood that this changes everything in prophecy. For instance, the greater part of the prophecies apply to a time when Israel is more or less owned in their land. All this is left aside, and finds no place in Mr. Gaussen's system. Now, when Israel is owned, and when it is a question of that people, the church, where there is neither Jew nor Gentile, is necessarily out of the scene. It is no longer a question of length of years, but of "a short work" of God upon the earth, in days, of which it is said, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved" —a passage where the Saviour Himself directs our attention to Daniel and to passages where it is a question of the twelve hundred and sixty days. This therefore goes to the root of the question on the point which is disputed between the two great schools. Mr. Gaussen entirely avoids it; even in his preface he already speaks of the coming sufferings of the church as of an admitted truth. The idea he has formed to himself of the church, becomes therefore a very important point to examine. Now, having left aside the Jews as objects of God's counsels, there remains in his ideas on the church a confusion one can hardly understand.

Thus volume 2, page 2: "The first siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar is the beginning of the captivity of the church under the first monarchy." Here the rebellious and perverse Jews under the judgment of God form the church. Page 4, he supposes that in Daniel it is a question of the destinies of the church. No proof is given. Page 12, "God was pleased to reveal to Daniel the history of the church." Here again no proof. In page 13,

he makes of this a point which must always be borne in mind. Page 23, “When in succession He caused the kingdoms of Moab, of Ammon, of Idumea, of Damascus, of Assyria, to prosper and to fall, it was for His church.” If I open my Bible, I find it is for the Jews and for His own glory. Here it is said, “the church,” without proof and without taking into account that which is in the word.

“When He exalted Egypt to the highest degree of splendour in the days of Joseph, and afterwards brought it into the Red Sea in the days of Moses, it was for His church.” Here also, we well know, it was for Israel.

Now, this confounding of the church with Israel, while deeply hurtful in spiritual things, becomes capital in prophecy; and all the questions which Mr. Gaussen treats of are connected with the solution of that one; because, if Israel means Israel, then the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel which he quotes have an application which he does not admit, and his system of interpretation, save a few analogies, is false from beginning to end. However precious the type which is found there as to redemption, does anyone believe that Israel was the church at the Red Sea? or that the fall of Moab or Ammon was for the church? Is it not evident that Mr. Gaussen ought to have proved that passages which speak positively of Israel, in the clearest and most simply historical terms, refer to the church and not to Israel, and the more so because a whole system of interpretation hangs on that question? All this Mr. Gaussen considers as admitted, whereas it is just that which is questioned.

Volume 2, page 50. The mountain, out of which the stone is cut without hands, is there “to figure the church of God, which will end by filling the whole earth.” Here, first of all, the mountain out of which the stone is taken is confounded with the one which fills the earth, and both are called the church, not only without proof, but in spite of the passage itself, which says that “in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.” Now it is certain that in no sense whatever was the church set up, nor began to increase, “in the days of these kings.”

I pass on to volume 3.35 Page 3, “The little horn,” he says, “is fatal to the church.” No proof that it is so to the church. The importance of this application of divers passages to the church will be understood, when I shew how often, in a part of the third volume, that application finds a place in the explanation, which, in effect, depends on the fact of knowing whether it is a question of the church—the point which is supposed from the beginning.

The reader will find this application of prophecy to the church in pages 16, 23, 28, and 29. In page 42 we find again applied to the church Psalm 74, which evidently speaks of the Jews, of the taking of Jerusalem, and of the havoc made in the temple on that occasion. See again pages 58, 59, 171, 181, 189, 191, 201, and 207. I do not go farther, because after that page Mr. Gaussen enters upon the explanation of the Apocalypse, and if I occupied myself with that, I should have to enter upon the ground of discussion, instead of shewing how the principal parts are supposed without any proof in support of them.

Now to omit the Jews, and apply all to the church, is to introduce complete confusion in prophecy. To do so, without discussing that point, is to build up a system without any real foundation. We shall see by some other instances, how few there are that are solid, among the things which Mr. Gaussen lays down as bases.

Already, in page 2, Mr. Gaussen supposes, without proof, that which is in question: “An ungodly personage, whose reign, of itself, will last longer than that of the three first monarchies put together.” Page 4, when he says, “our days,” he again supposes that the little horn forms a part of the history of the past. This is the thing in question.

We have already called attention to the assertion that “the horn” is a kind of theologian, since it pretends to “change times and laws” —the basis of all, which he always supposes to be proved after this passage; whereas the proof he gives of it is absolutely nothing.

Pages 6 and 7. That the prophecy may apply to the papal system, the writer makes a supposition as to the extent of the evil, without a word being said by Daniel as to that extent. Page 7. The horn is called a spiritual power, which is the point in question, and that without proof. We have already spoken of the dimensions of that horn; we have only this to notice as to the chronology, that is, that to present, in order to fix a date, the ravages which overturned the empire, as being kingdoms which rise up out of that empire, is anything but satisfactory; and this is the more evident because, in the Apocalypse, the ten horns receive authority one hour (that is during the same period)36 with the beast.

Page 10. Mr. Gaussen says: “The ten first horns presented themselves to Daniel all at the same time, already great, and threatening, all in the midst of the foaming sea, in contrast with the little horn which came up afterwards.” How can that be, if, as he says, it is a question of the invasions which begin in a.d. 412 and end in 526? How comes it that the little horn comes up in silence and under the most innocent, the most “modest,” appearances, etc., if (page 22) it is to fill with noise thirteen centuries (that is during the whole course of its existence)—if (page 27) it is always distinguished from all the other kings by its speaking great things?

What proof (page 11) that it takes its place “under the safeguard of the imperial power?” This is true of the pope; but what does Daniel say about it? We have already spoken of its increase—another main point, and of the proof of its date (pages 13-15).

Page 21. What proof that the horn receives its first power from the authority of the Roman emperors? If it is because it was on the head of the beast, that always remains true: it will not be only its first power. What Mr. Gaussen says is true of the pope; Daniel says nothing about it. Page 24. “Putting thus its own traditions.” This suits the pope; nothing that relates to it is to be found in Daniel. “He will excite all the other kings of the Roman earth against the people of God.” What proof? “It must be so” —no proof even that the horns do it. It suits the pope; that is all. Page 35. Observe that Mr. Gaussen places the angels on the thrones, a thing unknown to the Bible, because if the church was seated there (a thing that is certain through the Bible), all his system would fall to the ground, since, according to him, the judgment is executed before the resurrection of the church. Now

this last doctrine is totally inadmissible according to the word, as we shall shew; but if it were true, as Mr. Gaussen pretends, the church, in effect, could not yet be on the thrones. That is why he puts the angels there.

Pages 58-60. All that is contained in these pages is nothing but suppositions as to what the horn may be with the view of applying it to the pope, without there being found a single word which refers to it. The prophet's explanation tells us that the horn "shall speak great words against the Most High," and, as it appears, it is the horn37 that has dominion at the end. All that Mr. Gaussen says on this point, "We must suppose," applies no doubt to the pope, but it is quite different from what is found in Daniel.

In page 101 observe the conclusion drawn. "Before the man of sin was manifested, and, consequently, before the Thessalonians could see Jesus Christ coming on the clouds." Now it is certain through the word, that the Thessalonians, when Jesus shall appear, will appear with Him, will come with Him, because they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful. There is at the same time the confounding of the mystery of iniquity and the man of sin.

Page 93. What is the proof that the man of sin is the little horn? It is included in these words: "That is to say," which are very convenient for the discussion of a main point. And then the children "will have well understood that as to the man of sin, it is a succession of men of sin"—the least probable thing possible, since his coming is spoken of, as well as the coming of Christ. And where is the proof? Alas! one must be content with this: "Nothing is similar." Now of this I very much stand in

doubt, and this is the reason why: I find a false prophet who bears a much greater resemblance to this man of sin; and then there is also the beast that has dominion, and in Daniel it is the dominion of the little horn that is taken away at the end.

But I do not discuss here; I am shewing that the main points are nothing but suppositions without proof. I have spoken of the fathers, and shewn that on the very point which, by the avowal of Mr. Gaussen himself, is the main point, they are all entirely against him. I add here (see page 125) that a person cannot be vicar and rival at the same time. The fathers say that the Antichrist would hardly shew himself as being the Christ. For my part, I have hardly a doubt about it; but, at all events, they do not say what Mr. Gaussen makes them say (page 125), “the pretended vicar.” They had about it quite a different idea, as may be seen by the quotations given by Mr. Gaussen himself. But the expression suited the pope.

Page 187. Mr. Gaussen calls Daniel 2 the prophetical map of the world, and tells us that the horn cannot merely have a very short duration at the end of times, because that idea stands in contradiction to the map of the world. The revelation made to Nebuchadnezzar says nothing about the little horn, and therefore discussions as to its date cannot affect the map of the world. That it may have come up soon after the ten, as Mr. Gaussen affirms, is a possible thing, but Daniel says nothing about it. We have already examined what is advanced to shew the accuracy of the dates adopted by Mr. Gaussen; we found it to be without foundation, and we saw that the ten horns, in the Apocalypse, receive authority at the same time as the beast, instead of overthrowing the latter. If the predictions of Daniel refer to the time when

the Jews are on the scene, all Mr. Gaussen's system is thoroughly overthrown. Now the Spirit says so several times in the latter chapters of that prophet (see Dan. 10:14; chap. 11:14, 30, 31; chap. 12:1, 7, 11), where it is a question of those numbers; and the Lord, in speaking of Jerusalem, refers us to the prophecies of Daniel, where those numbers are given us. I do not dwell at greater length on this; but one may see the extreme carelessness with which Mr. Gaussen quotes the word (page 205). It is a thing truly inconceivable.

Page 209. The rule as to the number seven, namely, that "it always exhausts the history of future times," is not exact. The seven vials, for instance, exhaust the wrath of God; but the judgment of the beast comes afterwards; for the marriage is after the destruction of Babylon, and the destruction of the beast after the marriage; and nothing shews that the seven churches go on until the millennium. The Apocalypse declares that all the prophetical parts are "after these."

Page 211. I find very sad what is said of Sardis. After Rome (Thyatira), Mr. Gaussen tells us, Sardis is the church which is reserved from the midst of the darkness of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; that is, it is the same period as Thyatira, where were some of those, whose last works were better than the first.38 This remnant, reserved, according to the election of grace, is, according to Mr. Gaussen, the church which has a name that it lives, but is dead, and this at the same time as Thyatira. Meanwhile, in this remnant according to the election of grace, there are only a small number who shall walk with Christ in white, as being worthy of it. Hence, if it did not repent, the Lord was to come upon this church as a thief.

And wherefore all these inconsistencies? To make of Philadelphia the blessed Reformation. Unhappily (pages 230, 231), during this period the outward churches, official and visible, will be given up unto the enemies of God. Page 218, Mr. Gaussen tells us that the horse "is the historical sign of Rome." It is certain, according to Zechariah, that the horses are not simply the Roman empire.

Page 220. "Thus the Roman world henceforth will hold on the earth the place of the twelve tribes of the ancient people. The oracles of the New Testament will be committed to it." Add to this (page 221) that soon it would be the great apostasy, "which was to bring upon the Roman world all the chastenings revealed by St. John under the seventh and last seal… What will God do with His dear church, during this long revolt and these tribulations? We will answer: He will bring it out of them pure; He will keep it according to His election of grace. But, in order that this may be, what will He do? Listen, for this is what is told us in that admirable chapter 7, 'He will go and take His elect from generation to generation, in the twelve tribes of this prophetical earth, which henceforth fill the place of the ancient people Israel, for these twelve tribes here named are no longer Jews; they are, says St. John, men out of every nation, of every tribe, of every people, and of every tongue.'"

I say nothing of the idea that the oracles of God were committed to "the Roman world" —Christianised. I say nothing of this, that the real twelve tribes were an elect people, and redeemed on the part of Him whose gifts and calling are not subject to repentance. I merely point out here the way the word is treated to be accommodated to a preconceived system. "He will go

and take His elect from generation to generation." Where is this said in that admirable chapter 7? Nowhere. Quite the contrary; it is a very special period, where God holds fast the winds that may hurt until these one hundred and forty-four thousand have been sealed. Now, in order to adapt this also to his system, Mr. Gaussen affirms to us that John says they are people of every nation, etc. But John does not say a word about it. Having spoken of the one hundred and forty-four thousand of the twelve tribes of Israel, he says, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations," etc. That is, we have a multitude, which no man could number, of Gentiles, in contrast with an exact numbering of the elect of Israel. There is not a word of what Mr. Gaussen says, but the contrary on every point.

And do you know, reader, why these elect are presented here rather than elsewhere? It is "for a most simple and most beautiful reason: it is at this period of history that God raised up the admirable Augustine." All this, it is true, is borrowed from Mr. Elliott, but this ought to have given Mr. Gaussen time for weighing such assertions.

Page 223. The one hundred and forty-four thousand "reappear from generation to generation in all the great scenes of the Apocalypse." Where? There is a mention of one hundred and forty-four thousand in chapter 14; but it is not said they were the same.

The reafder will do well to notice the crowd of things which are supposed in these pages of Mr. Gaussen, of which we have just been giving extracts—serious and important things, advanced without proof. The twelve tribes are the Roman empire; the one hundred and forty-

four thousand are the church; and from generation to generation the church will pass through tribulations. I find, on the contrary, that there is a promise to the faithful of Philadelphia that they will be kept out of the hour of trial. But I do not discuss these points. I call the attention of the reader to these assertions, because, if they are not pointed out, they would leave an impression on the mind as if they were true.

Page 229. I leave the trumpet called Russian, since Mr. Gaussen does not explain it: only I would call on the reader to observe that these chapters of Ezekiel which, as commentators have remarked, speak of the Russians by their very name,39 apply to Israel and to the land of Canaan, and to them alone.

But, with regard to what is said in page 232, I have an observation to make. Mr. Gaussen brings in the killing of the witnesses at the end of the testimony of the twelve hundred and sixty days. It is well for the reader to pay attention here to the dates. It is not, however, of this that I would speak. This it is to which I would call attention: that, during the twelve hundred and sixty days of their testimony, no one could touch the witnesses: “if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies.” They it is who smite the earth with all kinds of plagues. They are clothed in sackcloth; but they are like Moses and Elias. How could they be delivered up into the hands of the beast and the little horn during that period, and be overcome by the beast? What is here said of the witnesses overturns the whole system. Mr. Gaussen avoids one of the difficulties felt by the other commentators, in distinguishing between the beasts. But he is in the same perplexity after all; because the horn is

to have power over the witnesses, and the beast will overcome them, contrary to what is said here. I must add that I have no difficulty on this subject; for my part, I see two distinct halves of the last week of the seventy weeks of Daniel; and I think that it is in the last half week that this peculiar testimony is given.40 But I do not discuss here.

We have spoken enough of the reasoning of the writer on the invisibility of the church. I add, however, that it is rather singular that the writer should scatter in the outward court (page 240) and in the holy city those who worship in the inward sanctuary. I do not return again to the monstrous things which are said on Revelation 12.

Page 246. We have another proof of the fallacy of the system. The dragon is the pagan beast, according to Mr. Gaussen, but “one recognises it to be the same beast,” he says, “by the duration of its war against the saints.” The war of the dragon! Is it the pagan empire that persecuted during the twelve hundred and sixty years? This also, which we indeed find in that chapter (for the woman flies into the wilderness from the face of the dragon, there to be fed twelve hundred and sixty days), overturns all Mr. Gaussen’s system, which brings in that period after the complete change of the dragon through Christianity;41 and not only that, but he makes his period of twelve hundred and sixty days to begin under the second form of the beast. The dragon has nothing to do with the twelve hundred and sixty days in Mr. Gaussen’s system, but it is what he has in Revelation 12. That is, the system is untenable. It is in vain to say that it is the same beast. Observe by the way the uncertainty which reigns here. Mr. Gaussen says (page 248), “It [the empire has] nevertheless had emperors at the same time

as kings, until the days of Buonaparte." In page 250, "The ten kings have hardly ever ceased to own a holy Roman empire." "One might almost say it has lasted till our day." He had positively affirmed it two pages before. But, elsewhere, he confesses there had been an interval of sixty years (vol. 2, page 255); and more positively (vol. 3, page 274), where it is said that it must perhaps be prolonged even two hundred and sixty-three years more.

But the conclusion on the subject of the beasts deserves a few words more. According to the word, the child is caught up unto God and to His throne; He is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. But (page 256) He rules paganism (that is, according to Mr. Gaussen, the dragon) with a rod of iron, already under Constantine. The triumph, however, is not long. The dragon all of a sudden becomes (page 257) the furious power of the Arians! Then Augustine prepares wings for the woman, that she may be in a state to fly into the wilderness. Finally, the dragon (pages 252, 253), that is, "in religion, a pagan and persecuting power," and with respect to the political side, the absolute power of the pagan emperors (say the imperial head from the third to the fourth century) becomes, after the second Arian attack, "the enemy of souls, making use of the Roman empire" — Christianised— "to cast forth after the woman the impetuous flood of barbarians." But the Latin empire (that is, the dragon, at the beginning of the phrase) swallows them up; they are absorbed into the empire, and are incorporated with it.

Page 270. Another passage is given as a quotation, with the expression "the church "added to the text of scripture.

Page 277. Mr. Gaussen makes of the destruction of the saints the source of the universal authority of the beast, adding, “as St. John says here, verse 8.” There is not an idea about this in John.

Mr. Gaussen adds “semi-religious,” in speaking of the character of the beast that is worshipped, whereas it is the second beast that is the religious party. He would only (page 214) speak of the empire, in contrast with religion, where it was a question of explaining the verse which speaks of worshipping the beast. And there, mark it well, the beast was the Roman empire under Justinian or under Charlemagne, who could hardly be said to have been objects of worship.

They have taken it to be certain that the twelve hundred and sixty days, and three times and a half, are necessarily the same period; but that period is the half of a week; and the question whether the two halves are not referred to, nor the possibility of reconciling the state of the witnesses in chapter 12 with the state of the saints in chapter 13. However that may be, Mr. Gaussen supposes the thing, and proves nothing. As to the empire, every one acknowledges it is the same.

Page 280. “An empire within the empire in the same countries.” Why in the same countries? No proof. The Lamb was Christ. Why is not this beast a false Christ? When Mr. Gaussen attributes miracles to the horn, the word does not support him. There are only words against the Most High and persecution of the saints.

Page 282. There is something more serious which, when compared with other passages of the writer, demolishes the whole system of Mr. Gaussen. “The second “period of the empire of the Latins “continues to the French

Revolution in 1789." "Yes, it is the time of the twelve hundred and sixty days, or of the war of the little horn against the church of God."

This is absolutely necessary to his system, because his beast—decem-regal—makes war during forty-two months, and the little horn during the three years and a half, that is, during the same period. Now the little horn makes war with the saints, "until the Ancient of days came," and, according to Mr. Gaussen (page 182), "this prophecy is there to tell us how will arise in the Roman empire that impious power which is to torment the church to the end of times." Now mark well that the persecution is attributed to the horn, and not to the beast, in Daniel 7. But this one remark destroys all the system of Mr. Gaussen, because if that horn, which lasts twelve hundred and sixty days, or three times and a half (the same period as the beast of chapter 13 of the Apocalypse), torments the church to the end of times, the theory of a third period of the beast under another form is imaginary. It was to take place after the end of times—after the coming of the Ancient of days. Here then, in a word, the third goes on till the coming of Jesus Christ. In Daniel, and according to Mr. Gaussen elsewhere, it is the second. This is a main point, because it is a question of the identity of the period of twelve hundred and sixty days and of the three times and a half.

Page 284. There is again something very serious. The question is about the beast in its last form, and of its destruction. "The beast is slain, and his body destroyed; it is given to the fire to be burned. Then, immediately after, the Son of man comes on the clouds of heaven." Very well, we see now why it was necessary to confound the presenting of the Son of man to the Ancient of days

with His coming on earth, in using the passage of Daniel, as we have already noticed, sometimes for the one, sometimes for the other. The doctrine here announced excludes the Son of man from taking any part in the judgment of the beast. He does not come upon the clouds till after that judgment. Daniel presents unto us the Son of man brought near before the Ancient of days to receive the kingdom. Mr. Gaussen alters this in order to make it to be the coming of Christ, and he quotes Revelation 19 in confirmation.

Now it is certain, according to Revelation 19, that it is by the coming of Jesus that the beast is destroyed. That He who is seated upon the horse is the Lamb is what is told us (chap. 17:14); that those that are with Him are the saints is what is certain from that same verse. The marriage of the Lamb also has taken place before that judgment (chap. 19). In spite of all this, Mr. Gaussen puts the coming of the Lord, who is the One that judges the beast, in chapter 19, after the judgment of the latter. Chapter 20:4 is a new vision, which introduces a new order of things; namely, the session on thrones, and not the coming in glory. Daniel 7 is also divided into visions, which begin at verses 1,7,13; and then comes the explanation: that is, verses 13, 14, contain a distinct vision.

What Mr. Gaussen calls anarchy (page 285), mark it well, is the effect of the judgment and of the setting up of a kingdom on God’s part; it is the explanation that the Spirit of God Himself gives of what He says of the little stone; Dan. n:44, etc. That kingdom, which God sets up, breaks in pieces these human kingdoms; the ruin is not prepared by anarchy; the feet are smitten by the little stone, and all is broken to pieces by the power of the

kingdom that is set up, and no place was any more found for that which existed before. What can one think of an interpretation which applies this to a democratic anarchy?

Here also in the Apocalypse, there is no question of anarchy. The beast is taken and cast alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. Is this anarchy? Now that beast is, according to Mr. Gaussen, democracy, and it had not been judged before by another judgment; those who compose his army are slain; and mark well that it is the blow of judgment, given by the kingdom that God sets up, which is here in question, and which produces what Mr. Gaussen so unadvisedly calls anarchy. It is not a state of things brought on by political revolutionary movements, which prepares the ruin (see page 255); it is the ruin itself through the judgment of God. Is the little stone cut out without hands, which becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth, a democratic and revolutionary spirit? And yet it is this which will grind the statue to powder.

All the system is untenable. As to the rising up and movement of democracy, it is a certain thing; it has been known well enough for many years. But the system which Mr. Gaussen founds on this is entirely opposed to the word. That is not all yet. The beast is the Latin empire in its unity. This is what he lays down as a landmark; but here he abandons that idea to bring his democracy into action. The beast becomes the people. But it is the people under citizen kings in all the ten states of the Latin empire (page 289). The unity is lost. It is the multitude of the people become sovereigns, in every one of those kingdoms. This circumstance renders impossible the application of the passage to their

receiving authority at the same time as the beast, as Mr. Gaussen conceives; for that reception of power is at about ten different epochs. Moreover, the Greek for “one hour” in Revelation 17:12, does not mean at the same epoch, but during the same period. See, above, the note at page 121. But finally, what is the grand proof that this beast is the democracy? It is this, that the woman, sitting on the beast, sits also upon the waters. The beast is the people, “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” (See pages 286, 295.)

These expressions are very far from giving the idea of unity. The expression “nations” and “tongues,” does not shew the beast in a democratic unity or any other unity. But this is not all: we see in the last page quoted, that Mr. Gaussen grounds himself on the idea that the woman sits at the same time upon the beast and upon the waters.

Here are his words: “It is the people sovereign, under kings delegate, who are deprived of the diadem.”

Who told you so?

“The angel who speaks to St. John.”

And in what way?

“Rome sits on the beast; it is also said to be seated at the same time upon many waters; therefore the beast is the many waters.”

Now Mr. Gaussen did not pay attention to the original text. By consulting it, he would have seen he was building in the air. The woman sits, “sits upon a beast” (Rev. 17:3) (the Greek is in the accusative), and “upon many waters” (in the genitive). If I say that Antwerp is situated on the Scheldt, it does not mean

that the city is built on the water, but on the side of the river. I suppose that Mr. Gaussen, when he has reflected, will not question that this is the sense of the passage. The woman, seated upon the beast and exercising dominion over the beast, was placed on the side of the waters, and spread her influence over peoples and nations, and this beyond the beast properly speaking.

That the evil of the last days is great is a thing I do not doubt. That the saints are in the tribulation I do not believe. Those who kept the word of Christ's patience will be kept out of the hour of trial which is about to come upon the whole habitable world, "to try them that dwell upon the earth." That those, whose portion is more or less earthly, should dread what is about to come, I understand; he who has his citizenship in heaven will not find it affected. Dread as to the future is not faith.

Page 304. In the text of the work we find, in a clear way, the contradiction which we have pointed out, and which affects the basis of the whole system. The writer speaks of the destinies of that little horn which was to torment the earth during the last two periods we have just been speaking of. But the first of the two, which lasts twelve hundred and sixty days, as well as the little horn, was to go on to the end, so that the contradiction is evident.

Page 307. We find here the practical effect of all this false system, that is, that we must wait for the Antichrist in order to wait for Christ, a principle which destroys on this subject all the moral teaching of the Lord, who always insisted on the constant waiting for His return—a principle which confounds the judgment of the world with the blessings of the church— which results in this, that the church, attached to the world, settles down

here in heart, until the Lord comes, instead of understanding and believing, according to the positive declarations of His word, that, when He comes thus, it will come with Him, the marriage of the Lamb above having already taken place.

Page 308 presents to us an instance of a curious feature of this book. Speaking of the Antichrist it is said, “During which of those three42 forms have we also ascertained he was to live? During the two last … yes; that is, unto the end of times?

What simplicity in the expression, “ascertained”! Is any proof given? Not in the least. To touch upon that question, when dealing with the third form, would have been fatal to the whole system. The thing is stated without going any farther. It cannot be denied that the horn continues to the end; but, in that case, the whole system is false, since the duration of the second form of the beast is identical with that of the horn. This duration is for twelve hundred and sixty days. And having glided over all that, now the thing is “ascertained.” Compare pages 182 and 278, where we have “mathematical evidence” of that which overturns all that is said on the third state of the beast.

“How long was that war of the decem-regal beast against the saints to last according to St. John?

“Forty and two months.

“And how long according to Daniel?

“Daniel says in his verse 25 that the saints should be given into the hands of the beast and the little horn, until a time and times and the dividing of time.”

Yes, and after other proofs taken from Revelation 11 and 12 the writer concludes that nothing is better established than the identity of these two prophecies. Now, as we have said on page 182, the ungodly power of the little horn of Daniel 7 is to torment the church up to the end of times;43 so that the twelve hundred and sixty days go on to the end of times.

Now (page 308), it is the two last: the decem-regal form and the democratic form; “that is to say, thus unto the end of times.”

We need only remember this to be brought to understand that what is said in page 318 has no foundation. For the rest, during the twelve hundred and sixty days that the witnesses give their testimony, it is not a question of overcoming them. They kill those who would torment them. These persecutions unto the end of times degenerate (page 319) into a “perhaps.”

Pages 321, 322. Observe the pains that are taken to confound the saints of the Old and New Testament, and the way in which the portion of the church, which is to go and meet the Lord, is carefully set aside. Page 324, Here again the fallacy of the system betrays itself.

In the fifth place, it is “until the beast and its Antichrist are broken to pieces, and that the dominion and greatness of the kingdoms which are under heaven are given unto the saints of the Most High.”

In the sixth place it is “this ecclesiastical power which, during the decem-regal period.” One will recollect that Mr. Gaussen’s democratic beast comes after the decem-regal beast.

Which of the two things is true? In both he speaks of the same thing, that is, of the little horn, as we see in the note added to the fifth remark and in the text of the sixth.

This complete and total contradiction, fatal to the whole system, breaks out again (page 325) in a way which only allows a feeling of astonishment that the writer could publish it. He speaks of Daniel 7:22. “It clearly declares that the life of the beast, that of the Antichrist, and the war with the saints, continue till the coming of Jesus Christ, and till the reign of the saints. We must therefore conclude from this that this personage still exists in our day, and that the term of the war with the saints is not yet come.” Now we read (page 282), “The second (decem-regal beast) continues from this to the French Revolution in a.d. 1789. Yes, it is the time of the twelve hundred and sixty days, or of the war of the little horn with the church of God” —a war pointed out in Daniel 7:22.

“And the third?

“The third goes on from this unto the second coming of Jesus Christ.

“Very well.”

Which of the two, page 325 or page 282, contains the truth on the point?

Page 327. “In what precedes we were told of its great words; but here it is blasphemy, it is against the most holy Trinity.” Where is that distinction found? Simply in the fact that Mr. Gaussen had himself given a very long explanation, of which there is not a word in Daniel, in order to apply it to the Pope, and “here “Daniel, or

rather the Spirit of God, gives quite another one, which hardly leaves room for that of Mr. Gaussen. “We were told” is candid enough.

Page 335. Mr. Gaussen has omitted what alters all the value of the passage to attain the object in view of which he quoted it. The word says, “They … of the kindreds shall see their dead bodies three days and a half,” etc. They were not therefore at so great a distance. They of the kindreds—it is the class; that is, they of that category of persons who were there. When it is a question of sending gifts, nothing is said of the time spent for that. However, I think it is simply characteristic. For the rest, there would be no difficulty. They will rejoice at it, when they receive the tidings, were it even at the ends of the earth. At all events, the passage is not what Mr. Gaussen says, and cannot be accommodated to it.

Here also Mr. Gaussen gives as being the word of God that which is not found there, namely, “Seal the vision, Daniel, for it shall be for many days, and goes on unto two thousand and three hundred days.” Now there is nothing of the sort in Daniel. The words, “it shall be for many days,” are not thus connected with the two thousand three hundred days.

Page 335. “It shall be for many days.” This does not speak of the duration of what is to happen, but of the interval unto the effect of the vision, as in chapter 12:9: “Go thy way, Daniel; for these words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end [until the time determined],” or, according to the French translation of the passage of Daniel 8 which we are examining, “for it shall not be for a long time.” There is no passage like

what Mr. Gaussen puts between inverted commas. It is too serious a thing to say “An angel says to him,” when the angel said nothing of the kind. What the angel did say to him is, “Behold, I will make thee know what shall be at the last end of the indignation.”

Pages 335, 336. Observe, as regards Daniel 12, which is referred to here, that the Lord, speaking of the times that are in question, speaks of Jerusalem, of fleeing into the mountains, of the sabbath-day, of shortening the days (but for which “there should no flesh be saved”); that is, what He says makes it perfectly clear that it is a question of days and not of years. If I am told, But it is a question there of the taking of Jerusalem, I answer in that case, It is a question of the same thing in Daniel; for the Lord says, “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet… whoso readeth, let him understand.” That passage, where it is a question of the abomination of desolation, is the passage where the three times and a half, the forty and five days, and the thirty days, of which Mr. Gaussen speaks, are mentioned.

In contradiction to what Mr. Gaussen here insinuates, it is certain that, as to the twelve hundred and sixty days, the oldest readers of Daniel whose writings we possess take them as days. Mr. Gaussen has already admitted this, founding himself on the good sense of the Jew Trypho against their opinion.

Mr. Gaussen tries to remove these contradictions about the duration of the persecutions of the little horn—a duration which he declares to be of twelve hundred and sixty years (page 72); then (page 182) unto the end of times; page 282, until the French Revolution in a.d.

1789; page 311, making it the general duration of its life; page 324, a war carried on until the reign of the saints; in the same page, during the whole decem-regal period; page 325, the life of the beast, that of the Antichrist, and its war with the saints until the coming of Jesus Christ and until the reign of the saints. He seeks, I say, to reconcile these contradictions by saying, “It is true that they [the saints] are to be, in a certain way, given into his hands, but only until a time and times and the dividing of time; but the war and hatred will last until the second coming.” But, further on, we equally find that, though the action of the little horn, as a wild beast, is transformed into that of the woman—or court of Rome—leading the democracy, the horn does not cease to act thus, just as the woman had acted before the democracy (pages 347, 348). Mr. Gaussen could not avoid thus modifying what he had said, because it is clear that the second beast, which he identifies with the little horn, perishes as false prophet after the destruction of Babylon.

But let us come to the root of the distinction. I have already called attention to this, that the application made to the saints of the words “given into his hand,” is, I doubt not, both arbitrary and false, of which, however, others besides Mr. Gaussen are guilty. It is the times and laws that are given into the hand of the horn. He will think to change all that and will change it. But if we take the little horn according to Mr. Gaussen’s system, the distinction he has made is a most unhappy one, because the witnesses, as we have already seen, are in no wise given into the hand of their enemies during the twelve hundred and sixty days, that is, during Mr. Gaussen’s second period—say that of the crowned kings; but, quite

the contrary, those who would hurt them are killed. It is after having continued their testimony during that period without being hurt, that they are given into the hand of the beast of Mr. Gaussen's third period—" the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit." It is that beast which, making war against them, will overthrow them and kill them. They are given into the hand of the beast of the third period of Mr. Gaussen's system, and not of the beast of the second.

The description of the acts of the woman (page 346) is not in the least according to the word, either for the decem-regal period, or for the time that comes after. The horn and the woman are confounded without saying why. Yet the things are given between inverted commas as quotations. The papal system answers to what Mr. Gaussen says: but what he says does not at all answer to the word. It is the history of the whole book. The little horn, says Mr. Gaussen, has "two periods which St. John has clearly defined to us, the one in his chapter 13, the other in his chapter 17." "The little horn will always be on the side of the strongest." "During the polycratic period, it will, as much as it can, associate its power with that of the ten absolute kings"; it will exercise, we are told, all their power before them; Rev. 13. But during the democratic period, "it will make drunk with its heady wine the ten citizen kings, and will contrive to ride on their revolutionary peoples." That such, up to a certain point may be, the probable history of papacy, according to the Abb6 de Lammenais, is possible; but—to say nothing of the arrogance which we were told of elsewhere, which associates itself with nothing, but exalts itself above everything; not to repeat, what I have already called attention to, that it is not a question of

their authority, of their presence, but of exercising the authority of the beast in his presence, which is quite a different thing, and that it is not said that it would make the kings drunk and would ride on their peoples, but that the nations would be made drunk, and that the kings of the earth would commit fornication with it; which changes every thing (a grievous thing when the word of God is in question),—I ask, Who will do all that? The little horn, says Mr. Gaussen. But it is a question of the woman in those passages, and the little horn is not the woman. That horn subsists, according to Mr. Gaussen himself, when the woman is destroyed.

Besides, John does not speak of the little horn, whether in chapter 13, or in chapter 17. He speaks of a second beast and of Babylon; that is, the writer supposes (contradicting himself as to Babylon) the very thing he would have to prove, namely, that these two things are die horn, and he does so without any proof whatever. Then he says, “This double period of the little horn is therefore clearly established” (page 347). If Mr. Gaussen tells me, “But I have proved it by its duration of twelve hundred and sixty days, which are found both in Daniel and in John,” I answer, That duration, if it proves anything, shews that it is impossible to apply to a double period of the little horn, for it ends with the decem-regal period. Moreover, nothing at all is said of the duration of the second beast.44 The only proof given is, that the fact of there being a woman, who is not the little horn, shews that the little horn will subsist during that second period, as that woman. And how are these things connected? Mr. Gaussen’s ideas on the papacy alone form the connection.

For the rest, to apply Babylon to that democratic period, as characterising it, is an idea both unfounded and false. That the kings of the earth will begin to commit fornication with her, in order to restrain the democracy, may very well be. But in Babylon is found all the blood shed upon the earth. We have also in Revelation 17 the description of the beast from the commencement of its existence; and it is with the beast in its unity when it ascends out of the bottomless pit, after it had ceased to exist, that the kings receive their authority. It is not a question of an opinion, as Mr. Gaussen represents it, but of the empire, and whatever may be the political opinion and the woes which flow from the passions of men (the sober-minded Christian will acknowledge it), to have ascended out of the bottomless pit goes much farther than the revolutions caused by the passions of men. I believe that all these things tend to bring about the result; but the beast is always the empire, and not a political principle. “Was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit” can be said of the empire, but not of a principle which is of the bottomless pit, nor of the peoples of different kingdoms under an influence. Babylon is the city of abominations, that is, quite simply, of idols; but it is not only during the third period supposed by Mr. Gaussen. The description is moral and general, without date. I do not believe that any allusion is made in it to democracy, when it is said, “Seven heads and ten horns,” although we know very well that historically the strength of democracy has greatly increased.

And see how easily the writer’s imagination carries him away. He says that those who, as I believe, form in the present day the great majority of the Christians who

have carefully studied the word, have a veil upon their heart when they read both the Old and the New Testaments, like unbelieving Jews. Now, this judgment rests on a confusion which flows from his pre-occupations. After a long dissertation on the merchandise of Rome, which I leave to the judgment of each, Mr. Gaussen asks, “If the unbelief of the Jews is inexcusable as regards the Christ, will one not be able to say as much on the Antichrist?” It is somewhat rash to place the testimony rendered by the life and death of Christ on the same footing as his own reasonings on Daniel and on the Apocalypse. We forgive him also the charge of blindness, which one would have with difficulty forgiven in others. But I will make this sole remark, that Babylon (and the question here is about Babylon) is not the Antichrist. If even it were granted to Mr. Gaussen that the bodies are relics, and that one must be blinded by God like an unbelieving Jew not to believe it, it is none the less true that the Babylon which is referred to is certainly not the Antichrist. I could even question the solidity of a reasoning which would accuse the pope of a crime horrible above anything else, because he thought to change the Scriptures, while “holding nevertheless those holy scriptures to be the Scriptures of his God” (page 323), and which would prove at the same time that the pope is the Antichrist, because he regards no God. But there would be no end to it.

Page 361. I make an important remark here on a point which has given a false turn to all Mr. Gaussen’s thoughts. “This image,” he says, “is the key to the prophecies; it is the abridgment of the great plan of God’s providence for the government of the nations.”

Now I affirm that whatever be the importance of the image (and it is very great), it is the very contrary of what Mr. Gaussen says, that is true. The government (properly so called) of nations on God's part ceases during the continuation of this image, although providence always acts. The image represents the empires which have subsisted during the period called the times of the Gentiles. God governed the nations before the image, having Israel as the centre and pivot of that government. He will inherit the nations and govern them after the destruction of the image. The duration of the image is the period during which Israel is put aside, and which is introduced by these words, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." Before that, there were different nations, the existence of which was recognised, which were the fruit of the judgment of Babel; Israel had been placed at the centre of the bounds of all nations—bounds which were set according to the number of the children of Israel; and God, having set up His throne at Jerusalem, and built His sanctuary as a building set up on high, from that centre governed all nations in relation to His people. Now, finally He visited them in judgment, as He had done to Shiloh (Jer. 7); and when Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, His glory visited the city, shews the prophet the iniquity of the inhabitants, and then leaves it; Ezek. 11. Instead of different nations, and a people—a special nation owned of God—where God reigned, He sets up an imperial unity in the hand of a human head, by committing unto him all that was

recognised of the world, and by placing His people in captivity. Finally, He gives up Jerusalem to be “trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Then He will again take up the government, in judging that imperial power which will be in rebellion against Him. But is the government of God on earth limited to the time during which He has given up His people (which He yet always owns) into the hand of His enemies, when His people are groaning in captivity, and when His holy city is in the hand of the Gentiles? Is the whole of prophecy included in a book written by a son of the kings set up by God, “on the throne of the Lord,” captive in Babylon, fasting and presenting his supplications unto God, and praying that such a state of things might come to an end? Clearly not. The time during which God’s people are in captivity is not properly the time of God’s government; and a system which considers it as such, and which takes no account either of that people or of the mass of prophecies which apply to them, necessarily falls into that which is false. Daniel naturally speaks only of these times of the Gentiles. He belonged to that captivity, and God gave His precious servant the divine light which gave him to understand that God had not forgotten His people. But the most detailed prophecies of Daniel are given after the return of the Jews to Jerusalem, a circumstance which makes one feel that the true captivity, the times of the Gentiles, still existed—a truth to which the chief priests put their seal, by crying, “We have no king but Caesar.” Daniel confines himself to that period. He goes on till the judgment, by God) and His taking possession of the government; and there he always stops.

He never describes that government nor its effects; he remains the prophet of the captivity. Nothing more important in its place; but, I repeat, to neglect all that is said elsewhere, and to present, as the government of God, the period during which God has committed it to the Gentiles, until He takes it up again in judgment, on account of their unfaithfulness, is to pervert all the truth and all the force of the word on those subjects. In Psalm 82, we have an appeal made to God, that He may interpose by taking the judgment into His hand. I repeat then, all Mr. Gaussen's system is wrong in its first idea, in its starting-point. It is false, completely false. And the fallacy of his starting-point which leaves aside the Jews and the government of God exercised in relation to that people (a government left in the hands of the Gentiles in Nebuchadnezzar, and taken up again at the time of the judgment of the beast), gives a false turn to everything he has built up thereon. The times of the Gentiles—times during which His people is rejected—are not properly the time of the government of God, although in one sense He always governs. Certainly it is not such exclusively. The system of the nations, and Israel chosen from among them, existed until Nebuchadnezzar. It will be recommenced in a far more excellent way, when the beast shall have been destroyed. The interval is the time of the beast in contrast with the government of God. Therefore do we find the church, which is in heaven, placed by Mr. Gaussen, as the great mountain on the earthy in the Pentaples, column 3.

I have only two things more to call attention to, what Mr. Gaussen calls the rule of the two ends, and the end of the last column of the Pentaples. The first, the rule of the two ends, is this: The man of sin (that is, the little

horn, which he has nowhere shewn to be the little horn) reaches from the time of the invasion of the barbarians, at one end, to the reign of Jesus Christ, at the other end. As to the last end, I have nothing to oppose; the little horn will be destroyed by the coming of the Lord. It is the other end that is in question. Listen to Mr. Gaussen: "The little horn was growing slowly, and with unperceived progress. The ten first horns had presented themselves to Daniel, all at the same time, all already great and threatening, all in the midst of the foaming sea" (page 10). How in the midst of the foaming sea? Historically, as to the dates, they were not on the beast when it came up from the sea. We must add, according to Daniel, that "four great beasts came up from the sea" (chap. 7:3), and the fourth "had ten horns." Now, if the ten horns were in the midst of the foaming sea, they were on the beast who was coming up from it, already all there, and all great. Now, it is quite evident that the Roman beast did not come up from the sea at the time of the invasion of the barbarians. And yet the ten horns were all there at the same time, great and threatening. Besides, there was nearly a century and a half between the first invasion of the barbarians and the last. Nevertheless Daniel sees them all great at the same time. What consequence do I draw from this? That the ten horns are a description, without there being any date supplied by the symbol seen by Daniel. There are there, possibly, when the little horn comes up; but as to the moment when the latter shews itself, there is absolute silence on Daniel's part. The existence of the horns is not given there as a date.45 They are there on the beast; nothing is said of their beginning, nor that it is a question of their whole duration since they began, nor that the little horn began immediately after. There is

not a single trace of what Mr. Gaussen advances. The chapter does not lend itself to dates, for the beast has ten horns when it comes up; they exist when Daniel sees it. He saw it come up out of the sea.46 If I examine the Apocalypse (chap. 13), the beast with ten horns acts during twelve hundred and sixty days; but as to the invasion of the barbarians which lasted such a length of years, there is no question of it. As to the second beast, which Mr. Gaussen, without proving it, pretends to be the little horn, there is no question of a date. So that there is absolutely nothing to shew that that beast—and, in general, that the man of sin—reaches up, by the only end which is referred to, to the time of the invasion of the barbarians.

Perhaps I am as blind as a Jew, but I do not even see in it the Pentaples to which Mr. Gaussen refers me (page 382). I see a frightful head, which comes out of the sea, with ten horns and an eleventh horn which is smaller than the others. But how does this plainly shew that the existence of this little horn begins at the time of the invasion of the barbarians?

In a word, the teaching of the prophecy does not bear upon any beginning whatever of the ten horns, nor upon a beginning of the little horn, at any moment whatever of the existence of the ten. There is a complete absence of proof. The little horn will continue till the coming of Jesus, twelve hundred and sixty days, and the beast with ten horns during twelve hundred and sixty days; but this only overturns the writer’s system, because he would leave time enough for his democratic beast afterwards.

Finally (and this is the last point), the writer places the resurrection after the judgment of the beast and the

false prophet. Here are the passages which shew this cannot be. 1 Thessalonians 4 teaches us that we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before He is on earth to execute judgment. Therefore it is not possible that the resurrection should be after that judgment. Colossians 3: “When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory”: so that we shall have been raised before He appears. Jude says, “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.”

The appearing of Jesus is with all His saints, and, in Revelation 17, those who are with Jesus are “called, and chosen, and faithful.” The marriage of the Lamb takes place before He comes on the white horse, and the armies which are in heaven follow Him, for the destruction of the beast. Mark well that the angels, although chosen and faithful, are not called ones. The connection which Mr. Gaussen seeks to establish between the church and these prophecies, is entirely contradicted by the word. Pay attention to this, reader, for it is most important.

You are misled by the book as to your faith: in it, the church is put out of its place. Its true position is denied. Had it not been for this, I would never have made a remark on Mr. Gaussen’s system—a system where an ardent imagination has united to the beauties of an attractive style serious errors, and thoughts which nearly all deviate from the word. I own that I find something very serious in the way of quoting the word, that is, in advancing things which are not there, with a “St. John says so,” or “It is written,” etc. In the beginning, I had no other idea but to point out the four or five main points which I have shewn to be destitute of

all proof; but the importance of the questions, and the gravity of the errors, induced me to touch briefly upon nearly all the foundations which the writer has laid down. I have avoided all discussion of doubtful points. I have confined myself to shewing that the system has no foundation whatever in the word.

It is a mixture of a few elements of truth, already explained two centuries ago, with the most grievous errors, recently introduced in order to oppose the light God has vouchsafed to His church in these latter times—errors to which Mr. Gaussen adds a few new and false elements, taken from the events of the day, clothing the whole with an attractive style, used to turn away the church from waiting for the Lord, and to confound the judgment of the world with our gathering together to Jesus.

The publication of the second edition of the first volume of “Daniel the Prophet” gives me an opportunity for adding a few words to what I have just been saying on the second and third volumes. Mr. Gaussen’s remarks on chapter 11 make us understand more exactly what his views are on the ways of God at the end of time. I am only occupied with his views on prophecy. I respect the piety one meets with in this first volume, although it is wrapped up in such a mass of history and imagery, which no doubt have attraction for most readers, but which, at times, may tire those who look for biblical explanation. I leave to every one his judgment in this respect, and I only take up the interpretation of chapter 2.

The little stone, according to Mr. Gaussen, is “some feeble portion of the church of God, which will become

the occasion of the ruin of the colossus, and of the coming of the reign of Jesus Christ." The mountain itself out of which it is cut "is the church of God, which has subsisted in all ages by the side of the image and before the image, but which is only then to obtain dominion among men." The first thing here that fixes attention is, that the stone, this "feeble portion of the church," is to be separated from the mountain by "the providence of God and by the power alone of His divine Spirit." This is singular, if the mountain is the true church which has subsisted by the side of the image in all ages. Why should this little portion be separated from the true church? But I let that pass. According to Mr. Gaussen it is the little stone which itself, at a later time, becomes the mountain which fills the whole earth. And as to the other mountain, what becomes of it? Do the separatists absorb the aggregate of the church? and do they, by themselves, execute the judgment?

But I leave all this. I only remind the reader of the remark already made, that, according to the word, the kingdom is set up in the days of the ten kings, and that assuredly the church was not set up in the days of the ten kings. And, pay attention to this, that it is the kingdom that God has established in those days which breaks in pieces and consumes all the kingdoms of the image. "But," says Mr. Gaussen, speaking of the little stone (without saying clearly whether he speaks of its existence, or of its work of destruction), "it will begin in the toes of the image." How will it begin? The stone was cut, without hands, out of the mountain which was by the side of the image. The stone was not in the image; it did not come out of it, and formed no part of it. It smote

the image and broke it to pieces. What was it then that began?

But see in what way Mr. Gaussen has changed according to his fancy that which the word says. “It will begin in this way; true Christians will never rise up against the powers that be. But if any one of the children of men is unfortunate enough to rise up against the church of Jesus Christ, sooner or later he will there destroy himself;47 if he will seek to break it to pieces, certainly he will there break himself to pieces… It is thus, dear children, that in the last days the church will break to pieces its adversaries; it will overcome by the blood of the Lamb, as it is written; ‘it will overcome through the patience and through the faith of the saints.’” So that this terrible blow of the little stone, which grinds to powder the image and utterly destroys it, is an attack of one part of the image against the church, which will overcome through patience. Is this a serious interpretation of the word of God?

“Finally,” says Mr. Gaussen, “the following are the immense results of this awful collision. One of the kings or several of the kings that belong to the Latin Church, angry with a certain portion of the people of God, will seek to crush it; but they will be broken to pieces like the chaff,” etc. “There will remain nothing but their dust, nothing but a frightful anarchy; the complete and universal breaking up of all the governments and powers that are will begin in the toes of the image” “In the midst of that frightful trouble one will see this little stone growing, growing, growing, by the power of God. Some time later it will have become a great mountain; and still later it will finally fill the whole earth.” After

these ideas of Mr. Gaussen, I take the liberty of presenting the word of God:

“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

Do we find there one single idea which resembles those of Mr. Gaussen? Do the toes attack the stone? Does the stone manifest the Christian mildness and patience which bears with the evil? Is it not quite evident that the word of God speaks the very contrary of what Mr. Gaussen says? Is it not evident that the time of patience is ended, when the stone acts and when the time of the judgment is come? Is it not clear that the blow from the stone is, above all, a judgment, which utterly destroys every trace of the kingdoms of the image? Is it not evident that it is the only thing which the little stone does, and that it is after this has been done that it fills the whole earth? Is it in the midst of anarchy that it grows? All Mr. Gaussen’s system is only an endeavour which tends to substitute its own ideas in the place of the testimony of the word.

Reflect well upon it, reader; I say it seriously. That explanation presents to us, perhaps, the expectation of Mr. Gaussen in the year 1837; but not one single thought of the passage in Daniel. And remark how carefully Christ is excluded from this judgment. “Thou wilt fill the earth, O church of my Saviour. This work of the little stone will become the occasion of the coming of the reign of Jesus Christ.” Will He not then come Himself to execute the judgment? Let us examine what is said by other passages of the word. Will there be “an anarchy, a complete breaking up of all governments,” before His arrival? By no means.

“And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour [during the same period] with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” There will be no anarchy there, no breaking up of governments, before the Lamb comes. And how then are they broken to pieces? The word relates to us the accomplishment of the judgment, of that victory of which the passage just quoted has spoken to us. “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called, The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him

upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Is that a feeble portion of the church, which overcomes through patience? And yet there cannot be two judgments of the same kind, for the blow from the little stone consumes the kingdoms, so that no place is found for them.

Finally, here is the judgment itself:

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Who is it that executes the judgment? The kings, smitten by the stone, are found here. Their power is not yet carried away like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors. Is it against the church on earth that they are making war? Read also the end of chapter 14. Who is it that treads the winepress of the wrath of God, so that His vesture is dipped in blood? Read also Isaiah 63, and you will see who it is that is come from Edom, with garments dyed with red, after having been alone, as to the peoples of the world, to tread the winepress.

I have already called attention to the manner in which Mr. Gaussen excludes Christ from the judgment of the beast, so that I do not return to it. There have been judgments executed on the beast, vials poured out, and that even upon its seat or throne; but here it is a question of a final judgment with respect to the image, with respect to the ten kingdoms—a judgment which causes them to disappear from the face of the earth. To exclude Jesus from it, so as to make it a consequence of the persecution of some little portion of the church, is enough to shew that the whole system which hangs upon it is nothing but the sport of the imagination of man. I respect, I repeat, the piety of the writer; I honour him, as sincere; as a man, I respect him. But I frankly own that I feel no respect for such a use—for such a perversion—of the word. I make allowance for an ardent imagination; I acknowledge how easy it may be for one to make a mistake on such subjects, if one goes beyond the plain teaching we may have received from God, and of which every one who has studied prophecy with piety will bring his share, whatever be his system. But as to Mr. Gaussen's book, it is not only that it contains an erroneous system. The writer avows that it is good to consider the coming of the Saviour as being at a distance for the church. He destroys the great foundations of the word, not on prophecy, but with regard to the judgment executed by Jesus; and he gives as quotations that which is not found in the word, in a way that deserves the strongest reproof of every faithful soul. The more Mr. Gaussen is surrounded with esteem (and I do not doubt that he deserves it, humanly speaking), the more important it is to denounce the evil. The piety and apostolic authority of Peter only served to carry away all the converted Jews and Barnabas by

dissimulation, when he fell into it. The failures of a godly man are the most dangerous of all failures.

29 Paris, Geneva, and Montpellier, 1850.

30 Mr. Gaussen admits that this point divides commentators irresistibly into two great schools, radically opposed to each other, never to be reconciled, and differing from each other on every point. (Preface to Vol. 2, pp. 15, 16.)

31 Mr. Gaussen quotes (Vol. 1, 133) 1 Samuel 2:10; Psalm 18:2; Luke 1:69, all which passages prove that "horn" simply means power. In any one of these cases can there be succession?

32 Here Mr. Gaussen places the words "the church of the elect" between inverted commas, as if they were a quotation from the word. I do not remember that there is such an expression in the word. Sometimes people add the word "church" to that of "elect." We find an instance in 1 Peter 5:13: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you." But the word "church" does not exist in the original; and if that word were found there, it would hardly suit Mr. Gaussen, because it would then be a particular assembly which was elect. I must warn the reader to be carefully on his guard with respect to apparent quotations from the word, which are to be found in this book. Not that I have the least idea that there is any dishonesty on Mr. Gaussen's part; but having attributed his opinions to the word, he uses phrases, in the form of quotations, which do not exist in the word, as if the word said what he thinks. For instance, page 255 we read: "The mother of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, who keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus

Christ, and have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb." There is no such passage to be found in Scripture. There are several passages tacked together (the words, "the mother," being added), which have no connection with each other, except in Mr. Gaussen's system. In the same page we find: "The apostle takes great care to tell us that the church has there a place prepared of God; that at a later time they should feed her there twelve hundred and sixty days." But the apostle did not say it was the church, neither did he say "at a later time" — two things without which the passage is of no value as a proof of the point for which Mr. Gaussen quotes it.

33 Nevertheless, at the end of the volume, he allows the children to speak of it, as if there were two times in the passage (p. 334).

34 In saying this, I rely on the best dictionaries, without pretending to be a Hebrew scholar myself. It comes from zaman, which signifies to be "appointed," "fixed."

35 There are many other passages, however, in volume 2 where the word "church" is used in the same way.

36 Mr. Gaussen seeks, it is true, to distinguish these two things, and to explain the passage by saying that the ten uncrowned kings take that character of power, at the same time as the democracy. But one cannot understand how ten horns which have existed twelve hundred and sixty years, take their power through losing their crowns by a revolution; and since that takes place in each kingdom, at a different epoch, it cannot be at the same time with the beast which is the unity of the Latin empire. Besides, mian horan (Rev. 17:12), being accusative case denotes time during which; whereas he

de hemera (Luke 17:29) (“on which day” or “on the day that”) and Rev. 18:17 (“in one hour”), have the dative case denoting time at which j whilst Rev. 8:1; 11:2, 3; 17:10, have examples of time during which (accusative) “about half an hour” — “forty-two months” — “1260 days”— “a little while.” (See the Greek text.)

37 Mr. Gaussen supposes, with the other commentators, that it is the saints who are given into the hands of the little horn. I do not believe this, but the times and laws. I do not believe that God gives His saints into the hands of the enemy. It is certain that it is the words “times and laws” which immediately precede that phrase. Times and laws are the ordinances or regular feasts of the Jews, and their laws.

38 This interpretation demands that two very different states should have been presented by the Holy Ghost as characterising the same period—a thing hardly possible.

But it would have been too painful for Mr. Gaussen to admit that the state of death of protestantism is represented by Sardis, according to the system which Mr. Gaussen adopts, and which I believe to be true as regards the seven churches. Nothing more solemn than the manner in which Sardis is put on the same footing as the world. (Compare 1 Thess. 5.) I beg of the reader to pay attention to this; the contrast with Philadelphia renders the thing more striking. The energy which produced the blessed Reformation was a precious gift of God. But the seven churches depict to us, not energies which produce certain results, but the various states which followed the effect of those energies; for it is a question of the judgment of the Son of man. Now the power of the Spirit of God is not the object of the

judgment of Christ; that which is its object is the state of man when he enjoyed that power.

It is never a question, in these churches, of grace communicated. There are threats and rewards—in a word, motives and responsibility. However, let us do justice to Mr. Gaussen, as regards Sardis and Philadelphia; he found, if I mistake not, this part of his system in Vitringa.

39 The word in the Hebrew, translated “chief,” is “Rosh.” Its position, it seems to me, renders necessary that it should be used as being the complement of “prince “—” Prince of Rosh.”

40 The phrase here is altered, as the writer then followed the division into two half weeks in chapter 11; now he sees ground for seeing here only the last, as in Matthew 24.

41 The woman should have clothed the dragon with a sheep-skin, or a lamb-Skin.

42 It is well to remind the reader that Mr. Gaussen teaches that there are three forms of the Roman empire; the imperial period, which lasted up to the establishment of the ten kings, the period of the ten kings or decem-regal, say that of the twelve hundred and sixty days, and the period of the democratic form—the last two being depicted in Revelation 13 and 17.

43 It is well to bear in mind that the duration of the life of the little horn and that of the war against the saints are the same, and end at the same epoch. It makes war until the Ancient of days comes, and then it is destroyed, since the war of the horn lasts during the same period as the existence of the second beast. Mr. Gaussen seeks,

farther on, to avoid the contradiction between these truths and his idea of a third beast, by distinguishing between “made war with the saints,” and “given into his hand.” The little horn may make war with the saints and overcome them when they are not given into his hand, according to Mr. Gaussen. We shall deal with that distinction farther on; if the little horn and even the persecutions last after the twelve hundred and sixty days, the identity of the period with the authority of the beast has very little meaning. Moreover Mr. Gaussen deals with his own distinction in pages 72 and 73: “The war of the little horn with the saints makes in the style of prophecy a times, times, and half a time,” that is, only lasts during the decem-regal period.

44 I have no doubt that the little horn exists at the same time as the beast of chapter 13; but I absolutely deny that the beast of chapter 17 is a form which takes place during a subsequent period. I do not admit that the woman takes the place of the horn. She is quite another thing. I do not admit that the little horn is necessarily the second beast. These are things which it is essential to prove in order to support Mr. Gaussen’s explanation. He does not take the trouble of touching upon them. The duration of the horn, its dominion, its blasphemies, rather resemble the first beast.

45 In the Apocalypse there is an element which overturns Mr. Gaussen’s system, namely, that the horns and the beast subsist during the same period. But I confine myself here to the examination of Daniel.

46 Mr. Gaussen makes this sea to be the Mediterranean, and sitting on the Mediterranean is, according to him, that which the beasts characterise. Coming up from the

sea has no reference whatever to that, the sea being the multitude of nations. Now that is the only connection of the beast with the sea. To sit is not to come up.

47 It is also remarkable enough that the Lord Himself speaks of the two things, that is, the result of falling on the stone, and the falling of the stone on any one, placing them in contrast. He says, “Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” So that the teaching of the Lord places what is in question in the passage of Daniel, in contrast with the application Mr. Gasusen gives of it.

What Saints Will Be In The Tribulation?

The question, Will the saints be in the tribulation? suggests itself to every one who is occupied with the hopes of the church of God and the prophetic declarations of Scripture as to the close of this earth's painful and laborious history. Personal anxiety suggests it on one hand, and on the other it connects intimately with the gravest and most vital points of prophetic enquiry; or rather of the true character of the church of God and its condition at the close.

I cannot, in the space allowed me here, enter at large into the declarations of the Old Testament as to a remnant, nor of the New as to the church. But a short answer to the question itself will help to throw light on the points I allude to and on the rapture of the saints. I purpose adding a development of the true force of 2 Thessalonians 1, 2, so often introduced in the discussions which have arisen on these subjects.

And first, as to our being in the tribulation: How do I know there will be a tribulation? I must get some revelation of it. He who would place the church in it will answer me, I am sure, that the Scriptures are clear on the point. There will be at the close a tribulation, a time such as there has never been, till the Lord's coming brings deliverance. What, then, are the Scriptures which tell us that there will be such tribulation? I am not aware of any other direct ones than these: Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21; Mark 13:19 (Luke does not speak of it nor of the abomination of desolation); to which we may add the more general

passages of Revelation 3:10; chap. 7:14. The first four passages do effectively prove that there will be a time of tribulation such as never was since there was a nation, or, as it is expressed in Mark, “such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created, neither shall be.” The passages from Revelation apply, we shall see, to a wider sphere than the preceding ones; but as they speak of a great tribulation, I have, of course, quoted them. There will be then a tribulation. The other part of the question still remains: Shall we, who compose the church, be in this tribulation?

The answer to this question must be sought in the passages which speak of the tribulation itself. The first of them, Jeremiah 30:7, is as clear as possible in announcing those to whom it applies: “It is the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be delivered out of it.” This time, then, of trouble, such as never was nor will be (so that there cannot be two), is the time of Jacob’s trouble. Nothing can be clearer or more distinct. The whole chapter may be read, which sets it in the clearest light. It is not merely that Jacob may be found there, but when it is said, “Alas! for that day is great, there is none like it,” the trouble spoken of is Jacob’s trouble.

The next is Daniel 12:1. This is also positively declared to be of Daniel’s people. The whole prophecy is the description of what is to happen to Daniel’s people in the last days. Dan. 10:14. Michael, also (compare chap. 10:21), will then stand up for that people, and, as Jeremiah had said, they will be delivered (that is, the elect remnant—those written in the book). Daniel’s testimony then is also quite clear. The tribulation is the tribulation of Daniel’s people. But this is the rather important because it carries us at once to Matthew, the

Lord Himself declaring that He speaks of this same time and same event, using the terms of Daniel, and referring to him by name as well as to the statements of the passage. Compare Matt. 24:15; Dan. 12:11.

But all the language of the passage in Matthew confirms this. Those who are in Judea are to flee to the mountains. Those who are on the housetop are not to come down to seek anything. The abomination which causes desolation stands in the holy place. They are to pray that their flight may not be on the sabbath. False Christs and false prophets are to seduce with the hopes cherished by the Jewish people. All is local and Jewish—has no application to hopes which rest on going to meet Christ in the air. What is in question is "flesh" being "saved" (i.e., life spared on earth). Mark relates evidently to the same event and almost exactly in the same terms. Thus these four passages, which speak of the unequalled tribulation, apply it distinctly to Jacob, Jerusalem, and Judea, and the Jews, not to the church. It is entirely another order and sphere of things from the church, and professedly so.

There are two passages which, as I have said, are more general: Revelation 3:10 and 7:14. Do these, then, apply to the church? The language of Revelation 3:10 is this, "Because thou hast kept tie word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them which dwell on the earth." That is, when the church is addressed, it is with a declaration that she will be kept from that hour which shall come to try others. So that thus far the testimonies of Scripture declare that the unequalled tribulation is for Jacob, and that, when the time of temptation is

spoken of in addressing the church, it is to declare that the faithful shall be kept out of it.

Revelation 7:14 may seem more difficult; still it bears witness to the same truth. For the heavenly kings and priests (that is, the elders who have represented them from the beginning of the second or strictly prophetic part of the book) are professedly another class of persons, who have not come out of the great tribulation. One of these elders explains to John who those who have come out of the great tribulation are, another class of persons from themselves. One of them asks John, Who are these who are arrayed in white robes? etc. John refers to him, and then he explains. That is, the crowned elders are quite a different class from them; so that, while admitting the passage to be obscure in certain points, it is clear in this—in giving us the elders and those who came out of the tribulation as two distinct classes. The crowned elders are not at all represented as having been in it, but as pointing out others as those that come out of it. Every element of the description of these persons confirms this distinction.

Another passage—Revelation 12—while not using the term tribulation, yet speaking of the epoch at which it is to happen, strongly confirms this same truth. When Satan and his angels are defeated by Michael, he is cast out and come down to the earth, having great wrath, knowing he has but a short time, and persecutes the woman. Now what is the effect of this most important event on those who can celebrate its bearing? That the trial of the heavenly saints is ended, and that of the inhabiters of the earth and the sea just about to begin in its most formidable shape, because Satan is cast down there. The language is this: “Now is come salvation, and

strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night: and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea," etc. Now I do not say that this is the moment of the rapture, for I think it is included in the man-child's being caught up. But I say this that, at the moment of the commencement of the great rage of Satan for the three times and a half, the entire deliverance of the heavenly saints from his power, and their definite triumph is celebrated; that is, they are not exposed to that last time of Satan's rage. This chapter, then, confirms, in the fullest way, the exemption of the church from the last and dreadful time of trial. I am satisfied that the whole teaching and structure of the Revelation confirms the same truth; but this would evidently lead me into too large a sphere of enquiry.

We have found that the passages which speak of the tribulation first apply it directly to the Jews on one side, and then exclude the church from it on the other. I do not see how such a point as this could be made clearer by scripture.

I now turn to the interpretation of 2 Thessalonians 1, 2. There is in the latter chapter and (I think I may say) acknowledged mistranslation, of which the true and undoubted sense gives the key to the whole passage. I refer to verse 2, "as that the day of Christ is at hand": it should be "is present." The word is used for, and translated in two different places, "present," in contrast with things to come— "things present and things to

come.” This is always its sense in Scripture. What the Thessalonians were troubled and upset in their minds by, then, was that they had been led by false teachers (pretending to the Spirit, and even alleging a letter of Paul to this effect) to suppose that the day of Christ was actually come. The violence of persecution was very great; and as the day of the Lord is in effect spoken of as a day of terror and trial in the Old Testament, these false teachers had profited by this to persuade them it was there.

The apostle with divine wisdom sets them morally right in chapter 1, as to their feelings and sentiments as to this, before entering in the second into positive instruction as to the fact of the Lord’s coming. He shews them the folly (since Christ was to appear for that day, He Himself being present in it) of supposing that it was His own people and faithful ones He was going to make suffer and cast into distress and tribulation. No; it was His enemies and theirs who would be in affliction in that day, and they themselves in rest and peace. The very righteousness of God would assure this. It was a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble them, and to His troubled ones rest, when Christ shall be revealed, for this was what brought in the day. It was only shewn by their tribulations that He counted them worthy of His kingdom that was then to come.

In a word, as the day was Christ’s and brought in by His personal presence, when it was there they would have rest and their persecutors trouble. It is the contrast of state when the day is there, not the epoch of its commencement, which is spoken of. Indeed, had it been so, it would have been a poor and uninspired comfort,

for they would not have rest yet. On the other hand, the adversaries of the constant expectation of Christ would gain nothing; for the apostle's words so interpreted would have led the saints at Thessalonica to a constant expectation of His appearing, instead of their rapture, as the moment of getting rest. But the truth is, the using the Greek word anesis (rest) as significative of the moment of attaining the rest is a mistake. The word, though used for the time of obtaining relaxation, is equally used for a state of ease, or even pleasure. It is never used in Scripture for the moment of obtaining relaxation from trial, but always in the general sense of a state of ease, one contrasted with theipsis (distress). The whole and sole force of the apostle's reasoning is this, that as the Lord Himself was to bring in the day, it could not, when there, be a day of distress for His people, but evidently for His enemies and their persecutors. In chapter 2 he proceeds to unfold to them the real order of the events, and especially in connection with the place they had in them.

Here, again, we meet a question of criticism, but it affects very little the reasoning of the apostle. Some would change here the authorised English version, and read, "But we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming," etc., instead of "by the coming." The preposition itself is used in both ways; but its constant force with words of beseeching is 'by' (sometimes 'for,' which has no place here). The force of the apostle's reasoning is this, that as they were to be gathered together to Christ, they could not be in the day which was to come by His appearing; they were to go to meet Him in the air, and hence could not be in the judgments of that day, it trials or its terrors.

The apostle had taught them in his first epistle that they were to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Hence he could refer to it as a known truth. The saints were not to await the coming of the day of the Lord on the earth, but to go up to meet Him in the air, and be for ever with Him. Did He appear, they, we know, would appear with Him. But here he speaks of what they ought to have remembered, that they would go up before the day, and hence they could not possibly be there in their actual state on earth, if the day was. The church's connection with the return of the Lord was, to go up to meet Him in the air, to be gathered unto Him. The day was entirely another thing; it was vengeance from His presence. Neither could the day therefore come before the objects of vengeance were there. An apostasy would come, and the man of sin would be revealed, whom the Lord would consume with the breath of His mouth, and destroy by the appearing of His presence.

That is, we have two things (which from other scriptures also we know to be distinct, exactly in this way, Christ's coming, and the manifestation of it; for when He appears, we shall appear with Him—hence we must be with Him before even He appears at all, yet at His coming), the coming of Christ and the public epiphany of His presence, with one of which the saints are directly connected, by being gathered together to Him; with the other, the day, because at His appearing He will execute judgment against the ungodly. They will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. But He will come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe; that is, they will be in the display of this glory in that day. They will appear with Him in glory—be like

Him. Now it is quite certain they will not appear with Him when they are caught up to meet Him in the air. Thus it is not merely particular expressions, though these are clear and forcible, but the bearing, and object, and course of reasoning of the whole chapter, which shews the distinction of the rapture of the saints before Christ appears, and the coming of the day when He is admired in them.

What is important to remark is, the entire difference of relationship in which the saints are put with Christ: we belong to Him, go to meet Him, appear with Him, are glorified together. The practical result is, not merely to clear up a question of dates and of time, but to change the whole spirit and character of our waiting and Christ's coming. We wait for Him to come and take us to Himself, the full realisation of our heavenly calling. There are no events connected with our relationship with Christ. We have no need of judgment to participate in blessing under Him; we go out of the midst of all events to meet Him above. The Jews and the world are delivered by judgments. Hence they must await the course of events and the full ripening of earthly evil for judgment; for the day will not come before. Hence, we find in the Psalms the appeal for judgment and the times of it, the declaration of the overwhelming character of evil, and the cry to God to shew Himself and render a reward to the proud. The church on earth has no need to seek this; she belongs to Christ, and will be caught up to heaven out of the evil.

I add a few words on another passage suggested to me as one by which difficulties have been created in some minds, really desirous of the truth. I mean the connection of chapters 4 and 5 of first Thessalonians. I

confess it does not affect my own in any way; but as it does the minds of others, it is well to notice it. The difficulty, if there be any, arises from a serious confusion in the minds of those who make it—the very confusion into which the Thessalonians were led, namely, taking tribulation for the day of Christ. For the day of Christ, Christ must appear. Let us only keep this clear in our minds, and all these difficulties vanish.

The Thessalonians looked so earnestly for Christ's coming, with no further knowledge of the. manner or order of it, that they thought believers who had died, and perhaps died even for Christ, would not be there to meet Him. This mistake the apostle corrects. He tells them that they must not grieve as those without hope; that they would not be left out of the cortege of glory; that Christ would bring them with Him. He then explains to them the manner, and shews that it is by their resurrection, which would take place before even the then living ones are changed; and when this is also wrought by divine power, all would go up to meet Him in the air, and so they would be for ever with the Lord. This parenthetically explains the manner by express revelation. They will go up to meet Him—subsequently, as we have seen from Colossians, appear with Him when He appears. The parenthetical part merely gives the association of the saints with Christ Himself, which is our proper portion.

But he had said, as a general truth, in answer to their fears, that God would bring them with Christ. This leads him naturally to the general subject. He had no need to speak of times and seasons. The Thessalonians knew perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, and when they (the world) say Peace and

safety, sudden destruction would come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; he adds, “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief: ye are all children of the day.” It is alleged that the apostle could not have said that the day would not overtake them as a thief, if they were not to feel liable to be in some sort overtaken by it. Now, if the teaching of the apostle be examined, even in the place, there is no possible ground for this: for the day of the Lord Christ must appear. But he had just taught them that they were to be caught up to meet Him in the air and be brought with Him. That is, he had taught them what made it impossible to suggest that the day could overtake them in any way or manner whatever. They were of the day, so to speak, as he indeed says, “ye are children of the day,” “let us who are of the day.” This passage says nothing of not being in the tribulation—we have treated that point already; but the objection confounds the tribulation and the day which really closes it. The tribulation is Satan’s power (though God’s judgment in woe); the day is Christ’s, who makes it and binds him. But the passage speaks not at all of the tribulation, though it supposes nothing of the kind; but it does speak of the day of the Lord, and with instruction as to the portion of the saints, which shews that it can have in no way whatever to do with them. They are of it and to come in its power. All it says is—The day will overtake them as a thief: but it will not overtake you, for ye are of the day. It says nothing of times and seasons, but negatives the application of the well-known truth to them.

The Rapture Of The Saints And The Character Of The Jewish Remnant:

Shewing The Position Which The Scriptures Give To The Remnant In Israel, In The Latter Day, In Prophecy, In The Psalms, And In The New Testament; And The Rapture Of The Saints, Gathered By The Holy Ghost Sent Down From Heaven, Before The Tribulation Of The Last Days.

The rapture of the saints to meet the Lord in the air, before His manifestation to the earth, and the existence of a Jewish remnant, in whom the Spirit of God is graciously working, before the Lord manifests Himself to them for their deliverance, is happily attracting the attention of Christians. It has made sufficient way to be the occasion of a renewed opposition, which can only do good by urging serious Christians to examine the scriptures on the subject—an examination, which will, under grace, spiritually enlarge their apprehensions on many most important points, full of blessing and interest for their souls. The true character of the church of God will appear, and the nature of its connection with Christ, on the one hand, and the ways of God in the government of the world on the other—the two great topics of which the Scriptures treat; besides that first of all concerns, the reconciling of the soul with God. On this last also, indeed, a right intelligence of the other two casts abundant light. The rapture of the saints before the appearing of Christ, strange as it may appear to some, has nothing to say to the church, directly or exclusively; but as we form part of those caught up, it, of course, interests us in the highest degree.48 The rapture is in

connection with the glory of the kingdom; and the saints in general, who are to reign in the kingdom, have part in this rapture. Still, indirectly, the enquiry leads to the question, What is the church? because the doctrine of the rapture of the saints, before the appearing of Christ, connects itself with the existence of a Jewish remnant waiting for deliverance after the rapture and before the appearing; and the position of this remnant connects itself, more or less, with the spiritual condition of the saints before the manifestation of the church on the earth.

Those who believe in the rapture of the church before the appearing of Christ hold that the church has a special and peculiar character and connection with Christ, in virtue of its being formed into one body by the descent of the Holy Ghost from heaven; and that, while salvation is always necessarily the same, the relative condition of the saints previously was a distinct one. They are convinced that in the Psalms a Jewish remnant is found, and that thoughts, feelings, hopes, fears, into which the Spirit of Christ enters prophetically with and for them, are there expressed in their behalf. This remnant is believed to be continually spoken of in the prophets, as existing before the appearing of the Lord, and waiting for that appearing, and delivered by it. But, further, the Lord Himself being a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, as well as a Saviour, presented Himself necessarily to Israel, according to these promises, and became associated with the remnant, and the leader of it, as far as it was awakened to know Him. Hence the interpretation of many passages of the New Testament also became involved in this question; and, indeed, the whole order of the

dispensations of God. But above all, the question of the church and its privileges, as formed by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, is important and essential in this matter, and a right understanding of it a key to the interpretation of the word of God.

On the other hand, the denial of the existence of a Jewish remnant, such as is above spoken of, involves the most grave and, indeed, fatal consequences; because it connects, especially through the contents of the Psalms, the Spirit of Christ, which speaks in them, with the ungodly and unconverted Jews, and makes the declarations of integrity and uprightness, not the breathings of a righteous soul pleading with God—yea, its pleadings furnished to it by the Spirit of Christ—but the pride of self-righteousness presenting itself to God. It is hard to suppose that any could allege that the Lord should give all this self-righteousness by revelation in connection with—yea, identified with—the breathings of Christ's Spirit and the piety flowing from it; but such is the theory of those who deny the rapture of the saints before Christ's appearing, and, consequently, the existence of a Jewish remnant, in which the Spirit of Christ is at work in connection with the hopes proper to Israel.

A point connected with this has been insisted on by the adversaries of the truth, to which I advert here only to leave it aside, as not touching the main point, even if true, and used by them only to obscure the great and vital truth of the rapture of the church—I mean the secrecy of the rapture. The two points on which it is important to have the clear testimony of Scripture are—first, that there will be a Jewish remnant at the end, with

a place belonging to itself as such; secondly, the true character of the church of God.

That there will be a Jewish remnant at the close, delivered and blessed by the Lord at His coming, blessed on earth, is, beyond all controversy, the doctrine of Scripture. This remnant has neither the church's heavenly blessings nor the church's hope. For those who have enquired into these subjects, it ought not to be necessary,to quote passages of scripture to prove this. Still, as it is in its consequences a very important point, I will reproduce here some of the principal passages which prove the fact that there is a remnant, and shew the state in which that remnant is. First, as regards the Jews, Zechariah 13:8,9: "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God."

As regards the ten tribes of Israel, the case is somewhat different; the rebels will not enter into the land. Of Ezekiel 20:33-38 I quote a part: "And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face… And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the Lord." Still they will be united in the land. See Ezekiel 37:11-28. In verse 19: "Behold, I will

take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand." Verse 24: "And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt … my tabernacle also shall be with them."

As regards Judah, Daniel tells us: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." I have no doubt verse 2 refers to those scattered in the countries; but on this point I do not dwell here. Only let the reader remark that the wise and those that instruct the49 many in righteousness are distinguished from the rest (v. 3; see chap. 11:32-35). The general blessing and promise to Israel may be seen at the close of Hosea 2 and 3. I do not quote in detail here, because these passages do not touch the question of a remnant. For the great day of trouble the reader may compare Jeremiah 30:4-9, and for the certainty of their blessing in general, that chapter, and chapters 31, 32, and 33. I might refer to a multitude of chapters besides, but this may suffice.

What I have quoted also shews that it is the remnant of Israel which is blessed with Israel's blessings. As it is said in Isaiah 10: "For though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant

shall return"; and verse 21, "the remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God." The points thus made clear are that it is the remnant which is blessed, and blessed with Israel's blessings, according to promise, in the land, with Jehovah as their God. The next and capital point (for what precedes is generally admitted), is their previous state: is it a Christian or church state? And now I pray the reader to mark one most important consequence of any supposition that this remnant of Israel is previously in a Christian or church standing. Their blessings are, the earthly glory, under Christ, in the land, according to the promises made to them.

Now, if their hopes have been church hopes, and their spiritual condition the same as ours, their hopes are not fulfilled, they are disappointed in them; or (and it is this I pray the reader especially to remark) if they are not, our hopes are reduced to the level of Jewish earthly and temporal ones. Now this is the great object of the enemy in all this scheme, for that it is the positive work of the enemy I have no doubt at all. In denying a distinct Jewish remnant, having Jewish faith, Jewish hopes, and resting on Jewish promises, it reduces the church to the level of these; and the value and power of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and the place of Christ's body in union with Him, is denied and lost. It is this which makes the question vital for Christians themselves. The great object of the enemy in denying the rapture of the saints before the appearing of the Lord, and in the consequent rejection of a distinct Jewish remnant, with Jewish hopes and Jewish piety, is to deny and destroy the proper faith of the church of God, and to set the church itself aside. Far be it from me

to say, that all who have fallen into this system have any such purpose, or are even aware of the effect; but the effect is nothing the less produced, and the loss theirs, though the intention be not. They are deceived by the enemy, though far from intending to deceive with him.

But my task now is to shew, from Scripture, that this honoured and glorified remnant are previously under the influence of God's Spirit—a people waiting on the Lord; I repeat, that those who are blessed as Israel by the Lord are previously waiting on the Lord, and that the Lord recognises them in this character.

There are two classes of texts referring to Israel in the latter day, to one of which I only refer here, and leave aside, though full of interest, as not bearing on our present subject. I speak of the texts which speak only of the intervention of God in power, whether to deliver or gather Israel, blessing the nation in contrast with their previous depression and misery, without touching on the question of a remnant, or the state in which that remnant is found. I refer to such passages as Amos 9, Jeremiah 30-33, and many like passages.

The other class refers explicitly to the despised remnant and its state previous to Jehovah's intervention in power to deliver. Texts of this character are what I would now lay before the reader, quoting as many as are needed to shew the existence of a godly though oppressed remnant, which is under the influence and working of the Spirit of God. This truth rests not on a few casual texts, but on the constant teaching of the Scriptures. For the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Himself concerning His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and that there is none shut up nor left.

Not only this, but it will be found that these scriptures connect this remnant of the latter day with those who had ears to hear when the prophets spoke. The connection of “the day,” or “that day,” with the testimony delivered by the prophet at the time, and that without supposed interruption or interval, is characteristic of prophetic scriptures. But we shall find that this is applicable to the testimony of Christ viewed as the great Prophet of Israel, by whose Spirit alone the prophets prophesied; and that thus the prophetic witness is continued in connection with a waiting remnant during His life, and even after His lifetime, in connection with God’s government of Israel, and as long as God dealt with that people as such; and that the doctrine of the church alone took the witness of God entirely out of this connection. The doctrine of a heavenly calling paved the way for this, though not the same thing as the church, though the church had surely a heavenly calling; while the destruction of Jerusalem, and the judgment of the nation connected with this event, and the warnings which refer to it, closed and broke all connection of God’s testimony with the nation, and left the church and the Gentiles the only acknowledged place of witness, as such, until that of the Jews is resumed, according to the clear testimony of the prophets.

Our first duty will be to produce the testimony of scripture to the existence of a godly Jewish remnant in the latter day, with Jewish hopes sanctioned of God. This once distinctly shewn, the whole question as to the state of things in the latter day is really solved, and the modified or transitional state of the remnant becomes easy to discern. God would not deprive the Jews of the

hopes of Israel till they deprive themselves of them; meanwhile He introduced the church, and their hopes gradually died down, giving place to exclusively heavenly ones, till judgment closed all other relationship between God and them. I shall begin by a very plain and strong testimony, which will set the state of the Jewish remnant in the latter day in the clearest light, and then quote passages to shew it was a constant theme of prophecy; some shewing the fact that a remnant will exist, others its character.

Malachi 3:16: “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.” Chapter 4: “For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts. Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the

coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth [land] with a curse."

Such are the last solemn words uttered by the prophetic Spirit to Israel before the coming of the Messiah and His precursor. The provisional application to Christ and John the baptist will be noticed, and is most important, to shew the way in which the testimony of their day took a Jewish character and application; but the last days are definitely here in view. A godly Jewish remnant is the very subject of the prophecy. They are contrasted with the wicked, they fear Jehovah's name, and unto them the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in His wings. They triumph judicially over their wicked oppressors in that day. They are identified with the godly in Israel in the prophet's time; they speak often one to another: God will spare His in that day. They are called on to remember Moses and the law given to him for all Israel. Nothing can be more distinct and plain, more specific and positive in its character; and it has all the peculiar weight of a final and closing testimony, the last words of prophecy to Israel.

Let us now see if this doctrine of a remnant is constantly recognised in the prophetic testimony, and in what way. Isaiah, a prophet who unfolds to us the ways of God with Israel as a whole, will abundantly instruct us on this point. The general principle, which connects the remnant with all God's moral dealings with Israel, is found in chapter 1:18, 19.

Before I proceed to quote the passages in detail, let me here state the great principles which this first citation

suggests. I have already noticed that, after the question of personal salvation or relationship to God, two great subjects present themselves to us in Scripture: the church, that sovereign grace which gives us a place along with Christ Himself in glory and blessing; and God's government of the world, of which Israel forms the centre and the immediate sphere. Only we have to remember that in this government grace must have a part, or it would not be the government of God. It would be simple judicial condemnation, and impossibility of blessing. These ways of God are revealed in Exodus 32, 33, 34, and Deuteronomy 32. The prophets, founding themselves on the law given in Horeb, are sent in grace to seek the fruit which the vine of the Lord's planting ought to have borne. They reproach Israel with not producing it; and solemnly warn the people of the consequences in judgment.

But as God, and therefore grace, was at work, there were the purposes and will of that grace to be revealed: only that it was not in Israel's case made effectual in a simple sovereign gift to the divine glory in a new creation, but in a display of God's ways in divine government in connection with the responsibility of man. This grace must be in Christ, for He is the centre of all God's ways. He is the Messiah, then, of the Jews, the King that is to reign in righteousness, and to display fully and in perfection God's immediate government. (See Psalm 101.) Hence there is a double test applicable in the ways of God in government in Israel. Have they profited by and glorified God in the privileges, in the enjoyment of which they were originally placed? Are they in a condition to meet Jehovah in glory, coming in

the Person of Christ? These two questions may be seen treated in Isaiah 5 and 6.

The question of the remnant is treated, let the reader remark, entirely in connection with the second of these subjects (i.e., in connection with Christ). It is the same nation, of course: the residue have the law necessarily before their consciences, and this fully maintained; but it is, after all, the presenting of Christ, the dealing of God in grace, which brought the state of the nation to an issue, separated the remnant, and brought judgment on the body. After sending the prophets, speaking by the Spirit of Christ which was in them, to seek fruit, the Lord of the vineyard said, I have yet one Son: it may be they will reverence my Son when they see Him. We all know the result. Judgment came upon the nation, a remnant clung to Him through grace. But this necessarily raised another point, “the kingdom” as well as the law. The kingdom was not set up, but the King was there, and the kingdom in that sense among them; and, moreover, since John the baptist, it was preached as at hand. It passed, on the rejection of the King, into its mysteries as unfolded in Matthew 13. It will be established on the earth; but on the return of the King from heaven, where He is gone to receive it. The reader may see that in Isaiah 5 the remnant is not brought into view; in chapter 6 it is, while the people’s hearts are made fat.

Now, the whole of this process of government is unfolded in Isaiah: in the early part, before the history of Hezekiah, in judgment, and connected with all God’s ways, and the national condition ending in the millennial glory and blessing in connection with Emmanuel the King; in the second part, after the history of Hezekiah,

in grace, shewing that Israel had failed in maintaining Jehovah's glory as His servant, that Jehovah had substituted Christ come in humiliation as His servant, "the true vine," and that He (rejected and despised of men) would inherit the Gentiles also. The restoration of Israel was a small thing; but still God would, in and with the remnant, bring in the final glory of Jerusalem and His people.

Thus the whole of the ways of God in government, in connection with Israel, are unfolded in this prophet. The question which exercises many saints connects itself with this whole in this way: Christ having been rejected, and having gone on high, has become the Head of the body, the church; but how far can we, admitting this great and blessed truth, consider the disciples, viewed as associated with Christ during His life—or even in some respects for a time, through God's patience, after His death—as entering (though, in result, then merged in the church) into the scheme and course of God's ways with Israel? Are they ever, whatever higher privileges God may have granted to them, viewed and treated as the remnant of Israel according to promise? How far did Christ act and speak in this character, or did He at all? And will not a remnant be found in the latter days, associated, according to God's will, with the hopes of, and promises to, Israel; taking up the link where it was suspended and broken off, a remnant to whom Jehovah (Jesus) will shew Himself in glory, to bless them on the earth, as having waited on Him and for Him, the Lord Jehovah, for their help in their trouble? Or is it the church which will continue to the appearing of Christ? And will there be no remnant of Israel waiting, with a

right Jewish faith owned of God, for the accomplishment of the promises? This is the point at issue.

Let us now examine the testimony of Isaiah as to the remnant. Firstly, we get the fact stated. The prophet (i.e., the Spirit of Christ), representing the testimony of judgment against sin, and God's grace pointing faith to Jehovah's faithfulness and a Messiah to come, thus lays down the state of Judah: "Why should ye be stricken any more? … Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and made like unto Gomorrah." This is the general prophetic view of the condition of Israel. At the prophet's point of view, such is Israel. Further, the nation must be restored by judgment; chap. 1:24-31. But there shall be a remnant left, and full glory and holiness with Christ for those who have escaped; chap. 4:2-6.

Judgment having been used to purify them, the glory is connected with Jerusalem on earth. We have already noticed the judgments of chapters 5 and 6; the former in respect of conferred privileges, the second of expected glory. In this second case, as the glory is necessarily connected with Messiah, the doctrine of the Jewish remnant is fully brought out. First, in general desolation and forsaking, the people's heart being made fat. This, we know, carries us on to the time of Christ, connecting Israel's state under the prophets with their state under Christ, in whose time this judgment was accomplished; Matt. 13:14, 15. And let the reader remark Acts 28:26, 27, shewing that there was a dealing with Israel, as such, in patience, after the Lord's rejection and departure.

But, secondly, the same passage shews us that there is a remnant (Isaiah 6:13)—a holy seed, which is the substance of the old and seemingly withered tree. It shall return and be eaten. Chapters 7 and 8 unfold this fully in connection with Emmanuel. The local enemies of Judah are set aside; and through the inroad of the Assyrian, the circumstances of the Jews connected with the latter day; for the enemy who then overran Judah is the often-named enemy of the latter day, of whom the prophet speaks continually as the overflowing scourge. At the same time, the sign of the virgin's Son, Emmanuel, is given to them. Assyria will overflow Judah. But this is not all; there is a confederacy of nations against Judah. Now we get the resource of the faithful, connecting this history with our particular point.

In presence of Judah's dangers from the confederacy of her enemies they were not to lean on human sources of strength, and confederate as men would. The Lord of hosts was to be in the sanctuary. Where found? Here it is Christ comes in. He separates the remnant, being a stone of stumbling to the nation itself: for He is the Lord of hosts. (Compare chap. 1.) He is a sanctuary for those who look to Him as such; for there is no question of atonement here. However needed it may be, it is not the subject. The Person of Christ is before us. The testimony is bound up and the law sealed among His disciples; and He teaches them, in the spirit of prophecy, to wait on Jehovah, who hides His face from the house of Jacob, and look for Him. In a word, He maintains by faith the connection of Jehovah with Israel in the remnant. He and the children which God has given Him are for signs and wonders to both the houses of Israel, from the Lord of hosts who dwells in mount Zion. Trouble and

judgments are then announced and the full deliverance of Israel through Messiah by victory and judgment. He shall reign upon the throne of David with judgment. (Chap. 9:3-7: in verse 3, read hast increased, instead of not.)

What is so important in this passage is, that while the church's position, undoubtedly assumed subsequently by the remnant who adhered to Christ, is passed over, their connection with Israel's hopes, and the accomplishment of Israel's hopes, are fully established through Him who teaches them to look to Him who hides His face from the house of Jacob, and wait for Him; for church blessings and grace they had not to wait. The church still waits for the accomplishment of this also; its own proper hopes are different, as we shall shew in due time. Here the remnant conneaed with Christ are connected with a proper and exclusively Jewish national hope.

The prophecy that follows (chap. 9:8) takes up the general history of Israel, its chastisements and hardness of heart, till the inroad of the Assyrian, the final instrument of God's anger, and in whose destruction His indignation is to cease. Here Israel, in Zion at least, is encouraged not to be afraid when the Assyrian is there; for God's indignation shall soon cease in his destruction. That is, God owns and warns in that day His people, has to say to them as such, and counsels and encourages them. Be it that the mass will not have heard, will have joined, as I believe they will have done, with Antichrist, to ward off the inroad (see chapter 28); still the remnant will hear, and will reap the fruit of this grace. All I insist on here is that there is a Jewish remnant who will have Jewish blessings, and who have Jehovah's witness and testimony for them to rely on, before He comes to

deliver. In this general history the ultimate result is more in view for the nation than the previous detail as to the remnant. Still, necessarily, general principles are maintained. Hence we find, in chapter 11, where the rod out of the stem of Jesse is introduced, that while in the main the millennial blessing is introduced, yet He reproves with equity for the meek of the earth. That is, He introduces a new order of things, in which pride is put down, and the poor and meek (that is, the remnant) vindicated. The Lord, when He was here, refused to judge thus, but the connection of this passage with those whom He owned in His testimony, and owned as those that should inherit the earth, is too evident to every reader of Scripture for me to insist on. There is, therefore, a remnant who are blessed with Jewish blessings, and who have previously a character suited to them, and who are owned in this character even by the Lord, and as heirs of this blessing.

That in the new establishment of the kingdom in heavenly power at the time of Christ's first coming they succeeded— and sometimes with very slow and reluctant faith—to other and higher blessings, is quite true; but this did not affect the truth suspended in its effectuation by Israel's unbelief for a time, but to be accomplished yet by Him who hides His face from the house of Jacob, and for whom, and whose time of mercy, they must now wait. When we examine the Psalms and Gospels, all this will come out with the clearest evidence. Chapters 13 and 14 I only note as shewing the way in which prophecy passes over from these present or near approaching judgments to the last day. The same remark applies to chapter 17: while there we find, verses 6, 7, the remnant and its moral state in the last

days. In chapter 24 the remnant are again found (v. 13, 14, 16); the righteous are owned. Judgment then comes in to establish the glory and blessing: but we find therein (chap. 25:4) the character of the delivered remnant very plainly recognised. Jehovah has been a strength to the poor and needy. Not only so, but this pious expectation is clearly stated (v. 9), and it shall be said in that day, “Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” This is very clear; but the whole of chapter 26 sets this position of the remnant in the strongest possible point of view.

“In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength: for he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy. The way of the just is uprightness. Thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just. Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee: the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn

righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them. Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them. Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen. Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”

Here the true state and character of these poor and needy are the special subject of the Spirit's teaching. God "most upright weighs the path of the just." They have waited for God in the way of His judgments. Their prayer was to Jehovah when His chastenings were upon them: "With my soul," says the righteous, speaking by the Spirit of Christ, "have I desired thee in the night." Jehovah will ordain peace for them, and finally desires them to enter into their doors and hide themselves for a little moment, till the indignation be overpast, for He was coming out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth. This passage needs no comment; its whole object is to own and shew the character of the remnant of Israel in connection with Israel's peace and glory, and before the judgment is executed (they waiting for and desiring the Lord).

I pass rapidly over chapters 28:5; 29:19; 30:18; 31:6; and cite them merely as confirming the same truth, which they do, however, very clearly. Chapter 33 furnishes a testimony to the point which I must not pass over. "The sinners in Zion," says the Lord, speaking of the last days of Zion, "are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty," v. 14-17. Here the righteous remnant in Zion, in her last day of

trouble, are brought under view as definitely as can possibly be, and their security announced on this very ground that they walk righteously. Chap. 35:3,4. The feeble remnant are encouraged while waiting for the Lord, who will surely come with vengeance. The ransomed of the Lord come to Zion with songs. It is a Jewish deliverance. That part of Isaiah which extends from chapter 40 to the end has quite another character. It is a series of reasonings with God's people, first, mainly on the point of idols in contrast with Babylon, introducing Cyrus by name; and, secondly, on the rejection of Christ. In the former part (chap. 40-48) the general restoration of the nation, taking the Babylonish captivity for its point of departure, is prophesied; so that a remnant previously in Jerusalem could evidently have little or no place. In chapter 49 Christ, who has laboured in vain in Israel, takes the place of Israel as servant; He is the true vine. Here the remnant at once comes in view (chap. 49:6); but after the rejection of Christ (chap. 50) their character in the last days (v. 10) is distinctly and definitely brought out: "they fear the Lord, and listen to the voice of his servant." In chapter 51:1, they follow after righteousness; and they know righteousness—have the law in their heart. Yet the comfort of Zion is not yet come, nor has His arm put on strength. But it does; and the redeemed of the Lord return to Zion with singing. The whole chapter follows out the progressive development of the appeals of Jehovah to the righteous remnant, and their deliverance by Him, in the most remarkable manner, with the remnant's appeal also to Jehovah, bringing in that deliverance. Remark, that in these appeals, righteousness, the circumstance of the grace shewn to Abraham, and the law in the heart, are spoken of as characterising or called for in the remnant

who follow after righteousness; and their deliverance is wrought, and Jerusalem called to stand up.

Afterwards (chap. 53) the exalted servant is introduced when the Lord has made bare His arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth see the salvation of the God of Israel; and the spared remnant recognise that the despised and rejected One had been bruised for their iniquities. Then comes out the full blessedness of Jerusalem. Her Maker is her husband. The call of chapter 55:6, 7, confirms the great principle; but I do not insist further upon it. Chapter 57, some of the righteous ones perish—have the lot of the Righteous One: the wicked will never have peace. Chapter 58 commences anew with warnings, shewing the spirit in which the godly Jew should walk; the result of which will be walking on the high places of the earth, and being fed with the heritage of God's servant Jacob. Yet he that departed from evil made himself a prey. Here was a suffering, godly remnant, in the midst of an ungodly nation; and Jehovah comes in in righteousness. Chapter 61 is remarkable in this, that the Lord quotes the early part of the statement, to apply it to Himself, but stops before the part which speaks of the day of vengeance, which is a part of the same sentence in the prophecy. Yet that day of vengeance comes to comfort all that mourn, to appoint to those that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified: and they shall build up the old wastes, and raise up the former desolations; and then all the blessing and glory of God's people is entered on.

Now here we get the Jewish remnant in the latter day, clearly connected with Christ's personal service on the earth when He first came, and all Christian or church blessing dropped out (the link of the latter day blessings of Zion, with His ministry being immediate, and the blessing being earthly, Jewish, and millennial, just indeed as in chapters 8 and 9). It is hardly possible to have anything clearer to prove, not only the existence of a Jewish remnant in the last day, owned of God as such, and blessed with Israel's blessing on the earth, but the connection of this with Christ's ministry as the great Prophet on the earth, to whom Israel was to hearken, the minister of the circumcision, the character withal of the remnant being in terms such as He owned in that ministry, though in order to the introduction of the church all was for a time suspended. This introduction of the Gentiles is explained in chapter 65, quoted by the apostle for this purpose, as well as to prove God's patience with Israel. In this chapter the remnant is again very distinctly and prominently introduced, declaring that, because of these, His servants, He will not destroy all Israel; they are the elect of Jehovah, who shall inherit His mountains—His servants, contrasted with those who forsake Him. They shall sing for joy of heart when misery and judgment shall come upon the rest. These (chap. 66) had hated those who trembled at Jehovah's word, and cast them out for His name's sake, and said, Let Jehovah be glorified: but He will appear to the joy of the poor, despised, but faithful remnant, and they shall be ashamed. They are righteous in heart and spirit before He comes; and, therefore, He appears, and gives them the earthly blessing.

I have gone through these prophecies that the reader may clearly see that the doctrine of a Jewish remnant (owned in this character by Jehovah, with Jewish hopes pressed on them by God's word, by Jehovah Himself—hopes to be fulfilled in the possession of earthly blessings in Zion, the holy land)—a remnant, pious, and waiting on Jehovah before His appearing to deliver them, and whose piety and confidence are owned by Him—is not a matter of speculation, or of the interpretation of some difficult or obscure text; but the clear, constant, impressive, and prominent testimony of the Spirit of God. He may have seen, too, that this remnant is directly and immediately connected, in character and in the divine testimony, with the position and character of the remnant at the time of Christ's presence on the earth, though meanwhile, for other purposes, the Lord may hide His face from the house of Jacob.

The Psalms will afford us the thoughts and feelings of this remnant in the double aspect of the righteous in connection with Jehovah, and the purposes of God as to His anointed, Christ—respectively the subjects of Psalms 1 and 2. The gospels will afford us (only that John's from its very nature treats the Jews from chapter 1 as reprobate) the transition to the previously hidden counsels of God as to the church— which last forms the second subject we have to treat of.

The Psalms begin (Psalm 1) with distinguishing the righteous man from the nation; that is, marking out the remnant morally. The ungodly are not so. They shall not stand in the judgment, nor in the congregation which the righteous will form. As Isaiah had said, in what we have examined, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the

wicked." Not only this, but the godly man is promised the present temporal blessing of the righteous Jew; and, further, the law is the measure of righteousness, in which he delights. Thus the first thing the Psalms do is to give the position of the remnant, and the results of that position in the government of God, while the blessing of God is pronounced upon the godly remnant itself.

The next thing is to present to us the heathen and Jewish rulers rising in rebellion against Jehovah and His Anointed, and the sure decree which sets Him, as Son of God, upon the throne of Zion, and calls upon the kings and judges of the earth to submit to Him lest they perish. Such are the thoughts of God, the effect of His government.

But another scene is opened out before it is accomplished. The godly man (and Christ, as such) finds himself a prey to the relentless hostilities of the ungodly. In Psalms 3-7 we have the various relative feelings of the faith of the remnant in this position—faith in spite of the taunts of enemies as to apparent desertion, calling upon God in peaceful confidence, appeal to God in contrast with the wicked, the distress so strong that God's chastening in displeasure is deprecated, and appeal against the wicked in this distress, looking to God's bringing it to an end as the righteous Judge. Then, in Psalm 8, the remnant own Jehovah their Lord as having made His name excellent in all the earth, while the Son of man, rejected when He came as Messiah,50 is set over all the works of His hands: that is, the full universal dominion of Christ is owned.

Now we have the remnant here very distinctly, and Jehovah their Lord; but we have the godly man. In Psalm 1, the righteous is plural in verse 6. But what undoubtedly is specially presented is Christ's entering in spirit, as the true godly one, into all the sorrows of the righteous remnant, which, though stated in principle, and specially in principle from Christ's first coming (when the position of the godly remnant and the rebellion of the nation were definitely and in their full character brought out), reach on to the final destruction of his enemies, as indeed stated in the two introductory Psalms. That it is stated in principle is evident from Psalm 1; that it is true in its main principle of Christ, the application of Psalm 2 by the apostles to the circumstances of Christ's death, and by Christ Himself of Psalm 8 on the same occasion, are ample proof. That it runs on to the close, and gives the sufferings of the remnant, and the judgment of the wicked then, is shewn by Psalm 1:5; 2:8-12; 3:7, 8; 7:6, and following; while Psalm 8 gives the result in blessing when the Son of man takes His place in the glory.

Thus the general character of the book (more correctly of the five books of Psalms, in which there is much more method than is supposed) is clearly given. It is the position of the godly remnant in Israel, and Christ entering in spirit wholly and fully into the position of this remnant, sometimes animating their feelings according to His mind in them in it, while sometimes the Spirit rises up to the expression of His own, as entered personally into it, so that what is there said becomes direct prophecy as to Christ Himself. The Lord, entering fully in grace (for in all their affliction He was afflicted) into their trial, appropriates more than once language

which is also true and applicable in the mouth of the remnant, though sometimes, as we have seen, it is exclusively Himself. In all, it is His Spirit graciously furnishing the expression of sorrows and desires in the trial by His perfect sympathy, or of which He is the source—sorrows and desires into which He has so personally entered, that often the terms employed belong prophetically to Him.

To proceed (Psalms 9 and 10), the trial and judgment of the last days are definitely gone into, and the state of the remnant plainly set forth; the needy expectations of the poor would not always be forgotten. The connection of the Lord with the remnant, and their praise for deliverance, is unfolded in Psalm 9; the extensive power of wickedness and distress of the remnant in Psalm 10; but the general subject and result is the same. In Psalms 11-15 the various thoughts, feelings, and apprehensions of the remnant in these circumstances are developed, Psalm 15 shewing the Jewish character of godliness which shall find its place in God's holy hill. All this, and its unquestionable carrying on of the subject to the last days (for we have in Psalm 8 the full final exaltation of Christ and blessing of Israel under the glory of Jehovah's name; and in Psalm 10 the heathen perished out of the land, and the Lord king for ever and ever) shews the existence and character of the remnant in that day, and its connection with the remnant in the time of Christ's personal presence in humiliation here on earth, in the very clearest possible way.

This is completed in Psalms 16 and 17, especially the first, by Christ's definitely taking this place of association with the godly remnant, as He did historically when He was baptised with John's baptism

(the submission to which, on the part of the remnant, was the first expression of the action of the Spirit of God in their separating in view of the thoroughly purging of the Jewish floor). In the path of that action, Christ, who surely needed no repentance, at once goes with them. The principle laid down in the beginning of this Psalm is brought forward in the epistle to the Hebrews,51 to shew that “both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one.” In the Psalm, Christ says, I take the place of a servant to Jehovah, not My divine place. He says to Jehovah, Thou art My Lord; My goodness extendeth not to Thee. He says (for that is the connection) to the saints on earth, the excellent, In them is all My delight. Having taken this path, and owning, leaning on, and desiring none but Jehovah, He follows the path of life, does not see corruption, and finds His eternal joy as Man in the presence and at the right hand of Jehovah. As Psalm 16 was His trust in God, so Psalm 17 is His appeal to His righteousness. He will behold His face in righteousness and be satisfied, awaking up in His likeness, the true eternal image of the invisible God. But here He brings in the remnant as associated with Him in His sorrow. In Psalm 16:2, it is absolutely Himself passing through death in the power of life. Mainly so in Psalm 17; only He associates the rest of the godly with Himself.

Psalm 18 is, I doubt not, the application of Christ’s death backwards and forwards (to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and to their final deliverance when, under the figure of David, all is subdued under Him). The Psalms which follow are remarkably interesting. In Psalm 19 we have the testimony of the creation, and the law. Psalm 20, Messiah; but now it is the sympathy of

the remnant with Him, as suggested by the prophetic Spirit. Psalm 21 the full result of His sorrows and desires recognised in His glory. Compare Psalm 20:4, and Psalm 21:2. The result is, length of days for ever and ever as man, and glory laid on Him. In result, His right hand finds out all His enemies. In Psalm 22 we have, not His sorrows from man merely, but the forsaking of God. He mentions these sorrows, and appeals to God not to forsake Him, and is forsaken as none other had been. The result is all grace, which He exercises on His full deliverance, in making known the deliverer's name to His brethren, and associating the remnant in praise with Him, then all Israel (for He has been heard as the poor man, so that they may trust in their cry); and then all the ends of the earth bow to Him in millennial fulness; and generations to be born learn what He has done as the source of their blessedness.

I will close this rapid review of the early Psalms with noticing Psalms 23 and 24. Psalm 23 as shewing Jehovah's faithful shepherd care through every difficulty, now exercised in our favour by Christ, is in principle the portion of every believer; but as He knows His sheep and is known of them, so He has walked in the path in which the sheep had to walk, and when He put them forth, went before them; and though the place of sheep was properly still theirs, not His, yet He has really walked in it; and, in that sense, this Psalm is the expression of His own confidence. Restoring is not exclusively from sin—though He does that for us, but from sorrow and oppression of heart; as, "now is my soul troubled and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour." In Psalm 24 we find, that He who has walked in the path of the sheep themselves in grace is the Lord of

Hosts Himself; and in the last day will take His place in glory in the hill and in the house of the glory of Jehovah. The character of him who shall have a place there, and blessing and righteousness from the God of his salvation, is found in verses 3-6. For the righteous remnant are all forgotten; only here, I apprehend, it goes out to Gentiles (so verses 5 and 6 seem to imply), for they shall rejoice in that day with His people. From this to Psalm 41, which closes the book (Psalm 40 giving the source of all the blessings in the counsels of God, and the willingness of Christ to undertake the accomplishment of His will), are largely and blessedly unfolded the various exercises of heart in confidence, joy, and sorrow, with exhortations and warnings suited to the godly in such circumstances, and Christ's entering into them given as a ground of confidence: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him," though this be in principle true of many a saint.

In this part, consequently (for it is never the case before Psalm 25), sins are referred to, and the blessedness of forgiveness; for, after all, the remnant had sins, and Christ took them. But the true godly character of the remnant, as under the influence of Christ's Spirit, is what is put forward in the first place as the true essential characteristic of the book, and of the position of those who are its immediate subjects. Even in Psalm 22, where the fact of God's forsaking is spoken of, the "Why?" shews the perfectly righteous man. Through grace we can answer the "Why?" but in the Psalm itself Christ is the righteous sufferer forsaken of God. Of Psalm 6 we can say, that the occasion of such fear to us would be our sins; but sins are not spoken of there—it was grief: but the wicked who pressed him he sends

away, as apart from them. In a word, sins are not spoken of before Psalm 25. This is after the whole introductory part of the connection of Christ with the remnant. Thence to the end of Psalm 41 every kind of practical exercise is gone through to which the remnant will be in fact subject, of which they need the exposition from God; but it is always of the godly these Psalms speak, even when forgiveness is sought or sins confessed. They acquaint us with the circumstances of the godly remnant in the latter day, though often on principles which all, by grace, can use. See Psalms 35 and 37.

Remark also the essential difference between the sufferings of Christ from man and from God; the first were for righteousness, the second for sin. The consequence of the first (Psalm 21) is, that He will make His enemies as a fiery oven in the day of His wrath. In the second He was bearing wrath: the consequence is all unmingled blessing, and nothing else, as its fruit. (See Psalm 22:11-23.)

Now, the reader has only to take up these Psalms and he will see the remnant recognised as a godly Jewish remnant, and their deliverance wrought by judgment (which is not the case of the raised or heaven-born saints in any case); their blessings, Jewish blessings; the character of their righteousness, Jewish. They wait on God, are owned; their cry is heard. They are exhorted to perseverance and dependence. The earth is their portion in many exhortations. Yet they go back to the place Christ held on the earth, and shew Him buried—not seeing corruption—and ascended on high. For their piety and waiting on the Lord for earthly deliverance, see Psalm 27 14, 13, 14, and indeed the whole Psalm; for their separation from the ungodly, Psalm 26; for their

trial and appeal, Psalm 31; for the positive reassuring of the saints, and confidence founded on Jehovah's ways with the poor man, Psalm 37, which is the full heart guidance and encouragement of God, the inheritance of the earth promised to those blessed of Jehovah. The whole Psalm should be read.

In Psalm 40 we have Christ's example to encourage. He waited patiently for the Lord. Then His whole work from His first undertaking it is shewn, and His taking the place Himself of the poor and needy. I only notice Psalm 41 as an example of a statement fulfilled in the case of Christ, but not properly a prophecy of Him. He was, above all, that poor man so often spoken of in the Psalms; but His brethren will tread in the same path, however feebly, and meet similar treachery, and what is done to one of the least of them is done to Him. The Lord God of Israel would accomplish His purposes in blessing.

I need not go into the same detail with the remaining four books. This gives the position of the remnant in the midst of Israel, all its great principles, and the place Christ has taken in their sorrows, Jehovah delivering, though in the end He is proved to be Jehovah.

In the second book, Psalms 52-72, they are cast out, the power of Antichrist established; but (Psalm 45) Messiah appears, and full deliverance is celebrated to the end of Psalm. 48. Psalm 49 is the world's instruction by the judgment; Psalm 50 the general judgment of Israel; Psalm 51 their confession of Christ's death now He has appeared; then the various relative exercises of heart under these circumstances. In Psalms 65, 66, 67 that praise which only waits for God's deliverance to burst

forth in Zion is sounded out, and thus the nations are to be made glad. Psalm 68, an ascended Christ is the real secret of all this; Psalm 69, a suffering Christ the basis of that ascended glory, and the security of the poor and needy in Zion. Psalms 70 and 71 apply it in the remnant, and against the wicked, in the Person of David, I doubt not to Israel, seemingly past hope; and Psalm 72 describes the full reign of peace. But take the end even of Psalm 69, which applies to Christ's sufferings; you will find the poor and needy owned in Zion, and the earthly Jewish types recognised and opened by God. The seed of His servants shall inherit it, and they that love His name shall dwell therein.

The third book, Psalms 73-89, goes out to all Israel, not simply the Jews, and gives God's government and dealing with them from the beginning, their fuller history in the latter days, the glory and blessing of Zion. The judgment of Israel under law, but election brought out, and the certainty of mercy by infallible promises to David's seed.

The fourth book is the bringing in the First-begotten into the world, directly connected with God's faithfulness to Israel, but reaching out to all nations. It shews how the suffering Christ could have a share in the restoration of Zion. He is the Eternal Creator; Psalm 102. In Psalm 101, we have His government as man.

In the closing book, the fifth, we have various consequences and effects on the bringing back of Israel —explanatory Psalms of the scheme of God, as Psalm 110; the law written on Israel's heart, Psalm 119; the Psalms of degrees commenting on God's ways; and then

the praises of God, with their various grounds, and pursued in view of millennial blessedness.

I have just thus run rapidly through the whole book to give a general idea of its connection with Christ and Israel. It would evidently be impossible to enter into the detail of the hundred and fifty Psalms here. I think, if the reader looks at them, he will see the leading ideas borne out. What he cannot fail to see, if anything can impress the truth, as I would trust it may, on his mind, is, that there is a godly pious Jewish remnant—ever true in principle—tried, oppressed, all but overwhelmed, in the latter day; whose piety Jehovah owns and encourages before their deliverance; which He rewards with Jewish blessings according to promise; with which Christ identifies Himself in spirit, as He did, in fact, when on earth with those of the like spirit; into all whose sorrows He enters, His own having given Him the tongue of the learned; whose sins He has borne; and that in this state of things the case is supposed of dying (Psalms 16 and 17) and heavenly joy provided in that case, but the hopes held out are of Jewish blessings, the earth, the holy hill, and deliverance wrought by judgment, that they may enjoy it (which we learn in the second and fourth books); that the ascension and sitting at God's right hand precede these blessings, Christ returning to judgment to bring them in—returning withal as Jehovah, and entering into the temple as such—assuring all things to Israel as David's seed, having all things under His feet as Son of man, and while King in Zion, subjecting all the nations as Son of God born in this world. The name of the Father and the thought of the church do not appear: room is left for one after His resurrection, when He calls the saints brethren; and

some figure of the other in Psalm 139, but no direct reference to either. The Holy Ghost's work, as come down from heaven, is intimated in the form of gifts in man, but so as Israel also will have them in the latter day— "Yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell among them"—only so far, however, intimated, as to say that Christ has received gifts for men.

Such is the testimony of the Psalms. While ministering to piety at all times, though often a piety with imperfect intelligence, their subject is the remnant of Israel, and the blessings of that remnant as such, of course, through Christ, the ministrations of His Spirit, preparing them to enjoy it with earthly though divinely given hopes, and in an earthly way. Note here, too, that all this connects itself with God's government of this world, and in no way with that sovereign grace, which sets a sinner in heavenly glory as one with Christ Himself, and a member of His body. But a heavenly calling is shewn in Him, and the possibility of passing to it by death; but it is only stated as to the Person of Christ directly, or in the general expression, "The heavens shall declare his righteousness."

What we have now to enquire into, is the extent to which the New Testament seals these hopes and promises to Israel, while introducing higher and heavenly hopes. For it is absolutely impossible that it can set them aside. It does not undo what God had before promised and assured to His people; that is certain and evident. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." It is said, in speaking of Israel, Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers. Has His rejection and

death set them aside? Far from it. It is just this the apostle insists on in Romans 11. It has made their accomplishment to be of pure grace, and has secured that accomplishment. Our only research, then, is as to this point: Was the remnant owned in connection with the kingdom then? Is this connection carried on to the latter days, so as to link the future restoration with the remnant then owned of and owning Christ, so as to shew that there will be a pious godly remnant owned of God, such as the Psalms speak of, before the manifestation of the Lord, and waiting for Him?

The beginning of the gospel of Luke announces Christ fully as thus coming in connection with Israel, before entering on the wider moral ground connected with the Gentiles, which Luke more especially does, and I think we may say because he does. The Spirit of God, at the commencement of this gospel, has put His seal on all the promises to, and hopes of, the godly remnant (that is, of Israel). The pious remnant were looking for redemption in Jerusalem, and knew one another thus; Luke 2:38. There were just and devout ones waiting for the consolation of Israel, who saw in Christ a light indeed to reveal the Gentiles, but the glory of God's people Israel. The angels brought good tidings to the shepherds, which were such to all the people (not all people). In the city of David a Saviour was born to them, which was Christ the Lord. The angels of the heavenly chorus alone, in this part of the gospel, celebrate the full result of Christ's coming to the earth—a result not yet produced, but, as the Lord Himself states, for the present the contrary, but which will be produced fully on the earth hereafter.

Prophetically, it was declared that many of Israel should be turned to the Lord their God, through him who came

in the spirit and power of Elias: he was to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Note the last expression, for it gives the divine intention as to any Elias service, and what the essential character of the remnant is. It is not sovereign grace visiting a sinner of the Gentiles in his sins, but a people prepared for the Lord before He comes. To Mary it is announced that the child born of her on the earth should be called the Son of the Highest, and that the throne of His father David should be given Him. He was Jesus, i.e., Jehovah the Saviour. Help to His servant Israel is the final subject of praise with Mary in the touching and beautiful interview between her and Elizabeth. And the song of Zacharias (Luke 1:67-79) is wholly composed of the divinely-given celebration of God's having visited and redeemed His people, and raised up a horn of salvation for them in the house of His servant David—a temporal salvation afforded—promises to Abraham in favour of his earthly seed to be fulfilled. The whole is too clear and definite to need any comment: a remnant already waiting, a people prepared for Jehovah, full earthly deliverance from Him. These are the topics divinely given by inspiration on the occasion of the birth of Christ. That they were interrupted, for the accomplishment of brighter and more blessed purposes, by His rejection, is quite true; but to suppose that He was to invalidate them would be to subvert divine testimonies and destroy divine faithfulness. That it is only a remnant is clearly shewn. He was for the fall, as well as for the rising up, of many in Israel. Further, all that passes, Mary's purification and the whole scene, places us on Jewish ground.

Matthew's whole gospel reveals to us the presentation of Christ to the Jews, and the substitution of the new

divine order for the Jewish on His rejection. Hence it becomes particularly important to see how far it assures us that, notwithstanding this new divine order, the old52 is still according to the mind of God to be accomplished in its time. We shall find that the yet future testimony of the servant of God in Israel is expressly linked up with the service of Christ's disciples in His lifetime, passing over, as the prophets are wont to do, the whole intervening church period unnoticed. This evangelist, from the outset, introduces Christ as the accomplishment of prophecy and promise. The very genealogy itself, and Matthew 1:22, and chap. 2:5, 15, suffice to point out this—the last shewing that Israel's history is taken up afresh in Christ, the true Vine, according to the principle of Isaiah 49:5.

In the sermon on the mount the remnant are morally distinguished; the qualities of those who should have part in the kingdom, are clearly and fully stated in contrast with the current self-righteousness of the Jews. Two great principles characterise this teaching of the Lord—the spiritual character of the law, and the revelation of the Father's name. It is to be remarked that persecution is supposed, and reward in heaven presented as the fruit of it. Thus we have the Lord's teaching in Israel clearly and fully brought before us. Obedience to His teaching was like a man building his house on the rock; while Israel was warned he was in the way with God, and if he did not come to agreement with Him, he would be cast into prison till all was paid. Compare Isaiah 40:2. It will be remarked, that all this is divine government, not divine salvation.

I pass by a multitude of indications of the same relationship of God with Israel, accompanied with

warnings of the introduction of the new order of things, to draw my reader's attention to a chapter which brings the point which occupies us out into the fullest light. In chapter 10 Christ sends out the twelve. They were not to go in the way of the Gentiles, nor to enter into a city of the Samaritans; but to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and declare the kingdom of heaven at hand; to enquire who was worthy (i.e., seek the righteous remnant, not poor sinners), and repel with fullest condemnation, shaking off the dust of their feet, those who did not receive them. Though in Israel they were "as sheep in the midst of wolves": it was an ungodly nation. They were to seek the worthy ones in it, speaking peace everywhere, but that peace resting only on the sons of peace. But in verse 18 this goes on to circumstances out of the Lord's lifetime. They were to be brought before Gentiles, and the Spirit of their Father to speak in them; not only so, but they would be hated of all men for Christ's name sake, and when persecuted in one city, go to another; for they would not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man was come.

Now here we have a mission exclusively to Israel, carried on during the Lord's lifetime, carried on by the Spirit afterwards, in which they were to endure to the end—a ministry which would not be closed nor completed, and still confined to the cities of Israel, till the Son of man came. How often do we see the prophets passing on from some notable circumstances in their day to "that day"! Here we find the Lord establishing a ministry exclusively to Israel, drawing out the remnant; carried on after Him by the Spirit, and carried on with the same objects still unfinished even when He comes as Son of man. They have only to do with Gentiles as

enemies, along with the wicked and hostile nation of the Jews. Nothing can be plainer in all its parts. They were, according to Jewish hopes and prospects, to gather out a remnant and prepare a people for the kingdom which was at hand. Such is the direct teaching of the Lord.

I note, in passing, that, besides the history of the mysteries of the kingdom to its close, consequent on His rejection, the church itself (chap. 16) and the glory of the kingdom (chap. 17) are announced in connection respectively with His titles of Son of the living God and Son of man. He and His disciples are (chap. 17:24-27) the sons of the kingdom. The judgment of the nation, viewed in their own responsibility, is clearly announced in divers parables under law and under the grace of Christ's mission at that time.

But in chapter 23 we come again to positive instructions on this point. The multitude and the disciples are both put on distinct Jewish ground, subjected to Moses's seat; yet they who filled it—all the teachers and the righteous of the nation— put under awful condemnation. Further, the apostolic mission (v. 34-36) is presented as "prophets, and wise men, and scribes," sent to the nation, as the prophets rejected of old had been), their rejection bringing present temporal judgment on that generation. Often would Jesus-Jehovah have gathered Jerusalem's children together—that Jerusalem who thus, in all times, stoned the prophets, and killed those sent to her; but she never would listen. Now her house was left desolate to her; she would not see her Lord till she repented. When, through grace, she was in the spirit of that by which God had perfected praise, in putting it into the mouth of babes and sucklings when Christ was rejected by the nation—namely, the confession of Psalm

118—then, and not before, she would see Christ again. In a word, there must be a prepared people, a people prepared to receive Him, saying, “Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord,” before the Lord would appear to them. Nothing, I apprehend, can be clearer than this, as to the position in which the Lord sets the multitude and the disciples; the character He gives to the witness of these last in Israel, after His decease, and the desolation of Jerusalem and the house, till repentance and a prepared heart had made them ready to receive the Lord, ready for the home here on earth, now to be desolate no more.

The Lord then proceeds in Matthew 24 to announce the judgment of Jerusalem, and the circumstances of His disciples in connection with the end of the age. The disciples enquire when should the temple be destroyed, what the sign of Christ’s coming, and of the end of the age. That the questions here relate to the Jewish people is perfectly evident: the end of the age (it is well known that “world” is a mistake) has no sense or application out of the sphere of Jewish thought. That it referred to this, in the mind of the disciples, is most clear; that the other question, when the temple should be destroyed, had this reference, it is not needed to say. Does the Lord’s answer continue on this ground? His answer is divided into two parts; a general warning to the end of verse 14, and particular circumstances from verse 15.

As to the first part, to whom do persons come, saying, I am the Christ? Not to Christians, as such, I suppose. It was an expectation that Christ might appear, into which the disciples, with Jewish expectations, might be seduced. The scene, sphere, and character, of deception are Jewish. Many troubles and wars would arise; but the

end of which they enquired was not yet. Before that arrived, the gospel of the kingdom, which Jesus, and even John the baptist, had announced, would be sent to all the Gentiles, and then the end come. Why even this difference, if the previous part were not Jewish in its sphere?

The latter part, from verse 16, demonstrates, as clearly as any language can do, that the Lord was referring to what was Jewish. The abomination of desolation of which Daniel spoke in a prophecy specially referring to his (Daniel's) people, is the point of departure: it would stand in the holy place. Those who were in Judea were to flee to the mountains; they were to pray that their flight should not be on the sabbath day. What language can be plainer, to shew the place, the people, the circumstances, which occupy the Saviour's thoughts? the rather because we get the saints, and the nations, and their judgments, in chapter 25.

That is (to resume the evidence this gospel affords us), it takes up the ministry in Christ's time (chap. 10), and pursues it to the close—the coming of the Son of man—in an exclusively Jewish character. The Lord takes up the disciples and the multitude (chap. 23) on definitely Jewish ground, subjecting them to Moses' chair, while rejecting those that sat there; and declares, at the close, that repentance must characterise the remnant before they would see Him again: and then, shewing the judgment on the house, shews the nation guilty—iniquity abounding—the testimony of the remnant in the midst of this iniquity—the true witness of the kingdom—and extending before the end to all nations; and. finally, He returns to the last great tribulation and occupies Himself with the godly remnant in Judea and Jerusalem,

previous to His own appearing; warning them that new pretences would arise of His being there, a suggestion having no application whatever to Christians, properly so called, because they are to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. A person must have renounced Christian hopes before such a pretence could be a snare to him. To an earthly remnant the presence of Christ upon earth is the sum of all their rightful hopes.

As regards the subsequent continuation of this testimony in the midst of Jerusalem the Lord on the cross (Luke 23:34) intercedes for them, saying, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” To this the Holy Ghost, in witness, responds, saying by the mouth of Peter (Acts 3:17), “Now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that [not “when”] the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus, whom the heaven must receive till the times of the restitution of all things, of which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” Now, this gracious continuation of the testimony to Israel, as such (see verses 25, 26—the remnant is distinguished by the reception of the testimony, v. 23), shews that repentance was called for in order to Christ’s return. Those would be cut off who did not receive his prophetic testimony. Stephen bears witness to their always resisting the Holy Ghost; and to Saul, the most active resister of the Spirit amongst them, the willing helper of the slayers of the witness, the full doctrine of the church is revealed. The persecuted witnesses are owned to be members of Christ Himself; yet, though the church be set up (and we have it in fact

in Acts 2 before Peter's testimony), and Paul be made a minister of it, he preaches first to the Jews only; when they count themselves unworthy of eternal life, he turns to the Gentiles, and pronounces, as witness of this church ministry, as the Lord in His living witness here (Matt. 13:14), that the judgment pronounced by Isaiah must soon fall upon them; but it is only in Acts 28 that this is finally said—the last scriptural witness that we have historically.

The general doctrine of a remnant in Israel is clearly stated in the epistle to the Romans; an elect remnant spared, who, not continuing in unbelief, will be graffed in again, and that into their own olive tree; not into the Christian assembly, which was not their own olive tree—they had never been broken out of that, nor had the believing branches continued in it. There is an elect remnant of Israel which shall be brought to believe, and be graffed into their own olive tree, and become the nation—the "all Israel." There are many passages in the prophets, as Joel 2, Zechariah 9, to which it may suffice thus to refer.

We will now proceed to take up the other capital point of which we desired to speak—that in which God shews the sovereign fulness of His grace. The historical development of the doctrine we have hinted at, and we will briefly state it here. We have the largest and fullest warrant for saying, that it was entirely unrevealed in the Old Testament. Speaking of the mystery, the admission of the Gentiles to be of the one body in the assembly of God, Paul says (Rom. 16:25, 26), "The preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest and by prophetic scriptures [not "the

scriptures of the prophets"], according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith," etc. In Ephesians 3:4, 5, "The mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and of the same body"; and (v. 9), "the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus." So in Colossians 1:24, "for his body's sake, the church, whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God, which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." This doctrine, of which Paul, as he states in the Colossians, was a minister, as well as of the gospel, in order to complete the word of God, was thus wholly unknown to the saints of the Old Testament. Much more was utterly obscure; but this was hid in God. Other things they might have were for an age to come, not for themselves, as the promise of the Spirit and the Messiah's glory and redemption; but this they knew not at all. When the Father had revealed to Simon Bar-jonas the truth of the Person of Christ, that He was the Son of the living God (not merely the Christ), Christ could then speak of the church; for it was to be founded on that. But He spoke of it only prophetically, and as a future thing— "on this rock I will build my church." It was by resurrection He was declared Son of God with power: so that Satan's power was of no avail; and His death was

needed to gather together in one the children of God, wherever scattered abroad—His departure, that the Comforter might come.

Except the corn of wheat fell into the ground and died, it abode alone. When Christ had died—had gone up on high— the great foundation was laid for all blessings, and in particular for the church. And the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, came down according to promise; and the assembly, the church, was formed; and the Lord added daily to the church such as should be saved (the residue); Acts 2:47. That was the way He now disposed of them, though His promises to Israel remained sure. The doctrine of the church, however, was not taught as far as Scripture informs us. The Christians remained strictly attached to Judaism, zealous of the law; priests were obedient to the faith, nor seem to have ceased to be priests. Peter never even teaches that Jesus is the Son of God; his doctrine is, “Him whom ye have crucified, God hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins”: God had made Him both Lord and Christ.

What will, perhaps, surprise the reader, the church is never named in the epistles but by Paul. A particular assembly is named by John; but the assembly or church as a whole, the body of Christ, is spoken of by Paul only; nor, consequently, I may add, the rapture of the saints before the appearing of Christ. God raised up, we learn in the Acts, a free ministry outside the college of the apostles. This brought out the fullest hatred of the Jews; and Stephen, an eminent instrument of God in this ministry, is put to death. Heaven receives its first-fruits of the power of the Holy Ghost, of the church; heaven itself is opened, and a heavenly Christ is seen—a man in

glory is seen. Conformed to Christ, the spirit of Stephen joins Him on high, and the final tale of Judaism was told in blood: they always resisted the Holy Ghost. God did not dwell in a house made by hands. This changed everything; a heavenly gathering before Christ's return was actually begun.

This, however, was individual; but the enmity of the Jew was to assume a yet more active and violent character. Not content with making havoc of the church at Jerusalem, Saul must persecute them to strange cities; but while occupied with this, and close to Damascus for the purpose, he is arrested by the Lord's revealing Himself in glory to him, and telling him that those he was persecuting were Himself— "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; why persecutest thou me?" Here, then, sovereign grace abounded over final resistance to the Holy Ghost Himself. The foundation for the gospel of the glory was laid, and the identification of all the saints on earth with their glorified Head in heaven was made the starting-point for Paul's testimony as to what His church was. Of this he became minister. For a heavenly, glorious Christ, Jew or Gentile were all one; they were all one in Him.

The reception of Cornelius was entrusted to Peter, that the new truth might not be a separate one; but unity, as manifested on the earth, continues, with a new element of truth introduced. The unity of Jew or Gentile, as one body in Christ, was entrusted as a testimony to Paul. He was minister of the church to complete the word of God. He who alone verbally speaks of the church, what does he teach? "God hath put all things under his feet [Christ's, exalted on high], and gave him to be head over all things to the church [assembly], which is his body,

the fulness of him who filleth all in all." Such, then, is the church. It is an assembly which, when Christ is exalted on high and fills all things, is His body, the fulness or completion of the Head.

So in Colossians 1. "He is the Head of the body, the church, the firstborn from the dead." So in detail, Romans 12, "We being many are one body in Christ, and members one of another." So 1 Corinthians 12, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit… Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

Another character as to the formal existence of the church on earth is, that we, Jew and Gentile (Eph. 2), are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. The manner of its building is the breaking down the middle wall of partition, and to make of twain one new man; or, as is expressed in a passage already quoted, the mystery is, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and of one body. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which it was formed, took place on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:8), which it was the distinctive title of Christ to confer (John 1:33, 34), and which for the saints He ascended up on high to receive. Acts 2:33; compare John 16:7.

In a word, the church, or assembly, is the body of Christ, formed, when the Head was exalted, by the Holy Ghost, which He then sent down to gather together the saints into unity. Before Israel's being owned as a nation, the

saints walked in individual faith; when Israel was owned, they were individual members of a nation owned as such as God's people, but of which the vast mass were unconverted, the unity of which, such as it was, was in the flesh—a unity with which the Spirit had nothing to do, and which, consequently excluded Gentiles. After the death and exaltation of Christ, who gave Himself, not for that nation only, but to gather together in one the children of God which were scattered abroad, all was changed in this respect; the distinction of Jew and Gentiles effaced; both alike (through faith) reconciled to God, and gathered into the unity of one assembly by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which assembly is the church, i.e., the assembly of God, the body of Christ, the dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost on earth. We are not enquiring here how far it could be corrupted or ruined, viewed as the house of God, or dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost on earth; but what it is in the primitive scriptural view of it. Nothing is that but itself.

This assembly is, as may be seen (Eph. 5), the bride of Christ. The word is applied to the particular assemblies of Christians in different places, because they formed the assembly of God in that place; but, if the word be taken as Scripture uses it, it is not possible to attach any equivocal sense to it. It is God's assembly, formed by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, when the Head had been exalted as Man on high. It is His body and His bride. Translate the Greek word by the natural English one, and no one would have a moment's hesitation as to what it meant—the assembly, or the assembly of God. The Lord added daily to the assembly. He set some in the assembly; firstly, apostles; secondly, prophets.

It is called to participate in the sufferings of Christ, and He will present it to Himself as His bride, as Eve to Adam, a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. When the Lord added to the assembly such as should be saved, it is quite clear that it was not to that to which they belonged already; and their adding to it, an act which shewed they did not belong to it as members of the Jewish nation, not even if they were previously pious. It was a newly instituted body, formed in unity by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and united to the Head, Christ, who was there.

We have now to enquire what the testimony of God is as to its joining Him there. The church's joining Christ has nothing to do with Christ's appearing or coming to earth. Her place is elsewhere. She sits in Him already in heavenly places. She has to be brought there as to bodily presence. Christ could not remain with His disciples here, and tells them, "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am there ye may be also." The thing she has to expect for herself, then, is not, though sure of that also, Christ's appearing, but her being taken up where He is. And so the apostle, speaking of it in detail, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

We go up to meet Christ in the air. Nothing clearer, then, than that we are to go up to meet Him, and not await His coming to earth; but that this coming to receive us

to Himself is not His appearing is still clearer, if we pay attention to Colossians 3, which shews that we are already with Him when He shall appear. “When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” This identification of the church’s hope and glory with Christ Himself is of the essence of the church’s blessing. He is our life, our righteousness; the glory given to Him He has given us: we are members of His body, we are of His flesh and of His bones. We reign with Him, suffer with Him, are glorified together, being like Him—conformed to His image. He is hid in God: our life is hid with Him in glory; but for this we must be caught up to meet Him, and that before He appears at all when He does, we are already with Him and appear with Him. This does not state the epoch of the rapture of the church, but, what is far more important, it does clearly shew the entire difference of relationship of the heavenly saints with Christ, and of those who only see Him when He appears. The one are blessed under His reign, and are connected with the earth; the others are identified with Himself—with Him who reigns—appear and reign with Him. Wherever this is enfeebled, Satan is at work.

There are truths common to all, such as being manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ. There are those which are the prerogative of faith; and such is our association with Christ, the Firstborn among many brethren, the being His bride and His body. He who awaits Christ’s appearing, as the time in which he is to go to be with Him, has denied the proper hope and proper relationship of the church with Christ. On this point there can be no compromise. Ignorance of privilege is one thing (it is our lot, all of us, in one shape

or other), the denial of it another. When once we have seen that we are to appear with Christ, and that, consequently, our hope of Christ's coming for us is not properly His appearing, all our habits of thought and our spiritual affections are changed. Our proper hope is not even the glory in which we appear with Him, wonderful as that is, but this, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." "So shall we ever be with the Lord."

Three several ways of presenting the return of Christ are found in Scripture. There is, first, the general fact. We do not expect things to go on to an unknown end of dissolution; we are converted to wait for God's Son from heaven. Nothing precise and distinctive is here presented. We do not think that things go on as they were from the creation of the world. Christ will come again, and we wait for Him. This is the abiding thought in every instructed Christian, whatever degree of light he may have as to details. He expects Christ, so that, morally, the fashion of this world is closed for him: the object of his hope is elsewhere.

Next, the scene of this world is confusion and evil to his spirit; he knows that it will ripen into rebellion, and that God will judge this world by that Man whom He hath ordained —that Christ will therefore judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom—that He will set up His earthly kingdom by judgment—further, that the effect of His governmental judgment will be manifested in the saints at that time—that if it be the day of the Lord for this world, it is the time when the responsibility of the saints will be brought to its manifested issue or result. He will return and take account with His servants, and set one over ten cities,

another over five. He knows that the appearing of Christ is naturally and necessarily connected with manifested judgment; hence he finds responsibility always referred to this in Scripture.

Thirdly, besides the facts of Christ's coming and manifested righteousness, there is, through grace, special privilege, the proper association of the saints with Christ, which must have their accomplishment also. No doubt the saints will be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ, to give an account of themselves to God; but this is not separated from privilege, for they arrive there already like Himself. Yea, He has come Himself to fetch them there. This special association with Christ is made good, not by Christ's appearing, as we have seen (though manifested there), but by His coming to receive them to Himself where He is; His introducing them into His Father's house, and in the kingdom placing them in the heavenly seat of government with Himself. This is effectuated by His coming, and causing them, raised or changed, to come up and meet Him in the air. This is the rapture of the saints, preceding their and Christ's appearing: at that they appear with Him. So that at their rapture He has not appeared yet.

Such is the general doctrine of the rapture of the church — a doctrine of the last importance; because it is immediately connected with the relationship of the church to Christ, its entire separation from the world and its portion. It is the act which crowns its perfect justification. This rapture before the appearing of Christ is a matter of express revelation, as we have seen from Colossians 3:4.

As to the time of this rapture, no one, of course, knows it. But the difference, in this respect, between it and the appearing is very marked, in what is most important. At the appearing comes the judgment of this world: hence it connects itself with, and closes, its history; and before it that history must have run on to its revealed result, revealed events must have occurred, and the objects of judgment must have appeared on the scene and accomplished what is predicted of them. The church is associated with Christ already gone, is not of the world as He was not, is risen with Him, has its life hid with Him in God. There is no earthly event between it and heaven. It must have been gathered, and Christ rise up from the Father's throne to receive it: that is all. It is this conviction, that the church is properly heavenly, in its calling and relationship with Christ, forming no part of the course of events of the earth, which makes its rapture so simple and clear; and on the other hand, it shews how the denial of its rapture brings down the church to an earthly position, and destroys its whole spiritual character and position. Our calling is on high. Events are on earth. Prophecy does not relate to heaven. The Christian's hope is not a prophetic subject at all. It is the promise that Christ will come and receive him to Himself, that where He is the Christian may be also.

Although the question be already answered in principle, it may be well to put it formally here, When is the Christian to expect the Lord? I answer, Always. It is his right spiritual character. His always doing it is that by which his right spiritual state is characterised. Be ye "as men that wait for their Lord when he shall return from the wedding, that they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he

cometh, shall find watching. Verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them… Be ye therefore ready also, for at such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." And, after speaking of service to the saints, the Lord adds, "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth, I say unto you, He will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if that servant say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and begin to beat the men-servants and the maid-servants … he will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." Here, as a general principle, the constant waiting for the Lord as a present thing is given as characterising those who are blessed when the Lord comes, and who reign over all things. That which leads the wicked servant into all mischief is, not the denial of the Lord's coming, but the loss of the sense and present expectation of it.

This was the origin of the church's departure from simplicity, and its fall into clerical authority and worldliness—the cause of the loss of its spiritual authority. The saints went out, left the world and worldly religion by going out, to meet the Bridegroom. It characterised them as a present thing. It was recalled to its primitive position and liveliness by the renewal of the immediate expectation of Him. He did tarry, in fact; and the sense of His coming was lost. "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" was what aroused and prepared them. No events, no earthly circumstances, intervene or modify the direct summons. They go out to meet Him. There is no other thought, no confusion with the government of this world, none of any previous dealing

in respect of the marriage-feast (His union with the Jews). They go back with Him to it.

That the apostle lived in, and taught, this immediate expectation, as the proper primitive doctrine of the Spirit of God, is evident, whatever degree of light as to detail may have been possessed. The Thessalonians were converted to wait for God's Son from heaven; with very little clearness of light; but they had been so taught, and Paul approves of their expectation as a divine witness to the world, of which the world itself spake. It was his manner of entering in—they were waiting for Him. It was not a prophetic explanation of events they possessed: there is no event, I repeat, between us and heaven. God's Son was coming from heaven; and they were waiting for Him as the fruit of Paul's entering in among them, owned and delighted in by himself. They drew certain conclusions from it in which they erred, which Paul corrected (as he did another mistake, induced by false teachers, in the second epistle); but their constant expectation was right. The word even is used only here, and speaks of awaiting; but Paul was doing as much. He speaks to them of "we which are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord." We are told this is a class. Be it so. But it is a class in which Paul reckons himself, shewing that that class could and ought so to await the coming of the Lord. Why not we?

But there were, as we have seen, errors. The Thessalonians were distressed about those who perished for Jesus' sake; fearing, as it appears (so much did they expect Christ in their life-time), that they would not be there to enjoy His coming. Paul corrects this error, by shewing that the dead would be raised, and then the

living go up to meet Christ with them. But he is so far from weakening the Thessalonians' present expectation of Christ during their life-time, that he confirms it by associating himself with them in this expectation. The circumstance, that it was a conclusion drawn from this expectation which misled the Thessalonians so that they were troubled about the saints' dying, gives uncommon force to the statement of the apostle. How anxiously would he have set them right, had they been wrong on this, and shewn them that he never had led them, nor meant to have led them, to such an expectation—that it was an excited and erroneous way of looking at the Lord's coming! How would he have shewn them (the occasion and need of correcting error being thus offered), as do many now, that there were many events to occur, much history of the church and world to be accomplished, before the Lord could come! But, quite the contrary, he corrects the mistake they did make as to the dead, shewing them that they should first rise; and they, being changed, all go up together on high; and confirms in the strongest way their own present expectation by, as I have said, associating himself with it. Was he deceived, as rationalists allege, in having and confirming in others this thought? Surely not. The moment was not revealed, as we know: the constant expectation was right. It produced a liveliness of expectation, a courage in persecution, a brightness of heart-association with the Lord's Person and personal approval, of which Paul will reap the blessed fruits when the moment does come—of which the Thessalonians did reap the fruits every day, in the liveliness of their faith, and the brightness of their hope, and the labour of their love—and of which we do: in a witness of liveliness of affection and liberty of heart, and superiority to

circumstances, of which no epistle in Scripture affords a like example. Would there were a little more enthusiasm in Christians, if it be founded on a hope sanctioned by the apostle himself!

But those circumstances to which the Thessalonians were exposed, were very trying; and if lively, they were young in the faith. They had heard that the day of the Lord would come —a terrible day of trouble and of judgment. False teachers came and sought to upset their minds, alleging even a letter of Paul, and declarations of the Spirit, that that day was there. If hope was somewhat enfeebled by their sufferings, as perhaps was the case (as the apostle speaks only of their faith and love here), this unsettling of their minds is not difficult to conceive, entirely inexperienced as they were, and subjected to trial. But the Lord was there to help them, as the wicked one to trouble them. It is to be remarked that the verse translated (2 Thess. 2), “as that the day of the Lord is at hand,” should be, beyond all controversy or question, “as that the day of the Lord were present.” It is the word translated elsewhere present, in contrast with things to come. They were troubled and upset by the impression that the day of the Lord, that great and terrible day, was actually come. No wonder the apostle could not speak of their hope. Before the apostle touches on their mistake, and unfolds the true order of events, with heavenly skill he sets their minds at ease. This he does in the first chapter. He glories in their patience and faith in their persecutions. It was a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to those that troubled them, and to them that were troubled rest with Paul and others (he was associated in the sorrow and the rest too) when the Lord Jesus shall

be revealed from heaven in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in (not “to receive to himself”) all them that believe (for the Thessalonians had believed) in that day.

Here all is set in its place. It was Christ’s appearing in glory which would bring in the day. If that day had been then present, it was without Christ. If His appearing brought it in, He was not going to trouble those that were His, but surely those who troubled them. That was a righteous matter with God; so that the terrible persecution the Thessalonians were undergoing was but a pledge with a righteous God that, when the kingdom came, they would have rest and glory. They would not have trouble when Christ appeared, and when the kingdom was established by judgment. In that day their portion would be ease and delight; nay, indeed, more than that—they would be the admiration of the world, or rather Christ in them, in that day.

Thus, by introducing Christ and God’s righteous ways, all was as clear as possible, and the delusion dispelled. The Thessalonians’ minds were re-established. It is ever so: introduce Christ and God’s ways, and all is clear and peace. They can now, calmly and with a restored soul, in which known truths had their place, receive fresh and satisfying light on the point which troubled them. The moment we see that they thought the day of the Lord was there, all is perfectly simple and clear.

It has been supposed that “rest … when” means the moment of relief. Nothing is more unfounded. The reasoning of the apostle is that, Christ introducing the

day, it was not when He had the upper hand that His people would be troubled and ill-treated. Was He going to treat them so? In the day exactly the contrary would be the case: they would enjoy rest and blessing; the persecutors would be troubled. The Greek used for rest by no means conveys always the same meaning of a moment of relaxation arriving; it is never so used in Scripture. The other passages are Acts 24:23; 2 Corinthians 2:12; chap. 7:5; chap. 8:13. It is used in the same sense here. In 2 Cor. 8:13, the Greek words for ‘burden,’ ‘tribulation,’ and ‘rest,’ are in a similar opposition as here in 2 Thess. 1:6, 7.

We come now to the very easy understanding of 2 Thessalonians 2, in which to the relieved Thessalonians the apostle unfolds, by fresh instructions, the order in which events will really take place. I only remark, before turning to it, that if “rest with us” meant relief at the moment of the revealing of Christ, it would mean that the Thessalonians and Paul were to expect Christ’s appearing in their lifetime, as the term of their trials, and the moment of their rest. This reply would be complete and absolute to those who allege this; but it would not be the truth, nor scriptural. It is not the force of the Greek here, nor is it the meaning of the passage, nor would such an expectation, using the same Greek word in this way, be a scripturally enlightened one, such as an inspired apostle would give. It proves the absurdity of their reasoning, but no more.

As regards 2 Thessalonians 2, as I have said, the apostle unfolds additional truth. He had already told the Thessalonians, that they would be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Hence their being under the day of Christ on the earth was an absolute impossibility, since

they would be in heaven, with the executor of the wrath of it, before it arrived. This motive he now pleads. They fancied (or at least were unsettled as to it by the false teachers) that the day was actually come—consequently, without Christ's coming. Hence he says, "We beseech you, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, nor troubled … as that the day of Christ was come." Both facts, and both together, proved that the day of Christ was not there; already evident by the moral absurdity of the day of the Lord being against the Lord's people; but here he leads them on to positive ground. Christ must come for it, and their portion was to be gathered up to Him before the day arrived.

Another thing which shewed the day was not then come (this supposition being the groundwork of all the apostle's reasoning, and, indeed, the occasion of the whole epistle) was, that the day would not come till the apostasy came, and the man of sin was revealed. Before the day of Christ could be present on the earth, events must occur—the object of judgment must be there. Thus the mistakes of the Thessalonians only gave occasion to clearer and surer light. And here I must remark, that confounding the day of the Lord and His coming to receive the church is not a mere mistake in terms, but a subversion of the whole nature of the relationship between Christ and the church, and Christ and the world, an apostate world; and a losing sight wholly of the great moral bearing of a day coming on the world, of which the Old Testament is full as well as the New. To mix this up with "I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also," is to

confound the whole bearing of Christ's affections towards His own, with the terror of an apparition which every eye shall see—a confounding the flaming fire of destructive judgment with the dearest confidences of perfect grace, and bringing down the hopes of the saints, founded on the all-perfect grace and truth of Christ, to the level of an event common to all, and terrible in its glory. It is the practical establishment of the error to correct which the second epistle to the Thessalonians was written. It not only sets aside the distinctive revelation of our being caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and the distinctive existence and position of the church with it; but it denies the position which (it is here, as elsewhere, revealed) we shall have with Christ when He appears. When He appears we shall appear with Him; He will come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe (not to receive them up to Himself). The scripture is as plain as possible. He who confounds the day of Christ with His coming to receive the church knows neither what His day is, nor His coming, nor the church.

Do the saints not await His coming to earth, and His appearing? Undoubtedly: but not as the time of their joining Him; for, I repeat, they will appear with Him: as walking on earth, they await this event. They await it as the great eventful act of God's government, in which Christ is glorified, as that which will set the earth right, as that in which all responsibility will be brought to its manifest result. It is the grand act of that display of power which sets everything in its place according to the divine judgment, and by which evil power is set aside. But they do not expect it as that which is to fulfil and accomplish their own personal blessedness

according to sovereign grace in their own relationship with Christ (that is, in the Father's house). Christ's appearing will be the full establishment of divine power in government, and the result of responsibility; the rapture of the church, and its entrance into the Father's house, the accomplishment of sovereign grace towards the saints in their full individual blessedness—of the hopes which communion with the Father and the Son has given them. Another special result will follow for the church—the marriage of the Lamb. But this is distinctive and peculiar, not the completing of individual grace.

The moment of the rapture none can know. Its distinctive character is vital for him before whom the truth is set. I will now cite some passages of detail, which shew our exemption from the tribulation predicted, a position in which the world will find itself, and in an especially manner the Jewish people restored to their land. In the address to the Philadelphian church, and in reference to the near coming of the Lord, and giving, as the ground of the promise, that they had kept the word of Christ's patience (for He waits also), it is declared that they shall be kept from the hour of temptation which shall come on all the world to try them which dwell upon the earth. This last description of persons is frequently so designated in the Revelation, and expresses, surely, much more than the fact that they live on earth. They are characterised by having their dwelling-place there.

In Revelation 12:10-12, it is said, "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And

they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! “Now I do not take this as the rapture, because I believe it had taken place before, and is pointed out in the timeless rapture of the man-child, for the church is one with Christ, and shall rule the nations as He. But I find a positive revelation, that three years and a half before the close (that is the last half-week of Daniel), Satan is cast down, the accuser of the brethren is no longer in heaven, the triumph of those accused is come—their trial passed; they had been in trial and conflict, and had overcome, and conflict is ended for dwellers in heaven. It begins, and with great wrath of Satan, for the inhabiters of earth. There had been persecution, there had been death. For one class it had now ceased, and for another it was just going to begin. And note, this is exactly the epoch spoken of by Daniel, which the Lord refers to as the tribulation such as never was since there was a nation; nor have I the smallest doubt that the woman represents the Jews. I am aware, as to the remant of her seed, difficulty has been raised from the expression, “the testimony of Jesus Christ.” But the answer is in the book itself: “The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.” It will be a prophetic, not a church, testimony—a very different thing. Compare with this the end of Isaiah 50, where the remnant are expressly declared to hear the voice of God’s servant (that is, of Christ as prophet).

I only notice these as accessory and explanatory, as my object is not controversial, but to bring out plainly the testimony of Scripture on the Jewish remnant and on the

church. Renewed opposition to these truths has come recently under my eye, but what is alleged was only proof to me how, when men are not taught of God on any subject, little difficulties hide and obliterate immense and fundamental truths, which a child, learning of God in simplicity, could not go astray upon. Indeed, wherever the connection between Christ and the church is not seen, reasoning on these subjects can only bring into deeper darkness.

But, as I have said, my object is not controversy here; and I pursue not my impressions on this point farther, however clear and strong they may be. If the reader has laid hold of the truth, clearly proved from Scripture, that there is a distinct Jewish remnant at the end, with Jewish hopes given of God, and a Jewish character, that the church has its own and peculiar association with Christ, as the body with its Head, called into union by the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven; if we have seen that we' shall not abide down here till Christ appears, since it is positively declared—revealed—that we shall appear with Him when He appears, he will have got hold of clear land-marks which will guide him safely through details, in the discovery and order of which patience will surely be needed; but through the knowledge of these landmarks, the details will not take him out of the main road, will never enfeeble divine relationship, upon which the holiest and most precious affections are necessarily dependent, and in which, indeed, they have their origin. It is, indeed, this last consideration which makes these subjects so vital and important to my mind. All right affections depend on divinely constituted relationships, and cannot exist out of them. If I know not the relationship of the church to Christ, and the position in

which He has set us, along with Himself in reference to the Father, none of the affections suited to these positions can have any place in my soul; and my spiritual discernment and judgment as to everything will suffer in proportion. The recrudescence of opposition to the truths on these points shews that it is making progress. What I have seen, written against it only seems to me to mark deeper darkness and more ignorance of the great outlines of scripture than earlier opposition, though the general spirit and character be the same.

As regards passing through the tribulation (a question which everyone knows is that which always arises on this matter) the scripture seems to me to make it very simple. How can I tell there will be a tribulation? I shall be answered, 'Passages of scripture positively declare there will be such.' I admit it: but there are no passages which reveal it, which do not also shew that the church will not be in it. As far as I am aware they are these: Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21; Mark 13:19; to which we may add Revelation 3:10; 7:14. I am not aware of any other which can be applied to this subject. Now who are in this tribulation in the passages which speak of it in Scripture? Revelation 7:14 could alone leave open the smallest question. Of this I will speak. Of all the rest, the positive evidence is, that the Jews are in it—the church not.

Jeremiah tells us, "It is the time of Jacob's trouble," the day which none is like. This shews to whom it belongs. Daniel shews us that that day of "trouble, such as there never was since there was a nation," was the day of indignation upon Israel. Daniel's people, as the whole prophecy declares, are there in question, and they will be delivered (that is, those written in the book). The

Saviour, who applies this passage in Matthew 24, leaves not the smallest doubt that it applies to those of Israel, and, even exclusively, to Palestine, or, still narrower as to locality, Judea and Jerusalem. They are to flee to the mountains. The abomination of desolation is in the holy place. Those in the country are not to return. They are the days of vengeance to accomplish what is written. They are to desire their flight should not be on a sabbath day. In a word, the tribulation is in Jerusalem, in Judea, and among Jews. Mark, I need not comment on; it is evidently the same event. Thus Jeremiah, Daniel, the Lord Himself, in Matthew and Mark, citing and applying Daniel, declare that the tribulation regards the Jews. It is the time of Jacob's trouble.

But Revelation 3 speaks of a time of temptation; and here it is said that it shall come on the world, to try them who dwell on the earth. This, therefore, is more general; it is not the great tribulation of Jeremiah, Daniel, and Matthew, which is exclusively Jewish. Here we have the church. But what is said of this time of temptation as regards the church who await Christ? They shall be kept out of it. That is, the passages which speak of the tribulation "which none is like" (and from which alone we know there is one) declare unanimously it is for the Jews and not for the church. The passage which, addressed to the church, refers to an hour of temptation, declares in a precious promise that, having kept the word of Christ's patience, she shall be kept out of that hour. If I turn to Revelation 12, which, in effect, speaks of the three years and a half trial, I am told the conflict of the heavenly saints is over before it begins. The woe is for others (that is, for Jews). Christ was not born of the church; nor is it the church who has to say,

“To us a Son is born.” The positive witness is as clear as clear can be. The statement, that there is a tribulation, declares the Jews will be in it, the church kept out of it. But there is a passage obscure to most; Rev. 7. It is one of the signs of error and the enemy’s work, that he takes an obscure passage to trouble the minds of saints and unsettle them by this means in great and plain truths. This passage may be employed so, and hence I notice it also. That it is not the church which is spoken of here is clear from the promise to Philadelphia. All confirms this. It is a different class from the elders, who represent the heavenly kings and priests to God. One of the elders explains who they are. I would remark that the expression (v. 15) “dwell among them” is a wholly false translation. It is “shall tabernacle,” or “dwell,” over them. The word is used for “dwelling with,” with other Greek prepositions, as en meta, en meso, but not with epi, whereas this is the preposition used for overshadowing, as in Numbers 9, with the word translated “abode” (v. 18) and “tarried” (v. 22), it is true; but the Greek word in John 1:14, “to tabernacle,” is not used in the LXX (unless once in some MSS, where it has nothing to do with this). There can hardly be a doubt of the allusion, I think, to the cloud which was a shelter over Israel.

Hence the only conferred blessing spoken of as the result is this protection, nourishment, refreshment, and the cessation of sorrow. They come in after the sealing of the elect of the twelve tribes of Israel, as a distinct class from all before—a new and distinct class from the elders; one of whom has to give an account who they are as such. Hence their position is as different as possible from those in chapter 5:10. They are talked about, and it

is explained who they are; but, save as to owning their own salvation through God and the Lamb, they are silent. They are sheltered, refreshed, fed, blessed, but take no part with others; indeed, the elders do not praise here. They have the privilege of serving God continually in His temple;53 but they are no part of the scene above, who celebrate and unfold the acts of God: on the contrary, as we have seen, those who are, are presented as a separate class, capable of explaining the enigma of this additional class of persons who are found standing before the throne and before the Lamb. There is no praising for others, no intercession^ language. One has only to compare the passage above cited to see the difference—to see they are another class. To use this passage, certainly obscure in its application (in which those who have been in the great tribulation are definitely distinguished from the heavenly company of crowned and enthroned elders, their whole position being different), to destroy the force of one expressly declaring that those who have kept the word of Christ's patience will be kept out of it, is certainly the opposite of a sound interpretation of Scripture. In result, what is the evidence of Scripture on this point? There are six passages which speak of tribulation, and by which we know there will be tribulation. Four are clear and positive in applying it to the Jews; one declares that the faithful church saints will be kept out of it; and the last, speaking of Gentiles, distinguishes them, in the most marked way, from those who represent the church, and saints in heaven, the crowned and enthroned elders. Thus direct Scripture is as clear as clear can be. We have seen that, indirectly, Revelation 2 confirms this view. What remains? General principles. Hence the attempt to bring the church into the tribulation;54 and

this is the secret of the whole matter—the confounding the church of God with the Jews and with the world, their hopes, and the trials that come upon them.

48 Hence, indeed, it is often, in a practical way, treated of, in Scripture, as applicable to those who now believe, without going farther.

49 Not “turn many to righteousness.” It refers to chapter 11:33, and other passages, where these wise ones are noticed. (See chapter 11:35; 12:10.)

50 Hence, when drawing to the close of His ministry, Christ forbids to say He is the Christ: the Son of man was to suffer. Compare Luke 9.

51 The quotation, as is shewn by reference to the LXX, is from Isaiah 8:17. But if this be referred to, it will only still more strongly confirm this connection of Christ with the place of the remnant, as the securer and inspirer of their Jewish hopes.

52 When I say the old, it is not, of course, under the old covenant. It was God’s wisdom to accomplish all promised and predicted, but on the pure ground of grace. (See the close of Romans 11.)

53 Remark, that in the heavenly Jerusalem there is no temple; so that the service here spoken of does not apply to that blessed place.

54 One tract I have seen goes so far (shewing the utter destruction of all spiritual discernment, which is the result of these views) that it speaks of the loss to the church in not going through this tribulation (thus confounding suffering for Christ with the terrible chastening of God for sin and unbelief—the temptation which the disciples were taught to pray to be kept from).

Are There Two Half-Weeks In The Apocalypse?

Dear Mr. Editor,

It has long been assumed that two half-weeks are spoken of in the Apocalypse. In this I have for years myself acquiesced, and I think rested on the contrast of the beast's overcoming the saints, and the witnesses destroying their enemies, as confirming this assumption. I hardly know how I was led some time back to call it in question; but I have been: and I should be glad to present the point as a question, in case you or your readers were given of God to throw any light upon it. Though strongly calling in question that two half-weeks are spoken of, my mind is still quite open to conviction; and I have nothing whatever to sustain in it, and desire only to know what the Spirit of God has really meant to teach us in the word as to it. I hardly know whether such a question enters into the object of the "Bible Treasury"; but it may elicit some light from others as to the matter. I shall give a kind of exposition of the subject from Scripture, considered from the point of view I have spoken of.

Seventy weeks are determined on Daniel's people and his holy city, to complete the blessing and close their eventful history—the display of divine government in the earth. After seven and sixty-two weeks Messiah is cut off and has nothing. There are seven and sixty-two till Messiah the Prince. His cutting off is indefinite; only it is after the sixty-two weeks. Then the prince that comes establishes a covenant with the many (that is, the mass of the people). Messiah's relationship, on the contrary,

had been with the residue, though presented to all the people. Then, in the dividing of the week, he causes the sacrifice and oblation to cease; and then, because of the protection of abominations (idols), there is a desolator. I give you Daniel as I understand it.

No persecutions are here spoken of in the first half-week, nor indeed is any first half-week spoken of. The prince confirms the covenant one week, and the half-weeks are marked by his change of conduct in the middle of the week. In Daniel 7 we have, without any note of period, the general characteristic of the beast—that he wears out the heavenly saints, and in general makes war with the saints till the Ancient of days comes. But the times and laws (not the saints) are delivered into his hand for half a week, i.e., for a time, times, and half a time. In Matthew 24 there is general testimony, such as there was in Christ's time—only it reaches the Gentiles—till the last half-week, which begins the abomination of desolations. This exclusive allusion to the last half-week in Matthew 24 had often struck me. In Revelation 13 the beast is given power to act forty and two months. He blasphemes God and them that dwell in heaven; and he makes war with the saints (not "those that dwell in heaven, compare chapter 12:12), and overcomes them. One would surely, at first sight, suppose that power to act forty-two months hardly meant that he does so eighty-four.

Thus far, certainly, the last half-week seems to be noted. The second beast acts in presence of the first, who is the beast with the deadly wound healed. Compare Revelation 17:8. In this last chapter no date or period is given; it is the description of the beast; but his existence is stated, and it is as ascending out of the bottomless pit

(he who kills the witnesses in chapter 11) when all worship him save the elect. The Gentiles (chap. 11:2) tread the city under foot forty and two months—one would suppose therefore no longer. It is true the temple and the altar are spared; but I surely think that this applies to the destruction of true condition of worship and true worshippers, not locality, though in Jewish connection. But if this be true of verse 2, verse 3 applies to the period spoken of in verse 2. This would put the third woe (Rev. 10:7, when he sounds, as he is just about to do, I apprehend is the sense), at the close. The casting down of Satan, the flight of the woman, and the changing of times and laws, would coincide as to epoch with the ascent of the beast out of the bottomless pit. I have thus given a kind of statement of the whole matter, sufficient to present the question, “Are there two half-weeks spoken of in the Apocalypse?” I do not reason on it, nor reply to objections which might suggest themselves. If my question draws out any remarks, that will be the time to enquire into their justice.

A collateral subject suggests itself, on which I would say a few words. There are heavenly saints spoken of in Daniel 7. Does this bring the church into the scene? It implies, I think, nothing as to the church; rather, I think, the contrary—makes its distinctive place more clear, though the church be heavenly. We have, in Daniel, the saints of heavenlies, as belonging to, and connected with, these earthly questions, where there is not the smallest allusion to the church, where all is connected with the beasts and the true kingdom over the earth. Abraham was a heavenly saint, though he saw Christ’s day and was glad. He looked forward with joy to this, but was himself obliged to take it in another way. Such is

the case supposed in the sermon on the mount. “The meek shall inherit the earth”; but the reward of the persecuted will be great in heaven. So in the Psalms, especially book 1 (Psalm 1-41), where even Christ is shewn the path of life (Psalm 16), so as to be in God’s presence, and the saint (as Christ Himself) is satisfied (Psalm 17), waking up after Jehovah’s likeness. Yet the remnant are promised earthly blessings very plainly and clearly. See Psalms 1, 37, whence the expression in Matthew 5 is drawn; so Psalm 34, and others, as Psalms 9, 10, and indeed also Psalm 8, shew.

The passages, then, in Daniel, as others, point out clearly a residue, who, connected with earthly things, and passing through them, but purified by trials out of them, and led to look up on high, have finally their portion there where they have been taught to look. But, in general, I apprehend their desire after heavenly things is more connected with weariness of heart in conflict while under the law—for they are under the law—though no doubt they do in spirit thereby dwell in heaven, for the enjoyment of which the new nature renders them capable.

As to the church, remark that in Ephesians 1 it is brought out quite apart from the full blessing of individuals, developed with such inexpressible beauty; first, in their calling; then, in the knowledge given them of the purpose of God to gather together all in one, in Christ, and in the inheritance obtained in Him. After that the apostle prays that they may understand these two points of God’s calling and inheritance in the saints. But then he adds another demand, brought in addition, that they might know the exceeding greatness of His power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from

the dead; and then first brings in the church as His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all; thus giving the church, which He had not before spoken of, a peculiar place in union with Christ, as raised from the dead (compare Col. 1:18),55 and sitting at the right hand of God. God gave Him, the raised Jesus, to be Head—over all things—to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all. It has no existence but united to Him, and has its existence consequent on His exaltation. Hence it is said we are “one body in Christ” (Rom. 12:5), and still stronger, “so also is Christ” (1 Cor. 12:12).

And here note that in Ephesians 1 Christ is considered as the exalted Man. The chapter speaks of His (God’s) mighty power which He wrought in Christ. Christ is looked at as man, and subjected to death, and raised again by another, even God; that is, it is a Christ really Living in time. When the forming of the body on earth by the Holy Ghost is spoken of, the word leads us to the same truth: “By one Spirit are we all baptised into one body,” 1 Cor. 12:13. There is (Eph. 4) “one body and one Spirit… one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” I go on to “one baptism,” because it shews that the apostle is speaking of those who are brought in by the known death and resurrection of Christ. The testimony of 1 Corinthians is beyond controversy; and while the Ephesians shews individual privilege, in the highest way, as relationship, position, and character, making the individual the proper object of every ministration of the church, the more the Scriptures are searched into, the more the church—the assembly—will be seen to have a distinct and peculiar position, and to be a special and distinctive body. Hebrews 12 shews it very clearly. Thus,

in the midst of the general assembly of heaven, “to an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly, and to the church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven.” It is really forgotten that, unless the question of authorship be raised on the last mentioned passage, in the apostolic writings none ever speaks of “the church” but Paul.

I resume the points as to the half-weeks. Christ’s connection with the first half-week is left entirely vague. Seventy weeks are determined on the city and the sanctuary to bring in blessing. Then there are seven and sixty-two weeks till Messiah the Prince. A week thus remains. But after the sixty-two weeks Messiah is cut off and has nothing—after their fulfilment, but His time passes for nothing; it drops through, as He is rejected. We can say that in His death He laid the foundation of the new covenant, and that, in some sort, during His life, He may be said to have been dealing with the remnant in establishing a covenant associating them on certain principles with Himself. I apprehend what is called “confirming a [not the] covenant” means forming it as on established principles of association. This the prince does with the mass or the many. This prince (not the Messiah) is alone said to do it, and in the dividing of the week, which is referred to in connection with him only, he subverts the whole order of Jewish worship, breaks their apparent link with God, making sacrifice and offering cease. In Daniel 9 we have only the earthly historical view of the matter.

But, at this epoch, Satan is cast down from heaven, the blasphemous beast comes up out of the bottomless pit—he whose deadly wound was healed. Thus, incontrovertibly, the last half-week is the great subject of

testimony: it alone is referred to by the Lord; nor indeed is the first referred to as a half week when its existence is proved; Dan. 9:27. Of course, as the prince changes his conduct in the dividing of the week, there must have been a half-week before; but the “confirming” is referred to the week in general. Satan’s (to him, probably, unlooked for) rejection from heaven changes the whole scene. He, as to the mass, sets aside the public outward testimony to God. This would account for the witnesses being raised up, as witnesses before the God of the earth; because (Satan being become the Satan of the earth then) God’s witness must be there where Satan’s power is and refer to it, just as the church’s ought to the heavenly now. The particular protection of the witnesses accounts for their subsisting in spite of it. They were as Moses and Elias in reference to the power of evil.

In reply to the questions of your correspondent, “J.M., etc.”, in the number for February, I remark: First, if the seven vials are the details of what passes under the seventh trumpet, the question is decided. But where is the proof of this? I have always held chapter 15 as a distinct vision (“I saw another great sign in heaven”), chapters 12-14 to be continuous, or rather to belong to one subject, giving the origin and different aspects of the same series of events up to the final judgment executed at the coming of the Son of man, and then chapter 15 to give another special course of judicial events up to the destruction of Babylon, before the coming of the Lord, which is only brought in subsequently in chapter 19. This part of the difficulty, therefore, falls to the ground, for chapters 15-18 precede the last event of chapter 14. The question whether chapters 15-18 are included in the last trumpet

remains untouched, but at any rate to be proved, and not, as yet, a proof of anything.

Next, it is assumed that chapter 11:7, the beast that ascen-deth out of the bottomless pit means “who then ascends out of the bottomless pit”; but of this there is no proof. It is a characteristic, and not a date. Is it not rather to be believed that he takes this character when Satan is cast down from heaven, and has great rage, and that the dragon then gives him his throne and great authority?

Further, your correspondent assumes too much when he says on chapter 12:10, that heavenly celebration long precedes earthly accomplishment, if he would use it as proving that the announcement that the worldly kingdom is come, may precede by three years and a half its coming. The cause of the celebration in chapter 12:10, which does anticipate, I do not doubt, ulterior results, is given, and is a present thing, and it is not said “the kingdom of the world,” etc. as in chapter 11:15—a very notable difference. The cause is that after open war, Satan or the dragon is cast down, and though there is an application to the state of certain suffering saints, the heavens only and their inhabitants are called on to rejoice. To the earth and its inhabitants woe is announced from the power of Satan. Surely this is a different thing from Christ’s kingdom of this world is come; though they might well say, “Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ; for the accuser is cast down.” For in truth the whole state of things was changed, and the heavenly saints delivered, and power established in heaven, in contrast with the meeting accusations.

There remains only one difficulty, that three days and a half occur before God interposes in deliverance. The same difficulty presented itself to me long ago, on the other scheme. For if the seventh trumpet be the beginning of the last half-week, as it is alleged to be by the connection of chapter 12:10 with chapter 6:15, then we have at least three days and a half and something more from chapter 11:14 (cometh quickly) intercalated between the end of the first half week and the beginning of the second. I hardly think the fact that a short interval elapsed between the last act of the beast and the public execution of judgment upon him can make a substantial difficulty. It may be the time of the gathering of the armies when Christ is coming as a thief, or the reaping of the earth before the vintage, neither of which could be called the practising of the beast. The difficulty seems to me to be less than intercalating something more than three days and a half between the half-weeks. If the three days and a half be put into the last half-week, which would not be, in itself, I apprehend, a difficulty, the whole connection of chapter 11 with chapter 12 and the explanation of chapter 12:10 and following verses falls to the ground. Yet that we have, certainly, some definite half-week in chapter 12 seems clear. I think the subject requires a fuller investigation. I can only here answer the difficulties presented by "J.M.", which do not seem to me to result, as yet, in the rejection of the thought that there is only one half-week spoken of in the Apocalypse. The removal of an objection is not a proof necessarily of the thing objected to. For that I still wait with my mind entirely free.

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

J.N.D.

55 The Colossians speaks only of the resurrection. This falls in with another point observable in this epistle: life, or the new nature, is referred to, rather than the Holy Ghost, as in the Ephesians; for the presence of the Holy Ghost depends on Christ’s exaltation. This difference of the epistles, which I cannot follow out here, is full of instruction.

The Blessing Of The Tribes By Jacob

It seems to me that we have the whole moral history of Israel, the purposes of God, and the accomplishment of them in Christ as regards this people, in the blessing of Jacob in Genesis 49. I can only briefly set it forth here. First, Israel as it was, and its moral failure in Reuben, Simeon, and Levi. The universal characters of the development of sin are given: corruption and violence; defiling and instruments of cruelty. God in the testimony of the Spirit rejects their assembly. The violent passions are the latter form. The beast is destroyed after Babylon. God's purposes are in Judah. The King, the Lawgiver, is there; the gathering of the peoples is to be to Him. But we know when presented to the responsibility of Israel He was rejected. There was no gathering of the peoples. The staves of Beauty and Bands were broken—those by which the people were to be gathered and the two divisions of Israel united in one under one head. Then, in Zebulun and Issachar, Israel is presented as mixed up with the world, like Tyre in Ezekiel, and content to be subject to strangers for ease, as if they were not God's people at all. Dan is still, in spite of all, owned, and represents Israel recognized as God's portion in spite of all, but at the same time points out the apostasy and power of Satan in Israel. The remnant, taught of God, look beyond the whole position of the people to God's own salvation, who cannot but be faithful to His word. Thereupon we have unmingled blessing, crowned with the heavenly and earthly glory of a rejected Christ—channel of all the resources of God's blessing to His people beyond all previous knowledge of blessing. Israel had been overcome, but overcomes at

the last. Asher (not like Zebulun) has his fatness in his own pastures, and royal dainties are there. In Naphtali is joyful liberty—the liberty God has given, and full of goodly words. Then comes the crown of all—the rejected one of his brethren sorely tried and shot at: Christ—personally considered the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel made strong by the power of God, exalted when rejected, to be at the King's right hand and Head over the Gentiles—is the exhaustless source of every divine blessing with which the heart of man can be made glad; all richly coming from God are upon the crown of the head of Him who was separated from His brethren. Such is Christ as rejected and glorified, and the medium as partaking of heavenly glory of all divinely given blessings which are to His glory who was separated from His brethren. In Benjamin, finally, we have the royal strength, a kingly power in Israel, and of the people when Christ is returned as King amongst them, and makes Judah His goodly horse in the day of battle, and fills His bow with Ephraim. Such in general is the prospect of which the outlines seem to me to be given in this prophecy.

The Coming Of The Lord And The Translation Of The Church

Editor's Note56

Direct testimony to the existence of a Jewish remnant with Jewish hopes, sanctioned of the Lord, having been published elsewhere, and the doctrine of the church also having been briefly brought out, as connected with the Lord’s coming, the object here is to examine, in a supplementary notice, some difficulties which a serious mind might find in the suggestions of those who oppose the rapture of the church. It is true that if the statements of Scripture be adequately weighed, and the truths which have been drawn from it received into the heart, the answer to all these difficulties is already possessed; or if we be unable to explain these objections, they have no force against the direct proofs Scripture gives of the truth, save to prove our own incapacity to solve them.

Thus it is insisted on, in the pamphlet before us, pages 13, 14, that we wait with the world for the appearing of Christ. “In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4, after speaking of the day of the Lord coming on the world as a thief in the night, the apostle adds, ‘But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief.’ The natural inference being, that the day of the Lord will come simultaneously upon the world and the church; only it will find the latter prepared for it, while it will be destruction to the former.” Now, take the plain expression of one passage which sums up the declarations of many, “when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” It at

once shews that, whatever may be the divine reasons for referring us to the Lord's appearing, as a time of blessing, or in connection with our responsibility (and Scripture does both), it is perfectly certain that it is not meant that we shall not be with Christ before He appears, nor that we shall be personally on earth as others are, so that He will appear to us and the earth at the same time. This we know to be false doctrine; because the word tells us that we shall then appear, or be manifested, along with Him.

But we learn more as to the teaching of those who would persuade us of it. The aim of that teaching, its direct and necessary tendency, is to destroy our distinctive relationship with Christ, and to connect us with the world, reducing us to the lowest possible level of hope which can be true for one who is not actually lost. Our proper heavenly connection with Christ is lost. This aim is accompanied by so obvious a loss of all spiritual intelligence, such an obliteration of the positive teaching of Christ and the Holy Ghost, that it becomes at once evident, to those not under its influence, what its source is.

Nor can anything be more groundless than the special objections. The first is a very favourite one of this school. "It [i.e., the view combated] takes away from us our direct and full interest in considerable portions of the gospels, and almost the whole of the Apocalypse; for these are regarded as strictly and properly belonging only to certain parties, Jews and Gentiles, which will come under the divine dealings after the removal of the church," etc. (pages 5, 6). To talk, then, of robbing us of much in the gospels and the Apocalypse is, we repeat, the more absurd, since the special privilege of the

heavenly saints is to know what does not concern them. In virtue of this, they are “friends,” not because of having external signs given. To encourage the weak faith of the tried Jewish remnant they were really given, as will appear more clearly when we come to examine Matthew 24, and kindred Scriptures. But it is a hollow and false principle that the gift of a revelation to any one implies that he will be in the circumstances described: least of all is it true of the church, to which all Scripture is given. But thence to argue that we must be there, that this or that prediction is about us, is as unreasonable as contrary to fact. Yet ought the church to have an understanding of all, for “we have the mind of Christ.” The Lord’s grace communicates to us what concerns others, and sometimes that we may intercede for others. Thus it was with Abraham: the Lord revealed to him what did not concern himself. Did Abraham lose by the Lord’s communicating to him what concerned Lot? or would he have gained by imagining that it was about himself? Was Enoch worse off than Noah because the one declared what was coming on the world, not on himself, and was translated before there was a sign of the judgment, while the other received a warning of what concerned the circumstances he was in, so that, moved with fear, he gave heed and was saved through the deluge of waters? So with the church in the Revelation. None can deny that there is absolute silence as to the church (we do not say saints) on earth when the terrible judgments, symbolised by seals, trumpets, and vials, issue from the throne. Churches are spoken of before Revelation 4, and they are addressed after the visions close in Revelation 22. For no doubt the church ought to be the vessel of divine testimony as to what is coming, as Enoch was, and ought to be in the place of

intercession, as was Abraham; but the church is outside the scene of judgment in the Revelation, as both these types were in Genesis.

But the second objection surrenders, in fact, the principles of which the first complains so loudly; for it is owned, though it seems reluctantly, that there are passages in the gospels (and so much the more in the Revelation) where the apostles are not our representatives. Thus, while we are privileged to profit by Matthew 10, it is plain that the commission there given is, in important respects, the reverse of our service as Christians now. It is only through the Holy Ghost enabling us to compare aright scripture with scripture, that we can discern what concerns a Jewish remnant of old or by and by, and that which describes or supposes our position. The author asks somewhat triumphantly in page 7, “Do they represent us, and listen for us, at the sermon on the Mount, at the last supper, at the concluding discourse in John; and yet represent another set of people in Matthew 24, and Luke 21? Are we on church ground with Martha and Mary at Bethany; and in company with the Jewish remnant when we place ourselves with the disciples on the Mount of Olives? (Matt. 24:3).” Now, so far are the distinctions in question of an arbitrary nature that the argument used to expose them demonstrates their reality. For imbedded in the sermon on the Mount are words of our Lord which apply far more closely to Jews or the remnant than to the church. (See Matt. 5:25; 6:12,13, 33, etc.). And as to the prophetic discourses in Matthew 24 and 25, it carries on its front and within its own compass, the clearest evidence of these distinctions. For in the early part the Lord speaks of the

temple and its destruction, of the abomination of desolation, with express reference to a prophecy which professedly relates to the Jews and the remnant up to the last days. But this is not all. What has this character and is connected with Jerusalem, Judea, and that nation, is plainly distinguished from the parables which relate to Christians during the absence of the Lord (viz., the household servant, the virgins, and the talents). These last are not Jewish, but in some respects in marked contrast with what precedes, as well as with the closing sketch in Matthew 25 which gives the Lord's dealings with the Gentiles on His return as King. To deny these distinctions, then, is ignorance, and nothing better.

Nobody affirms that the church existed as a fact at the last supper in Jerusalem, or when the Lord uttered His discourses, etc., in John 13-17, or at Bethany; but it is abundantly clear that these scenes contemplated much which was afterwards verified in the church, and outside the remnant, while the remnant had special provision for it made in Luke 21. Nothing simpler than what the writer seeks to mystify.

Again, in this late defence of the system which denies the distinct portion of the church and its rapture previous to the Lord's appearing, the time of vengeance in which even the Jewish remnant is desired to flee—the time of visiting the unbelief of the nation with anguish and trouble unheard of; in a word, the most awful chastisement for unfaithfulness the world ever saw—is confounded with the privilege of suffering for Christ by faith! "A further objection to it is the extraordinary result, that the church will be removed from the earth at the very time of all others when we should think its testimony would be most needed, and when suffering

will be most glorious [!!]. Surely, of all others, the church of Christ is best fitted to be confronted with the great Antichrist and his followers. Strange, indeed, should its martyrology break off at that critical period! Strange if tribulations, closely linked in the apocalyptic visions with the brightest glories of heaven, should be reserved for another than that body, which for nearly two thousand years has been associated in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ!" (Attempt, page 7.) Can ignorance of God's ways be shewn more painfully than this confusion of suffering with Christ, and suffering fearful penalty for having slighted Him and His will?

The last of these general presumptions is that Scripture intimates delays and impediments to the coming of Christ (pages 7, 8); and it is argued, that if to know what shall befall others be a privilege, still more what personally affects ourselves. Can anything exceed the blindness here manifested as to what spiritual privilege is? Is knowing what applies to ourselves the proof that we are friends of God? After Abraham had promises relative to himself and his seed, the Lord says, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" And what did He make known to him? What concerned himself? No; but what concerned Lot, of which there was no need. Lot heard in due time what concerned himself. So, says the Lord, in a scripture which the writer cites in the same paragraph, "I have called you friends, for whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you." I tell a man what concerns himself as a matter of business or duty; I tell my friend what my heart is interested in, whether it concerns him or not, because he is my friend. (Compare Eph. 1:8-10.) How

entirely this system destroys spirituality and divine intelligence!

And here we would say a word on the practical effect as indicative of the real character of these views. We are told that it is impossible rightly to be expecting the Lord from day to day; and this because all the predicted signs must first come to pass. Now, we ask any serious Christian, if this be not in direct contradiction of all the teachings and warnings of Scripture (those passages excepted whose proper application is in debate)? Does the Lord direct us to be habitually waiting and watching always for Him? Be it Christian or Jewish remnant that it refers to, does He not insist earnestly upon it? and that in such an hour as those He addresses think not, the Son of man cometh?

Further, the whole order of God's dealings is subverted. "We do believe the church and the remnant to be on earth together," etc. (page 39). That is, they believe that the full explicit revelation of the church, wherein is neither Jew nor Gentile but all one, and a recognition, on the part of God, of a body of persons as to whom He sanctions hopes exactly contrary to this (furnishing inspired terms for the expression and encouragement of them), will go on together on the earth. As an analogy to this, the state of the disciples during Jesus' life, and the condition of the church afterwards, and the case of the disciples of John (Acts 19), are brought forward. That is, the progress of the same saints out of Jewish thoughts into a church standing by the coming of the Holy Ghost, in the former case, and the instant cessation of the Jewish state of hope because of the Christian revelation, when it came to their knowledge, in the other, are alleged to be analogous to the simultaneous sanctioned

subsistence of the two contradictory states at the same time. The value of the reasoning here is a specimen of the superficiality of this publication.

Another sample of the extreme levity and carelessness of the writer is this: “To say that while we are here, it [the Apocalypse] is of use to us, is to plead for a very secondary concern in it” (p. 6). The view of the writer is that its warnings are to be of use to the church when it is in the circumstances referred to. Is it not evident, then, according to the author’s theory, that this destroys its usefulness as to at least eighteen hundred years and more of the church’s history? The necessity of being in the time of its fulfilment to make it useful, destroys its constant use for the church; whereas the knowledge of its application to a body traversing the time of trial, after the church’s rapture, makes its usefulness apply to all, though its accomplishment is for others. If men must be in the circumstances to render it useful, the Apocalypse has had, on the author’s shewing, no utility yet. 2 Peter 1:19, which he quotes, is strongly against his arguments, besides being altogether misinterpreted. The point here is the excellence of the prophetic word as a lamp, till a light still better dawns on the heart. The apostle does not mean till the day of the Lord actually come upon the world, but till the heart is imbued with daylight, and the morning star arise therein (i.e., till the saint is awakened to the heavenly hope, apart from the events of prophecy).

The parable of the tares of the field (Matt. 13) is the first of the special scriptures adduced as positively adverse. “‘Both grow together until the harvest’ (v. 30); a statement clearly decisive of the whole question, for unbroken certainty cannot possibly be more plainly

expressed” (page 9) … “and at one definite point of time, the harvest, or the end of the age” (page 10). The short answer is, that the harvest is not one definite point of time. “In the time of harvest,” it is written, “I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.” First do this, and then that. In other words, it is a period in which different events take place, the order and meaning of which is exactly what is in question. It is also alleged (page 9), that “gathered together” is the same as “rooted up.” But it is no such thing: quite a different word is used for rooted up. Again, “gathering together,” or up, is said to be removal from the field by reaping or plucking up, that is, the end of present existence;—a very singular explanation. We all know such is not the eflfect of reaping. The removal of the wheat from the field is expressed in quite a different way. Indeed the tares are never said to be removed from the field at all, and notoriously, if we turn to the thing prefigured, they will be judged in the field when the harvest comes, and to this the parable looks on. In truth, the subject is the field, as to which there is one only exception—“Gather the wheat into my garner.” The thorns, we read elsewhere, will be utterly burned in the fire in the same place. The tares are gathered together to be burned—clearly declaring that the gathering together is not the final judgment.

Further, none can read the parable and its explanation without seeing that they describe different scenes, as is always the case in such prophetic statements, because public results before men explain what is parabolically stated when the results are not there. Thus, gathering the wheat into the garner is not shining forth as the sun,

nor is gathering into bundles to be burnt the same as gathering out of the kingdom and casting them into the fire. Note here, that the uniform testimony of Scripture is that the saints will appear, or be manifested, when Christ appears for judgment. (Col. 3; Rev. 17:14; chap. 19.)

Hence the gathering the wheat into the garner must be before the gathering evils out of His kingdom and casting them into the furnace of fire. The making the heavenly saints to remain on earth while the judgment is being executed, is against the universal statement of all scripture. And this is what is alleged. For if the gathering the tares in bundles to be burned be the same as their final burning (an allegation indeed manifestly absurd), then their complete judgment takes place before the saints are taken into the garner; “the end of present existence” as regards the tares is before the saints are with Christ. Further, the righteous shining forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father is clearly not in the present age, which the harvest of judgment closes. It is the new age, while the gathering into the garner is part of the harvest or end of this age. The harvest, then, or end of the age, is certainly not one point of time. The Lord Himself states a “first” in what happens. The only question then is, Does the rapture of the saints take place before the execution? All Scripture answers, Yes. They come with Christ to judgment: they appear with Him in glory. The order of the parable and its explanation is, first, gathering the tares in bundles, then the wheat is put into the barn; and when it comes to the execution of judgment the tares are gathered out of the kingdom and burnt, and the righteous shine forth as the sun.

One point of the old system is avoided. It used to be maintained that when Christ rose up from the Father's throne the present age closed. But the parable of the tares described the end of this age. Hence the judgment of the earth was before Christ came at all, and the catching up of the saints too. The absurdity of this was evident, and it is now avoided; but the elements of the error remain—only concealed. The harvest is made one definite point of time as the end of the age. If it be not Christ's rising up, it must be the moment of His executing judgment which closes it.

Where are the heavenly saints then according to Scripture? The wicked are punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. When this judgment is executed, are the saints still unchanged on the earth or already caught up? If still unchanged on the earth, and the resurrection yet to come, then is there a negative to all these statements together: "The Lord shall come with ten thousand of his saints"; "The Lord thy God shall come and all his saints with thee"; "They that are with him are called and chosen and faithful"; "The armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean"; "When Christ, our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." But Scripture declares these things positively. That is, the saints must have already been caught up to meet Him. But if so, the whole proffered explanation of the parable of the tares is false, and hangs on the blunder of interpreting the gathering of the tares together in bundles to be burned as meaning their actual burning, accompanied by the contradictory allegation that the harvest is one definite point of time. That anyone should not see clear on such

points is evidently to be borne with. We are all ignorant on many points.

On 2 Thessalonians 2 the less may be said, because it has been already entered into in a previous paper.57 But it is well to note it as an additional specimen of this writer's reasoning. He says in page 15, "Surely the terrors of the day of the Lord are for His enemies, and the enemies of His people. How then could those terrors be present, and those enemies be unchecked in their cruel persecution of the Thessalonian saints? Could these saints have had such a notion? "Now the reasoning against the fact of the day's being there is most just. The only misfortune is that it is the apostle's own reasoning with the Thessalonians, because they thought the day was there, as Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2:2, and as the writer quotes Mr. Alford, explaining it in the same page. "Its object is to make it clear to them that the day of Christ… was not yet come."

As to what is insinuated on Daniel 7, and the endeavour to connect the Son of man with the kingdom after the blasphemies of the little horn, the way of putting the matter is incorrect, and, to say the least, the one-sided result of prejudice. For the account of the reception of the kingdom is not merely after the horn's blasphemies, but after the beast's judgment and destruction for those blasphemies. So that if it were just to apply the passage to the remaining of the church on earth during the whole career of Antichrist, the passage would equally prove that the church was on earth after the destruction of the beast. That is, the whole argument and application of the text is entirely groundless; for the heavenly saints come with Christ to judgment. The prophecy speaks of the earthly kingdom, first of the

beasts, and then of the Son of man. The place or portion of the church is not touched on at all in the statement. It is the kingdom under the whole heaven; while the following explanation of the prophecy (as all Scripture), declares that judgment is given to the saints of the Most High. It is but an additional proof how the whole tenor and bearing of Scripture is lost by such as maintain this system. If we enter into details, we shall find that the thrones were set before the judgment begins, and indeed in order to it.

As to the argument on Luke 19:11-27, in page 11, viz., that we are not to look for the Lord as our immediate hope now, because there was a premature expectation of the kingdom during His ministry on earth, it has really no force, nor even sense. Some then expected Messiah to appear in glory and deliver Israel. The Lord shews that, being rejected, He must go to the Father, receive a kingdom and return, and that meanwhile His own servants were to serve Him. Does this prove that His servants are not to expect Him now more than the Jews then? Strange reasoning?

Passages, such as John 16:2-4, which speak of trials and persecutions for the saints, need not be rested on. It was not the best, but one of the strongest reasons for looking for Christ continually, who was to take the saints out of trouble. The sufferings of the disciples would make them desire His coming.

If we turn to the epistles, another class of texts, to which reference is made (page 12), is that which involves responsibility in connection with Christ’s appearing. In order to understand such passages as 1 Timothy 6:14, some remarks are needed. The rapture of the church

has nothing to do with responsibility; it is the fulfilment of the highest blessings of sovereign grace—Christ's coming to take us to Himself, that where He is, there we may be also. Now, none but Paul ever speaks of the church save the Lord Himself prophetically (Matt. 16, 18), or the historical facts that He added to it, etc., in the Acts. It was a mystery hidden in God; it is not named in the epistles but by Paul, for we do not speak of allusions to a local church or churches. Various privileges of its members individually may be, but however strange it may appear to some, in the epistles none ever speaks of the church itself, nor names it, but Paul. Hence none speaks of the rapture but he; for this is connected with its known privileges. Where the coming of Christ is spoken of elsewhere, it is spoken of as the time of judgment; or of the display of the effect of righteousness and of glory in the saints; or as a general expectation connected with the ways and government of God—a very distinct thing from the privileges conferred by sovereign grace. The judgment connected with Christ's coming includes the judgment of, and retribution to, the saints, because this is a part of His display of government, and not the portion of the saints given them in sovereign grace in Christ. By the deniers of what is called the "rapture," all this is mixed up together, for the counter-scheme is one of unmingled darkness.

Now, as regards the world, this manifestation for judgment is Christ's coming. The term coming, or presence, embraces all that passes in connection with His return from the moment of His entrance into the created universe, be it heaven or earth. As regards the world, His coming may be called His appearing, His

manifestation, the appearing of His coming, or His revelation. It has all these titles. The saints joining Christ is never referred to anything but His coming; for when He appears, they appear with Him.

Do they not wait for and love His appearing? To be sure they do. This removes evil and destroys the power of evil on the earth; in this they appear with Him in glory. The whole display of God's glory in righteousness, and its fruit, blessing and power, takes place then; and those who groan under the sense of a creation subjected to the bondage of corruption rejoice in the thought of its deliverance. The entire scene will be changed by Christ's taking the power, Satan being bound, and the rule of goodness and righteousness established. The saint cannot but delight in the thought of the setting up of the kingdom, the glory of Christ, and the blessing of man and creation. That everything should be ordered according to Christ's will is the joy of the heart. It is the time of the divine blessing in government. Oppression will cease, peace and true liberty will reign without evil, all God's promises be fulfilled, His goodness satisfied, and Christ glorified. As regards the government of this earth, it is what our hearts as we walk on it, and what we in our nature, as creatures belonging to it, must desire. We love His appearing—the rising of that Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings. That we shall not be those subject to this government, to the rightly taught soul, enhances the joy of it, though, on the principle of wretched selfishness, which characterises the system we are combating, this may seem to enfeeble its interest for us. On any ground, we shall not be the subjects of that government, because we shall be glorified.

But which is most blessed—the family in misery which is relieved, or he who has a share in relieving, and participates in grace in the joy of it? No properly ordered heart can doubt a moment. All love His appearing, for Christ will have His rights, and the dreary scene through which we pass will (blessed be God) brighten up under the rays of the Sun of righteousness, as a morning without clouds, as the clear shining after rain. As to our own portion, indeed, the appearing of Christ is the time of our being manifested in glory with Himself. But, doubtless, the loving His appearing looks to more than this. It is the substitution of the blessed reign of Christ for the power and dominion of Satan in a world which is God's, but now oppressed—the taking of His just place in the universe by Christ Himself.

But the being caught up to meet the Lord in the air is for our own proper and higher blessing; it is in order to be for ever with the Lord. There the apostle closes all he has to say to it. But in all that respects the government of God, the appearing or the manifestation of Jesus in this creation is the thing referred to. Hence our loving His appearing is a test whether we delight in His authority and the divine blessing, or whether we find our pleasure where Satan is prince. Hence also, when our responsibility is in question, as this relates to government and reward, the appearing is always referred to. Christ will take account with His servants as well as with the world. But the difference is in every way evident. We all go up together: there is no distinction. The life and righteousness of an apostle are the same as mine. We shall all be conformed to the image of God's Son, that He may be the firstborn among many brethren. But the Thessalonians will be Paul's crown, not ours;

and every man will receive his own reward, according to his own labour. Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it.

Other objections are founded on the declaration that Peter would die (John 21:18, 19; 2 Peter 1:14-16); Paul's expecting his own death, and predicting evils that should arise, and especially in the last days. One thing is clear about Peter's death—it can have no possible force now. But this remark has not all its force, if we do not perceive that it required a particular revelation that a person was to die: otherwise it was said, "we which are alive and remain," and that by the apostle confuting this thought when it was in question; but of this anon. So the word "If I will that he tarry till I come" was interpreted. It required a particular revelation to point out a particular event as intervening, and when that has intervened, the general truth flows on in all its force. That is to say, the lightness of the general expectation is largely confirmed by a person's death, before Christ's coming, requiring a revelation to have it supposed possible. It was an event, too, which might have happened at any time after the church's expectation had in fact been fully brought to light. The only word at all applicable to delay even then is "when thou art old"; it is in comparison with "when thou wast young"—a proof he was no longer so—sufficiently vague to leave all open. But further, the church, probably, was very little or not at all cognisant of it. When Peter was in prison (Acts 12), they thought his death might well happen then. When Peter refers to it, he does so as imminent. As to the expression "after my decease," the expectation of the Lord's coming never enfeebled the most assiduous care of the church, while waiting for Him, but just the

contrary. Nor certainly can the case apply now. Again, what is more material to remark, it was never given as a sign to the church, but as a testimony to one individual. There is no proof that the church had the least knowledge of it before it was past. It certainly was not addressed to the church by the Holy Ghost before, for John's gospel was given after Peter's death—and this is the grand point.

As to the predictions of the last times, the case is even stronger; for the Holy Ghost has declared by John that they were come. That is, the expectation of Christ was constant then. The word of God gives us, in its own contents, the ground for constant expectation now, for it declares the last hour or time come before John was gone. At first, the expectation was constant; next, as time went on, and in fact faith and hope fuller, particular events were noticed as immediately imminent. Paul says, in Philippians 2:17, that he was a victim on whom aspersion had been made already. Would this be ground for delaying hope or awakening it? Peter announces that his decease was just at hand, John that the last time was already there, and these are alleged as reasons why we should not expect Christ! None of the cases were ever given to the church in any sense as signs. Before the announcement was given to the church by John that Christ had said it to Peter, Peter was long dead and gone. No: they were no signs, and have no application at all now; and what came on to be revealed as a necessity for the church, for its seeing the evil of the last days, the Holy Ghost has taken care to tell us is arrived. How wise are the ways of God! He establishes, as a doctrine, the expectation. Particular revelations are given to individuals, and they speak of them only when they are

close at hand, God knowing well that there would be this delay. When the church needs it, He warns them of evil and dangerous days, but takes care, before His instruction closes, to keep one there to tell us they were come. And this is alleged as a reason for our not waiting for the Lord! No: we must get down to another and an earthly hope before signs come in or are applicable to us. The virgins in the parable did sleep, and the saints have slept, but they went out to meet the Bridegroom at the first, and awaited nothing else: when divinely aroused at midnight, they were to go forth to meet Him, and not to await aught else but Him.

The case of the Thessalonians is exceedingly strong. They so expected Christ to come in their life-time that they were uneasy if a saint died. Paul relieves them from this anxiety by telling them the dead in Christ would be raised. But does he correct their expectation as an unfounded one, saying, Signs must be fulfilled, all should die, and I know not what? Far from it. He shews the dead will have part, but strengthens their hope and associates himself with it, saying, “We which are alive and remain.” Unbelief and Satan may seek to divert from this; the Holy Ghost sanctions and insists on it when the question is raised.

Such are but a few of the proofs the publication affords of the absence of spiritual intelligence inseparable from the system it maintains, as well as of the utter futility of its reasonings. Hence it was not thought worth while to answer it, save briefly. It professes to review the question, but is little more than a re-assertion of Mr. Newton’s prophetic theory, as it seeks also to accredit his “Thoughts on the Apocalypse.” Now every reader ought to know that it is hard to say whether the

absurdities or the blasphemies of that book are the more glaring, and that its system is inevitably identified with a false doctrine of as audacious dishonour against the Lord Christ as ever was known. Here are some of the proofs from the first edition, 1843.

Page 45, speaking of the elders it is said, “their eldership and proximity to the throne of the Most High, are sufficiently plain indications of their being called into participation of His counsels.”

Pages 48 et seqq. “Nothing perhaps amongst all the attributes of God is more wonderful than this universality of present control, all the merely executive agents of His government being subordinate thereto… it gives a view of almighty and omnipresent power more wonderful perhaps than the original power of creation, or that whereby He continually upholds that which He hath created. This power is at present possessed and exercised by the Lord Jesus… but His saints do not possess it yet.… But since it is said in Scripture that we are the fulness of Him that filleth all in all … it cannot be doubted that the church will participate in this branch of His glorious power”—that is, have almighty and omnipresent power.

Page 51. “But there is yet another character of power which the church is to exercise in the glory. Admission into the counsels of God is represented by the throned elders— omniscient power of superintendence by the seven Spirits; but the execution of the will of God, and the omnipotent power necessary to such execution, is also committed to the redeemed. This is a third sphere of their glory. They are represented in it by the living creatures, or cherubim.”

Thus, the church will be omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. Is not this open blasphemy? The last form of power, for which he refers to Ezekiel, is thus described: “Nowhere absent, but everywhere present, in the perfectness of undivided action: afford the mysterious but fitting symbol of the omnipotent agency of the power of Him, before whom all the inhabitants of the earth are reported as nothing,” page 52. “And when we consider what the state of the earth will be when that period arrives … we may see the necessity for such a power, and the high calling of the church in being entrusted with its application to the circumstances of a terrified but delivered earth,” pages 53, 54.

So in page 55, still speaking of the church as the cherubim, “as such will apply to the earth and to the universe the wisdom of the elders and the throne.” “And although all that we have yet seen in this chapter appears to exalt the creature almost into co-equality with God, yet we find His due supremacy most carefully maintained. The glorious power of the cherubim does not prevent their giving all glory, and honour, and thanks to Him that sat on the throne; nor does the higher exaltation of the elders prevent them from falling down before Him that sat on the throne, and worshipping,” etc. But can the nauseous-ness of blasphemy be carried farther than when, in ascribing omnipotence and omnipresence to the church as executive power, it is declared that they apply the wisdom of the elders and the throne, setting the elders (i.e., the redeemed) before God Himself? It would be hard to find, in the wide circle of what printing has given to the world, such pages as 48-55 of Mr. Newton’s “Thoughts on the Apocalypse.”

For recklessness of assertion, for self-contradiction, for pseudo-criticism, we might produce a host of examples, if need were. And this is the book sought to be anew accredited by the publication under review. We enter no further into its character here: but is it not painful to see a certain class of Christians greedily receiving this mass of unscriptural fancies and follies, which, alas! have an object behind them, viz., the blotting out of Christ's various glory, and the denial of the true place of the church as His body and bride? On the side of truth such a work would not have been borne an instant. It contradicts itself, parades bad Greek, details gross absurdities and bold statements, without the smallest proof; but all this fades away before the real blasphemies which we have noticed lying on the surface. One of the phenomena of the human mind is its disposition to receive error rather than truth. It likes error. And when imagination would be detected in a book pleading for truth, it is passed by in its most unbridled form, and even like when it is employed to teach error. It is a humbling fact. One only can deliver from its power.

The effort to re-accredit the "Thoughts on the Apocalypse," which contains such blasphemies, and identified as it is with yet worse, cannot be too strongly and earnestly denounced. It is perhaps not wrong to add that the attempt has been made by one who has distinguished himself by another pamphlet written to prove the resurrection of brutes and dedicated to a dead cat. There is no wish to do more than allude to such a fact; but many things help us in judging how far the guidance of God's Spirit is with a man.

56 An attempt to answer the questions, “May the coming of the Lord be expected immediately? and Will the translation of the church be secret?” By George J. Walker. London: Whittaker & Co.

57 See “What Saints will be in the Tribulation?” page 110.

Brief Thoughts On The Apocalypse

The book is prophetic: it does not deal with the church in respect of itself, as in relationship with God, save incidentally in the preface (chap, 1:5, 6), and conclusion. (Chap. 22:16, 17.) It is the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. The address, though of grace and peace, is governmental. Thus it is from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come (not from the Father as such), and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ, the Faithful Witness, the First-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, i.e., not mere Messianic glory, yet connected with earth, in life, resurrection, and rule. The mention of Him draws out, by the way, the church's, or Christian's, own consciousness and feeling as to Christ. This is followed by the testimony of what He is to the world, and to the Jews, at His coming in judgment. Then we have the personal seal of the eternal glory. And so the whole book, in its relationships and results. The word of God and the testimony of Jesus applies both to prophecy and to Christianity, though not properly to the church; for Scripture looks at testimony continuously, as in Hebrews 1, 2; or separately from what went before, as in the epistle to the Ephesians.

Next, we have the vision of Christ, revealed in the midst of the churches, governing them. There are two parts in the description—what is personal, and what is relative; the former, in verses 13-15; the latter, in verse 16. Personally, He is a Son of man, not now a servant at His work: His garment is the long flowing robe, and not tucked up. His girdle is divine righteousness as such.

Verse 14 marks Him as Ancient of days. His eyes search, His eyelids try, the children of men in the power of judgment. His feet, as seen here, represent judgment, not abstractedly divine in the sanctuary, but applied down here to the ways and dealings of men—to sin, in government, and this with a peculiar character. Ezekiel 1:7 and Daniel 10:6 (different in the English version) are the same; but we have here “passed through the fire.” I apprehend it means here that the application of righteousness in judgment to man was according to the full absolute trial of the fire of God (i.e., judgment allowing no evil). Governmental judgment has not this character exactly. Brass is not used for immediate divine righteousness—i.e., intrinsic divine righteousness as such, remaining immutable in itself; to be met and satisfied, no doubt, by what is suited to it, but not exercised. This last is in power and ways. But in Christ, this last had all the perfectness which that fire, which consumes all dross, has or can have. In the relative characteristics, we have maintenance, by His power, of all the subordinate administrative power of the churches; judgment, according to and by the power of the word, of what had possessed that word, and the manifestation of supreme sovereign power, as regards the whole world.

Human nature fails before this, but while the First and the Last, God Himself, Jehovah, He was also the Living One— not the power of death—for His servants: He had gone through death and destroyed it, and was alive for evermore. Life was His, and not only so, but life after death and resurrection, after His going through that which man was subject to; and He has thus the keys of power over death and hades. Christ was to be revealed

in this way, then the present existing things, and the things after them.

In Ephesus, we have the great principle of His government in, and survey of, the professing church. He has the seven stars and walks among the candlesticks. The principle of departure from first standing is taken as the general ground; the result of faithfulness is also individual—he eats of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of the God of Jesus (read “my God” in verse 7), while the general fact of judgment is threatened—the candlestick removed. It is in every respect the great general principles of departure and judgment, though there was still much good.

The Smyrna state is clear. Christ, who was before all, and will be after all, and in this present world, has overcome death, sustains faith in the midst of needed persecution, and promises the crown of life. It is the title by which He met the withering of fleshly life in the apostle before His glory. Note, the profession of hereditary religion accompanies persecution— the trial was external, and the blessing here is general; they were to hold good their faith among the polluted.

Next, in Pergamos, we have the searching judgment by the word, where corruption was allowed. So the blessing is distinctive also. Next we have—not trial by God’s word, revealed truth, but—the Lord’s searching of all that is within the heart: His eyes as a flaming fire; and the governmental judgment. And this closes the public history of the church in general. And the morning star, and the coming, and Christ’s kingdom, are brought in as the object of hope. Nor is there here invitation to repent. In the first there was. In the persecuted church there is

encouragement. In the third there was. In this fourth the bad had space to repent, and did not. “Behold, I will cast,” and “I will kill,” is absolute.

The church of Sardis clearly begins afresh. Christ has the seven stars. They are His; but He does not say He holds them in His right hand. And He has the seven Spirits—a point not noticed yet, but which marks that whatever the state of the church, He has the full supply of gift—the Spirit, in all competency to act and glorify God. But I think it looks out beyond the former church. It is irregular, but a competency above order, and a competency proper to Him personally. Hence it will be found, as each characteristic of Christ in the last three churches, to reach over into the coming scene, i.e., the characteristic itself. They are none of them mentioned in the description of the Son of man. They are new objects and grounds of faith; not the regularised characteristics for ecclesiastical dealing, or of that revealed use.

Hence, if not faithful, Sardis is not judged as the church, like Thyatira, but treated as the world. The overcomers have the general result of righteousness, not being out of the book of life, and being confessed individually before the Father, as they had confessed Christ before the world. In Philadelphia, all ecclesiastical pretension is against them. But Christ’s personal sovereign title to shut and open is for them. They have to keep the word of His patience. All this is unecclesiastical. Christ waits for His enemies to be made His footstool. In this respect He continues even His life on earth. So do the saints. They walk in the midst of a corrupt closing dispensation, keeping Christ’s word. Hence the word “my.” Laodicea goes further. For Christ takes up the witness in the new creation, instead of the church, which He rejects. Divine

righteousness must be had—saints' righteousnesses, according to God's purity, and true discernment from God, known only through Christ. He has not ceased to love the church, and looks for zeal and repentance. The kingdom is all that is here promised. The different place of the warning in the last three has been noticed.

As to the sequel, I do not see how it can be questioned that we enter on a different sphere of prophecy in chapter 4. I do not mean merely that it is the third division, as often remarked; but that chapters 2 and 3 were the judgment of the church on earth, and this is not. The world is dealt with from the throne, not on earth either, but in heaven. When this is the case, the saints are seen there. It is not merely that the blessing is anticipated before the judgments come, through which the blessed have to pass; but the body of saints is seen enthroned, encircling the great throne of God before any history of judgment begins at all. And the sources of all are revealed in this place. They are associated with the throne in its then place and character. It is not Christ's throne on which they sit. They are enthroned and crowned priests and kings before the government revealed in the book begins. And it is not the revelation of any place acquired or reached through them, as may be said in chapters 7 and 15. Before the Lamb has taken the book to bring about circumstances to go through, they are associated with the throne. The throne itself is very clearly the throne of divine government and providence; and that set in majesty of judgment, but connected with the first creation. The rainbow is round it. It is not a throne approached with blood—the golden throne. And the living creatures, though in the midst of

the throne, can be apart from it. But it is a heavenly throne. Jehovah-Elohim-Shaddai is celebrated.

The elders worship Him as Creator and Sovereign. It is His throne of government (in the first creation), and they can sit on thrones, but in heaven. They are in rest as to judgment, and active in worship. Though the living creatures were in and around the throne, next it thus, the elders as to place are first mentioned as morally associated with the throne. On their own thrones they were part of the scene. The creatures are only part of the character of the throne. Reasons for praise are here with the elders only. The creatures' part is the unceasing celebration of what He is.

Chapter 5. We have now competent power to act on the unfolding of divine purpose. In the centre of all God's ways of power and providence was the Lamb as slain. He could open the purpose of God's right hand of power. Other saints are here with prayers yet to go up. The creatures and elders fall down before the Lamb. I should leave out "us" in verse 9, and naturally read "them" instead of "us" in verse 10, as Tischendorf, etc., unless perhaps "they reign." Here, if connected with "living creatures," these give reasons for worship also, the angels do not. Then note the living creatures put their amen to this ascription of power and glory. The twenty-four elders worship; I doubt a little the worshipping, etc. (v. 8), of the living creatures; but in chapter 19:4 they do. In chapter 5:14 "him that liveth," etc., is to be left out. The living creatures, join with Amen. The elders worship. All may own the Lamb by falling down. It is all most due and right, but the intelligent song is morally, I think, with the elders: they sing (not "they sung"). It is in the main (besides the Lamb's glory, having perfect

power and the eyes of the Lord which run through the earth) the interest of the heavenly saints in, and their connection with, the earthly ones, and the same place as to the kingdom. In what follows, to the end of chapter 11, we get the general history, and in the earlier part of it, in parenthesis, the special final history of the beast, so as to get its place in the series. Remark, we have not yet the offspring of David. Only the Lamb is Lion of the tribe of Judah; but it is redemption out of all nations which gives a title to take the book and open the seals.

But I suspect there is something more as to creatures and elders. It is not till the Lamb has taken the book that the creatures get their place with the elders. Now it has been long remarked that the creatures are the symbols of providential power (attributes in exercise), and that the instruments may be angels as in this world and saints in the world to come. Now it will be remarked that, before the Lamb appears on the scene and takes the book, there are no angels who praise, and the creatures, while celebrating the character of God—expressing it, are not associated with intelligent praise and worship. Now this is always their proper office and character; but when the saints take this office, they are also the intelligent worshippers, though remaining another aspect of them. Hence, before the Lamb is in the scene and has taken the book, they are completely distinct, and no angels are spoken of; when He has, they are connected, and the angels are distinct. Still the creatures say Amen to creature-praise, and the elders worship. In point of fact, after Christ has risen up and taken the church up, the angels expel the dragon from heaven; but in power connected with the Lamb, here held up to view, the saints must be associated. When in

chapter 19 the Lord is coming out, the elders have the first place, for that is the first heavenly part and place, the governmental attributes relating to the inheritance and the earth. So they have in chapter 7:11.

A question arises out of the change of reading in chapter 5:9, 10, whether the redeemed are a distinct set, or the redeemed in general. The saints, whose prayers are offered, are earthly—that is clear. But I have been rather disposed to think verses 9 and 10 are general. The Lamb has wrought this work. But “to our God” is a difficulty in this view, and the prayers of others must be considered.

Then, after the general history of public judgments, after conquest, etc., we have the souls under the altar—martyrs in general, I conceive, though this is a very important point as to the structure of the book. They are owned (for there is a break in God’s ways here), but must wait for judgment; but all is broken up in order of existing powers, so that a way is made to the accomplishing prayers.

But special things, a scene of special dealings and judgment, were first to come in, yet part of the general history (i.e., not the beasts of chapter 13). But before this new scene is opened, the perfect remnant of Israel is sealed. The angel came from—was connected with—the dawn of the new day upon the earth. I cannot think that “before the throne and before the Lamb “is physical locality, but moral. The angels do not stand round the/ white-robed multitude. I apprehend they are the delivered saints on earth, who are perfectly secured and sheltered for ever—God dwells among them j His tabernacle is over them. I do not say they are seen on earth, for I do not think so, any more than the woman in

chapter 12:1; yet her history is on earth, but in both cases in the purpose and mind of God. God views them thus, and their place is moral. They are never “around the throne,”58 which is remarkable; nor are they seated as the elders; nor do they give motives for praise as they do. Their salvation is of and from the throne before which they stand. They have known God and the Lamb only there. There is, however, I apprehend, victory. They have come out of the great tribulation. They are not those born in the peace of the millennium. So that they have a place before the throne, as then set, and serve him inside, and with a knowledge not possessed by merely millennial blessing. There is no temple in the heavenly Jerusalem. It is not the Son of David, or of man, who feeds them, but the Lamb on the throne; and they are before God on the throne. They have an inner place and better knowledge than the millennium. The elders can explain for them—are interested, so to speak, in them—though they are not in their place. There is a connection with Christ, to the elders’ minds, which themselves do not fully understand—something as if they said “When saw we thee?” Compare chapter 14 for a somewhat analogous class, though there we are not in the general history. They have heavenly connection, though they are not in heaven.

Chapter 8. I suppose to be general judgments on the Roman Empire. In chapter 9 we begin more special dealings of God: the first woe-trumpet on the rebellious part of Israel, then an inroad of eastern cavalry-characterised nations, but in the Roman Empire. (See, for the Roman Empire being characterised by a third part, chapter 12:3, 4.) But men do not repent. Then before the third woe a more special and peculiar subject

is parenthetically introduced. From chapter 8, the ministrations, as noticed long ago, are angelic in character; previously, from chapter 5, the actings of the Lamb: I suppose the latter connected with the throne in heaven, the former with administration towards the earth, before the Lamb takes His title as King of kings and Lord of lords. As such we again find the Lamb. This, if just, is a help to the interpretation and moral placing of these two parts. Hence we have a step lower down, and John takes the book from the angel (Christ), not the Lamb from Him that sits on the throne. This is no sealed book of counsels and universal ways towards Gentiles, but the open dealings of God with Israel and the earth again, not providential, but in already revealed circumstances, God's known ways on earth. We are here, then (chap. 11), on direct Jewish ground; the inner remnant are owned, the general outer body given up to be profaned by Gentiles. It is not, I judge, locally, though speaking of Jews and Jerusalem, but morally, that the distinction is made. It is trodden under foot forty-two months.

Some have put the twelve hundred and sixty days of verse 3 after this. Now, though I admit the possibility of recurring to a previous dealing of God, it seems to me forced to attempt it here with the meaning of the Greek translated "And I will give," Rev. 11:3. This is important in another point of view; because, in this case, there is only one half-week here, as in Matthew 24; for the city's being given up to be trodden down forty-two months, and twelve hundred and sixty days following after in which it still is, does not well hang together. It is not sufficient, I think, to say, The first period was characterised by this, without testimony, and the last

half-week by testimony, not by this, because forty-two months is an exclusive measure of time. If so, as in Matthew 24, we are in general time up to the last half-week—no commencement here, but the conclusion marked. Then I hardly think, if the forty-two months came after the twelve hundred and sixty days, the beginning of treading down by the Gentiles could be celebrated as the coming of the worldly kingdom of Christ. The witness, however, goes farther than the Jews; it maintains (as must be in them) the claims of God over the earth—His ruling title there.

We have worshippers in an earthly way, and witnesses or prophets. They are like Moses and Elias in testimony—in the midst of a captive people and an apostate people. They act in power like them—shutting heaven, as Elias, and turning waters into blood, as Moses—over heaven, the waters, and the earth, but in view of the earth. But they are only witnesses (testifying what is fulfilled in Zechariah). The power of evil, the beast from the abyss, overcomes and kills them (properly it is the great street of the city). But they go to heaven and judgment strikes the city; names of men fall; the remnant own the God of heaven, not of the earth—the new testimony.

Note, there is the completing the testimony; till then they are safe. They of the nations kept their bodies—ready to go up. This closes the second woe. The time is thus placed; and this seems to me to conclude a second half-week, because the forty-two months must be within the second woe; and if the third woe gives the last half-week, we have three half-weeks—two closed by the end of the second woe, and one forming the third. It can hardly be said that verse 2 is not within the closing of the second woe.

Note here, “the kingdom of our Lord.” It explains the reign for ever. It is the establishment of God’s government in contrast with man’s misrule. So in Revelation 11:16, we have “before” (enopion) the throne. This partly shews its moral force, for they were “round” the throne; chap. 4:4. We have in chapter 11 the elders in their own distinctive place again as intelligent worshippers, not the living creatures.

See chap. 19:4. They only give an amen to the voices in heaven. Both are there; only elders, as we have remarked, first. They are noted here, too, as sitting before God on their thrones. But the setting up the governmental power of God draws them to prostrate worship, as the celebration of creative glory had done in chapter 4. The whole scene is judging the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom, and destroying them that corrupt and destroy the earth. It is thus the whole scene of judgment of the kingdom—not the destruction of the elements, but judgment of all living corrupters of every sort.

We now come to the direct and complete development of the parenthetical matter of chapters 10 and 11. We get the counsels and thoughts of God, not the history of His ways and man’s conduct, but His view of what He was bringing about, and the formal design of Satan to oppose it. This is connected with His covenant with Israel. The ark of His covenant was seen in His temple, which was opened in heaven. He was going to act openly on the earth in connection with the covenant with Israel, and first we have the heavenly aspect of it all before the history. That is to say, Jerusalem or Israel viewed according to God’s sure counsel, clothed with supreme authority, all legal ordinances under her feet, crowned

with perfect administrative subordinate authority. Of her the Man-child that was to govern all was to be born (i.e., Christ and the church in Him). Opposed to this is Satan's power in the Empire of Rome. This empire is looked at, however, not historically, but as the power of Satan. But the Child was not yet set up in power, but caught up to God's throne—hidden there. The woman's (Israel's) place is in the wilderness, driven out in desolation, but kept of God for twelve hundred and sixty days.

Next, we begin our history from heaven downwards. The dragon is cast out thence, but into this earth—he becomes a mere earthly power. The heavens are set free, the accuser gone, and those who suffered in connection with his and their place are there freed from all his efforts. He then begins to attack the woman (now seen historically on earth). She flees from him three and a half years into the desert, is saved from his pursuit, and he turns to persecute the godly of her seed. Here I certainly think we have still only one half-week. The woe on the earth, on the heavens being set free, is not, I judge, the coming of the worldly kingdom. Divine power was set up in heaven, to the exclusion of the accuser, and in favour of the heavenly people. But the earthly kingdom of the dragon came; not the judgment and worldly kingdom of Christ.

In chapter 13 we get the earthly agent of Satan, the Roman Empire; but not as a direct subject in its heathen character, but in its blasphemous one; still it is viewed as being the last of the four empires that came out of the sea, but with ten horns and seven heads, and embracing characteristically the other three. The slain head had been slain, and continued "as if slain," but had been

healed. This is part of his character, shewing previous existence and history of a beast who now rises, to whom the dragon gives his authority. But the world would be infidel in it, and take up, independent of Christianity, the admiration of that power which would have destroyed Christ in its imperial character. Blasphemy is the new character of the beast, and he continues in this character forty-two months— half a week, not a whole one. He blasphemes God, and in the shape of His name, dwelling-place, and the dwellers in heaven. This is characteristic. The church, as a heavenly thing, could not be endured. But it intimates that in the close, historically, the church is already caught up. He can only blaspheme them. But he makes war with the saints on earth (i.e., who are not dwellers in heaven). The dwellers on earth worship him, save the elect remnant. I apprehend this latter is more universal in character; while the saints he overcomes are active in witness, more or less, and answer to the saints of the high places (Dan. 7) whom he wears out. Though more generally expressed here, they are the understanding ones of Daniel 11; not the church, but not merely faithful, but aware of God's title and ways, as the Most High, and their testimony obnoxious to the beast. Hence they are slain and go up—though they do not dwell there. The changing times and laws is the Jewish part, and not brought in here; but the period is the same. And the two former parts of Daniel 7:25 are found here (read "written from the foundation of the world"). As yet, God not being come in in judgment, submission, not actual resistance, is the patient path of faith. He will bring judgment on the persecutor. The rest of the chapter and chapter 14 do not offer, I think, much difficulty. We have active satanic agency, bearing the form of Messiah's

power, and ministering to the first beast's throne and blasphemous claims.

Chapter 14 is the work of God in this time—the perfect remnant of Jewish sufferers preserved under the beast's reign; the gospel of the kingdom and coming judgment before that judgment is executed; the fall of Babylon; the warning as to the beast, and the lot of those who worshipped him; the judgment of the earth, sparing many, and of the vine—the religious corporate character of evil connected with the apostasy of Israel and Antichrist, sparing none. It is the utter destruction of apostate religiousness in the earth—the vine of the earth. The judgment of the beast as such is not here.

I apprehend the beginning of chapter 15 is anticipative, as the judgments are made manifest. But they are what follows (v. 5), it is the naos, holy place. "Tabernacle of testimony" is the word used by the LXX for the tabernacle of the congregation. So Stephen in Acts. What follows is the inauguration of it (like Exodus 40:34, and 1 Kings, or 2 Chronicles). But here it is the smoke of glory and power, wrath being to be executed as from it. Still God takes His place—though not Himself—by His presence. This and chapter 16 come in before chapter 14:8. Chapters 12 to 14 have no date till Satan is cast down, and the last half-week. That casting down changes the whole character of the working of evil. Note, these last chapters are testimony or conflict, and the ways of God when He does not execute judgment, though ending in the Son of man's doing so. Evil has the upper hand as far as man can see. Deliverances, then, are by special or providential interventions. The ark of His covenant was then securing through the power of evil; but not judging. Chapters 15 and 16 are the

judgment and wrath of God—not yet the Lamb. And they act (not on the power of Satan as an adversary, but) on men and the world and what is worldly, as such, according to responsibility to God. You get God's doings in chapter 14 in the period; and the closing judgment by Him to whom definite judgment is committed. God's ways in His government of the world are only noticed in recital (v. 8).

In chapters 12 to 14 the people are secured; and the world, till the Son of man comes, has its way. The ark of the covenant is seen, ordered and sure, but not made to grow. The men of Belial are taken at the end. In chapters 15 and 16 there is no ark of the covenant, but the house filled with smoke, so that none can enter; but it is glory and power active in wrath. In both we have to do with relationship with Israel, and the world; only as yet from heaven, not from Jerusalem on earth. In the first, directly with the Jews—their whole state is unfolded; in the last, the judgment on the proud of the earth, who leave no place for them, have displaced them, and in wickedness taken their place. The earth and everything in it is providentially judged.

I have nothing particularly new to remark on chapter 18, only the time is drawing on close, "has drawn near," 1 Pet. 4:7. In chapter 18 I apprehend the fall is before the violent throwing down, but immediately preparatory to it, a total degradation of its state—a final call to God's people to come out of her, to avoid her sins and imminent plagues. I apprehend there will be some strange union under secular influence connected with the false Messiah (see Revelation 13 and 2 Thessalonians 2 for extent and association too) between idolatrous Romanism and idolatrous Judaism. The Jews

only, I apprehend, are His people here. The ark of the covenant has appeared, but it would have a moral application whenever Babylon was spiritually discerned, as even now are there many Antichrists. She was now in her last stage; her sins had reached unto heaven, and God had remembered her iniquities. So in Jeremiah 51:9, where also her fall precedes her being taken. The last verse shews the religious character, answering to Jerusalem in the Lord's time. She has taken in a worse way Jerusalem's place.

In chapter 19 it is, first, heavenly (not church) worship; i.e., not of intelligence of divine ways, but celebration when divine judgments are made manifest. It follows chapter 15. Hence it is entirely God's judgments. The Lamb is not yet spoken of. The twenty-four elders and four living creatures only add their amen, worship, and hallelujah. Here it is a universal summons to praise of every one that fears God, for He reigns as Jehovah-Elohim-Shaddai. This must be connected with chapter 11:17, and helps to a date, and Psalms 95-98. This introduces the marriage of the Lamb (His wife being already made ready). This closes thus far the divine communications. It is on the assertion of the truth of them here, and chapter 22:6, on the reigning of the saints, that John was going to worship. Read, "The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus"; i.e., this book was the same service and had the same object as John's own, who was in Patmos for it. These were all in heaven.

Now heaven is opened, not on Jesus—not to the spiritual man—but for Jesus, who, with the name taken to Laodicea only there in witness), comes to judge and make war. He was characterised by the garment dipped in blood. He is the Word of God. Verse 15 is not solely or

properly applicable to the destruction of the beast and false prophet (though they may come under it as first opposing the other). It is the place Christ is taking in the world to introduce His kingdom. The beast and the false prophet and their armies gather themselves together to oppose this. They are therefore first met, themselves cast into the lake of fire, and their armies become the mystical supper of the great God for the fowls of the air, slain by the judicial authority of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords. The dragon was then laid hold on and bound for a thousand years in the abyss—then to be loosed for a little season.

I have nothing new to add here, save that, if the thought of there being only one half-week be just, the slain for the testimony of Jesus are a general class, and those who do not worship the beast belong to the half-week. Indeed this makes it simpler.

In chapter 21:1-8 there is, remark, no dispensational name. In the description of the city, which follows, we have the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb. It is a dispensational state.

58 See Notes, Rev. 4:3, in New Translation, New Testament, by J. N. Darby.

Lectures On The Second Coming Of Christ

Delivered At Toronto, Canada

Lecture 1 1 Thessalonians 1

What I would desire to bring before you is, the coming of the Lord as the proper hope of the church, and to shew you that it is constantly, increasingly brought before it as such by the Spirit of God. When once the foundation is laid of His first coming as that which brings personally peace and salvation (and even before it, so far as it is a means of awakening the conscience), the one thing the saints were taught to look for was the coming of the Lord. No doubt the first thing the soul needs to know is the ground of its salvation. When this is known, the Lord Himself becomes precious to the believer; and when the church was in a healthy state, we shall find that the hearts of the saints were altogether set upon Him, and looking for His coming. And now our hearts should understand (as I shall shew you from Scripture was the case then) that the coming of Christ is not some strange speculation, or the advanced idea of a few, but was set before the church as elementary and foundation truth, and formed a part of all their habits and feelings, and mingled itself with every thought. It was and is the keystone of all that keeps up the heart in this solitary place (looking at it as journeying through the wilderness). Thus with a heart full of love for God, and the desire to see Christ, we can appreciate the apostle’s prayer for us— “The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting59 for

Christ." We have not long to wait; and it is worth being patient for.

We shall find, too, that the teaching of Scripture as to Christ's second coming casts wonderful light on the value of His first coming. For His second coming, as it concerns the saints, is to complete as regards their bodies (so bringing them into the full result of salvation) that work of life-giving power Christ has already wrought in their souls, founded on the complete title in righteousness which He has effected for them on the cross. He comes to receive them to Himself, that where He is there they may be also—to change their vile bodies and fashion them like His glorious body. For the saints the resurrection is a resurrection of life, not of judgment. It is a raising in glory, or changing into it by the Lord's power, those that are already quickened and justified. When people, Christian people too, are looking for judgment, and saying with Martha, "I know he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day," they forget the judgment of the quick—that then is the judgment of this world. They are to be all caught eating and drinking. "Sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." People do not like that. They put off God's judgment to a vague and indefinite period, when they hope all will be well. They think that then will be decided their final state, they trust, for blessing. There is surely a judgment; but all their thoughts about it are a mistake. The matter is decided now: "He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already."

If we receive the statements of Scripture, all is as simple as possible: that the first coming of Christ to do His

Father's will was so complete in its efficacy that they who belong to that first coming, who have part in its efficacy by faith, are forgiven, cleansed, justified, by its virtue; and that when He comes the second time, He comes to bring them to glory. The moment I get hold of the truth that the coming is, for believers, to receive them to Himself, the moment I see that His coming the second time is to bring in the glory—to change us into His own likeness and to have us with Him, it affects everything, instead of being an unimportant thing.

I believe death is the most blessed thing that can happen to a Christian; but it is not the thing I am looking for. I am looking to see Him. He might come to-morrow, or to-night, or now. Do you not think it would spoil all your plans? Suppose you thought He might come, would it not make a difference in your thoughts? You know it would. Suppose a wife expects her husband to return from a journey, do you not think there would be an effort to have everything ready?

Another thing I have found to be specially blessed is, that it connects me with Christ so nearly that I do not think merely of going to heaven and being happy—a vague thought this. Of course, I shall be perfectly happy: surely we shall. The divine presence will shed sure and endless blessing around. But one is coming whom I know, who loves me, who has given Himself for me, whom I have learned to love: and I shall be with Him for ever. Christ becomes personally more in view, more the object of our thoughts. Nothing is so powerful as Scripture for everything. It deals with the soul in the power of divine light. It reveals Christ, bringing the heart's judgment into His presence. It convicts every thought of the heart, shewing what it is in truth.

There are three ways in which Christ is pointed to in Scripture: on the cross at His first coming; He is sitting on the right hand of God; and He is coming again. In the first, He has laid the foundation of that which I have in Him: the foundation was on the cross. And now that He is sitting on the right hand of God, He has sent us the Holy Ghost the Comforter while awaiting His return, giving to those in whom He dwells the full certainty of faith as to the efficacy of His work and their own redemption. God's love and their own adoption thus lead them to desire with ardent hope His coming again.

Having thus given a general idea of the place Christ's coming holds in Scripture, I will take a few passages in different parts of the word, without going fully into them now, to shew that it is the great truth of Scripture hope, and that all the thoughts, feelings, hopes, interests of God's children are connected with it—that not only it is not a false idea, but that it is not rare or strange, but enters into the whole structure of Christian feeling.

Thus 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10, "For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." Here we find that the world was talking about this expectation of the Christians: so sure was their expectation and so strong the influence which it exercised on their conduct. They (the disciples) were looking for God's Son from heaven; it formed a part of that to which the heathen were converted— to the present waiting for God's Son from heaven—so that the world took notice of it. In chapter 2:18, 19, "For what is our hope, our joy, or crown of

rejoicing?" Most beautiful here to see the affection of Paul for the saints; but to what did his heart look as the time when these affections would be satisfied in their blessing? The coming of Christ. Again, as regards holiness, we see exactly the same thing in chapter 3:12, 13, "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." The coming of Christ (and His coming with all the saints, so that it can confer but one thing) was so near to his spirit that he looks at their being found perfect then as the object his heart desired. And in chapter 4:13-18, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

We find that, instead of the Lord's coming being a strange doctrine, while he could not look for the Christian's dying without his going to heaven, yet the comfort he gives is not that, but their return with Jesus.

Death did not deprive them of this; God would have them with Him. First note, beloved friends, the full assurance expressed here for living and dead saints alike. How do people persist in saying it is impossible to tell on this side the grave? The apostle does tell for both. The first coming of Christ has so finished redemption and the putting away of sin, that His second is glory and being with Him, for the dead and living saints. But see how present the coming of the Lord was to their minds. If I were to comfort the friends of a departed saint by saying that God would bring him with Jesus when He came again, what would they think of me? That I was mad or wild. Yet such is the comfort Paul gives to the Thessalonians, and no other, though he plainly teaches elsewhere that the soul of the saint will go to be with Christ when he dies.

But these examples shew how the coming of the Lord mixed itself with every thought and feeling of Christianity then. So in his wish for Christians in chapter 5:23, “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” But the world rejects this news, and the church becomes worldly—has lost her value for it. Not so the first disciples: their hearts were attached to their Master; and they desired to see Him to be like Him. They waited as a present condition of soul for God’s Son from heaven. I have gone through these passages, not merely to prove the doctrine, but to shew the way in which it connected itself with the whole of the Christian’s life.

We will turn back now to see the universal testimony of Scripture to the truth of this doctrine and the various

aspects it takes; and first Matthew 24:30, 31, “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 one end of heaven to the other.” When the disciples ask Him the time when these things are to be, He tells them to watch; and in verse 44, “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” But the Lord goes farther in the following parables, which apply to Christians. The mark of the evil servant given there is that he says in his heart “my lord delayeth his coming,” and thereupon begins to eat and drink with the drunken. They lost the expectation of Christ and sank down into hierarchical power and into the world, into comfort and pleasure. But the Bridegroom did tarry, and the church lost the present expectation of Christ and the blessed fruit of it on their souls. Matthew 25:1, “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom.” There is the essence of the church’s calling. They went forth, but while the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept—saints as well as professors, no exception. They all lost the sense of what they had gone out to, and gave up watching. And what is it that aroused them from the sleepy state into which they had fallen? “And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him” (v. 6). They had to be called out again; they had got into the world, into some place to sleep more comfortably (just where the professing church is now), eating and drinking with the drunken, and the cry is, I

trust, again going forth, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh.” And what made the church depart from the sense of what they had been called out to was, saying (just what people, and Christian people too, are saying now) “The Lord delayeth his coming.” They do not say He will not come, but He delays it; we are not to expect Him.

I will pass over Mark, not that there are not plenty of passages there, but that what we find there is substantially the same as what we find in Matthew. I will go on therefore to Luke 12:35-38, “Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching; verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.” Remark here that the waiting for the coming of Christ is what characterises the Christian according to the mind of Christ. Men speak of death, but. death is not “my lord.”

We find the same truth pressed on men in Luke (chap. 17:22-37), where this passage does not warn people as to sin, but as to the unholy thought that the world may go on indefinitely. As soon as Noah entered into the ark, the flood came and destroyed them all. As soon as the church is taken up, Satan having filled men’s hearts with lies, judgment will come. And as in the days of Noah and of Lot, they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, planted and builded, even thus shall it be in the day

when the Son of man is revealed. Remark here how impossible it is to apply this to the great white throne. When He sits on the great white throne, the heavens and the earth flee away; there is a total destruction of everything. Men will not then be eating, drinking, planting, building. Now look at chapter 21:26-36. People apply this to the destruction of Jerusalem, but this is spoken of in verses 20, 21 of this chapter: “Then let them which are in Jerusalem flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.” But then, after that, Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles till the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled (the time running on now till the last beast’s wickedness is filled up). Then come the signs and the Son of man is revealed.

John 14:1, 2, 3. “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” Such is the promise left us, the comfort Christ gave to His disciples when He was leaving them: He comes to receive them to Himself.

Acts 1:10, 11. “And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” This too, though it be Christ coming in the clouds, is not the great white throne: but it is striking here that they are losing

Christ; and what is the angel's word to them? Why are ye looking up into heaven? He will come again in the same way. What the angels brought before them, to comfort them, when Jesus left them, was that He would come again; and that to which Scripture points people's hearts to comfort and strengthen them is, that He is coming again.

It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment. That is the allotted portion of the seed of the first Adam; but as that is man's portion, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation; Heb. 9:27, 28. And Christ is waiting only till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. We are not even all to die. We shall not all die; 1 Corinthians 15:51. Romans 11:25: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." When the church is formed, its last member being brought in; when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, Israel will be saved as a nation, and the Deliverer come out of Zion. Christ will appear for their deliverance. Again, turn to 1 Corinthians 1:6, 7. "Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift: waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." All the promises of the prophets will be fulfilled at that coming.

Turn back to Acts 3:19, 20, 21. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when [rea4 "so that"] the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the

heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began”— as had been before preached to them; but it is the same Jesus that had been spoken of to them. We cannot apply it to the Holy Ghost; for it was the Holy Ghost then come down who spoke by Peter and declared that He should come whom the heavens had then received. In Acts 17:30, 31, the apostle is testifying that though God winked at the times of their ignorance, He now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world (i.e., this habitable earth) in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.

The distinctive resurrection of the saints will be at His coming. 1 Corinthians 15:23. “But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.”

Ephesians and Galatians are the only two books in the New Testament in which you do not find the coming of the Lord. The Galatians had got off the foundation of faith—absolute justification by faith in Christ; and Paul was obliged to return to the first principles of justification. The epistle to the Ephesians takes the opposite extreme, and you see the church in Christ in heaven, so that it cannot speak of Christ coming to receive it. It is viewed as now united to Him there. But we shall find constant reference to it in the other epistles that it is a point kept before the mind for present practical effect.

Philippians 3:19, 20, 21. “Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. For our conversation is in heaven, from when also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

Colossians 3:1-4. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

In the Thessalonians it is the main subject of both epistles. In the first epistle, except the warning in chapter 5, it is the blessedness of it to the saints; in the second epistle, the judicial character, though the glory of the saints is included in it (for when He executes judgment on the living, we shall appear with Him in glory).

1 Timothy 6:14. “That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The apostle exhorts Timothy to go on diligently and faithfully looking for the appearing. When the word of God is speaking of joy to the saints, it is the coming. The moment he speaks of responsibility to the world or to the saints, it is always His appearing. What would have been the use of his saying to Timothy to keep the commandment until His appearing, if it were not practically a present expectation? and then, how

mighty its power on the conscience (not the very highest motive, but one we need)! And if through grace the Lord has delayed His coming, not willing that any should perish, those who have acted on that expectation will have lost no fruit of their fidelity: it will find its recompense in that day.

2 Timothy 4:8. “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” “Love!”—do you love, can you love, that which will put a stop to everything that is pleasant in the world? it asks the heart. How does this mark a spirit entirely in contrast with that of the world!

Hebrews 2:5, 6. “For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? “The world to come is the habitable earth. Christ is now at God’s right hand till God puts all things under His feet. In chapter 9:24, “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” There was a state of probation before man was turned out of paradise. Since then man has indeed been tried up to the death of Christ, whether law or prophets or the mission of God’s Son could win him back, but in vain. What man finds out now is, that he is lost; but then, that when man’s sin was complete, God’s work began, and redemption is by the cross on which man crucified the Lord. Sin was complete then: but He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. That work is completed, and those

who through grace believe and have part in it await the same Saviour to come again for their final deliverance.

James 5:8. “Be ye also patient: stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” Here again we see how it is presented as a present motive for patience and to be looked for in daily life as sustaining the soul in patience, yet as that which was to change the whole state of the world.

In 1 Peter we have a remarkable testimony to the order of God’s ways in this respect. First are the prophets, who learned, in studying their own prophecies, that what they testified was not to be fulfilled in their day. Next is the gospel, but this not the fulfilment: in it the things are reported with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The saints are called on to be sober and hope to the end for the grace to be brought to them at the appearing of Jesus Christ, “whom, having not seen, we love.” The time of the saints’ receiving the promise is the appearing of Christ; 1 Peter 1:10-13.

In 2 Peter you may remark that he makes the slighting this promise, the calling it in question because the world was going on as it had, to be the sign of the scoffers of the last days.

In 1 John it is mentioned in chapter 2:28 for the conscience as ground of warning, but in chapter 3:1-3 we have it amply used for the heart and walk of the saints. Now are we sons of God. “It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is: and everyone that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” Our blessed and assured hope is to be like Christ Himself: this we shall be when

He appears. The present effect of this special hope is that the saint purifies himself even as He is pure, seeks to be as like Him now as possible, takes his part with Himself at His appearing as his motive and standard of walk.

Jude 14. “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.” The epistle is striking in this; it shews the decline of the church—the false brethren coming in unawares, who in character designated the state of the professing church in the last days and the object of the judgment of the Lord when He would appear.

The whole book of Revelation refers to this; it is an account of the preparatory judgment of God on to chapter 19, when the Lord comes forth to execute judgment. He has accomplished the work of salvation, and is sitting at the right hand of God, and then comes to set all things right. This makes His coming (besides the righteous display of His own glory, of God’s eternal Son as man the centre of all things) of such importance. It alone actually makes good the plans and counsels of God.

Glory is founded on His first coming. That, morally speaking, surpasses all glory. It is the absolute display of what God is, when evil is come in. But only at His second coming will the actual result be made manifest. He comes to receive the church to Himself, the witness of sovereign grace, and to order the world (subject to Him in the power of His kingdom) in blessing, and so display the government of God. Till He comes neither can take place. We enjoy the full revelation of Him from whom all

that blessing flows, and enjoy it here in a nature suited to it and flowing from it; but we wait for the results for ourselves and for this burdened world. We love His appearing. How is it with you? Are you linked with the world He subverts when He comes, or with Him who brings the fulness of blessing, though with judgment on what hindered it? Were He to come now, would it be your awaited joy and delight, or does it alarm and try your hearts? The Lord give you to answer before His face!

I have sought this evening to shew you how it forms the constant topic of Scripture, and enters as a present expectation into the whole structure of the habits of thought of those who were taught by the apostles—by the Spirit of God Himself; and how its loss was the sign of the church's decline, sinking into worldliness and the world. I leave it to the blessed Spirit of God to bring this divine teaching home to all our consciences. To wait truly for Christ, we must have our consciences purged by His first coming, and our hearts fixed on Him that is to come.

Lecture 2 Ephesians 1

At the last lecture I mentioned that the two epistles in which the second coming of the Lord is not spoken of are the Galatians and the Ephesians. It may seem strange that, this being the case, I should have selected on this occasion the chapter we have just read. But I have done so (and shall refer to other passages with the same intention, desiring to found all I say upon Scripture) because that chapter gives us a general view of the whole scene and plan that will be fully accomplished at the second coming of our Lord. It does

not speak of the fact of Christ's coming, but it does tell of the purpose which God has, and that will then be accomplished. And not only that, but it shews us the way in which the church of God (I mean all true saints gathered to Christ by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven) at the coming of Christ have a portion or part in it—what their place in this great plan of God is, that plan having necessarily for its centre the exaltation of the Son, "the brightness of God's glory." He was humbled to be exalted.

The way in which God has dealt with us, beloved friends, is this—He has brought us completely to Himself, having respect to the whole value of Christ's work; and, in doing that, He has given us a place with Christ. He makes us like Christ; and, having thus made us near to Himself, He then unfolds to us all His plans. It is not merely being made safe, but, being brought as children to God: "all things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." But then, having done this, He treats you—as His expression is to Abraham, and as Christ's expression is to His disciples—as friends. The Lord says, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" And what He then told Him was not merely that he personally was in His favour—that He told him long before. He does not merely shew him the promises which belonged to him and his seed: but He told him too what concerned the world, and did not immediately concern himself. This was the special mark of friendship.

If I am dealing with a man with whom I am on good terms, but not on terms of friendship, I tell him whatever is needed with regard to the business between us, according to the common courtesies of life; and there it ends. But if I have a friend, I tell him what is in

my heart. This is what God does with His children—as Christ said to His disciples, “Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”

And there is not a greater proof of the extent to which the church has lost its conscious identity with Christ, than its giving up its expectation of the coming of Christ. And why is that, but because there are so many whose hearts do not enter into this thought, that God has brought them so near to Himself that they are considered as having been taken into His family? “Sons and daughters,” the expression is, and sons and daughters too of full age. That was not their position under the law. Therefore it is said that “the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant though he be lord of all. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father.” And, because you have the Spirit, because you have an unction from the Holy One, you know all things, having the consciousness of being sons of God, sons of full age, so as to possess the confidence of the Father.

And the same Spirit, who is the Spirit of adoption, unfolds to us all the things which are freely given to us of God. “It is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” And there people generally stop; whereas the apostle goes on to say, in order to shew the difference between that

and our state, “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God… Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God,” 1 Cor. 2:9-12. Now is it not a strange things that people should quote that passage which declares that man’s heart hath not conceived the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, and should pass over the declaration which follows, and which contrasts the position of Christians, saying God had revealed them unto them, and given them the Spirit to enable them to understand them? And is it not a sorrowful thing, when the Lord hath put us in such a place that He confides to us (poor creatures as we are), in a certain sense the glory of Christ, having confided to us all His thoughts about Christ, that we should say, “Oh! we cannot pretend to such things as that?” I will not say it is ingratitude—it is worse; it is dishonouring the love God has shewn to us. Suppose a child were to say, “I do not pretend to the confidence of my father; I do not want that; I am simply willing to obey him.” I would say to such a one, “You are a very unhappy child, extremely unhappy; you do not know what a child’s place is.” It is just that which the apostle brings out in this chapter. He first speaks (although I do not dwell upon that now—not that it is not precious: I thought, while reading, how sweet it was), in the early part of the chapter, of the place in which we are set before God— “that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved; in whom we have

redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." You are brought into God's likeness of righteousness and holiness before God— "holy and without blame before him in love." You are brought into the place of sons, having the adoption of children, and you have got the forgiveness of your sins and are accepted in the beloved Himself. That is the place you are brought into: there is no other place for a Christian. And now, says the Lord, having put you there, I am going to tell you what my plan is for Christ's glory and your glory along with Him. He says, "Wherein" —that is, "in the riches of his grace" — "he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times" —He hath not only given us this redemption, so that we know where we are in our relationship to God, but, being in this relationship, has shewn us all this of His plan— "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."

Mark where we are connected with it, "in whom also we have obtained an inheritance." We are heirs, as the apostle says to the Romans— "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." That is, God says, I am going to give all to Christ; I am to gather together in one all things which are in heaven and on earth in Him; and with Him you are joint-heirs—with Him you have got the inheritance. That is the way in which the chapter presents to us the purpose and thought of God.

Now just look at various passages which shew how He brings this about, and the way in which, beloved friends,

He will take us to put us into the inheritance. For it is for this we are waiting. We are not waiting to be heirs, but we are waiting for the inheritance. We are not waiting to be sons—we are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus; but we are waiting to get what belongs to the sons. Poor earthen vessels that we are here, in the wilderness, we are waiting for that. He has given us “the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” That is, the glory of His grace we have got—the redemption; but the glory we have not got—this we are waiting for.

Such is the order of his prayer withal: our calling, our nearness to God; our inheritance, that is, everything of which we are heirs along with Christ; and, then, there is the power which brings us into it. That is, the very same power which raised Christ from the dead has raised every believer out of his state of death in sin to the same place with Christ. And, having brought them into one, at the end he shews us the place to which Christ is raised—“at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

This enables us to see a little of the way in which God accomplishes His plan; and it was to shew what that plan is that I read this chapter— “That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth” — under Christ as the

Head. But when Christ takes this place as man (of course as God He is over all always; but when He takes this place as man), we take the inheritance along with Him. We are joint-heirs— “in whom also we have obtained an inheritance.” And, again in Romans, “if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.”

Now the principle of that is what many Christians are sadly unmindful of, having lost the consciousness of the way in which they have been brought by God into the same place as Christ, who became a man on purpose to bring us into the same place with Himself. “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them.” If He is a Son, so are we. He is our life, our righteousness; and we share His glory, the fruit of righteousness. When He was transfigured, Moses and Elias appeared in the same glory, talking familiarly with Him. And we should consider that the Lord has come down in lowliness and humiliation amongst us, that our hearts might get near enough to Him to understand that.

Having got the plan then, we shall now go through some passages of scripture to shew how the Lord brings it about. If you will turn to Psalm 2, you will see the way in which the Lord was first presented on earth to have the earthly dominion, and was rejected:60 we shall see immediately how the two things are connected. “Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed.” This is quoted by Peter with reference to Herod and Pilate, etc. “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.” That is, Christ Himself shall have them in derision. “Then

shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." This is not come yet. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion" —in spite of all this rejection— "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." These judgments, of course, are not come yet.

And now, as confirmatory of what I have just said, let me ask you to turn to the book of Revelation, at the end of chapter 2 to shew the way in which we are connected with Christ. "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father." I refer to this now for the purpose of shewing that even in such things the saints are connected with Christ, although these, of course, are not the most blessed things in which they are connected with Him. It is said immediately afterwards, "and I will give him the morning star"—Christ Himself; and this is infinitely more precious. But still He associates them with Himself in all His glory. He receives these heathen for His inheritance and breaks them in pieces; and so shall you with Him if you are faithful.

It is strange to see how the church of God has lost the sense of all things; and I refer to these passages to shew how the saints are associated with Christ, even with reference to those extreme cases. "Do ye not know," says Paul to the Corinthians, "that the saints shall judge the world? "He tells them just to think of that, and then

to consider whether they were not worthy “to judge the smallest matter” (speaking of saints going to law with one another). Are you not able, any of you, to settle the commonest things between yourselves? “Know ye not that we shall judge angels?” It was necessary to tell them this, because they had not got hold of a right understanding of the place in which Christ has put the saints, because they did not see their association with Christ in all the fulness of its meaning. I have referred to this association with Christ in judgment, not at all because it is the most blessed part of it, but as confirmatory of what I have said about the association of the saints with Christ.

Observe that Psalm 2 speaks of Christ’s coming and being rejected. Peter quotes it in that view, and Paul also the words, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” And, being rejected, the Lord (that is, Christ) is there represented as laughing—which is, of course, a figure—at all the raging of the nations; and it is said that the time will come when He will sit in Zion in spite of them all, and have all the world given Him for His inheritance. This, however, does not present Him in the place in which the New Testament largely represents Him. Here He is only connected with the fate of the Jews, and the judgment of the heathen and rebels at the time of the end.

At His first coming, He was rejected as Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed. And mark what light this throws even upon the gospel. We find Christ charging His disciples strictly that they should no more say He was the Christ, because He was to be rejected, for “the Son of man,” He says, “shall suffer many things.” It was, as if He had said, “I am not now to take my place as King of

Zion. I come in another way. I come to be the suffering Son of man, in order that I may afterwards take a far higher place of glory." You find accordingly, in Luke and the other gospels, that He strictly charges His disciples not to say that He was the Christ, because that was really over in consequence of His being rejected. Now take Psalm 8— "O Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." This, you know, was fulfilled when He rode upon the ass's colt into Jerusalem. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the Son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet." It is there intimated that, though as Christ He was rejected, the consequence of His being rejected was that He takes His place as Son of man, in which He was to have everything put under His feet. You will see how the apostle reasons on that in the New Testament.

These two Psalms shew His coming among the Jews and being rejected, and yet His taking His place over these rebels in spite of them at the end. But the present consequence of His rejection is that He takes the place (which He always gives Himself in the gospels) of being the Son of man. Coming to the New Testament, I have just read from the Ephesians, "He hath put all things under his feet," and, being in that place, "gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body." The church is His body, making the complete man, and

is therefore said to be “the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” Christ is a divine Person, though a man, and fills all things; but it is the church which makes Him as the Son of man complete—makes up what is called the mystical Christ, of which He is the Head, all the members of the church making up His body.

The church, therefore, is as closely associated with Him as a man’s own flesh is with himself. This is the comparison employed in Ephesians 5, “No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” And in this body there being but one Spirit, the church is associated with Christ as taking the headship over everything. We see Christ, the Son of man, in the counsels of God set over everything in heaven and on earth; and we, as being close to Him, His redeemed ones, His brethren, joint-heirs, and members of His body, are completely identified with Him in His place of headship. You thus see the connection of the church with Christ’s glory at His second coming.

You find the same thing in Hebrews 2, where the apostle, citing Psalm 8, shews how far it is accomplished. “But one, in a certain place, testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.” That time is not yet come. “But we see Jesus, who was made a little

lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." Mark what we have got here. Here is God's purpose of putting everything in subjection under Christ without any exception— there is nothing excepted that is not put under Him. In fact He created it all, and therefore is heir of it all. But the point is this, that what He created as God He takes for an inheritance as Man, in order that we might take it with Him; but that time is not come yet. We do not see all things put under Him; but we do see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour; we see that half accomplished, but not the other half; we do not see all things put under Him. This is what the apostle states, and the reason of it we get in Psalm no, which the apostle also quotes in the Hebrews, and to which the Lord Himself appealed in reasoning with the Pharisees on this very matter. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." And therefore in Hebrews 10 the apostle says, "He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" —that is, the work of their redemption— "from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool," till they are all put under His feet by God.

I shall have another opportunity of referring to that. But I am speaking now of the blessed assurance it is to the saints, that Christ is sitting at the right hand of God until—and expecting till—His enemies are made His footstool. They are not made His footstool yet: if they were, He would not allow matters to go on in the world as they do now. It is another thing which God is doing now. He is gathering out His joint-heirs, and, having this purpose, He says, Sit thou at my right hand until the

time when thine enemies shall be made thy footstool. As to the question when that time shall be. Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." But it is said to the Son, Sit thou at my right hand till that time is revealed.

We have the plan then as clearly set forth as language can put it. We see Jesus, when He has by Himself purged our sins, "set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," and then by the gospel gathering out the joint-heirs. And we are associated with Him while He is there at the right hand of God—associated with Him as united to Him by the one Spirit.

If you will turn now to another passage, 1 Corinthians 15, you will see the way in which we get this place of glory at the resurrection, all things being under His feet. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" —those that are His heirs, they and nobody else. "Then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him." That is, God the Father is not put under Him, but that very exception proves in the strongest way that everything else is—God the Father being alone excepted.

But it is said we do not see that yet. Do you think that all the oppression and wars and wickedness and horrors, which now mark the history of the earth, would go on if everything were put under Him? It is Satan, and not Christ, who is now the prince and god of this world. It is strange how many people fancy that the cross put an end to that; it was exactly the contrary. The cross was the one grand demonstration—and there never was such a demonstration before—that Satan is the prince and god of this world. “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me,” said our Saviour. Until Christ had been rejected, Satan was never called the prince of this world. Before that, Jehovah was on the earth, and in the temple was the Shekinah of glory. But when at last He came into this world in the Person of Christ, and the world rejected Him, then from that time Satan is the prince of this world. And it is after this that the apostle says, “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not.” When the Lord comes again, He will be the Prince of the world; but till He comes again, Satan is that prince.

If you will now look to Luke 19, you will see how the Lord Himself puts it, when He speaks of going into a far country to get the kingdom, and there receiving it, and then returning and executing the judgments to which He refers. “As they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.” They were looking for this, and fancied that, instead of His being rejected as He was, they would get the kingdom with Him in an earthly way directly. “He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and

to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come." This is the service of Christians, while the Lord is away. He has gone away to receive the kingdom, and has not returned yet. Then He judged the servants when He came back. "And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him," and begins to take account of their service. And then, that being finished, he says, "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." This is after He has received the kingdom and come back again.

He does not judge while He is away. It is said, "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." But, if He were to begin to judge now, He would have to close the time of grace and the gathering in of the church. The Father judges the saints, but it is in the way of discipline— "If ye call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work." But, as regards definite judgment, it is said in John, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." When the Son returns, He will take notice of His enemies and execute judgment upon them. But meanwhile He has gone away to receive the kingdom, and has not returned. When He does, He will not allow all this wickedness which we now see to go on. But for the present, this is the time when we must watch in faithfulness, occupying till He comes, and trading properly with those talents, the spiritual gifts He has given us.

You will find this remarkably brought out if you turn to Colossians i. I wish to dwell a little on this, that we may get to as full an understanding as possible of the thoughts and scope and plan of God, which seem to me to be very plainly set forth in Scripture. Begin at verse 12, which shews where we (I mean all believers) are: “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet.” He has made us meet—that is all settled. You will always find this in Scripture; you will not find anything there about growing to be meet; it speaks about growing up to Christ in everything, but this is a different thing. “Which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him “—this is the reason why He is set over all things—” by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him.” He is to take them all under subjection, but not in this state of wickedness in which they are now. “We see not yet all things put under him.”

And how does He take them? He takes them as Man—“whom he hath appointed heir of all things “(Heb. 1:2): and we are appointed joint-heirs with Him, as the scripture tells us. You will see, therefore, how the second part comes in. “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” — that is, because He is a divine Person— “And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

He has this double headship, which is also brought together in the chapter of Ephesians I was reading—head over all things, and head to the church. “By him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death.” He has reconciled—it is always ‘hath ‘as regards the saints. It is not said ‘He will reconcile,’ but “hath reconciled.”

But the reconciliation of all things in heaven and earth is future, because Satan is not yet bound. Even Christianity itself has been corrupted in the most awful way, because Satan is not bound; and the corruptest thing in the whole universe is corrupted Christianity. The apostle says, “By him to reconcile all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven”; or, as it is in the Ephesians, “to gather together in one all things in Christ”; but he does not say he has done this yet. Nor does he speak at all of those who are under the earth. When he talks of subjection, of everything bowing to Him, it is said, “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.” Of these things he does not say ‘reconcile ‘but “bow”; “but you,” he says, “hath he reconciled.”

You thus see the truth about the double headship of Christ— His being Head of the church, and His being Head over all things; and then the double reconciliation, the present reconciliation and redemption of the church through grace, and then the reconciliation of all things in heaven and in earth. Now we see not yet all things put under Him, but we see Him by faith, sitting at the

right hand of God, until His enemies are made His footstool. And when that time comes, and they are all put under Him, He will take possession, according to the character given to God in the appellation used by Melchisedec when he came out to bless Abraham— “The most high God, possessor of heaven and earth.” Thus, when Christ becomes in all its fulness the King and Priest upon His throne, God will have that title.

We come then to the next thing, which I will just state—I do not know how far we may be able to go through it this evening. Taking these two statements, that He is to reconcile everything in heaven and earth, and again, that He is to gather together in one, all things which are both in heaven and on earth; we also see, in several of the passages which I have quoted, that the church, or the saints who compose it, are joint-heirs with Him. What I have been seeking to shew you is, that the church of God (all the saints whom in this present time God is gathering by His grace in the gospel) are being associated with Christ, as the centre of blessing; that they get the central place with Himself, under whom all possible existences are to be placed. But the time for this which the scripture speaks of is when Christ receives the kingdom and returns, when the dispensation of the fulness of times comes. Then everything will be brought into order and blessedness under the authority of Christ. When God the Father has put everything under His feet, He will bring everything into order, and will then deliver up His kingdom. But the central thing during the dispensation of the fulness of times in the heavenly places will be the church, and the central thing in earthly places will be the Jews.

This brings in what are the two great subjects of holy Scripture, after personal redemption. The church is that in which He displays sovereign grace, bringing its members to share the glory of Christ. The Jews are those in whom He reveals as a centre the government of this world. These are the two great subjects in Scripture after personal salvation. The Scripture speaks of the church of God as those who are associated with Christ, who are the heirs of Christ's glory. But the moment we say this, we cannot but think how wondrous it is that poor wretched creatures like us should be brought into the same glory with Christ—should be brought into the same place with Himself. And the work of reconciliation is to embrace all things in heaven and on earth.

This world is not to remain for ever the sporting-place and playground of the devil. That will not be allowed for ever. The Son of David will yet have His place in it, and His glory too, as its ruler, and the world will then be altered. "None shall hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain." There is a time coming when Christ will be the Prince of peace. He has declared positively that this is not at the present time. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division. For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother," etc That is, this is the time when the bringing in the light awakens the passions of men; and until Christ's second coming puts them down, they continue their raging.

And Christians now have to take up the cross and follow Him. Do you think if Christ were reigning, His followers

would only have the cross? Why, they would have the crown. We are positively told that our part is the cross. We must now take it up every day. But, when Christ reigns, that will not be the part of His people. He will "come to be glorified in his saints "; and a glorious place they will get, when He comes to reign.

When this time comes to gather together all things in one, the church of God will be the centre of all things in heavenly places, and the Jews the centre of all things on earth, Christ being the Head over all. This is what we find stated in the chapter of Ephesians which we have read— "That ye may know what… is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come "—the time namely of which we are speaking— "and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body."

It is the same power which raises the saints, and so, in the next chapter, he says, speaking of it now as already got spiritually, "and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." God, in setting us over angels and principalities and powers in the world to come, is shewing the exceeding riches of His grace in the place He has given to us, in His kindness towards us. This, beloved friends, is what I have been anxious to shew

you, by bringing before you these various passages, that thus in the ages to come God is going to shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward you. Angels are going to learn the immense riches of God's grace; and how? By our being made partakers of the glory of Christ, in God's kindness to us through Christ Jesus; so that, when they see Mary Magdalene, the thief on the cross, the woman of the city that was a sinner, any one of us, in the same place of glory with Christ, they may admire the exceeding riches of His grace. Laying hold of this now even by faith in the teaching of God's Spirit, although we have not got all the fruits of it as yet, we may find our present place very profitable in the way of discipline, and exercise, and spiritual education; still its full development is in the future, when God's kindness to us shall be shewn to the angels.

And now let me try to shew you a little the way in which the Lord brings us into this place of association with Himself. And first I will refer you to the passage in John 17, where the Saviour states the fact, that the saints share with Him His glory and the love of the Father. A wonderful passage it is, as shewing that love of Christ which passeth knowledge. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." This refers to the present time, or, at least, to what ought to be the case in the present time. And then He goes on to the time to come: "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they

may be made perfect in one, and that the world may [not believe, but may] know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." All the glory thou hast given me, He says—that is, the glory He takes as man, for as a divine Person, His glory was eternal—I have given them, and this, that the world, when they see My people like Me, and having the same glory as Myself, may know that thou hast sent Me. It is not "believe": this is spoken with reference to the present time. Saints should be one now, as a testimony that there is a power in the Spirit of God which overcomes all fleshly differences. Alas! that is not so. This, too, is a precious subject; but I must pass it over just now, confirming myself to the one I am more immediately dealing with. Of the present time it is said, "that the world may believe"; of the future, "that the world may know." "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that the world may know that thou hast sent me." They will know it plainly enough for their condemnation—for the condemnation of those who are rebels— when they see those whom they have been accustomed to despise coming with Christ in glory.

Now do you believe this, beloved friends? Our hearts ought to know and recognise that love—not fathom it, for this they cannot do, but confide in it, and to that extent know it, although it passes knowledge. And, as you see, the time is coming when the world too will know that love of God to us. We pass on to verse 25— "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." That is the present

good we enjoy—that the love wherewith Christ is loved should be in us—that we should have it in our souls. No one can fathom it: it passes knowledge; but still we are to have it and to know it, and that by Christ being in us. I am not to wait till the world sees I am with Christ in glory, to know it myself; for the Father now loves me as He has loved Christ.

If you turn again to 1 Corinthians 15, you will see this same truth brought out in its relation to the resurrection. The point I am now to impress upon you is, that Scripture shews us these two things—that we are to be like Him, completely like Him, save that He is a divine Person; and that the time we shall be like Him is when we shall be raised from the dead. It is then we shall appear with Him. We are not of the world now, but it is said that the world will only know that we have been loved as Christ was loved, when they see us in the same place of glory with Him, when the Lord takes us up to be with Him and to put us in this glory; so that when He appears to the world, we shall appear along with Him in the same glory.

The fact that it is so, that we shall so appear with Him in the same glory, we have seen already from various passages which I quoted on the last occasion; but I shall refer you to some more particularly. At verse 47 of 1 Corinthians 15, it is said, “the first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy”—all like to their father Adam; and, “as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly,” that is, like what Christ is, not speaking of His divinity; “and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” We shall be like Him, we shall be just the

same as Himself. He does not say merely that we shall be there, in heaven, but like Him. But first, “as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy” —that is, like Adam, poor wretched sinners, mortal creatures, like him; whereas, “as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.” This is the full absolute statement of the fact. Then he adds, with respect to the fact of the glory—putting it, of course, as in the future, not having yet come— “as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly”; and he goes on, “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” As it is said before, “it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory.”

Now let us refer to some of the passages which shew how Christ receives us to Himself. I follow the teachings of Scripture throughout, that we may get solidly grounded in what Christ communicates to us. He says, “In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” He has gone into His Father’s house, but He will come again and receive us to Himself, that where He is, there we may be also. He was going up then with a body, going up glorious, not as yet having all things under His feet, but crowned with glory and honour; and He says to His disciples, You must wait and occupy till I come again. But now, before He comes, we see what He is to do with us who are in the same glory— “I will come again and receive you unto myself”; as He said in the previous chapter, “If I wash thee not, thou

hast no part with me." It was as if He had said, I cannot stay with you, as King and Messiah now, but I am washing you that ye may be fit to reign with Me when I come again. I am, therefore, still your servant in the sense of intercession and the like, and by My all-prevailing intercession I will wash you daily, because, if you are to have part with Me in My kingdom, you must be made like Myself.

In like manner we get what may be called the public announcement of this in i Thessalonians 4— "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," etc. See how the apostle constantly expected the coming of the Lord. Some people have boldly dared to say that Paul made a mistake in expecting the coming of the Lord in his day. It is they who are making an awful mistake. It was never revealed when Christ would come, and Paul did not pretend to know it. But he knew that that time had come when we should always be expecting Him (instead of saying, My Lord delayeth His coming, and beginning therefore to eat and drink with the drunken, and to beat the men-servants and the maid-servants). It was, therefore, that Paul put himself in this class, "we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." And what was the effect of that? He lived like a man who expected Christ every day; and when Christ comes, he will get the fruit of that, while those people who put off the expectation of Christ's coming, and do not wait for it, allowing their hearts to go out after covetousness and such like things, will also get the fruit of their so doing.

The time of the second coming of Christ is declared not to be revealed. Paul got a revelation that he should soon die, and he knew it. Peter also got a revelation that he must shortly put off this tabernacle, and of course knew it. But it was not revealed to them when Christ should come. Therefore Paul says, “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,” Christ having overcome death. We may all die before Christ’s coming—no one knows the moment of it; still we may use the language, “we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord.” It is said of the man who thinks Christ is delaying His coming, that he turns to what is bad, smiting his fellow-servants, and eating and drinking with the drunken. And it is said, that while the Bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept, the wise virgins as well as the foolish; that is, the church lost a sense of the present expectation of Christ. Even the wise servants had to be waked up again; and it was a mercy to them to rouse them up in time, because to His people Christ is ever faithful. But it is the characteristic of the faithful servant that he is expecting. The church of Philadelphia was expecting the coming of Christ, and it is called the word of His patience, “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience.”

The passage in Thessalonians goes on— “We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first”— nobody else. I shall dwell upon that at another time, but I just notice it now in passing. The shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, are not to be taken as the voice of God

to all the world to raise the righteous and the wicked. "The shout" is a military term; whatever the precise term now equivalent to it, it is that which follows "Stand at ease." It was first used with reference to calling rowers in the trireme, and afterwards as a military term. When soldiers are left to go about their at ease, and are then all suddenly called back into the ranks, it is the command given them for that purpose, to which the word "shout" here used is equivalent. But the only persons who hear it are "the dead in Christ," Christ being represented as in this way gathering together His own troops. "The dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Here, then, we have the details of it. The Lord has declared that He will come and receive us unto Himself; and now the apostle, by the revelation given unto him, explains how it will be. He will come and call us up to meet the Lord in the air. The passage in I Corinthians, which I have already read, refers to the same thing, when it says, "afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits." The specific thing here is that it is not a resurrection of the dead, but a resurrection from among the dead. The raising of Christ was not a resurrection "of the dead" simply, but a resurrection "from among the dead." This was its whole character—a taking up from among the dead; and why? Because the Father's delight was in Him. And why are we in like manner taken up from among the dead? Because His delight is in us. And therefore at the proper time the Lord comes (it is not

said, appears) and calls us up to be for ever with the Lord, to take our place associated with Christ, partaking of that glory which you have already seen referred to in the words “as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

But what we are called to expect is, not to die—we may die, and a blessed thing it is too, to die; but what we are to look for and expect is, as it is expressed in 2 Corinthians 5, “Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.” That Christ’s power over death may be fully shewn, He takes to Himself mortal men, whether alive or dead: if alive, He changes them into glory without dying; if they are dead, He raises them. This is the first thing He does. He raises the dead first, and then the living are changed; and they go to meet the Lord in the air. He has predestinated us “to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.” And, as we have seen, “the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.” This then is our portion of heavenly things.

And if you turn to Colossians 3 you will see that when Christ appears, we shall appear in this glory along with Himself and be like Him. He will have already come and taken us up to Himself; and then He comes manifesting Himself to the world, and we appear with Him. You will remember what I have before quoted, that the glory which was given Him, He has given to us, that the world might know, etc. Now, turn to Colossians 3, and you will see how thoroughly the apostle identifies us with Christ. Look first at chapter 2:20, “If ye be dead with Christ.” Then, at the beginning of chapter 3, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where

Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." He is hid in God; He is your life, and your life therefore is hid there. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." When He appears, we shall appear with Him. There can be no separation. If He is hid in God, our life is hid in God. If He appears, we appear. If He appears in glory, we must appear in glory with Him. We are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.

You will see the same thing in the first epistle of John: only the same truth comes out in different shapes— "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" — this, that we should get Christ's own name! (what a wonder of love is this that we should get Christ's own title of relationship!) "therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not," shewing that we have got the same place with Him. He says, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." I have accomplished your redemption, and the effect of this is, that I have put you in the same place with Myself. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." "Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." It is no wonder that it does not recognise us, if it did not recognise Him. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God"— this is the present time, "and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Further, as to this appearing with Him, I shall now refer to the book of Revelation; but, before doing that, you

may turn for a moment to Zechariah 14, where it is said the Lord shall come and all His saints with Him, and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives. This is referred to by the angel, when, after Christ's ascension from Mount Olivet, he said to the disciples, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Again, in verse 14 of the epistle of Jude, you find "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment upon all." Here they are associated with Christ in the executing of judgments. "The Lord cometh with ten thousands" —properly myriads, that is, an immense number— "of his saints to execute judgment." This shews how entirely we are associated with Christ. And what a place does not that put us in! Yet Scripture is so simple and plain upon the point, that it cannot be misinterpreted.

You will find the same truth in 2 Thessalonians 1. I prefer quoting many passages to enlarging upon them, that our faith may stand, not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. The Thessalonians were suffering dreadful persecutions; and the apostle told them, "We glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure; which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer; seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking

vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." He comes with these ten thousands or myriads of His saints.

You find a distinct statement of their coming given in figure in the Revelation. At chapter 17 it is said, "These shall make war with the Lamb." All the kings of the earth shall be found, not in blessing, joined with Christ, but in open war with the Lamb, joined with the beast. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Other passages shew us that angels will be with Him, but it is not angels that are here spoken of as being with Him. The angels may be described as "faithful" and "chosen," because the scripture speaks of the "elect" angels; but these that are with Him are the "called," and it is the saints who are called by the grace of God. These "called "persons then who are with Him are the saints. Having seen who they are, turn now to chapter 19, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

You have seen all through that He is coming to judge the wicked on the earth—a thing greatly forgotten, that there is a judgment of the quick as well as the dead. "As in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not, until

the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean" —which, he says elsewhere, is the righteousness of the saints. I close now, as regards the quotation of passages.

On the last occasion we found, running through the whole series of passages quoted, that the Lord's coming was the one thing kept before the church as its hope in the Scripture, that it connected itself with every kind of thought and feeling the saints had, that they were even looked upon as being converted to wait for the Son of God, that every other doctrine of Scripture was connected with it, that what marked a decaying church was the thought that "the Lord delayeth his coming," and that what woke them up was the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh."

Then to-night we have found that the Lord reveals to us with wisdom and prudence His plan, namely, "that he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" — reconciling them all in Christ—not merely for their own selfish good, but as a plan for Christ's glory. And with this view He has associated us with Christ in the place He takes as Head over all, so that, being associated with Him as heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, we have the inheritance with Him; that, when He takes it, we shall have it with Him; that, when He comes, we shall come with Him; that, whereas He was presented to the earth

among the Jews according to the promise of God, and they would not have Him, He then took another place—that of Son of man. That place He will take in His resurrection and in His glory, and will raise us up to have it with Him when the time comes; and not we alone, but all saints will have it with Him. Thus we see not yet all things put under Him, but we do see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, and are waiting, as He is, till His enemies are made His footstool. But when that time comes—when it will be, nobody knows; God has not revealed it—the first thing He will do will be to have His body; He is not to be Head without the body, but will catch us up to meet Him in the air; then, if dead, He will raise us; if alive, He will change us, and take us up to meet the Lord in the air. He will come and take us to His Father's house; for this is our place; and He will have everything there in order for us—only He must have His heirs with Him; for He cannot take a step in entering on the possession of His inheritance, without having His heirs, His body, His bride with Him.

In the Revelation you first have the marriage of the Lamb, and then you see the Lamb coming out with His armies following Him. They are the bride—that is what they are; for the Lamb must have an associate with Him, a help-meet to share His inheritance. He has not yet taken to Himself His great power and reigned. We see not yet all things put under Him. But when He comes, He will take us up to be with Him, because we are perfectly associated with Him. When He appears, we shall appear with Him. When He executes judgment, we shall accompany Him—that is, when He executes judgment on the world, breaking them with a rod of iron, and dashing them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

That is anything but the blessedest part of our sharing His inheritance. The blessedest part is being with Him. But when He does appear, the world will see us with Him. He comes to raise the dead saints, and take them up to be with Himself: then when He appears we shall all appear with Him, and “shall bear the image of the heavenly, as we have borne the image of the earthy.”

But meantime, while Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, He has sent down the Holy Ghost to gather His heirs together. They must now carry the cross: when the kingdom comes, they will have the kingdom and the glory. But until that time, while He is sitting at the right hand of God, His people must bear the cross, and it is only by the power of the Spirit of God that anyone will follow Him. Whatever glory He has, in the time of glory He associates us in it with Himself, and, as a consequence, we shall reign with Him—we who are now reconciled in Him. And when He comes again, He comes, but not to judgment as regards us. “As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.”

And now, beloved friends, I would only ask, With whom are you associated? Are you associated with Christ, rejected by the world, and now sitting at the right hand of God? Are you by the Holy Ghost in spirit associated with Christ? or are you associated with the world which He is coming again to judge, and all His saints with Him? With which are you associated, while Christ is away? Having been rejected, He says, Occupy till I come, having gone to receive a kingdom and a glory far better than that from which He was rejected. With

whom are you associated? You have to go through the world, you must go through it: do you really believe that Satan is the prince and god of this world, which has rejected Christ? and do you really live as if you believed this? Do you believe that Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and that He will come again to receive you to Himself, to share with Him the same blessings as Himself in His Father's house, to witness His Father's glory, and to share His love? Are we doing anything to recommend Him? Is there that in our hearts which is like the confiding love of a child to his father, that which shews we are sons by adoption? Is there anything in us which identifies us with those who are the heirs of that blessedness and glory? The world knew Him not; the world knows us not. Can we say this? Are we like Him in our place in the world? When Christ was in the world, they saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. How is it with us? Is it the things that are not seen, or the things that are seen, that have power in our hearts? Christ is not seen; does He dwell in our hearts by faith, so as to be our portion? If He does, then, when He appears, we shall appear with Him in glory; and, better than that, shall be taken up to be for ever with Him. The Lord give us to be able to wait for Him, and to be ever saying, "Even so come, Lord Jesus." May we have all our treasure, and heart, and portion, associated and identified with Himself. A little while, yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. He only knows how long the gathering of the saints to be with Him will last.

Lecture 3 Revelation 12

What I intend speaking of this evening, and the idea of which is given in this chapter in allegorical expressions, is, first, the gathering up of the church of God, the heavenly saints, to be with Christ; and then, secondly, if the time allows, the promises which we have, and thereby the infallible certainty of the restoration of the Jews to their place as a nation upon the earth. Both connect themselves—otherwise it would be impossible to go into the whole subject this evening— with the manifestation of judgments in this world: only that the taking up of the saints is the taking them out of the way of those judgments. On the contrary, the Jews who are to remain on the earth, and other Gentiles also, when they come to those judgments, must pass through them, as Lot passed through, and from all that happened to Sodom, making his escape, yet so as by fire, while Abraham looked on upon the judgments that fell on the guilty cities of the plain. So also Noah was saved, passing through the flood, while Enoch was taken up to heaven. Those two cases are spoken of as analogous to what shall be at the coming of the Son of man. We have in these two cases the two things of which I have spoken —the one class of persons out of the reach and out of the way altogether of the judgments that are coming, and the other class passing through those judgments which destroyed the great body of men, and thus escaping them. I have said that this class consists of the Jews and some Gentiles also; but I do not enter into details on that point at present—I wish now merely to present the general thought.

We saw, last evening, that the church forms the centre of the heavenly glory—under Christ, of course, who is the

centre of everything—and that the Jews are the centre of the earthly dominion, the earthly blessings. This is what gives their importance to the two points on which, if time allow, I shall dwell this evening—that is, the taking the saints in the last time to be with the Lord Himself in heaven, and their sharing His own glory and blessedness; and then the Jews brought into blessing with this earth, as reigned over by Christ, and not reigning with Him, but still a great nation on the earth. These two facts are the two great centres of God's ways.

In the chapter we have read you have first Christ Himself and the church figured in the man-child; and then, in the woman which flees from persecution for twelve hundred and sixty days, you have the Jewish remnant—those who are spared in the time of judgment but are not yet brought into glory. It thus brings before you the two subjects of which I have spoken. And I add this, that the consideration of the blessing of the church will lead us necessarily to another point; and that is, that what is called a general resurrection, common to all together—and I state it now that we may get fast hold of the idea at once—is a thing entirely unknown to Scripture.

I do not deny that it was the notion entertained among the Jews, at least by the Pharisees, that all Jews at all events (as for the Gentiles they looked upon them as dogs) would rise again together; but our Lord corrected this notion. A right conception on this point is necessarily connected with our understanding the taking up of the church to heaven, because those saints who are dead must be raised for that. When I say "saints," I mean all the saints, those of the Old Testament, as well as those under the New Testament, dispensation.

And I mention another point for those persons who are not familiar with these subjects, and that is, that God is not now dealing with this world—providentially of course, He governs all; but that He is not dealing with this world as He afterwards will, at this time while Christ is sitting at His right hand in heaven, and while He is gathering the joint-heirs of Christ to reign with Him when He takes the inheritance. He alone knows at what moment this will be fulfilled. Then, when He hath put Christ's foes under His footstool, Christ will rise up from His Father's throne, and take His own throne. But, while Christ sits on His Father's throne, the Holy Ghost having been sent down, consequent on His ascension, He is gathering out of the world a people for His name, to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

This lapse of time, this parenthesis in the ways of God, is brought in, in the most distinct way, at the end of Daniel 9; and I refer to it because we should never understand God's dealings with mankind, unless we get hold of this. At the end of Daniel 9 you find the Spirit of God shewing a certain period which was to elapse before Jerusalem got its full blessing; and you will see the reference that is made to what I was calling the parenthesis, or lapse of time, during which the Jews were all set aside. At verse 24 it is said, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and

threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." That took place: you know it was forty and six years going on. "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off "—the threescore and two weeks, with the other seven, making sixty-nine— "but not for himself"; or rather, instead of this, take what is in the margin, which is undoubtedly the true sense, "and shall have nothing." He did not take the kingdom at all; He was cut off and got nothing; in heaven He got all the glory, but He got nothing as regards what we are speaking of. "And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." That is— what almost everyone is familiar with—Titus coming and destroying the city, until there was not left one stone upon another that was not thrown down.

But there is still a week left—we have only had sixty-nine weeks; and here, without entering into details, is the great principle I want you to get hold of. We have the sixty-nine weeks, and then there is a lapse. Messiah comes, is rejected, and is cut off, does not get the kingdom at all, gets nothing— He gets the cross it is true, but that is all He gets. He ascends to heaven, and therefore our hearts must follow Him up to heaven, while He is there. Then comes the time of the end.

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." For remark what was said before, "unto the end of the war desolations are determined." As to the time all is left vague; these desolations are to go on for no one knows how long after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Messiah having gone and taken nothing. "And he

shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations" —that is, idolatry: "abominations" mean idolatry in the Old Testament— "he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

There then we get this simple but very important fact as to the interpretation of prophecy—that there was a term of seventy weeks, which would come upon the holy city —upon the Gentiles too, but specially the Jews—until all prophecy about them was to be accomplished; but when the sixty-nine weeks had elapsed, Messiah comes, is cut off—that is actually fulfilled—and takes nothing; and there go on wars, etc., and the city is destroyed; and then there run on the times of the Gentiles; and blindness in part, according to Romans 11, has happened unto Israel, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

So again our Saviour, in Luke's gospel, after speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, says that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Now that is what is still going on. Jerusalem is still trodden down. Christ has not taken to Him His great power and reign, spoken of in a chapter of the Revelation, preceding that which we have read. Jerusalem is still desolate, and the times of the Gentiles are still running on—I doubt not, running close unto their completion, but still running on; and Christ is sitting on the right hand of God the Father, according to that word, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool." But while He sits there, the Holy Ghost comes down from heaven to declare that,

if man had rejected Him, heaven had accepted Him, and that (redemption having been accomplished, and the grace appeared that brings salvation) He sits there to associate with Himself the joint-heirs of whom we have been speaking.

But in the meantime the Jews are set aside, and the times of the Gentiles are running on, and nothing is fulfilled or brought to an accomplishment, because what He is.doing is gathering the heavenly saints. Now those heavenly saints, as we saw in the last lecture, are completely identified with Christ Himself. He is not ashamed to call them brethren. He is the Firstborn among many brethren, who have been conformed to the image of God's Son, and are "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." For it is said, "no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." And the saints too are the bride of Christ. What Eve was to Adam, that is the place the church of God fills in reference to Christ. And what He is doing now is gathering the saints to fill this place. It is not the fulfilling of God's dealings with the earth, but the gathering of saints for heaven; and while He is gathering saints for heaven, Christ sits at His right hand until His enemies be made His footstool. As the apostle expresses it in Hebrews 2, referring to Psalm 8, "but now we see not yet all things put under him; but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour."

There is an extremely beautiful thought connected with this, which we cannot dwell on now, and that is, that if you look for the church in the Old Testament, you can

only find Christ, but when you find the blessedness and glory which belongs to Christ, the church is the sharer of it. So that what we have to see in connection with the fulfilment of the prophecies of God is, that previous to this the church is to be taken out of the scene altogether, because He cannot begin these dealings with the Gentiles in the last week until the gathering of the saints to be heirs with Christ is over. Until He has got the heirs, Christ cannot take the inheritance; and, therefore, all the dealings of God (or of Christ, if you please, who is the power of God)—all these dealings of God with the world—we do not speak of His providence, of course, for not a sparrow falleth to the ground without Him—but all the direct dealings of God with the world through the Jews are suspended until the church is taken up.

But you never find in prophecy, until the end of Revelation —you never find the church revealed in prophecy, except in connection with Christ. I may give you some instances of this. For example, I have no doubt that the “man-child” spoken of in the chapter that we have been reading, includes the church as well as Christ. But it is Christ that is principally meant; for the church would be nothing without Christ, it would be a body without a head. It is Christ who has been caught up, but the church is included; for whenever He begins to act publicly (even as regards the casting down of Satan), He must have His body, His bride with Him; He must have His brethren, His joint-heirs. If you examine what we find here, you will see that the church is certainly included. You read, “And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God and to his

throne." The man-child is to rule all nations with a rod of iron, but there is an interruption. And as we have seen that Christ came to this earth, was cut off, and took nothing, we get the other side of the picture here. He takes nothing, but is caught up to God and His throne, and sits at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens.

This sitting at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens belongs personally to Christ, but when it comes to ruling the nations with a rod of iron, the saints are associated with Him. The quotation is from Psalm 2, where it is said, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession: thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." That is not asked yet. And He has prayed for the saints, not for the world— "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." He only intercedes for the world when He asks for dominion over them, and, of course, it will be given Him—it is in God's counsels that it will; and He will take judgment in hand, the rod of iron. But then the saints will judge the world too; that is positively revealed, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" And not only is this stated in the general, but in the detail, especially as to the rod of iron. At the end of Revelation 2 you will find that this is given to the church, exactly as it is given to Christ. "He that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father." And the same thing is said in Daniel 7, "Until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment

was given to the saints of the Most High" (the saints who will be in the heavenly places with Christ, when Christ comes)—the "rod of iron" being there spoken of as "judgment." That is not the most blessed part: the blessed part is to be with Him; but it is true, and it is part of what we have to look for. And so in Revelation 20, where this time is spoken of, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them."

How sadly has the sense of this blessedness and glory of the saints been lost! I was speaking of it on the last occasion— their identification with Christ, their being joint-heirs, members of His body, His bride. The sense of all this has dropped away from the church. It is common to say that it is enough to lie at the foot of the cross. Now to me it is a blessed thing to see a person coming to the foot of the cross; but it is dreadful to stay there, because for a person to do so is the same as saying that he does not own that the whole thing is accomplished. It is a want of boldness "to enter into the holiest, through the veil, that is to say, Christ's flesh." It is the same as saying that he is unfit to pass through the veil to be a priest in the holy place. He says, "No; I must stay outside." I say that is a very wretched condition to be in. He must come to the cross in order to get in; that is perfectly true. And it is blessed to see a person who has been careless so coming; he can never get in any other way. But always to stay outside— always to say "I am staying at the foot of the cross, and do not know whether I have the right to enter in or not" —that is a great mistake. If you say, you cannot tell whether you are redeemed or not, how then can you call yourself a Christian? Christians are redeemed, of course. Why then

do you take the name of Christians, and yet remain unable to say whether you are redeemed?

In this chapter of Revelation which we have read, you have it positively revealed that it is finished with the saints, as regards all their trials and all their accusations, before the time that the trial of the Jewish people begins in the last half-week of Daniel. In the first six verses of the chapter, you have the statement of those who are concerned in these last days. First, you have the "woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This, I have no doubt, is the Jewish people, nothing else; because Christ is not born of the church, but looked at as reigning and glorious in the world, was born of the Jews, "of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came." There is no kind of sense in the idea of Christ's being born of the church. Being "clothed with the sun" is being clothed with supreme authority. She has the moon—all her previous reflected state—under her feet: "and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Twelve is the number always used to indicate power—the power of God's administration among men. You have the twelve apostles sitting on twelve thrones—the city built on twelve foundations, and having twelve gates, etc., the number being used to express administrative power—God's administrative power over man. Well, Christ was to be born. "And she being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." And so the Jews say, in Isaiah 9, "To us a son is born." The church cannot say that at all. We can say that we believe He is the Son of God; but we do not say He is born to us. As concerning the flesh, He was born into Israel.

Then you come to the opposing power—the power of Satan —exercised through the Roman Empire. “And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth; and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.” That is the power of Satan resisting Christ, and seeking to put an end to His power. He could not, of course, but he seemed to have done it for a while.

“And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron” —clearly Christ— “and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.” He did not take the power—He took nothing, but was caught up to God.

Then, having seen who are the persons engaged, you get the woman’s place, “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand, two hundred and three-score days.” You will see now the reason why I referred to the gap, with regard to all God’s dealings with the world, which there always is in prophecy— without, however, giving any dates at all— between the time that Christ is taken up, and the time that the church is taken up; and they are both united together. As I have said, it is not merely a notion of men, but it is positively revealed, as God’s own order in Daniel 9, that Messiah was to be revealed, and cut off, and take nothing; that blindness in part happens to Israel till the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled; and that then the Jews would be brought to repentance, as Jesus Christ says in

the gospel of Matthew, “Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

Thus we get the church, united with Christ, taken up to God, and the woman fled into the wilderness. Now we come to the progress of events, not as regards the church at all, but as regards Israel and the world. “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.” The whole power of Satan will then be cast out. That is in direct contrast with the result of the church’s warfare: “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” This is the conflict we have to wage as to our title to sit in heavenly places with Christ; and the result of this spiritual conflict is, that the power of Satan is cast out. In the prophecy we are considering this is all over, and you see the joy there is in consequence among the dwellers in heaven, the heavenly saints.

“And the great dragon was cast out—that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea!”

We find here, that while all the heavenly people, that is, the church of God (because our conversation is in heaven and we are one with Christ in heaven) are called upon to rejoice that the accuser of the brethren is cast down—that they have overcome him—at this very moment when these heavenly saints have overcome, it is just the time when Satan comes down to earth, having great wrath, knowing that he has but a short time. Thus we get entire rejoicing in what is heavenly, and at the same time most desperate woe in what is earthly. This makes the contrast very distinct and definite between these heavenly ones and the dwellers on earth, who, all through the Revelation, are contrasted with those persons who are heirs of heaven, whose citizenship is in heaven.

“Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.” We see here very clearly that by the woman it is not the church of God that is meant, because the church of God is called upon to rejoice on account of all their afflictions being over, and the accusations against them past. They are called upon to rejoice because they have overcome the accuser by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. But this woman is in a different position, all the rage of Satan being now directed against her. The church of God has been taken out of the way, and Satan has another object for his

great wrath, namely, the Jewish people. This is for them the time of great tribulation that is elsewhere spoken of. Christ said to the Jews, “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.” If they would not take the true Christ, they must have a false Christ.

I have read this chapter of the Revelation, in order to shew that while one class of persons—those associated with Christ— are caught up to God, and there is triumph and rejoicing and gladness amongst them when Satan is cast down, that is the very time when tribulation begins on the earth. “And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.” There in the wilderness, in this time of tribulation, God takes care of her. She makes her escape from the tribulation, the figure being employed that she receives this great power of flight, as if the wings of an eagle: and God secures her, not as He did Abraham who saw the destruction of Sodom from the top of the mount, but as He secured Lot who was saved by flight. The people in heaven rejoicing are like Abraham on the top of the mount; while the woman upon the earth is like Lot, saved by God giving her the great wings of an eagle to escape while all this great rage and power of Satan is being displayed. “And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his

mouth." That is, providential means were used for the purpose of saving the Jews from the violent assaults made upon them. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to* make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

I shall now refer to a more literal prophecy, which will help us to understand this same interval, these times of the Gentiles, so far as they are going on now—because I have no doubt that they began in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. Turn to Isaiah 8, where, after the circumstances of the moment having been spoken of as leading to it, it is said, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself"—a blessed testimony to the deity of the Lord Jesus as Jehovah— "and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken." The Lord, you know, spoke of His being a stumbling-stone, and said that whosoever should fall on that stone should be broken. "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me." This, you remember, is quoted in Hebrews 2. Although God is hiding His face from the house of Jacob, Christ says, "I will wait upon the Lord"; or, as the Septuagint has it, "I have put my trust in the Lord." And again, "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me." These are the disciples of Christ in all ages.

And then, in chapter 9, you have the close of all that—"For that hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even for ever."

Here, then, we have the fact of Christ's coming and being a stone of stumbling, and He says, "I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob." Then follows a period of dreadful sorrow for Israel, "They shall look unto the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness." And then comes—what? A dreadful battle; only it has the fire of God's judgment in it— "this shall be with burning and fuel of fire"—which is a figure of God's judgment. And then it is said, "Unto us a child is born." Christ is this child that was born; but when He comes back, it shall be said of Him, as in Isaiah 53, "we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."

What I refer to the passage now for is, the revelation it gives of the same fact of Christ's coming and being rejected; His waiting upon the Lord that hides His face from the house of Jacob; and of the fact that at last He goes forth in glorious power, in this terrible battle of

God's judgment, "In righteous ness doth he judge and make war." And then it is said, "unto us a child is born, the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God," and the like, and He sits upon the throne of David to give peace upon the earth. All this comes after the time that He had been waiting. His waiting was consequent on His rejection, while God was hiding His face from the house of Jacob, as He is doing now. But that is not for ever. I refer to it that if possible our souls may get hold of the ways of God, the framework as it were of His plan: that is, that Christ comes, is rejected, and is caught up to God; and then He sits on His Father's throne, but He does not yet take to Him His great power and reign. Meanwhile the times of the Gentiles are running on. God hath hidden His face from the house of Jacob, and Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. And, while that is going on, while there is that parenthesis in God's ways as regards the government of the world, Christ, having sent down the Holy Ghost, is gathering His joint-heirs to be associated with Him when He does take His great power.

Now let us turn to the accomplishment of this, as regards the church, that is, its being taken up to be associated with Christ; and then, if time permits, we shall turn to the other part, the accomplishment as regards the Jews. My object will be to shew that the resurrection of the saints is a thing, in nature, time, and character, entirely apart from, and (except in the fact of its being a resurrection) in every particular the opposite of, the resurrection of the wicked—that the resurrection of the saints is a special favour of God, such as was manifested in Christ's own resurrection, because they

are saved already, because they have got eternal life, because they are the delight of God, not as they are in themselves, but as they are in Christ—that they are taken up and dealt with apart, by themselves, as not belonging to this world's government, except in so far as they are kings of it; whereas the wicked (while it is quite true that they are raised, for Christ will raise everybody) are raised, not however, because they are the delight of God, but because the contrary is the case—not because they have life in Christ, for they have not—but they are raised for judgment, which is nothing but condemnation. This is another part of the subject and a very solemn part of it, which I cannot dwell upon now, that the judgment of the nations and of the earth is for condemnation.

I purpose now to go through all the passages which speak of the resurrection, and to shew you that the resurrection of the saints is an entirely distinct thing in nature, time, character, and everything else—that it is the consequence of redemption, so that now we can look for it, because we are saved—that it will happen when Christ comes, whereas, when the wicked are raised, Christ will not come at all; but that when He comes He will raise the saints, and the saints only, to be with Him in blessedness and glory. Mark, beloved friends, how solemn and practical this is for all of us—that the distinction is so clearly made, that, where the life of Christ is, where we have a part in the redemption of Christ, when Christ comes, He will take us up into glory with Himself—that we who are redeemed and have eternal life shall appear with Him in glory; whereas, where there is not repentance and a receiving of Christ into the heart, this will not be the case; but when the

time comes, those who are in that condition will be raised solely for judgment, and that while all are to appear before Christ, wherever a person has to do with judgment, he is infallibly condemned.

Hence you find the words which are familiar to all of you, “Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified.” Beloved friends, you can feel how important this is. It applies the subject we are now considering directly to the state of our souls. There is no judgment without condemnation. No man with whom God enters into judgment can be saved; for sentence has been pronounced already, as plainly as God can pronounce it— “There is none righteous, no, not one.” I do not know what the great white throne can say plainer than that. Such is the declaration which is brought home to our hearts; but before the day of judgment which shall execute the wrath, the wrath to come, Christ comes to deliver us from it, and wherever He is received into the heart we are delivered from it, and are placed with Himself—He is our righteousness, our life, everything.

Before referring to the passages which speak of the resurrection, I will only add in passing that in the very nature of things the judgment of God can never be anything else than condemnation. I speak of the judgment upon men, not the rebel angels, although it is true of them also. We have made a judge of God—and how? By sin. God could not judge Adam, if he remained as God created him; for if He judged the thing that He created, He would be judging Himself. He could not judge him unless he sinned. Suppose I made this desk, and I began to judge it, I should be judging myself, the workman who made it. God made Adam such as he was,

and saw him to be very good; and while Adam remained such, God could not judge him. What brought him into judgment was, that Adam left God, listened to the devil, and turned to sin. What then can judgment be but condemnation? God may save us out of it through Christ —that is another thing; but our prayer must be “Enter not into judgment with us, for there is none righteous, no, not one.”

Now the resurrection of the saints is the fruit and final power of Christ’s deliverance; whereas the other resurrection is the righteous execution of judgment against those who have hardened their necks against God’s mercy in Christ, treasuring up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. First, then, as to the nature and character of the resurrection of the saints, turn to Romans 8:11— “If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you” —that is, if you are Christians (for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His), “He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” This is not true of the wicked. The reasons why they and we, if we are saints, are raised, are totally different; for we are raised in virtue of the Holy Ghost dwelling in us—that is, because we are saved and sealed by the Spirit of God already. There, then, we get the principle.

Now turn to John 5 and see how strongly it brings this out. It says nothing as to time, which is comparatively immaterial; but it is a most solemn and instructive passage with regard to the point we are considering. Christ says, at verse 21— “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son

quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." They both quicken; but the Father does not judge: all judgment is committed to the Son, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father" —even the wicked themselves, they cannot help doing so. "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." You see that after He had said the Father and Son quicken, but judgment is given to the Son, He puts it to us which we are to have. Am I to be the subject of judgment? That is what He is asking us here.

"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life" (it is given to him), "and shall not come into condemnation" (the same word in the Greek as stands for judgment), "but is passed from death unto life." Christ has exercised His life-giving power, and is not going to deny it by bringing into judgment those upon whom it has been exercised. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live "—by which, no doubt, is meant spiritual quickening. "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of

damnation” —which is the same word (“judgment”) again.

I do not want to insist on the word “damnation.” It is damnation no doubt, but I do not insist upon that word, because the point all through is that it is ‘judgment’; it is a resurrection of life, and a resurrection of judgment. How far they may be apart is another point, which has nothing to do with this fact, that there is a resurrection of life, and a resurrection of judgment. Where there has been spiritual quickening, where they have everlasting life, they shall not come into judgment, but have passed from death unto life; but then, if dead as to their bodies, they must be raised up to make that life complete, because they must have bodies in unison and in harmony with the state into which they enter. And on the other hand, they that have done evil shall come forth unto the resurrection of judgment.

It is said, “The hour is coming, in the which,” etc.; but this is really nothing as to the two things being at the same time. It is no more than if I were to say, “the hour of Napoleon’s greatness,” meaning the period during which he was great, as constrasted with the period of his fall and littleness. So here, when it is said, “the hour is coming and now is,” we know that it has already lasted since Christ spoke of it, for more than eighteen hundred years. The real intention of the expression is, to contrast the time of Christ’s life with the time since; it is the same as saying there is a time for quickening and a time for judgment, and therefore a time for raising up. Here, then, are two distinct characters of Christ’s power —His giving life, and His executing judgment; those to whom life is given (gracious, spiritual life) have part in the resurrection of life; those to whom it is not given

have part in the resurrection of judgment or condemnation.

You thus have the great principle that is involved, and I now turn to other passages which illustrate other parts of the subject. In Luke 20 the Sadducees put the case that, according to the law of Moses, if a man, having a wife, died without children, his brother should take the wife; and they supposed the case of seven brothers marrying her, and asked whose wife should she be in the resurrection. It was a quibble they raised, tempting the Lord; and Jesus answered them, “The children of this world marry and are given in marriage. But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead,” etc. Now what is the meaning of this— “accounted worthy to obtain the resurrection from the dead?” You see it is accounted a special favour. If you only get the resurrection from the dead, you will be “equal unto the angels.” It cannot be meant that, if people are raised to be condemned, they are equal to the angels. But it is said, If you get the resurrection, you will be equal to the angels— “And are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” It is quite impossible that this can be said of those who are raised only to condemnation.

Again if you turn to 1 Corinthians 15, you will find that nothing can be more plainly set forth than this is. At verse 22 it is said, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order.” Then we get the order of the resurrection, and this is just what we want. Let us see then if it is to be a common thing, in which all classes are to go up together. “Every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.”

Nothing can be more plain. “Then cometh the end.” There comes another time when others shall be raised, but it is they who are Christ’s at His coming.

And what I affirm is, that not merely can this be proved from Scripture, but that there never is the slightest appearance of anything else—that this fact I am speaking about is linked up with the very foundation truths of redemption. Many have redemption who do not see it—I admit this fully; but nevertheless it is the effect of redemption, and you can see the light that is thus thrown on the fact of my not coming into judgment, because I have passed from death unto life, as stated in John 5, and what the church has lost by losing sight of that.

Again, in Philippians 3, the apostle speaks of it as his own hope, “And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection” —that is a present thing you see— “and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” Now what is it to which so much importance is attached, that the apostle desires to be made like Christ, if by any means he may attain something very special—the resurrection of the dead? When the apostle uses such language, is it possible that all, both the wicked and the righteous, should be jostled up together in the resurrection, leaving it to be found out afterwards which are the righteous and which are the wicked? The truth is, it is a word used by the apostle in a new sense, in which it is not used in classical Greek, to express a being raised up from among the dead, on

purpose to distinguish the raising of the saints from out of or among the dead, from the raising of the wicked.

I do not like to deal in critical points, but the fact is that in a number of passages the power is lost, because the word is translated “resurrection of the dead,” instead of “resurrection from among the dead.” This was the character of Christ’s resurrection, when He was declared to be the Son of God with power by being raised from among the dead. And we shall be like Christ, in that He will raise us up from among the dead, because we have got the Spirit of Christ, and life from Christ.

The reason why I dwell on this is, because it goes right to the root of the question of our redemption. Nothing can be so absurd—forgive me for saying so—than the idea of what is called the general judgment. Not that we shall not all appear before Christ—this of course is true. Take Paul himself. He has been in heaven one thousand eight hundred years, absent from the body and present with the Lord; are you going to judge him after that? He is in heaven because he was entitled to go there; and to speak of judgment after that is absurd on the face of it. To do so only shews that the church of God, even true saints, have lost the sense of being redeemed already. If Christ’s dying has put away my sins, and given me a place with Himself; if, having received the Holy Ghost, I am joined to the Lord as one spirit; am I, thus joined to Christ, still to be judged? To say so is to forget the true place which we hold.

I turn now to the proof of this. Look back for a moment to 1 Corinthians 15, where, having got the order, to shew further how entirely and distinctly it is saints and

none else who are raised, we find, “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory.” How can you apply that to a general resurrection? “Raised in glory” —can you apply that to the wicked? It is impossible to read one sentence about the resurrection without seeing—not that the others will not be raised, but—that it is distinctly and definitely the resurrection of the saints that is spoken of, because they are redeemed and have life in Christ.

Take again 1 Thessalonians 4 which we quoted another evening with reference to the Lord’s coming, and now with reference to which we have already seen, that it is “they who are Christ’s at his coming.” At verse 16 it is said, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first”—and no one else. This is the plain language uniformly held. It is indeed the capital truth of the New Testament, that as Christ, by resurrection from the dead was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, so we through grace are (not like Christ in Person but by adoption) also declared to be the sons of God, by attaining, when the time comes, the resurrection of the body.

The only point that I refer to the Revelation for is, that there will be a thousand years between the two resurrections. But, whether it be a thousand years or a thousand days, the point which I feel it to be important to insist upon is, that they are two totally distinct things —that the resurrection of the saints is God’s taking those He delights in, who are already redeemed and quickened by the Spirit, because His Spirit dwells in

them, His taking them to be with Christ in glory; whereas the other, whether a thousand days or a thousand years after, is the resurrection to judgment—quite a different thing.

There is one passage more I will refer you to, in order to shew how the same truth is everywhere affirmed—to John 14. “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.” That is the way in which Christ takes us up. He will take us up to be with Himself at His coming. He comes again, and receives us to Himself, that where He is, there we may be also.

There is one passage which people quote to prove the erroneous notion about a general resurrection. They cannot apply to that purpose any of the passages which speak of the resurrection; but they quote Matthew 25 where the division between the sheep and the goats is spoken of. Now there is not a single syllable there about the resurrection. In chapter 24 our Lord has been speaking of the dealings with the Jewish people until Christ comes. Afterwards, in three parables, He describes His dealings with the saints; and then lastly He describes His dealings with the nations; and then He speaks of the time when He comes in His glory to sit upon the throne of His glory, and to gather all nations—the Gentiles, if you please, for it is the same word—before Him to judge them. And this is the judgment, whose existence people have strangely forgotten—that there is a judgment of the quick as well as of the dead—a judgment of the living (and a terrible judgment it is too).

I now refer to the passage which speaks of the thousand years. I went over the other passage first, because people are apt to think that this “first resurrection” is merely the explanation of some symbolical ideas which we find in the Revelation; but, as I have shewn you, there is no passage in Scripture referring to the resurrection, which does not shew that there is a first resurrection of the saints. Turn, then, now to Revelation 20.

But remark, that in the preceding chapters you find that Babylon has been destroyed—she in whom “was found the blood of prophets and of saints.” Then you have the judgment of the wicked on the earth, which I do not enter into now; and then the marriage of the saints and the Lamb, and their coming with Him when He comes to destroy the beast. “The armies which were in heaven followed him.” Whenever Christ comes, His heavenly saints will come along with Him, as it is said, “the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee”; and “the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints”; and “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory.” Here, in Revelation, they are seen in figurative language, coming forth, clothed in white garments, which is the righteousnesses of the saints. I refer to this merely to shew the place they hold. Then Christ comes forth as King of kings, and Lord of lords, with His saints, and the beast and false prophet are taken and destroyed.

Then Satan is bound, and then John says, “I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image,

neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." There we find the saints, those to whom judgment is given, and not only so but who execute judgment, sitting on thrones, and reigning with Christ a thousand years. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished; this is the first resurrection." Mark how the whole statement shews the perfect absurdity—and it is a sad and solemn thing, the influence which this delusion exercises on people's minds—the perfect absurdity of what is called the spiritual millennium. Not that the Holy Ghost will not be there, for He will; but you see now, before all this, the marriage of the Lamb is come with the church, the bride of Christ; the whole as regards the church is complete; and Christ comes forth to execute judgment on the beast and the false prophet, accompanied by the armies of the saints, the bride having made herself ready, and the marriage of the Lamb having taken place before that.

And yet people are looking for the millennium as a state of the church down here! I admit that it is presented in a figure; but this is certain, that if the bride is gone up, and the marriage of the Lamb is come, it is not the state of the church down here that is meant. For we read also that Satan is to be bound then; whereas the character given to us while down here is that we are to overcome Satan. "Satan will be bruised under your feet shortly." Our place here is that we have to wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but with spiritual wickedness in heavenly places; whereas when the Lamb comes out with His saints, Satan is bound, and then begins the period of a thousand years.

I wish to refer you to the connection of the passage in 1 Corinthians 15 with Isaiah 25, because the connection of these two things—the resurrection of the saints, and the restoration of Israel—will thereby be strongly brought out. The apostle says that “when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” If you turn to Isaiah 25, you will see that this takes place at the time which we call the millennium, when, the Jews being restored to their place on the earth, there is that era of blessedness among the nations which is commonly called the millennium. It is there said, “Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud; the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low. And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory.” That is at the time the resurrection takes place; for it is said in Corinthians, “Then shall come to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” And thus it appears that the time when the resurrection takes place is the time when the Lord restores Israel, when He establishes Israel’s place in Zion, and takes away the veil from off the face of all nations.

It is said, “Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity? For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the

waters cover the sea." This is the condition of the earth when this time of which I am speaking comes— "They shall labour in the very fire and shall weary themselves for very vanity." Again, it is said, "Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them." We thus see that, though favour is shewn to the wicked, they will not learn righteousness. But "when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

I am adding these few texts to shew that the millennium is not spiritual in the sense in which it is often understood. Whenever God speaks of the earth being full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, and the like, it is always in connection with judgment. You find this in Numbers, when God.said He would destroy Israel, that in connection with that it is written "All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord"; and you find the same thing in the passage from Habakkuk, which I have quoted. You never find the idea presented of the gospel going forth and bringing all nations under its influence. In Romans 11 the apostle puts it in this way, "For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved." That is, he treats that expectation of the church not being cut off, as being wise in their own conceit.

Again, in another passage it is declared that what gathers together to battle the kings of the earth and of the whole world will be three unclean spirits that come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. I do not now go into the details of that; but this must be evident to you, that when it is stated that these three unclean spirits go forth to gather the earth and the whole world to the battle of that great day of God Almighty, it cannot be the gathering of the saints that is spoken of—it is a gathering of the powers of Satan.

I have now gone through all the passages in the New Testament, which, so far as I am aware, speak of the resurrection; and I think it must be as plain to you as anything could possibly be, that all those passages shew very distinctly that the resurrection of the saints is an entirely distinct thing from the resurrection of the wicked, being founded on their redemption and their having received life from Christ, the power of which is shewn by the resurrection of their bodies; that that resurrection of life is definitely distinguished from the resurrection of judgment by a thousand years elapsing between the two; and that, while the first is the fruit of redemption, the other is the fruit of the rejection of redemption.

Time will not allow me to enter on the subject of the restoration of the Jews. But let me just return, in a few words of application, to these solemn truths, that, before judgment comes, Christ has come to save; that, if He entered into judgment, nobody could be saved; that, whenever He enters into judgment, no flesh living can be justified, because there is none righteous, no, not one; but that, because this is true, the Lord has sent a

perfect salvation in order that we might escape the judgment—a salvation that delivers us from the wrath to come; that there is wrath coming, but that there is deliverance from it; and that when God interferes in this way to deliver us from that wrath to come, He does not merely save us from wrath, but gives us a place with His own Son. Thus not merely are our sins forgiven, but we are united to Christ by the one Spirit, Christ being the Firstborn among many brethren, who are the members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones; so that He nourisheth the church as a man nourisheth and cherisheth His own flesh, and prays, “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am”; so that when He appears, we also shall appear with Him; and if He is the Judge, the saints too shall sit with Him on thrones, and judgment shall be given to them; for, says the apostle, “Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?”

Now is that the thought, beloved friends, which you have of redemption? Have your souls believed that this world is a condemned world? I know that the world will not bear this, but it must bear, when it rises to judgment, to hear that it is a condemned world. Individual souls are tried, but it is not true that the world is in a state of probation. Christ came to seek and to save that which is lost; and a man that is lost is not in a state of probation. When we are judged, we are judged of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. That is all a settled thing with the world.

How do your hearts take this up, that all this busy scene, in the midst of which you live, is a condemned world; that this is the world which said, “This is the heir, come, let us kill him”; that this world “has rejected Christ, and

that Christ has said, “Now is the judgment of this world”? He says, “The world seeth me no more”; and “when the Comforter is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment—of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more,” etc.

But, because the world is thus condemned, there is offered to us redemption, a new life, a Second Adam instead of the first; and all the promises of God are in Him. There are no promises to men; but all the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him, Amen. When Adam sinned, the promise was not given to Adam—there was no promise given to Adam— it was to the Seed of the woman, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. That is, the promise was given to the Second Adam, not to the first. And then, in Christ, we have not merely forgiveness, but glory. We are one with Christ, the bride of Christ, and have our place, not according to the demerits of the first Adam, but according to the merits of the Second Adam. Do you take hold of that blessed truth? The Lord give you to feel more deeply than you have ever felt before what it is to be in a world which has rejected the Lord; and then to know, with joyful hearts, that you yourselves have bowed and received Him as your Saviour, who in unspeakable love suffered and died for us.

Lecture 4 Romans 11

Of the two great subjects, besides our individual salvation, of which the Scriptures treat, as already stated (namely, the church and the government of the world), the latter leads us at once to the Jewish as its centre, as the church is of the heavenly glory under

Christ; under whom as their head all things in heaven and earth are to be gathered together in one. That government will extend over the whole earth, but the royal nation and seat and centre of government will be the Jewish people. To Jerusalem, as the centre alike of worship and government, all nations will flow. So it was ordained from the beginning, as we learn from this remarkable passage, “When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance,” Deut. 32:8, 9.

The difficulty we have to meet in men’s minds on this point is this: that that people having been set aside for their sins— first, idolatry, secondly, the rejection of the Lord Jesus—and the church and kingdom of heaven having been established, it is supposed they will not be restored, but merge in the profession of Christianity. But this sets aside alike the prophecies of the Old and the declarations of the New Testament.

I will refer to this last first, as correcting this very mistake; and this will make way for the direct and positive testimonies of the Old which concern this people of God’s election. In Romans 11 this question is treated: “I say then,” is the question with which it begins, “Hath God cast away his people? God forbid… God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.” Then the case is put of their rejection, and the apostle argues that the casting of them away was the reconciling of the world, and proceeds, “for if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the

dead?… And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree," etc.

Then he warns the Gentile Christians against the very notion to which I refer, assuring them that they are in danger of being cut off in their turn, as we shall see more fully when we treat that subject. In verse 25 he adds, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, … that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." They are partially set aside till the church be called, and then a deliverer, Christ, shall, after all the church is brought in, come out of Sion and turn away their ungodliness. This is not by the gospel as now preached, for he adds, "As concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sakes," the

Gentiles being thus let in; “but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes. For the gifts.and calling of God are without repentance.” Here we have God’s ways towards them clearly set forth: partial blindness for a time, during which the church, the fulness of the Gentiles, is called; when that’is closed, their Deliverer comes out of Sion. Our gospel’ is not the means: they are as a nation enemies as respects that; but they have not ceased to be beloved for the fathers’ sakes. That is a matter of God’s election, and as to His gifts and dealings He does not change His mind.61 Thus it is certain that God maintains His purpose as to them as a people, and that it is not by the gospel as now preached they will be called in. As to that they are enemies. So the Lord at the close of Matthew 24, when declaring the judgment coming upon them, says, their house should be desolate till they say, accomplishing Psalm 118, “Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” And He carries on their history till His coming again, consequent on which He will gather together the elect among them from the four winds; nor should they cease to subsist as a distinct class till all was fulfilled. Compare Deuteronomy 32:5-20. Then the Lord gives His ways with His servants meanwhile, and afterwards with the Gentile nations when He returns.

Thus we learn distinctly the teaching of the New Testament, of the Lord, and the apostle, as to the plan and ways of God in respect of His ancient and elect people. If we compare Deuteronomy 32:26, 27, and what follows, we shall find this abundantly confirmed. In the end the Lord will judge His people, and repent Himself concerning His servants, and the nations will be called

to rejoice with them,62 and Jehovah will be merciful to His land and to His people.

I may now turn to the direct declarations of the prophets, which leave no shadow of doubt on their restoration and blessing; and that as a people, with Jerusalem for the centre of their dominion and glory. That these prophecies have never been accomplished the passages themselves will prove; but there are certain general considerations that affect this question, which I will here notice. That Israel as a people were not brought into their promised blessings when Christ first came, is evident. It was the time of their casting away, and the grafting in of the Gentiles—the reconciling the world; and their receiving again is set in contrast with it. Jerusalem was destroyed, not rebuilt; the people scattered, not gathered.

Their restoration after the Babylonish captivity is sometimes alleged to be the fulfilment of these promises; but it was far indeed from accomplishing them. Their blessings are to be under the new covenant; but the new covenant was not established then. They are to be under Messiah, but Messiah was not then. The Jews were still in captivity, so that Nehemiah speaks thus: “Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it. And it yieldeth much increase to the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins. Also they have dominion over our bodies and over our cattle at their pleasure, and we are in great distress.”

Further, when Christianity was introduced, not only was Jerusalem destroyed in judgment, but the Gentiles were

in full glory and triumph. When the Jews are re-established according to prophecy, they are judged and brought under.

I will now quote the prophecies which predict this establishment of the people. You will see its connection with Christ, with the judgment of the Gentiles, with the new covenant, and even with the resurrection. It will be the sparing of a remnant, in the first instance, which will become a great nation. I first quote Isaiah, who furnishes us with some very remarkable prophecies on this subject. After describing the universal evil and the judgment of this nation, he closes his introductory prophecy thus, “In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain,” chap. 4:2-6.

Thus the glory will be restored to Zion when the Lord shall have purged away her guilt by judgment. Two causes of judgment are there stated: the unfaithfulness of Israel to her first calling; and their unfitness to meet

the glory of the Lord when He appears. In this last (chap. 6) that judgment which the Lord recalls is pronounced, “Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.” The prophet then enquires, “How long?” The answer is, “Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.” Then it is added, “But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they have cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.” Nothing could more strikingly depict the long winter of Israel’s desolation; but here God would in the remnant give a principle of restoration and blessing, as Paul shews in Romans n.

This point is more historically prophesied of in Isaiah 8 and 9, where the rejection of Christ is definitely spoken of, verses 14-18; and His manifestation in glory in favour of Israel, yet in judgment, in chapter 9:5-7.63 Chapters 11 and 12, the closing ones of this series, largely declare the restoration of Israel, terminating thus, chapter 12:6: “Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”

In chapters 24 and 25, which form the close of the next series of prophecies, the testimony of God is carried on to the utter desolation of the earth. “The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, … and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fail and not rise again”; that is, it is its definite and final judgment as

the earth of man's power. It is added, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.... Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." Here, therefore, again we find judgment on the earth, and the Jewish people brought to the enjoyment of Jehovah's presence and blessing. But there is more, than this. In chapter 25 universal blessing comes on the Gentiles then: "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." At this time also it is that the resurrection takes place, verse 8: "He will swallow up death in victory: and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces: and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." In the mountain of Zion is the awaited blessing and power that sets aside all that is hostile. In chapter 26 all is celebrated in a prophetic song. In chapter 27 Satan's power is destroyed, and God's dealings with Israel reviewed.

In taking up these closing chapters of the two series of prophecies (chaps. 5-12 and 24-27), the first, God's dealings with Israel as in the land, the second with the Gentiles, I have passed over a remarkable chapter in the midst of the Gentile series, to which I must now return, chapter 18, difficult in expression, but very plain in its purpose. Messengers are sent by a mighty protecting

power to a nation scattered and feeble—a nation wonderful from the beginning. The Lord summons all the inhabitants of the world to attend. He holds Himself aloof in His dwelling. The Jews come back, looking for full national blessing in a carnal way; just as it seemed blooming they are cut down again, and the beasts of the field, the Gentiles, summer and winter on them. Still at that time a present is brought of this people to the Lord, and then from them to Him in the mount of Zion. We learn thus their return by some political movement, their subsequent desolation in their land; yet they are brought to the Lord, and they themselves bring their offering to Jehovah in Zion.

You will find in chapter 29, and remarkably in chapter 32, and largely in chapters 34 and 35, the Spirit's testimony to the final restoration of Israel. You may compare chapters 54,62,65, and 66 for enlarged testimonies of the restoration of Jerusalem in the glory. The prophecies of Isaiah have the character of a general revelation of the ways of God, having the Jews for their centre, including their guilt in separating from Jehovah, and in rejecting Christ; Babylon, their scourge when disowned, and the Assyrian when they were owned.

But Jeremiah lived when the house of David had completed its guilt, and Jerusalem was about to be given up to the captivity of Babylon. Hence, while pleading with them as to their sins, he enters into specific detail as to the restoration of the Jews and Jerusalem, announcing (as the other prophets) the judgment of the haughty Gentiles. To his prophecies I will now return. The whole of the chapters from 30 to 34 are worthy of your fullest attention. I can only quote the most striking passages.

In chapter 30 the prophet speaks of that day of Jacob's trouble which there is none like, of which the Lord speaks in Matthew 24, but declares he shall be delivered out of it—a declaration which, as we know, was not accomplished at the first destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; and he adds that in that day the Lord of hosts would break the yoke from off his neck, and strangers should no more serve themselves of him, takes notice of the utter desolation of Jerusalem, but declares He would bring back the captivity, and the city should be built on its own heap, and the palace remain after the manner thereof; and then announces the utter judgment of the wicked when Israel should be His people: it would be in the latter days.

Both families (chap. 31) should be His people. This shews at once it was not the restoration from Babylon merely. It is declared that His love is an everlasting love. Jacob was redeemed (v. 11); they would come and sing in the height of Zion. This is declared (v. 31) to be founded in establishing the new covenant, and the chapter closes with these remarkable words: "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name: if those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the

corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse-gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever."

In chapter 32 Jeremiah is commanded to redeem land at Anathoth; and the chapter closes thus: The Lord declares, He will gather them and they will be His people, and He will be their God. "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul. For thus saith the Lord, Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." And, returning to the occasion of the prophecy, "Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth; for the right of redemption is thine to buy it. So Hanameel, mine uncle's son, came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the Lord, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord. And I bought the field of Hanameel, my uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him

the money, even seventeen shekels of silver." The promises are renewed in chapter 33, and God declares David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. "If ye can break my covenant-of the day and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me. Moreover the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the Lord hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith the Lord, If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them."

Nothing can be more positive than these promises. The Lord takes the ground of His unchangeable faithfulness, refers to all the evil man has been guilty of, and declares He will not cast him off for it, but put the law in his heart, gives local details as to the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and says that as He had pulled down and destroyed them He would build them up again; so that it is impossible to apply it to any others.

We get details as to their restoration, which passing on to Ezekiel leads us to. In chapter 20 of that prophet we are told that, as regards the ten tribes, they will be brought out of the countries, and as in the days of leaving Egypt the rebels fell in the wilderness, so now they would pass under the rod like a flock told by the shepherd, and the rebels would not enter into the land (v. 34-38). This is not so with the two tribes: they will return in unbelief, a remnant only being faithful; Daniel's 'wise ones,' and two thirds will be cut off in the land and the third part pass through the fire and be refined as silver is refined. See Zech. 13:8, 9.

But I must quote some other passages of Ezekiel. In chapter 34 God judges the shepherds. He there declares He will take the flock into His own care (v. 11-22) He then, in verse 23, passes on in unsymbolical language to say what He will do in the latter days. "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. And they shall no more be a prey to

the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God."

In chapter 36 we have the well known passage in which being born again is declared to be the work which God will accomplish in them that they may enjoy their land before Him. "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses; andI will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen." Then the heathen would know that this restoration was Jehovah's doing. This last point, which we find more than once in Ezekiel, is an important element in the re-

establishment of Israel, and (like the others, and especially their occurrence at the same time) has never yet been fulfilled.

In chapter 37 we see a further point insisted on. The dry bones of Israel would be clothed with flesh, and the people brought to life again, and placed (v. 14) in their own land. But when this takes place in the last days, the long separated ten tribes will be reunited to Judah, and have one head, never to be divided again (v. 19, 20). David (the beloved), that is, "Christ," is to be king over them; God's tabernacle will be amongst them; He, Jehovah will be their God and they His people; and the heathen will know that Jehovah sanctifies Israel when His sanctuary is in the midst of them for evermore. This dwelling of Jehovah in their midst has never been, if not by the presence of Christ whom they rejected, since the Babylonish captivity.

Ezekiel wholly passes over the times of the Gentiles, and introduces Jehovah again in their midst in the land. Connected with this is the account of the inroad of Gog, in the two following chapters. When restored to the land, and appearing outwardly to be restored to blessing, Gog comes up against them; God pleads against him and sanctifies Himself in this judgment. Gog falls on the mountains of Israel, and God makes His holy name known in the midst of Israel; He allows them no more to pollute His name: and the heathen shall know that He, Jehovah, is the Holy One in Israel. "Behold," it is added in remarkable language, "it is come and it is done, saith the Lord God. "This is the day whereof I have spoken." The prophecy is closed by these words: "Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen,

but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God," Ezek. 39.

Thus the revelation of the full restoration of Israel in both parts of the divided kingdom, reunited in one under Christ, and of the new covenant—connected with the judgment of the heathen, and their learning that Jehovah is in the midst of Israel, Jerusalem being rebuilt and glorified, as in Isaiah 40— is made as plain as words can well make it. I will confirm this, however, by some remarkable testimonies of the minor prophets.

Turn to Hosea 3:4, 5, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." You will remark that the blessing of Jehovah and the often mentioned David are spoken of in the latter days; meanwhile, they have not the true God, and they have not false gods—no sacrifice, but no image either. Thus they abide many days, and thus have abode. In the latter days it shall be otherwise.

In Joel 3 we have again the judgment of the Gentiles summoned to awake up and come to the great day of God to the valley of Jehoshaphat (the judgment of God). There, says Jehovah, will I sit to judge all the heathen round about, and the harvest, separating judgment, and the vintage, judgment of pure vengeance, arrive. Of the Jews it is said (v. 20, 21), "But Judah shall dwell for ever,

and Jerusalem from generation to generation, for I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion."

See Amos 9:14, 15. Here we get what has clearly never yet been fulfilled, while it applies to temporal blessing in the land: "They shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." It is here a question, which is not one for faith, whether God's word will be fulfilled.

In Micah we have a beautiful description of what Israel will be in the world in that day under Christ. They will not be added to the church one by one, and merged as blessed in it; they will be gathered as Israel; chap. 5:3. Then Christ will be their strength against the Assyrian their foe, when owned in the land. Then they become as dew in the world, the freely flowing blessing of God, but as a lion among the beasts of the forest to all that oppose them and the counsels of God in them (v. 8), while all evil is purged out from them and the heathen judged, as we have never seen (v. 9-15).

In Zephaniah 3 we have another passage full of instruction as to the Lord's ways with this people. First, Jehovah's long and gracious, but useless, patience (v. 7). So the godly ones had to wait till judgment came on the nations, would subdue them, and bring in blessing. In Israel there would be a poor and afflicted and sanctified remnant (v. 12, 13), but peace should be their portion. Then Zion, Israel, and Jerusalem are called to rejoice with all their heart; Jehovah was in their midst: they would not see evil any more. God would rest in His love —the blessing so great that His love would be satisfied and in repose. Blessed thought! still more blessedly true

of us when Jesus shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. Then all that afflict Israel will be undone, and the people made a praise among all peoples of the earth (v. 14-20).

In Zechariah, the whole of chapter 10 describes the restoration of Israel in the latter days, speaking of each division of the people, Judah and Ephraim; then chapter 11 tells of Christ's rejection; and in chapter 12 all the nations gathered against Jerusalem are judged, and she becomes a burdensome stone for them (so that it has no application to past events), and there is a detailed account of how Jehovah will save the people: "In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah." Then there is the mourning over Christ's rejection, and they look on Him whom they have pierced. They are sifted (chap. 13:9), and two thirds cut off, and the third part pass through the fire. The last chapter (14) closes this striking history with full details of what shall take place. The Lord comes. His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives. At evening time, when men would expect darkness, it will be light. Living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem. Jehovah shall be King over all the earth; He alone shall be owned. Jerusalem shall be inhabited in her place; there shall be no more utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

The testimonies I have cited are amply sufficient to shew, to every one who receives the testimony of God's word as true, the certainty of the restoration of Israel to their own land to be blessed under Christ and the new covenant. The circumstances of the return of Israel and Judah are distinguished. Of the former, the rebels are cut off outside the land, which they never enter; of the latter, in the land: the residue of these last passing through the fire. This involves the history of Antichrist and the Gentiles, which will be spoken of when the prophecies as to them are considered. But Israel and Judah are united under one head. Further, in the series of events which usher in the blessing, the Gentiles are gathered against Israel and are judged, and afterwards blessed in connection with, and subordinate to, that people. Jehovah is King over all the earth. It is noticed, too, that these events take place at the epoch at which the resurrection does. Peace reigns, and the curse is removed: Jerusalem is never defiled any more, nor does Israel lose its blessing.

Such is the establishment of the divine government of the world at the close. Of this government Israel is the centre, according to the fixed purpose and unchangeable calling of God. They reject now the gospel, but are beloved for the fathers' sake: they will believe when they see. We have brighter blessings, because we believe without seeing; and this is one thing which renders the understanding of the prophecies, as to the Jews, important. Not only is it precious to us as a part of Christ's glory, but our clear apprehension of the application of prophecy to them hinders our misapplying it to the church. This takes its own heavenly character. It is witness of sovereign grace, giving it a place with

Christ where no promise was; Israel, the testimony to God's faithfulness to His promises—Jehovah, who was and is to come. Israel will, indeed, be the royal people, the centre of Christ's earthly power and dominion, but they will be reigned over. We, by pure grace, shall reign with Him, suffering first with Him. The church has its place with Him, Israel its own blessing under Him according to His promises of old.

Lecture 5 Matthew 13

The part of the subject which will occupy us this evening, beloved friends, in treating of the coming again of our beloved Lord, is the sorrowful side of it. What we had before us in the previous lectures was the blessings and joys of the saints, founded on the sure promise of Christ Himself that He would come again; and we found that their looking for the fulfilment of that promise was connected with their every thought and action. But it is of the greatest importance that we should look at this sorrowful side as well as the other, that man may see the consequence and effect of his responsibility.

The coming of Christ has a double aspect. As regards the professing church, and the world at large too, Scripture speaks of His appearing; because then it is that the result of their responsibility is manifested. As regards the body of Christ, it speaks of His coming, and our taking up to Himself. It is one thing to own the church as a responsible body in the world— another thing to look at it as one with Him. When we turn to that which has been set by God as a system down here, and see the failure of it, it is to be judged in respect of that failure as every system set up by God has been (each

having been first established on the footing of man's responsibility).

There is never anything else but failure exhibited in man. Look all through the Scripture, where we have man's history from the very beginning of creation, and we find nothing but failure. Adam most signally failed in what God had entrusted him with. And then when law was given, even before Moses came down from the mount, man had made the golden calf to worship it. So when Aaron and his sons were consecrated, on the eighth day—the first day of their service—they offered strange fire; and, as a consequence, the free and constant entrance of Aaron into the holy place was stopped. Solomon, the son of David, was given glory and riches by God, but his heart was turned from Him by strange wives, and he fell into idolatry, and the kingdom was divided. God trusts Nebuchadnezzar with power, and he is the head of gold among the Gentiles: he gets into pride, and throws the saints into the fire; he loses his reason and senses for seven years (a figure of the Gentile empires), and eats grass like an ox. So with everything. So it is with the church, and man cannot mend it. Grievous wolves, says Paul, will come in after my decease; and there will be a falling away, and then Antichrist be fully revealed. The church itself as a system, trusted to man's responsibility, has been all a failure.

All was set up in the first Adam, who has failed. All will be made good in the second Man, who is perfect, and has overcome. But it is hard to get saints to lay hold of the entirely new position in which all is set by redemption, and by the resurrection of Christ. The first Adam failed, and was cast out; the last Adam, perfect, is

come into a better paradise. So of everything. In the same way, law, which man broke, will be written on his heart. Christ will be the true Son of David. Christ will rise to reign over the Gentiles. So, as the church has failed, He will yet be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe. In each position in which God has tried man, what Scripture teaches us is, that man has failed in his responsibility, and that God's plans will go on in His patient mercy till all is fulfilled in Christ.

If we now turn to this responsibility, we shall find there are two subjects before us as engaged in it; the professing church is one; power in the earth, shewn in the beasts, is the other. Both are found corrupt, or at open enmity with God; that which is called the church will be utterly rejected of God— spued out. The thing which Scripture teaches us is, not that we shall fill the world with blessing, but entirely the contrary. The evil introduced by Satan, where Christianity had been planted, will never be remedied until the harvest. Such a thought is humbling, but gives no ground for discouragement, for Christ is ever faithful. It is the occasion, dear friends, for those who have the grace of God to walk more in accordance with it. But it is a solemn thing, if what we have to look forward to is the cutting off of the professing church.

Geographically speaking, Christianity was more widely spread in the sixth century than now; the world as then known was more acquainted with the gospel than it is now. Whatever man may say about progress and the like, a great part of what was then the Christian world had heard of Christ, but is now overrun by Mohammedanism or Popery; and, where that is not so, how far have infidelity and Puseyism prevailed! But it is

this very thing that calls for earnestness in those who have the Spirit of God. He is surely working very specially in these days; and in the tide of evil we have the strongest possible motive for energy and activity. It is always right, but the inroad of evil specially calls for it, as in the days of Noah, in the sense of approaching judgment. The false idea of converting the world may give a stimulus for a time, but it destroys the solemn sense of what God is, and enfeebles the authority of God's word, which gives no such hope. When it is gradually found, too, that evil is growing up, and that the world is not converted, the reaction tends to subvert the faith, and cast into infidelity.

The evil which works now was declared from the beginning, and will continue its course (such is the declaration of Scripture) till God interferes—will not be remedied until the harvest. Such is the clear teaching of the parable I have read to you (v. 24-30). It is a similitude of the kingdom of heaven.

People very often take the kingdom of heaven as if it were the same thing as the church of God; but this is in no way the case, though those who compose the church are in the kingdom. Supposing for a moment that Christ had not been rejected, the kingdom would have been set up on earth. It could not be so, no doubt, but it shews the difference between the kingdom and the church. As it was, the kingdom of God was there in the Person of Christ, the King. Only as He was on earth, it was not the kingdom of heaven. But Christ being rejected, He could not take it outwardly then, but ascended on high. Thus the sphere of the rule of Christ is in heaven. The heavens rule, and the kingdom is always the kingdom of heaven, because the King is in heaven; only at the end it

will be subdivided, so to speak, into the kingdom of our Father, the heavenly part; and the kingdom of the Son of man, the earthly part. If we understand the kingdom of heaven as the rule of Christ when the King is in heaven, it is very simple. If Christ had set up a kingdom when He was with the Jews, it would not have been the kingdom of heaven, because He was not in heaven. Hence, it is said, “the kingdom of God is among you,” but “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

The gospel is the only means we have of gathering souls into the kingdom^ *and such are properly the children of the kingdom; but, within its limits, Satan works and sows tares, and they are in the kingdom. Take Popery, Mohammedanism, all manner of heretics: these are tares which have been sown where the good seed had been. Church means, or is rather, simply an assembly—an idea which has nothing to do with the thought of a kingdom. The parable I did not read, where we have Christ sowing the good seed, is not a similitude of the kingdom of heaven. A kingdom is a sphere where one rules as king. Christ is simply there sowing the word in men’s hearts. It does not describe the kingdom of heaven, nor even the kingdom begun by the King being on earth; it is individual in its character.

The moment He comes to this and the two following parables, we have a similitude of the kingdom of heaven. They describe the outward result in this world of the fact of Christ the King’s being in heaven. You will remark that these are spoken to the multitude; the last three, and the explanation of the tares and wheat, to the disciples, shewing the mind and purpose of God—what divine intelligence knows and does, not mere public result in the world. The tares and wheat shew the

outward result, in the world, of the gospel. In the next, it becomes a great tree—a great tree, in Scripture, signifying great power. That is what Christianity became in the world from a little seed—a great political power, like the kingdoms of the world. The next shews it as a doctrine pervading a mass of measured extent, as a little leaven penetrates through the lump of dough.

Then the Lord goes into the house, and explains God's mind about these things (v. 36). "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house, and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field." The servants enquire if they should gather the tares up. They are forbidden to do it. Our part is not judgment or excision in this world. We have not to root evil out of the world by persecution. We have seen often that the wheat was rooted up. They must grow in the field (that is in the world) till harvest. "But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest." We learn from this, not only that Christianity does not spread everywhere, but that where it does spread it becomes corrupted. And, if we look at the state of Christendom, we cannot but see that this is the case. We see how the tares have been sown and sprung up, how false doctrines have crept in, Popery, and all kinds of errors. Then our Lord, having sent the multitude away, and gone into the house, explained the parable to His disciples.

You will now remark that, as I have said, in these parables, with the explanation of the first, you have two distinct things— the outward result, and the unfolding of God's design in it. Thus, with regard to the grain of mustard seed, you have the outward result—it becomes

a great tree, which, in Scripture, is simply a great public power. The king of Assyria is represented as a great tree. So Pharaoh is represented as a great tree. And Nebuchadnezzar was a great tree, which was hewn down, but whose stump and roots were left in the earth. In a word, it means simply a great power. And that was what Christianity became in the world—the greatest power in it. The figure in the parable does not raise the question whether it was good or bad, but simply represents that it was a great public power in the world. The little seed of the truth, sown at the first, took root, and grew up to be a great tree. So in the case of the leaven, working within a certain sphere, represented by three measures of meal—it worked there until the whole was leavened. The doctrines of Christendom penetrate through the whole. But no reference is there made to godliness or sanctity. Christianity is represented as a public outward thing, making its way in the world. But, having sent the multitude away, the Lord takes up an entirely different thing, and explains, not the outward effect, but God's mind in the transactions represented by these parables. And He begins by explaining the parable of the tares of the field. Verse 34: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables… Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man: the field is the world."

Mark how perfectly absurd it is to think, as some do, that it is the church which is here spoken of. The Son of man comes to sow the gospel, the word of God, in the world—not in the church. The church has received it

already. The church is composed of those who professedly or really, as the case may be, have already received the good seed. He does not sow it in the church, which would be repeating what had been done before, but in the world. “The field is the world”; and nothing can be more absurd than to apply this to the church, or to bring it up in connection with any church question.

“The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one.” It is not that the wheat is spoiled. The Lord will gather that and have it in His garner. But the crop is spoiled. Christianity, as an outward thing in the world, has been corrupted through the prevalence of all kinds of error and wickedness. “The enemy that sowed them is the devil: the harvest is the end of the world” (that is, “of the age”). It is not the end of the world, in the ordinary sense, that is spoken of; it is “the end of the age”: there is no dispute about that for anyone acquainted with the original: “And the reapers are the angels. As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world” —of this age. “The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” That is, the mischief which Satan has done will go on until the Lord executes righteous judgment on the world. The corruption of Christianity, the spoiling of the crop—not of the wheat, because God takes care of that, and gathers it into His garner, but of the crop (the public outward thing, which Satan has set

himself to corrupt and spoil)—will go on until the harvest.

And indeed on this point we get a little more precise information. The first thing, we learn, will be the gathering together of the tares (those who have grown up as the fruit of the corrupt principles, sown by Satan where the gospel had been planted) in bundles to be burned. And then He gathers His wheat into His garner —takes His saints to be with Himself. This is all the parable states. The explanation goes farther, and gives the manifested result when Jesus shall appear, “Then shall the righteous shine forth” —they have been gathered already— “then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”; as the wicked are cast into a furnace of fire, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. We have first, then, the tares growing till harvest; and then the Lord gathers out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. There is much instruction here, but I will not detain you now with entering into more than the general idea. We have this, however, very distinctly brought before us, that while the Lord gets His own wheat in the garner, yet the crop sown in the world is spoiled; while men slept, the devil comes and spoils the plan by sowing false principles of Judaism or legalism, and immorality or Antinomianism, and false doctrines about Christ. By all these things the crop is spoiled, and this is never mended in the world until judgment comes.

You will now see, by comparing other passages, that the church, having a certain responsibility entrusted to her in the earth, has not fulfilled what that responsibility made incumbent upon her, and comes under judgment. Turn to Romans 11 and you will see distinctly this

principle laid down: as to the facts we shall refer to other passages. There, after speaking of the cutting off of the Jews, the apostle says, “Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off; and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off… For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” It is exactly through being wise in its own conceit that the professing church has fallen. It has looked on the Jews as entirely set aside, forgetting that “the gifts and calling of God are without repentance”—that He never changes His mind—that, though He can create and then destroy, He never sets aside His own design and purpose; and that, God having called the Jews as a nation, He never will lay aside that purpose. But the church has been wise in their own conceits, thinking that the Jews are set aside, and that the church never can be.

But we shall find exactly fulfilled, as regards the church as an outward thing in the world, what is stated in this chapter, that, if it continue not in God’s goodness, it will be cut off. This is the specific instruction contained in this passage, with reference to those brought in by faith, after the natural branches were broken off, that is,

Christendom, that they are placed on this ground; that, if they do not continue in God's goodness, they will be cut off like the Jews. The only question is, how long forbearance may be extended to them. "Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off that I might be graffed in." Quite true, the apostle replies, but "because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God," etc. Now, what I ask is this: Has the professing church continued in God's goodness? Do we not see Popery and Mohammedanism prevalent where Christianity was originally planted? Have they continued, then, in God's goodness? There is nothing said about being restored. This will not do: what is required is to "continue." It is the same as when a man who has broken law, says, "I will do right for the future." This does not meet the law's claims; he has not "continued in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

And I ask, Has the church continued in God's goodness? Is that which we now see in Christendom what God set up in His church in the beginning, or anything like it? Has not the professing church turned to ceremonies and sacraments, and all kinds of things other than Christ, in order to be saved by them? They have not continued in God's goodness. You can see that most plainly. Our own consciousness testifies to it. But, if they continue not in God's goodness, the whole of Christendom, the apostle says, will be cut off, and the Jews will be graffed in again. There cannot be the least doubt of that. "And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be graffed in; for

God is able to graff them in again" … "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." As soon as the Lord has gathered the real church of God, and taken them up to heaven, He sets up the Jews again.

Turn now to the positive testimony. What I have been reading is conditional; it shews what will take place if they continue not in God's goodness. We shall see now if they have continued. You will find that Jude brings it out in a very striking way, because he takes up the whole history of Christianity from beginning to end. "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called" — that is, the true saints— "Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." That is, I would have written in order that you may be built up in the truth, but through the coming in of evil I am obliged to exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

We see, then, the cause of the falling away—that already in Jude's time these men had crept in unawares into the church of God, and were bringing in corruption. And he

warns them that the same thing had happened in the case of Israel, when brought out of Egypt, and had caused them to fall in the wilderness: they had not maintained faithfulness. He refers them also to the case of the angels who kept not their first estate, because the principle of apostasy crept in. And mark the way in which he speaks of these men that had crept in unawares—of these tares that Satan had sown. Look at verse 14: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

That is, under the inspiration of the prophetic Spirit of God, he sees the mischief and evil done by these persons, and sees that it was to grow and ripen up to judgment, as we shall soon see appears elsewhere. And he tells the saints that the mischief has begun, and therefore he warns them that they "should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." And the Lord executes judgment, because, instead of the world becoming filled with the blessedness of the gospel, the church has got corrupted. That it is prophesied that the filling the world with blessedness is to be brought about by Israel and not by the church, you will see, and that very distinctly indeed, when we come to other passages. But here we get a remarkable prophecy, shewing that (as in Romans 11 was declared that, if they did not continue in God's goodness, they should be cut off) they will not continue in God's goodness; and it gives us the history of the

church in the world from the beginning to the end of it, when the Lord shall come with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment. It is as plain and distinct a declaration as it possibly could be; and you will find that the whole testimony of Scripture concurs, as of course it must concur, in the same truth.

Turn now to Habakkuk, where you have one of those passages which are constantly in people's minds, as shewing that the gospel is to go on and spread until it fills the world. I refer to them merely for the negative purpose of pointing out that they shew nothing of the kind. Habakkuk 2:12: "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity. Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity? For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." The people are all labouring in the fire, and wearying themselves for very vanity, and then the glory comes and fills the earth.

Turn now to other passages, where it is not stated conditionally, or in a general prophetic manner, but where distinct details are given of that which would come about. Turn to 2 Thessalonians, and you will find there the connected details of the course of that of which Jude has already given us the beginning. But the general fact we also have stated in the Philippians, where the apostle says, "I have no man like-minded; for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." That surely was an early period in the history of the church to say that Christians were in a state of such decline and decay that they were not seeking the things of Jesus Christ, but their own interest. When we

return to the second epistle to the Thessalonians we get this very distinctly brought out. “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ [rather of the Lord] is [not “at hand,” but] here.” The expression “at hand” makes it almost impossible to get at the sense of the passage; it means “here or present,” the same word being used as when things “present” are contrasted with things “to come.”

The whole point of the apostle’s statement rests on this, that the Thessalonians thought that the day of the Lord was “here” —that it had already come—that their having got into so much dreadful tribulation and persecution proved that it had come. The expression “the day of the Lord is at hand “is often made use of as occurring in this passage, while in fact there is nothing of the kind in it. The Thessalonians thought, not that it was at hand, but that it had come, and therefore the apostle says, “Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there come the falling away first”— that is, the not continuing in God’s goodness.

Therefore, as the apostle had stated that, if they did not continue in God’s goodness, they would be cut off, we have here the positive revelation or prophecy that they would not continue in God’s goodness, that there would come the falling away, and that the day of the Lord cannot come until that falling away or apostasy takes place. So it is plain on the face of it that, in place of the church continuing in God’s goodness, the distinctly opposite is the case. The apostle shews how the declension goes on: “Let no man deceive you by any

means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work." That is the important point here, that already, as to its general principles, it was going on in the apostle's day. Even then the enemy was at work, sowing tares. Only it was a mystery; it was going on secretly, in a hidden way. There was Judaism, and Antinomianism, making high professions of grace with a corrupt practice, and various other forms of heresy, as the denial that Christ was a real man, etc., all of which are mentioned in Scripture—we do not require to go to church history at all to find them. They denied the humanity, quite as soon as they did the divinity, of the Lord.

We find then that this mystery of iniquity was already at work in the time of the apostle, and it was then only hindered from going on; it was not to be set aside. The time will come when it will be set aside, when Babylon will be destroyed, but not by the word. I may first refer for a moment to this point. In the book of Revelation (chap. 17) you find that it is the ten horns and the beast which shall destroy the great whore, and burn her with fire, and then men will be given up to even still greater evil—giving their power to the beast; and then judgment.

Returning to the passage in Thessalonians, we find the apostle says, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work;

only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." We get here this very important truth, as regards the responsibility of the church, that what was working to corrupt it in the time of the apostle himself would go on until what hindered the full development of iniquity was removed, and then that wicked would be revealed, etc. This, as I have said, is the very opposite of continuing in God's goodness. It is intimated to us, that what was mysteriously working then would ripen and mature up to the open revelation of the man of sin, whom the Lord will consume and destroy— "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." That is the way in which the professing church will be dealt with. Having refused to retain the truth—the- real truth of God, God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie— "that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

The Lord then comes and destroys the wicked, the evil being open and evident; it is no longer a mystery. This is for us a very solemn view of God's dealings. It is not the pleasant and bright side. The pleasant bright side is the blessedness the saints will have at the coming of the Lord Jesus, in being gathered together to Him. The apostle says to the saints, You will all be taken up to

meet the Lord in the air, and therefore you cannot think that the day of the Lord is here, for that day will not find you here at all. That day is the execution of judgment on ungodly men. It is as if a rebellion were going on at Toronto, and the Queen were to say, I will have all my loyal subjects with me at Montreal first, and then judgment will be executed. And so long as you were not at Montreal, it would be evident that that day of judgment had not arrived yet. That is the reason why, when it is said Lo here and Lo there, we know it does not apply to us. To a Jew it is different. If you say to a Jew who is expecting Christ, Lo here or Lo there, it is a snare to him. But if it is said to us, we can only answer, It is impossible, for we are going up to meet the Lord in the air, not to find Him here; and I am not there yet. So he beseeches them by our gathering together to Him not to be troubled as if the day was come.

In this passage then which I have read you have the positive declaration, that what had begun in the apostle's time goes on, until Christ comes to execute judgment; and you find another distinct and definite declaration of this kind in 1 Timothy 4. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron."

Then, in 2 Timothy 3, we have very definitely and distinctly stated what the last days will be: "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come"—not that the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord (that is a blessed time), but that "in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud,

blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." That is the character of the last days. There will be a great form of godliness, much superstitious worship, but a denial of the power of godliness. That is not a continuing in God's goodness, when the professing church in the last days, with a great form of godliness, denies the power thereof.

It is a remarkable proof of the power of Satan, that in the face of these passages, men, wise in their own conceits, will bring reasoning to prove that they are to go on and fill the whole world with the gospel—that, at the very time that judgments are hastening upon them, men will cherish the expectation of the earth being filled with a widespread blessedness— is the strongest possible evidence of the power of that delusion of which the apostle speaks. It is not that God is not working, and turning men from darkness to light. It was the same before the destruction of Jerusalem; three thousand were converted in a day. If we had three thousand converted in a day now, would it be a proof that the millennium was coming? No, but rather that it was judgment which was coming. It was because the judgment was coming that this happened. It was the Lord's gathering out His saints before the judgment, and adding to the church such as should be saved. And, if He is now working in a special manner to gather out souls, it is not because the gospel is to fill the world, but because judgment is coming upon the professing church.

The apostle shews that the declension will go on, that it will not be set aside. For “evil men and seducers,” he says, “shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” And then he gives the resource under such circumstances. “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” It is as much as to say, You cannot trust the church, which will have but a form of godliness, denying the power; your resource must be the holy scriptures of truth.

You will find, again, how this mystery of iniquity began to work at the very outset, by turning to 1 John 2, where this very question is treated of. “Little children, it is the last time.” It seems a remarkable thing for the apostle to speak of the very time when Christianity commenced to be diffused as the last time. God’s patience has nevertheless continued to go on from that time to this day; for with Him one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. “And as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists.” It is not the Antichrist whom he speaks of, but he says that already there were many antichrists—already the mystery of iniquity, the spirit of evil, was working— “whereby we know that it is the last time.” We have seen that the last days are a perilous time; and here we see that the apostle knows it to be the last time, because there are many Antichrists. Is it possible then that the last time will be a time when the whole world will be filled with such blessedness as some speak of? The whole testimony of Scripture is as plain as can be to

the contrary: “Whereby we know it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” They adopt false principles: their Christianity becomes corrupted; and they go out.

Turn now to Luke 18, which occurs to my mind in connection with this, shewing how far the professing church is from continuing in God’s goodness (v. 6): “And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless,, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” That is not like having the world full of the gospel. He puts the question, Will there be some individuals still expecting His interference and intervention? but He does not say there will be. The church will be gone, and the question is, Will there be any looking for His interference? will there by anyone expecting the Lord to descend on the earth?

It may be well now perhaps to turn to a few passages—because they rest in people’s minds, in looking at this subject— about the gospel being preached to all nations and the like. I believe that this ought to have been done from the beginning by those to whom God has given grace. But that is not the question. The question is, whether there has not been a failure on the part of the church, as to the discharge of its responsibility. It is not a question whether they ought to diffuse the gospel—of course they ought. In the sixth century, Christianity was the all but national religion of China, and there are fragments of it there still. The limits of nominal

Christendom are now very much contracted from what they were in former times. Formerly they embraced all the north of Africa, and in a measure all Asia. Now they are almost confined to Europe, except that in these modern times they include also the scattered populations in America.

Let us turn then to the passages which speak of the prevalence of the gospel. That in Matthew 24 is one of them. “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But 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” —not the millennium, but— “shall the end come.” There is nothing here about filling the world with blessedness. But the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached for a witness to all nations, and then will come the end—the judgment, the end of this age. It is not said that the world is to be filled with blessing. To suppose so is being wise in your own conceit. It is said that the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will fill the world, but it is not said that the gospel will; although men, fancying that they have the power to bring it about, speak as if it were the gospel that was to do this.

If you look at Revelation 14 you will find this brought out still more distinctly and clearly, that the end comes when the gospel is sent for a witness to all nations. You often hear the passage quoted to shew that the gospel is to be preached to all nations, which is no doubt a blessed truth in its place. But, to see the effect of it, we must take the whole passage: verse 6, “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the

earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, saying, with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." It is almost a miracle how people read Scripture without understanding it. Whoever has been in the habit of frequenting public meetings, and listening to speakers from public platforms, must have heard that passage quoted hundreds of times, as if it meant that the gospel is so to be preached to all nations that it is to fill the whole world with light, while a moment's consideration would shew that this preaching of the gospel is a precursor of judgments. I shall now refer to the passages which speak of the knowledge of the Lord covering the earth as the waters cover the sea.

But, before doing that, let me just quote one passage in Isaiah (chap. 26), where you will see that this is brought, not by the gospel, but by judgments. Verse 9: "With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early; for, when thy judgments are in the earth" (not the gospel, but judgments) "the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour" (that is, grace, or the gospel) "be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness." There must be judgment; the time of harvest must come, as in the parable of the tares. "In the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up" (when He is just going to strike), "they will not see; but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them."

Turn now to Habakkuk, where you have one of these passages which are constantly in people's minds, as shewing that the gospel is to go on and spread until it

fills the world. I refer to them merely for the negative purpose of pointing out that they shew nothing of the kind. Habakkuk 2:12: “Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity! Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity? For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” The people are all labouring in the fire, and wearying themselves for very vanity; and then the glory comes and fills the earth.

Turn now to Numbers—another of the only three passages in which what I am now referring to is spoken of in that way; and in chapter 14 you will find what the Lord means by filling the earth with His glory. When the people had sinned against the Lord and murmured against Moses, God said He would destroy them, and Moses then interceded for them. “Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word: but as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice, surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it.” That, of course, is judgment; and the filling of the earth with God’s glory here has nothing to do with the gospel. The Lord will have the whole earth full of His glory, but He does not use the gospel for that purpose. He does send

the gospel, and urges it upon men with infinite patience and goodness; but they reject it; and then comes judgment.

In one other passage the expression occurs. You will find it in Isaiah 11: “But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb… They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” —that is, when God smites the earth, and slays the wicked. “And,” the prophecy goes on, “in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria and from Egypt,” etc. That is, the Lord gathers the Jews, and slays the wicked; and it is then the earth is full of the knowledge of Jehovah. “And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together,” and so on—shewing that there is to be an execution of judgment in the earth.

Turn now to Isaiah 66, where the glory of the Lord is also spoken of. And, in referring to these passages which are so constantly quoted, it is always an excellent plan to read the context. In this passage the glory of the Lord

is brought in by fire and by sword. Verse 15: “For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many… For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory.” The glory of the Lord here comes with the execution of judgment; there is nothing of the gospel at all.

You see, then, these three points. First, you have the statement that, after God had sown the good seed, the enemy came and sowed the evil. Then you have the conditional declaration, that the professing church, if it did not continue in God’s goodness, would, as an outward thing, be cut off. Then, further, you have the declaration that that evil which had begun in the time of the apostles would go on to the end, the Lord only restraining the public manifestation of it until the time of judgment approached at Christ’s coming, the fulness of the Gentiles being come in, and then that wicked would be cut off; also that in the last days perilous times would come, and Antichrist would come. We have seen also that the passages referring to the earth being filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, and the like, are all connected with judgment; and that when favour is shewed to the wicked, as in the gospel, he will not learn righteousness.

If you turn to the Revelation, you will get a little more of detail about the falling away, and about what the character of that evil is which is at work. But before we quote from the Revelation, let me remark that the two

great characters of evil from the beginning have been corruption and violence. Before the deluge, the earth was corrupt before God and filled with violence. And in the Revelation, “Babylon” is the expression of corruption, while the “beast” is the expression of violence. I cannot, this evening, enter into details as to this part of the subject, but I wish to shew you how the one runs into the other. In chapter 17 the expression “the great whore “indicates the power of corruption. At verse 15 it is said, “The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” —the reference here is to the influence over the nations which a corrupt Christianity has exercised. “And the ten horns which thou sawest, and [not on] the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.” Of course, that is not the gospel; it is violence putting an end to corruption. “For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast.”

It is not when Babylon is destroyed that the kingdom is given to the Son of man. It is given then to the beast. The effect of the destruction of all this corrupt influence of outward nominal Christianity, of the awful corruption of the Papal system, which was the centre of it all, that “mother of abominations of the earth” —the effect of the destruction of that, through the hatred and disgust of those connected with it, and disgusted and wearied with it, will be to put the power of the world into the hands of the beast. There is nothing at all here about the gospel. It is the violence of man refusing longer to submit to priestly power. When one reads Scripture, simply desiring to learn what it teaches, he cannot but be

surprised how people form from it the systems they do. They take hold of some abstract principle, and following it out succeed in finding it in Scripture according to their expectations. In studying the Scriptures, they settle first what the Scriptures should teach, instead of being content to take simply what they do actually state.

Turn now to chapter 16, and you will find more about the time when judgment shall be executed upon Babylon, although we cannot now enter into the various details of it. “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.” These are the powers of evil. “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief.” It is the devil who gathers the whole world to that great battle. People may discuss what is meant by the dragon, and the beast, and the false prophet. I have very little doubt on that point; and I may just say, without entering into the details, that the dragon is the power of Satan, that the beast is the Roman Empire, and that the false prophet is the false Messiah at the time of the end.

I do not dwell upon this; but at all events it is perfectly clear that the three unclean spirits, which gather the nations to the battle of the great day of God Almighty, are not the gospel. It is the battle which in Isaiah is said to be with burning and fuel of fire. The nations are gathered to Armageddon, and then comes the judgment. The beast and its horns destroy Babylon, that great corrupt system, and then the beast and the kings of the

earth are gathered by evil spirits against the power of Christ, Satan being cast down from heaven.

In Revelation 19, we read that there comes forth on the white horse He who has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords; that the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army: “and the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image: these both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone; and the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse.” Thus we get here very distinctly that there is an execution of judgment. And after that—after the execution of judgment —Satan is bound.

Then we have a passage, which is the only ground we have for saying that there is to be a millennium—a thousand years of blessedness. We have seen the general statements that the world will be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, and that this is to be by judgment. But the only proof we have that the period of blessedness is to last a thousand years—the only evidence for this particular character of the glory which is coming—is found in Revelation 20. We have plenty of testimony that there will be a time of blessedness, but this specific character of it is only found here, and that is after the Lord has come as King of kings, and Lord of lords, and executed judgment, and Satan is bound. Satan has been corrupting everything; but, when he is bound, he can no longer do so; and then come the thousand years, and thrones and judgment are given to

us. The saints shall judge the world, for so God has revealed in His word.

Are there not many professing Christians who, if you were to say to them, “Do you know you are to judge angels?” would think you were mad? And yet it was to the Corinthians (who were very far from being the most perfect of Christians, for they were, indeed, going on very badly) that this was said. The full import of the connection of the church with Christ has been almost wholly forgotten. People talk of their hopes of being saved, and of living godly; but the connection of the church with the Second Adam is practically forgotten. The power of redemption, and the high privileges connected with it, are overlooked.

Let us revert for a moment to Revelation 17 to see how intimately the saints are associated with Christ in that day. We read that the beast and the kings of the earth shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings; “and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” That description does not apply to angels. No doubt He will come with the holy angels; but the expression— “called, and chosen, and faithful”— applies to the saints, who come “arrayed in fine linen, clean and white,” which “is the righteousness of saints.” So arrayed, they come with the Lord. We shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air; and when He appears, we shall also appear with Him in glory.

There is another point I wish to shew you, although I cannot go into details. I can only touch upon the great principles bearing on the subject we are considering, and pass over them very rapidly. You will remember a

passage of sacred history in the time of Elijah, recorded in the Kings. God had seen that there were seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal, although Elijah had fancied that he only was left, and they sought his life to take it away. Acting under God's authority, Elijah raised the question whether Baal was God, or Jehovah was God, and proceeded to test it by a public demonstration in the face of all the people. And he proposed to test it in this way, that he who answered by fire should be acknowledged as God. Sacrifices accordingly were prepared, and the priests of Baal cried aloud from morning until noon, "O Baal, hear us!" And Elijah mocked them, and said, "Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." And they cried aloud, and cut themselves with knives, until evening; but there was no answer. And then Elijah built an altar, and laid on it the sacrifice, and filled the trench about it with water, and called upon the Lord; and the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood, and licked up the water that was in the trench; and when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The Lord [Jehovah] he is the God; the Lord he is the God."

Now we find in the Revelation, that the false prophet brings down fire from heaven in the sight of men. It is all lies, of course; but he does it in such a way as to deceive men. The very thing which Elijah did to prove that Jehovah was the true God, the false prophet, or false Messiah, also appears to do— bringing down in the sight of men the very thing which proved Jehovah to be God; and that he succeeds by it in deceiving men, shews that they are given up to strong delusion to believe a lie. This

refers to the government of the world, so far as the Jews are concerned.

If you turn to 2 Thessalonians, you will see the same, where Christianity is concerned, in connection with the apostasy: “Then shall that Wicked be revealed … even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders.” Of course they are all “lying,” but still they are “powers, and signs, and wonders”—words verbally identical in the original with those used by Peter when he preached of “Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs.” That is, Antichrist does the same things—lying, of course, but the same as regards men’s apprehension of them—which proved Jesus to be the Christ, and the same things that proved Jehovah to be the true God. By these means he blinds and deceives the people, and leads them away to worship the dragon and the beast. He does this by bringing down fire from heaven and leads them to recognise the false Christ as the true one, by doing the same things—falsely, of course—as Christ had done. You cannot conceive a more awful and solemn thing, than that men should thus be given up to strong delusion, to believe a lie, and to be subject to the power of him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders; and it is not surprising that the apostle should be so impressive in his warning, when he says, “This know, that in the last days perilous times shall come.”

Now, beloved friends, the more you search the Scriptures, the more you will find these great leading principles clearly brought out. But the professing church refuses to see them; and this is connected with what I

pointed out at the outset, that everything which in God's great scheme is trusted to man is a failure. It was while men slept, that the enemy came and sowed the tares, and then we have the positive revelation that the church, not continuing in God's goodness, will be cut off. Therefore the notion that the outward church of God, after having become corrupt, will again be set right, is an entire delusion—I say outward church of God; for, as regards individuals, what is revealed on this point is only a reason for greater faithfulness on their part. That is another question altogether.

As regards the duty of individuals, Scripture gives plenty of directions about that, even when speaking of the last days, when there shall be a form of godliness and a denial of the power thereof. From such, says the Spirit, turn away. It will be with the saints as with Elijah—there never will be a time when individually they will have a greater consciousness of the power of Christ, than in the time of general declension.

That, however, is not the point; the question is as to the outward manifestation and outward effect in the world. Men have comforted themselves with the thought of an invisible church, forgetting that it is said, "Ye are the light of the world." Of what value is an invisible light? It is said, "let your light so shine before men"; that is, let your profession of Christianity be so distinct "that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

And now, beloved friends, take this lesson with you, that, during this time of God's forbearance, until He comes forth to execute judgment, a deep responsibility is laid upon each of us. Let each man take heed how and what

he believes. Keep in mind that it is by false doctrines that Satan has corrupted the church—by Judaism, by the worship of saints, and by all sorts of errors. We have not time to enumerate them all; but it is by the introduction of these false and heretical doctrines that Satan has succeeded in corrupting Christianity: so much so, that, if you wished to look for really the darkest characters of evil, you would have to go among Christians to find it—of course Christians merely in name I mean, but yet those who boast that theirs is the only true Christianity in the world.

I only add now this thought—how important it is, if we are approaching these scenes of judgment, that we should understand correctly what is the destiny of the church, instead of imagining that all is to go on rightly until the whole world is filled with blessedness! How important it is that we should understand that this mystery of iniquity, already at work in the apostle's days, is to go on until God leaves the bridle loose, as it were, for the whole power of evil to do its worst; that the evil is working until the saints are taken up to meet the Lord in the air, and then the power of Satan will begin to work! This surely is a solemn thought for me, if I care for the church, how I have discharged my own responsibility, when the question is put, as in Jeremiah, "Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock? what wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?" Read the Acts, and see what Christendom is now, and say what likeness there is. Ask not only, Is there the doctrine? but Where is the practice now? Yet the Lord is faithful. And, when judgment comes, the Lord, having bought the field, has got the treasure safe, and He has kept it safe all the while.

We shall afterwards take up that part of our subject which connects God's dealings with the world, more particularly with the Jews. But, meanwhile, the Lord give us to lay this to heart—the difference between what is called the church, the outward thing, and what the church really ought to be. And let us see what our own characters are, if there is anything in us which is an adequate fruit of the travail of the Son of God, and of the coming down of the Holy Ghost as the Comforter and Sanctifier. It is best always, in making application of these truths, to begin with ourselves. Let us see, then, whether in our hearts we love and care for Christ, and about the condition in which the church of God is, or whether we are deceiving ourselves by imagining that it is in a proper condition to set the world right. I do not doubt that the Holy Ghost is remarkably working now. From the first time these things broke in upon my mind I have always expected that the Spirit of God would work; and I bless God that He is doing so much at this time. Yet I feel assured, from what I find in the Scriptures, that it is by judgment that this working is to be followed.

Lecture 6 On Daniel 2:19-49; Daniel 7

I have to read this chapter, dear friends, because it gives an outline of a part of prophecy of which other parts of Scripture are the detail. We began with the church's having a sure and certain hope, through the never changing promise of God, of being caught up to be for ever with Christ before He comes to judge the world; and we saw that the looking and longing (where the heart is truly for Christ) for His coming again is the bright and cheering influence of the Christian's path. Last evening we saw the professing church looked at as

in the world (that which is called the church) to be at last utterly rejected of God, fearfully judged for its corruption, or spued out of Christ's mouth as nauseous.

When we turn to the ways of God on the earth, we have seen that His direct government had always been exercised with the Jews as a centre. Providential government He always exercises. He makes all things work together for good to those that love Him. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without Him who is our Father. But when we come to direct government, the immediate dealings with men on the earth according to their conduct, and the direct public interference of God to shew His ways on earth, then the Jews come on the scene and are the pivot round which those ways turn. But they, when fully displayed, extend necessarily to the Gentiles, who surround them and fill the earth, the great body of whom have now long oppressed them. Hence, the same passages which refer to the Jews refer to the Gentiles also, as those who come up before God when He begins that government in which the Jews have the first and principal place on earth. These passages I will now refer to, some of which, by reason of what I have just noticed, have already been quoted in reference to the Jews.

But, before doing so, I must point out two classes of Gentiles to which they refer, in respect of whom there are two very distinct classes of prophecy in Scripture: that which refers to those who were enemies of the Jews when God was there with them on the earth—when He owned them, or will hereafter again own them as His people; and that which refers to those who oppress them when they are not—when God has written on them Lo-ammi, "not my people," and the times of the Gentiles

have begun. These are entirely distinct. We get certain powers dealt with which are outside Israel, and are their enemies when the presence of God and His throne are still in the midst of that people, and the representatives of whom will be found in the latter days, when God has taken Israel up again. But after the Jews turned to idolatry, and, whatever had been God's patience, rising up early and sending His prophets till there was no remedy, He was obliged to give them up to judgment; He then set up Nebuchadnezzar, and the times of the Gentiles began; and they are still running on. The empire passed from Babylon to Persia, and Persia to Greece; and the Jews were slaves to the Romans when Christ came—slaves to the Gentiles. Their ecclesiastical polity was allowed to exist, but the civil power was in the hands of their oppressors. These times of the Gentiles run on, until Christ executes judgment, until those who were the oppressors of God's people when He does not own them shall be destroyed, and those who are their enemies outside these oppressors shall be brought to nought at a time when they think they have got it all their own way; and then the Jew is set free.

In a word, Scripture shews us that the Jews are the centre of God's earthly dealings; and that as regards the Gentiles there are two classes of prophecy, one referring to the enemies of God's people when He owns them, and the other to their oppressors when they are turned off and He does not own them. Deuteronomy 32 lays the prophetic ground, at the very origin of their whole history, of all that is to come to pass. In verse 8, as we have seen when speaking of the Jews, they are shewn to be the centre of His ways. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the

sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people [peoples] according to the number of the children of Israel." Just connect it now with the general judgment of the Gentiles. The prophet first states that after his decease Israel would corrupt themselves; then he goes on in verse 21 to the wickedness, the fruit of which is going on now. In verse 27 He rises above the wickedness so as not to destroy them, to shew that He is God. Then he goes on to the time of His rising up to judgment, leading us to that of which we are speaking. When Israel is brought utterly low, He will indeed judge His people, but He will also repent Himself concerning His servants. His hand, as it is expressed, takes hold on judgment, rendering vengeance to His enemies; for such the Gentile powers are found to be, and apostate Jews too. He makes His arrows drunk with blood, and His sword devours flesh. Yet this it is brings in the millennial blessings, when the nations will rejoice with His people, for He will avenge the blood of His servants (a thing we have not yet accomplished)—will render vengeance to His adversaries, and, mark the expression, be merciful to His land and to His people. Thus we have His people judged, His servants avenged, His adversaries brought under vengeance, yet His land and people Israel coming into mercy, and the Gentiles rejoicing with them—in a word, judgment, the Lord's adversaries destroyed, Gentiles and apostate Jews, His servants avenged, Israel restored, and the nations blessed with them, but Israel His people.

I will now turn, before distinguishing the enemies of Israel owned of God, and their oppressors when given up, to the general testimony of the judgment of the nations, and then shew you the two distinct. Turn to

Isaiah 66:15, “For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire; for by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh.” We have the great general fact of the judgment of the nations; and, if you turn to verses 6-14, you will see the Jews set up again. “For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her [Jerusalem] like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream” (v. 12). Then you get the ungodly Jews in verse 17, and thence to verse 24 the manifestation of Jehovah’s glory, those that escape the judgment that accompanies it going off to the nations and announcing the appearing of that glory, and bringing back the scattered Jews to Jerusalem. I get, then, thus the great fact that the Lord comes to judge all flesh; and those He finds interfering with Israel He cuts off.

Now turn to Psalms 9 and 10. They celebrate the judgment and destruction of the enemies of Israel in the land. The Psalmist introduces the whole subject in verses 4 and 5, “For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right. Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever … that I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation. The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God” (v. 14-17). “The Lord is king for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land,” Psalm 10:16.

These are the two psalms which, after speaking of the rejection of Christ as King in Zion, and His taking the character of universal headship as Son of man in Psalm 8, bring in the whole testimony of the Psalms, the state and feelings of the remnant of Israel in the last days, and the judgment which God executes upon the Gentiles.

Hence, remark, it is that we find in the Psalms these appeals to judgment, and demands for it, which have often stumbled Christians, when urged by the enemies of Christianity. They are not the expression of Christian feelings. We leave the world and go to heaven. In no sense have we to demand the destruction of our enemies in order to pass into glory. But Israel cannot have their rest on earth until the wicked are destroyed; and therefore they do demand this righteous judgment, and this is the way they will be delivered.

To pursue our subject: turn to Jeremiah 25. This is a remarkable chapter; but first I will give you a few verses from the end of Isaiah 24:16: to shew the connection with Israel I will read from verse 13: “When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree: and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done: they shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea. From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously, yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously. Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are

upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly." There you get the world reeling like a drunkard under the terrible judgment of God, and (v. 21, 22) we see the judgment of the powers of evil on high, the prince of the power of the air and his angels, and of the kings of the earth on the earth; and then the Lord reigning in Zion and before His ancients gloriously.

Now turn to Jeremiah 25:15, "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me: Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it." He speaks of the various nations in that way, and then goes on from verse 29 to 33 to declare the universal judgment of the heathen, describing the terrible coming down of Jehovah in judgment upon them.

Turn now to Micah 5:15. "And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard." But then, too, Israel is blessed and re-established in power in verses 7, 8, and that through Christ, great to the ends of the earth (v. 4, 5). "And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth. And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds and eight principal men."

Turn to Joel 3:9-17. “Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; prepare war, wake up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat [Jehoshaphat means judgment of Jehovah]: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.”

What makes this passage additionally important is, that Jerusalem is brought back to blessing and never to be trodden down again, no strangers shall pass through her any more, but the Gentiles who helped on her affliction are destroyed for ever. In the time of Nebuchadnezzar, when Jerusalem was in trouble, and again when Titus besieged and took it, the Gentiles were not destroyed at all. When Cyrus sent back a remnant to Jerusalem, they remained captive, and strangers are yet in Jerusalem.

Again we find here all the nations gathered together, the Gentiles destroyed, and the Jews set up.

Zephaniah 3:3 to end: Jehovah's determination is to gather all the nations. They are to be devoured by the fire of His jealousy. Here again, too, we find that Israel will never be cast out again. He will bring back their captivity and make them the praise among all the people. He will cast out their enemy. They will not see evil any more. Jehovah is in the midst of Jerusalem, God will rest in His love. I will turn to one more passage before I shew the difference between the two classes of enemies to Israel.

Haggai 2:5-9: "According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house [properly, the latter glory of this house] shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." The apostle quotes this passage in the epistle to the Hebrews, shewing that it has not yet come. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." He is urging them not to rest on earthly and created things, shewing that that time of universal shaking of the first and changeable creation

was yet to come, declaring that all would be shaken and pass away.

Let us now take a review of scripture as to the two classes of Israel's enemies of which I have spoken. The chief enemy of Israel, while Israel was still owned of God before the captivity of Babylon, was the Assyrian. There had been others, as Syria, but Syria succumbed to the Assyrian. Egypt then sought to fill the scene of the world, and came up, conquered Judea, and met the power of Babylon at Carchemisli; but its power was broken, and Nebuchadnezzar became the head of gold over the whole earth, and the times of the Gentiles began, which are still running on, and will till the Lord takes His great power and reigns. No doubt the Jews came back, or a small remnant of them, from Babylon, to present Messiah to them. But they were so wicked and perversely idolatrous that God had given them up to captivity, and, even when in their land on their return, they were subject to the Gentiles. God's glory and His throne were no longer amongst them. When they came back, they never got the Shekinah (the Shekinah was the cloud that manifested the presence of God). They had no longer the ark, or the Urim and Thummim. What constituted the witness of God's presence was gone, and these things were never restored. There are the times of the Gentiles still; the four beasts constituted the times of the Gentiles. And this, as to the earth, was of the last possible importance. The throne of God ceased to be on the earth.

Prophecy, indeed, remained till the outward order was restored; but it is remarkable that the post-captivity prophets never set aside the judgment pronounced in Hosea— "Ye are not my people." They never call the

Jews God's people in their then standing, doing so only when they prophesy of that future day when they will be restored to the divine favour, which is yet to come. Finally, when Christ came, He was rejected, and sat down on His Father's throne, and the divine power and glory is wholly above, the object of faith to the believing soul. The people whom God had called, and who had God's throne among them, were wholly cut off, though preserved.

Well, the throne of God had ceased on the earth at the beginning of these times of the Gentiles; and therefore, in Daniel you never get the God of the earth, but the God of heaven, because He was not there with them. The departure of God from the direct government of the earth with Israel for the centre, His throne being in their midst, sitting between the cherubim, as it is said, and His return to the government of the earth, are of immense importance.

In Ezekiel we see His judgment on Jerusalem. God comes (Nebuchadnezzar being the instrument), God comes on the cherubim in the way of providence (those wheels which were so high—they were dreadful), spares His own whom He has marked and gives up the rest to destruction. He executes judgment, leaves them, and goes into heaven. The Gentiles are left to rule, subject to God's providence and final judgment; Israel, with God's throne in their midst, is set aside.

Four great empires arise successively—Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. The Roman Empire, while devastating everywhere, does not succeed in getting all nations under its power, but continues the great power of the world till the judgment, though in a special form.

Then the Assyrian comes on the scene again at the close; that is, geographically what is now Turkey in Asia and part of Persia, but in the last days Assyria will appear on the scene in the Russian power, according to the testimony of Ezekiel 38 and 39 (a passage applied to this power one hundred and fifty years ago by the elder Lowth, before the present question arose). And the world, as connected with Israel and God's ultimate purposes on the earth, is divided into Western Europe and the basin of the Mediterranean, the Roman Empire, and Eastern Europe or the Russian. These two are never confounded in Scripture. The Assyrian was the power that warred against Israel when God owned them, and the other the power that oppressed and held them captive when they were not owned.

Now in Isaiah and the pre-captivity prophets you get the Assyrian all through, the beast being scarcely mentioned (once "the king," so as to complete the scene; and even that, I apprehend, as a subordinate ally of the beast). Whereas in Daniel you do not get the Assyrian, unless, possibly, obscurely in one chapter, and then not as such, the same thing being true of Zechariah, save that all nations are mentioned in both in a general way, brought as sheaves to the floor when rising up against Jerusalem. Thus far I have been speaking of the general judgment. Now, having distinguished between the beasts and the Assyrian power of the latter day, we have to cite those which apply to them distinctively.

Turning to Daniel, you get fully the beasts, but not the Assyrian. Let us examine first the chapter I read. Here we have Nebuchadnezzar the head of gold, the Persian Empire denoted by silver, the Grecian by brass, the Roman by iron (while the iron and clay represent the

present state of things). Then after these last were formed, a stone is cut out without hands (God's sovereign work), smites the image, when all becomes as the chaff of the summer threshing floor, and no place is found for them; and then the stone that smote the image became a great mountain which filled the whole earth.

There is not here, remark, a trace of influence exercised over the previous component parts of the image so as to produce a change of character. The notion is that Christianity will spread and pervade these countries. Now the stone does not grow at all till they are entirely destroyed. There is no influence exercised, no modification takes place, no change at all is spoken of here. The little stone destroys all before it increases. It is the- stone which has smitten the image, which grows.

What we have got here is the coming of Christ's kingdom in judgment, and a total destruction of the empires which preceded its action. That action was on the last, and more particularly on the toes of iron and clay—the last form which this image took, looked at in its geographical distribution on earth, and in the condition of its parts, partly strong, partly broken. What gives its specific character to the figure is, that the stone does not grow at all until it has done all these things, and after it has finished its work of judgment and destruction, it grows to be a great mountain.

What is going on now is not this. Christ has ascended up on high and He waits, in the spirit of grace, sitting on the right hand of His Father's throne, while the saints, His co-heirs, the church, is gathering out of the world; until, at the moment known to God alone, He rises up from the Father's throne, then to take to Him His great

power and reign, His enemies being now put under His feet.

Turn now to the interpretation itself, which is perfectly clear on this point. Power in the world is entrusted to man in the person of Nebuchadnezzar; three empires succeed his, and at the end, though there be a strength in the last which breaks in pieces and subdues all around it, yet a conflict of principles characterises its latter form (I have little doubt the Teutonic and Latin elements); and it is partly strong and partly broken. But then the close comes, verse 44: “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

You will remember, beloved friends, that on the last evening we saw the general outline of God’s dealings with the Gentiles, in connection with His chosen earthly people, the Jews (they being the centre of all God’s earthly dealings). First, that at the restoration of the Jews there would be the judgment of the Gentiles, the nations being divided into two classes, those that were enemies to God’s people when God owned them and had His throne in their midst, and those who led them captive and oppressed them when God did not own them. Both will be cast out from the seat of power. It is evident that, as regards the world, it is an all-important fact, God’s taking His throne from it. When that took place, He was no longer the God of the earth, though He over-rules all things providentially, but does not exercise direct government as in Israel when His throne was there. Hence Daniel calls Him the God of heaven, and it is not until He comes to judge the world that He takes

His name of God of the earth, Lord of the whole earth. (See Zech. 14.) The time during which God gives up His throne on the earth is called “the times of the Gentiles.” During these times the Jews, who were taken captive and made slaves to Nebuchadnezzar, have ceased to be God’s people as a present position, and are always subject to the Gentiles, and the times of the Gentiles run on till He comes to take vengeance. Then He takes them up again, casting out (as we saw before) those who oppressed them when they were not owned, and those who were enemies when they were owned and His throne was in their midst.

The distinction of these two classes is important to us because we are in the times of the Gentiles. In the prophecies there is never the slightest confusion between the two. The Assyrian, and finally Gog, is the great enemy of Israel when the people is owned, the four beasts or Gentile empires their oppressors when they are not. The prophets up to the captivity and Ezekiel speak of the former, Daniel and Zechariah of the latter, to which (when we come to the New Testament) we must add Revelation. The whole New Testament history is under the last beast.

The nrst, fullest, and most general account of these is in chapter 7 of Daniel, which we have read. If we turn to it now for a moment, we shall see that it is divided into portions by the terms “I saw in the night visions.” First, we have, verses 1-6, the fact of the four great empires and a brief account of three; the next division, beginning with verses 7-12, a particular description of the fourth beast, and then a throne set up and judgment. Verse 13 begins another division, in which the kingdom is given to the Son of man. After this we have the explanation

given to Daniel by the angel, in which the condition of the saints under the beasts and particularly the last beast, and, finally under the Son of man, is given. They are beasts as having lost their intelligence towards God, not owning Him, and doing their own will in ravening power as far as they can. Of this the madness of Nebuchadnezzar was a figure.

The first three great empires are, Babylon (the head of gold); the bear, Persia (silver); the leopard, Grecian (brass). On these I do not dwell: they are past. The fourth beast, described as we have seen apart more particularly, is the Roman; you find him represented as fierce and powerful, tearing and devouring—not simple conquest, but putting all down under it, treading down what it did not devour; and where has not Western Europe sought to place its power? But, which is far more important still, we find direct antagonism to God.

Verses 7, 8: “After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots, and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.” You will remark that there is a special power here (a horn, the symbol of power or a kingdom); before it three of the kingdoms fall. Its general character is given here. We shall see the details farther on. It has eyes of man: eyes here mean intelligence, insight into things. His mouth speaks great things, saying, Who is

Lord over us? Nor is this all—that his lips are his own, as the psalm speaks; but he will not allow of God.

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down [here with the LXX and best judges we must read “set,” which falls in with the. sense indeed of the whole passage], and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.” The first three powers, you may remark, had their dominion taken away (their power was destroyed), but subsisted afterwards as subject kingdoms; whereas, when the Roman Empire is put an end to, it is destroyed utterly.

To this we must now turn. It has an importance which none of the others have, though Babylon has a special character. It was the Roman Empire that was in power when Christ was born and took part in His rejection through Pilate, and hereafter they will join Antichrist when he comes. The prophet regards till the thrones are set and the Ancient of days sits. The Roman Empire will then subsist, and, whatever its form or its apparent subversion, is not supplanted by any other beast till the judgment comes. The prophet beholds till the thrones are set and the Ancient of days sits. This is an important element in the fourth beast’s history; the consequence

is, that it is utterly destroyed when it ceases to be an empire.

Remark, too, the clear proof we have of what I drew your attention to as so important in speaking of chapter 2, namely, that the kingdom is not assumed by the Son of man till the judgment is executed. He may and will destroy the beast by His power; but it is only when it is destroyed that His own kingdom is established. It cannot be along with evil. This is the question of the expectant and suffering Jew in Psalm 94:20. It is not now, but after the judgment, that the growth of Christ's kingdom takes place. He is sitting at the right hand of God, but comes thence to take the kingdom with glory and power; He is gathering in now the joint-heirs.

Next, we find here that what is brought out as the cause of this judgment is the great words of blasphemy of the little horn. There cannot be a more definite statement that the glory and kingdom of Christ is consequent on the judgment. I insist upon this, because it bears upon everything. we are treating of, and determines our whole view of the nature of Christ's kingdom. There is no change in the principle of sin, in the first Adam, but it goes on to the end. It was lawless at the beginning, breaking law when law was given, rose up against the Lord in hatred to God when He was made flesh and dwelt among us; and, Satan having throughout corrupted the church as we have seen, his power is allowed to unfold itself in the beasts, and in the last beast ripens to a head, and leads the kings of this earth to make war with the Lamb (the lawless one, the man of sin, being then openly revealed). Our portion, as we have seen, is in the Lord, nor will the fruitful power of His grace towards us cease till we shall be like Himself.

But though the kings of the earth stand up together, and the rulers take counsel together, yet God will set His King upon His holy hill of Zion. Here, however, the aspect of His power is somewhat different, He is seen as Son of man, a term of wider dominion than Son of David, in which Psalm 2 views Him; but even there the heathen are given to Him for an inheritance, and He breaks them in pieces like a potter's vessel. The difference is this, that here the kingdom is given and possessed as a dominion, in Psalm 2 it is established by judicial power.

We now come to the interpretation in which this very judgment is spoken of, some immensely important truths besides being brought out. In the prophecy nothing had been said of the saints, heavenly or earthly: here we shall find both— I do not say the church, but still heavenly saints. Indeed, when God's mind is thus given, and not merely the outward facts, the connection of these events with the saints is the principal point. Verse 17, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." The saints will do it, not the Son of man only. Verse 21, "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."

Here you will first remark the extremely important point that the Ancient of days Himself comes. For though Christ, as man, is gone to receive a kingdom and to return j yet the Son of man is the Ancient of days. So it is said in Timothy that the King of kings and the Lord of

lords would shew Christ in glory. But in the Revelation Christ comes as King of kings and Lord of lords; and I may add, in another relationship, the traits of the Ancient of days in Daniel are found in the Son of man who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks. He is there distinctly both—Son over His own house who built all things.

Another term calls for remark here—the saints of the Most High; or, as in the margin, heavenly places, which we find again in Ephesians as the place of the saints; yet it is immediately connected with the name God takes as possessor of heaven and earth. It is not here the church, but all the saints who have their dwelling in heavenly places in connection with the kingdom, yet in a state of eternal glory. God took the name of God Almighty in relationship with Abraham, of Jehovah with Israel, of Father, in grace, with us. Thus Abraham was to be perfect, walking before God Almighty: Israel was to be perfect with Jehovah their God. We are called to be perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect. We are before God as Christ; but as He is in us, we are called to display the divine nature, to be imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ loved us. But the name of Most High is the expression of God's sovereign dominion, above all that is called God, the Supreme. So, when Abraham returned from the slaughter of the kings (figure of Israel's deliverance and final victory in the latter day), Melchizedek (the figure of Christ as King and Priest, Priest upon His throne in the world to come, King of righteousness, King of peace) comes forward and blesses Abraham on the part of the Most High God possessor of heaven and earth, and blesses the Most High in Abraham's name. In our

chapter the saints have their name in connection with this; and indeed it is applied to God (with the difference then of being singular, instead of plural).

Meanwhile tribulation and trial is the portion of those on earth. The little blasphemous horn who speaks such great things makes war with the saints. This is the general character. Of course they must be down here. Those on high he can only blaspheme. I do not believe this little horn to be Antichrist; the source of persecution is ever the traditional religious power. Antichrist will be in direct association with him and urges him to it: of this hereafter. But this is the last active power of evil in the Roman Empire or beast whose names of blasphemy are on it: of this also farther on. This persecution will continue till God's power interferes. This is stated in a very important verse: he prevails till the Ancient of days came (here we see that the Son of man is the Ancient of days, for we know that the Son of man comes); and thus a total change takes place, judgment is given to the saints of the high places, and the time is come that the saints possess the kingdom. He does not say saints of the Most High here, for on earth and in blessing the earthly saints will possess the kingdom, as in Matthew 25; but judgment is given only to the saints of the Most High. The Ancient of days then comes, judgment is given to the heavenly saints (compare Revelation 20:4, where we read that judgment was given unto them, and they live and reign with Christ a thousand years), and the saints possess the kingdom.

When will Christians learn their place? He is never called our King, but He is the King of the nations, of the world. We reign with Him. Nothing is so hard as to get the saints to accept the place they have in Christ—to

know that in Him, through the price of His own most precious blood, they are one with Him in God's sight and purpose now, and (after having been caught up to Him in the clouds, as we have already seen in a previous lecture) will come with Him when He comes to judge the nations.

But I pursue the explanation. Verse 24, "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise, and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Most High, the first time if is mentioned here, is God Himself. "Times and laws" refer to Jews entirely; the words are terms which refer to their statutes and ordinances. These (not the saints) are given into his hands. God never gives His saints into their enemies' hands, though He may use these as a rod.

When that time comes, the beast at first makes his covenant with Israel, according to Daniel 9:27—first joins with them, then breaks with them, and makes the sacrifice and oblation to cease. All the Jewish order which had been set up in pride will be completely upset, as in Isaiah 18: "They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them." They are brought into such trouble as never was since there was a nation, no, nor ever will be. It is the time, times, and half a time—the great tribulation. The verse gives in few words, but precisely, the state of things when the little

horn is wearing out the saints of God.64 Satan will be cast out of heaven and have come down, as we have seen, in great rage, having but a short time. Before that period everything is given into the power of the beast. Then the Lord, the Ancient of days, who is come, takes all into His hands. “A short work will the Lord make upon the earth.” For the judgment shall sit; the kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High—that is, to the Jewish people, now brought into connection with the rule of heaven, and secured by it.

In order to get that clear a little, we turn to the Revelation, for there we find the history of this beast unfolded in chapter 13. I shall refer to it fully farther on; here, only to notice its character and what it is. It is the Roman beast, with seven heads and ten horns. It receives its power from the dragon, blasphemes God and those in heaven, and makes war with the saints. It is ministered to spiritually by the deceitful power of Satan. It is the instrument of Satan’s power in the earth when he is cast out of heaven. Already, as the dragon, the Romans had joined in rejecting Christ. The Roman beast is the only one which has done it in the person of Pilate. But then Christ owned the power as of God, as it was. He said “Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above” (John 19:11), though Satan’s influence, as prince of this world, was guiding the use of that power. Then judgment was on one side, perfect righteousness on the other. When Christ comes again, judgment will return to righteousness. They will be reconciled in one, as it is in Psalm 94: “The Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. But judgment shall return unto righteousness, and all the upright in heart

shall follow it." Till then the saints must not expect it. God may hold the reins and control to His own purposes the powers that be whom He has ordained—may give thus all quietness, as we surely experience it and have to thank Him for; but we must not expect the motives of government to be righteousness as God sees it. It is the time to do well, suffer for it, and take it patiently, as Jesus did; and when God looses the reins to evil, when Satan is come to the earth, then the full true character of evil power from Satan will be manifested. "The dragon gave him his power, and his seat and great authority." Rev. 13:2. Such is the Roman beast in its final state during the time, times, and half a time.

The distinct and definite place and character of this period become as plain as possible if we consult the end of Daniel 9. The prophet receives from the heavenly messenger the assurance that the Jews will be restored. "Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times: and after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off and shall have nothing," as in margin; "not 'for himself'" is not the sense. "And he shall confirm covenant with the many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." First, seven weeks, during which time Jerusalem is rebuilt, then sixty-two weeks—making sixty-nine weeks—Messiah was cut off; but there was a week or part of one left. After the close of the sixty-ninth week Messiah was cut off, and He took nothing. Thereupon the Jewish nation, instead of being restored, was completely

subverted. So we find in Luke, “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.”

The last week thus remains. In the first half indeed Messiah was there, but rejected by the nation and owned only by the remnant. At the end Antichrist is owned by the nation, rejected by the remnant. The beast makes a covenant with the Jews for that week, but breaks it in the midst of the week, the half-week remains unaccomplished. You get then three and a half years that remain to be accomplished, when abominations (i.e., idolatry) will overspread the Jewish people, the times and laws will be changed. At that very time Satan is come down (in chapter 12 of Revelation), and the woman, the true remnant in Jerusalem, flees into the wilderness for a time, times, and half a time. This is Daniel’s half-week. You get it thus perfectly clear. The remnant owned Christ, but the Jews did not. You get the sixty-nine weeks, and then a long parenthesis in which Christ is set aside and the Jews on the earth, “desolations being determined,” which goes on until the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled. During this period the church, the heavenly thing, is called.

Thus the time we are in is not reckoned at all. So the prophets (who do not speak of the times of the Gentiles as Daniel does) pass it over altogether and connect Christ’s second coming to earth with His first. We have a very remarkable proof of this from the Lord Himself, when quoting from Isaiah 61: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the

captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The prophet adds, "and the day of vengeance of our God." This Christ does not read, though in the same sentence, but stops short in the midst of a sentence, when He had read as far as "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord," and then ceased. "He closed the book, and sat down," because the remaining part of the prophecy extended beyond the period in which they then were, and in which we still are, to a time which is yet to come —the time of vengeance of the Lord.

All this time the interval in the midst of Daniel's week runs on without being counted. We do not count by time in heaven, and this is the time of the heavenly calling. This is evident from the passage in Daniel 9, for the weeks go on to sixty-nine; then all is vague to the one week at the end; but as soon as ever God takes the Jews up again, Daniel's week begins again. If you apply therefore the time, times, and half a time, or the forty-two months, or the twelve hundred and sixty days (which are precisely the same time, three hundred and sixty days being counted to a year, and the five intercalary days or next days being left out), to the intervening epoch, you are necessarily on false ground. I believe there is an analogy, as there are many Antichrists though they are not the Antichrist, proving in a moral sense we have been in the last days since the apostle's time. But the moment you come to be precise, it all falls to the ground, although there is an analogy. The counting of time belongs entirely to the Jews, and the three years and a half begin to run when they are again on the scene, when Satan has been cast down, and

the beast has assumed a diabolical character—is come up out of the abyss.

If you take Revelation 13 you get the details of this beast. “And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority” (v. 2). There I get the direct authority of Satan. The saints of the Most High did not take the kingdom then: we shall be caught up and be entirely out of the way of that power of evil. “And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast” (v. 3). I do not doubt that we get here the imperial head once destroyed but now revived. “And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?” (v. 4). That is, the direct power of Satan, as dominant, is publicly owned, and the Roman Imperial beast thus restored carries all the world enthusiastically after it. “And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven” (v. 5, 6). Mark here, he cannot touch them in heaven, but he blasphemes them. Satan had been cast out, he was no longer an accuser, and those above he can only blaspheme. There will be some who will have a place in heaven, and whose hearts are weaned from earth, whom he will injure. Those whom he can hurt and kill will be taken up, or they would have lost earthly blessings by

their faithfulness, and not get heavenly ones. Such there will be, who refuse to worship him. But this is a detail into which I do not enter here, as our subject is the Gentile powers and their judgment. But “all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain” (verse 8—for such I have no doubt is the true force of the passage). Complete power (only God preserves a remnant) is in the hands of Satan and his instruments.

But, connected with this, we have now another power coming out of the earth. “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.” In this, I have no doubt, we have the Antichrist, or false Messiah, the direct exercise of Satan’s falsehood on earth; he is not a priest, or anti-priest, here; that he exercised in heaven. He is a false prophet (compare chap. 19:20), and he has two horns like a lamb. Horns are the power of a kingdom; and he sets up to have that like the Lamb. He pretends to the power of Messiah’s kingdom and to be the hoped for king; but when his voice was heard, it was evidently Satan’s. Antichrist denies the Father and the Son (i.e., Christianity); he openly denies its truths, and he openly denies that Jesus is the Christ; the first, so to speak, the Jewish form of Christianity, though ever, of course true, but what a Jew was and will be called on to own. “And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” (v. 12, 13).

How solemn this, as the power of delusion, remark. It was the proof Elijah gave that Jehovah was the true God, not Baal. Here this active power of Satan is shewing by the same sign that his witness is to be received, and that they are to own the beast and worship him, and they are so given up that they do believe the lie. We have seen elsewhere that he did falsely what Christ did to prove His mission. He leads them thus further to open denial of Christ, denies Christianity altogether, and says he is Christ himself; but, at the same time, leads them by these means into idolatry, and to make an image to the restored beast, “and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live: and he had power to give [not life, none can do that but God, but] breath unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads” (v. 14-16): that is, he forces them to be his avowed slaves, and make an open profession of his service.

In sum, we have a second beast, using diabolical spiritual energy, and playing into the hands of the beast who held his throne from Satan. You get a kind of trinity of evil and resurrection. The dragon gives the throne to the beast, as the Father to Christ; and the second beast exercises in spiritual energy the power of the first beast in his presence, as the Holy Ghost with Christ. This is the fruit of the falling away—the apostasy of Christianity.

So the first beast was slain and his deadly wound is healed.

In chapter 17 we have other aspects of the beast, or Gentile power. The empire is given, but it will ascend out of the bottomless pit, become definitely diabolical, and go into perdition. “And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings [forms of power], five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come, and when he cometh he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition” (v. 9-11). That is, five forms of government were fallen in the apostle’s time; and one was the imperial; a sixth was to come and abide a short time; and the last, who is of the seven, as a form I suppose imperial, but is an eighth. In this last form he comes out of the bottomless pit—as a diabolical character. It will be a Roman emperor; he is the eighth head, and is the beast (that is, concentrates all the power in his own person). After him the world, save only the elect, will go, seeing the long-lost form of power revived in his eighth head. It is Rome; for the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits: of her anon. But another important element is added, “And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast” (v. 12).

“One hour with the beast”—mark this, because it is the definite evidence that it had not been going on since the fall of the Roman Empire through the inroad of the northern nations. Those nations broke up, and, for the time, destroyed the beast —gave it its deadly wound. These receive power one hour with the beast: therefore

the beast must come up again. It existed at the first without these kings. Then these kings existed without it, and you have the ten kings without the beast. At the end you get the ten kings with the beast. Men form schemes; but the moment I get scripture, I can surely say we have not the beast in this form yet. What is presented here is subsisting kingdoms, but kingdoms which have given their power, without ceasing to be kingdoms, to one head, who leads all as a whole. “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” This beast, with his subordinate kingdoms, rises up in open hostility against the authority of Christ; while Christ comes with His armies to judge and destroy them all. God’s mighty ones come down, the saints come with Christ. “And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire” (v. 15, 16).

This introduces us to the judgment of Babylon, of Rome, of the great whore, the mother of harlots and abominations. We see, not a spiritual change, but her utter destruction by the beast and the ten kings—the ruin of priestcraft. They pull it all to pieces and devour its wealth and destroy it utterly, wearied with its dominion and falseness. It had deserved it. But it is not the power of good. “For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.” It is a perfect riddle how people who profess to receive the

Scripture have invented all sorts of notions as to the course of events connected with Christianity in this world. The moment I come to Scripture, they are all gone. Men may talk as they like about the steady growth of religion in the world, and the way in which God's word will remove the power of evil from it. It is directly stated, that when the beast and the horns destroy the corrupt power which had long ruled them and made the nations drunk with her fornications, they give their kingdom to the beast.

You will find at the end of chapter 19 God's dealings with the beast (v. 14-20), "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun: and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These

both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.” And the false prophet, which is the second beast. Verse 21, “And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth, and all the fowls were filled with their flesh” —a strong figure, drawn from Ezekiel, of judgment and destruction. There we see that power has come, not the influence of the word, whether law or gospel; but power has come in which puts down evil power.

In chapter 20 we have a full development of what we read in Daniel 7. We get in the Revelation the history of the last beast more fully developed (that is, of the Roman Empire, which had already rejected Christ when on earth in conjunction with the Jews). Consequent on the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God, the Jews being set aside as a nation, the church was formed. She does not belong to the world, but is the bride of Christ in heavenly places. Then when the church is caught up, the beast which seemed to have been destroyed is found in a new form—still as such—its deadly wound being healed; and as he had joined in rejecting Christ, he is now in the closest connection with Antichrist. At the first he deals with the Jews, makes a covenant with them, but in the last half week of Daniel turns against them, persecutes them, changes times and laws, makes the sacrifice and oblation to cease. The king, the Antichrist, establishes idolatry, and divides their land. You read his character in this point of view in Daniel 11:36: “And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the

indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done." In a word, in Daniel, as in the part of Revelation I have referred to, is the testimony of the beast, the last form of the power which oppresses Israel when they are captive, and does so until the Lord comes and delivers, though He judges them.

Now another power, the Assyrian, comes before us, Israel's great enemy when God owns them, and who will also appear on the scene in his last form in the last days, thinking, when the beast is destroyed, to possess all, but he comes to his end. In Isaiah 10:5 we read, "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation." After giving the various instruments which God has used to chasten Israel, he comes to the last and terrible invader. That was God's indignation against the rebellious people (the indignation describing the last terrible visitation of God). Compare Isaiah 26:20, 21 with Daniel 11:36, the last words of which are also a technical expression for the short work which God will, at the end, make on the earth, as in Daniel 9:27, and this chapter—Isaiah 10:23. (Compare Isaiah 28:22.) If you look now at verse 25, you will see what will make the force of it quite clear, "For yet a very little while and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction." That is, the whole judgment of God on Israel—His indignation—is closed in the destruction of the Assyrian.

Now, beloved friends, we will turn to Isaiah 30; but before we do so, let us, just in passing, look at the passage I have referred to in chapter 28:14-16, "Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and

with hell are we at agreement, when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." That is, they made, as we have seen, a covenant with the power of evil, but to no purpose. But the remnant who trusted the Lord and counted on His promise, though not yet delivered or knowing redemption as we do, yet looking, through the testimony then given, to the Son of man, the Branch whom Jehovah had made so strong for Himself (at any rate the wise ones of Daniel and all true-hearted ones resting on such testimonies as this and Isaiah 8) did not make haste or join the Antichrist, while as to the mass, the hopes they had put in him and the beast are confounded, and the scourge of this invader flows through. Afterwards at the end, as we see in the following chapter (29), it is exactly the opposite (v. 4-7); the enemies who were ready to devour are destroyed.

Now look at the end of chapter 30, and you will find this enemy and his end: "For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod. And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it. For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king [or, as I believe, "also for the king"] it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." The grounded staff is God's decreed rod. When this is laid on the Assyrian, it is the

source of joy and triumph because of deliverance—the end of the indignation.

Turn now to Micah 5, where we shall see the connection of Christ with the judgment of the Assyrian and the subsequent blessing of Israel. Nothing so laid hold of a Rabbi I was conversing with as this passage. Verses 1-9: “Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth. And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men. And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nim-rod in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders. And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who, if he go through, both treadeth

down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off."

The rejected Christ is now to be great to the ends of the earth. He is the peace, secures the peace of Israel, when the Assyrian (their last rod whose destruction puts an end to the indignation) is in the land. He will at first tread in Israel's palaces; but at the end Messiah's power destroys him; and Israel will be as a lion among the Gentiles, though as the dew of divine blessing also. The enemies of the Lord will be cut off. He will judge fully rebellious Israel, indeed, but execute vengeance and fury upon the heathen such as they have not heard. At this time, remark, the Jews are owned, seen in their land, and judged as the people of God there.

Daniel, we have seen, is occupied with the Gentiles when Israel is in captivity, and Jerusalem and the land desolate. He brings all these powers to an end, but never takes up the consequent blessing. His subject is the times of the Gentiles.

Ezekiel does exactly the contrary. He goes, himself a captive, up to the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and goes then right over to the end, when Israel would be restored and the enemies go up against them in their land. We shall turn now to his prophecy, where you will find largely developed this other great power. Chapter 38:1, 2, "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him." The chief prince of Meshech is properly interpreted prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal;65 and then follow the names

of countries which agree with the names of those of the present day under the influence of Rosh (Russia). You will remark that, in the two preceding chapters, 36 and 37, you have the restoration of the people and divine revival of Israel. Now, when restored and quiet in the land, Gog comes up against them (chap. 38:8) to plunder and possess the land; but it is that the heathen may know Jehovah when He is sanctified in Gog before their eyes (v. 16). They will then know by His judgments that He is Jehovah (v. 23). In chapter 39 God leaves a sixth part of them, and when judgment is thus executed, God's holy name is known in the midst of His people Israel. He will not let them pollute His holy name any more, "And the heathen shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel." He then calls on all the fowls of the air to come and feast on the slaughtered victims whom He has slain for a sacrifice; so many are they that it is seven months before the land is clean. This also is the one of whom He has spoken in old times by His servants the prophets, the Assyrian of the last days, in whom, as these passages plainly shew, the indignation ceases.

Chapter 38:14-20: "Therefore, son of man prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God, In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army. And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land. It shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord God, Art thou he

of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them? And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence; and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground." Chapter 39:1-8: "Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel. And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the Lord. So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel. Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God: this is the day

whereof I have spoken." "And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward" (v. 21, 22). "Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (v. 28, 29).

I get here this other fundamental principle: When Israel is restored, then the heathen themselves—judged that it may be so—understand that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the Most High over all the earth, and submit to Him. You will see how Psalm 8 expresses this: "O Jehovah our Lord," says Israel, when Christ is set up, not simply as Son of David, according to Psalm 2, which will indeed now be accomplished, but as Son of man, "how excellent is thy name in all the earth! "This is the prayer of Psalm 67. I should multiply quotations too much were I to quote all the Psalms which speak of this. I will allude to a remarkable series—Psalms 94-100. Psalm 94 calls for judgment; Psalm 95 summons Israel to repentance; Psalm 96 the heathen are called to own Jehovah, for He is coming to judge the world in righteousness; in Psalm 97 He is actually coming in clouds; in Psalm 98 the Lord is come and has made known His salvation; in Psalm 99 He is known upon the earth again, and is sitting between the cherubim; and Psalm 100 calls on all nations to come and worship Him now that His throne is set up on earth for blessing. The cry for vengeance and

deliverance is the cry of the remnant, from the time of God's bringing back the people till His sitting on the throne of judgment. He will send deliverance by power. The throne of iniquity will not share the power with Him. Now, grace calls souls from the evil, to come to God and go to heaven, and grace characterises the Christian, though he knows vengeance will come.

I have now gone through the passages which give us the history of the beast, and a sufficient number of those which speak of the Assyrian, to have a distinct idea of these two powers, now concentrated in Western and Eastern Europe. Zechariah never speaks of the Assyrian. He belonged to the captivity of Israel, though the Jews were restored that Messiah might be presented to them. But the post-captivity prophets do not call the Jews God's people, unless speaking of their future; and the other prophets, those before the captivity, never speak of the beast as such, because Israel was owned, God's throne still there. Ezekiel, we have seen, goes over from Babylon to Israel again in the land. We have more directly to say to the beast because the time is going on in which they rule: only that in result it becomes open rebellion. There is a raising up of the beast from a seemingly fatal wound in an utterly diabolical character. God has put into the hearts of a little remnant of the Jews then to look to Him. But the nation blossoms and buds, and seems as if it were beginning a time of full prosperity in its own land. But then it is browsed and eaten down, the resort of beasts and birds of prey. These are judged and Israel is received and blessed. And if, says the apostle, the falling away of them be the riches of the Gentiles, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead to the world?

All this calls our hearts, beloved, to a far more divine apprehension that our portion is in heaven while Christ is rejected; and that, Christ having been rejected, Christians are; and that, Christ being in heaven, their conversation or citizenship is there also. No living here any more, though we pass through it as pilgrims and strangers. What I have to do is to convince the world that there is a power which delivers from it, to manifest Christ and Christ's motives in it. "If ye do well and suffer for it, and take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." The danger for the saints now is that, instead of seeing evil going on and rising up to a head against the Lord, man is thinking of improving the world and bringing in good. What is before us is, that in the last days perilous times shall come. But men are wise in their own conceits, and fancy they will do better than Christ and the apostles—not make Christians for God, but improve the earth. The testimony of God is, that the professing church and the world are both ripening up to evil, and that the Lord is coming, to receive us to Himself, and to judge the habitable earth in righteousness, and reign for its blessing, and primarily over the restored Jewish people.

59 Properly, "the patience of Christ," who is also waiting.

60 The words are quoted in the New Testament, but do not give our portion of the inheritance at all.

61 Verse 31 should be translated, "even so these have now not believed in your mercy that they might be objects of mercy." The Gentiles clearly were, but the Jews had promises; but, having rejected the grace of the gospel, they became objects of mere mercy like the

Gentiles. This calls forth the apostle's admiration of God's ways.

62 The apostle Paul quotes this to prove as a principle that God will bless the Gentiles. But the accomplishment is clearly yet to come. The smallest attention to the passage makes this clear.

63 Verse 3 should be read "Thou hast multiplied the nation, hast increased its joy; they joy, etc."

64 "The saints of the Most High" here, I do not doubt, are specially those spoken of in the last part of Revelation 20:4, who, refusing to worship the beast, will, being killed, have their place on high.

65 This translation, of the correctness of which I have no doubt, is that of the elder Lowth, some hundred and fifty years ago, before these prophetic views were mooted.

Brief Remarks On The Work Of The Rev. David Brown, D.D.,

Entitled “Christ’s Second Coming; Is It Pre-Millennial?”

I have, in the lectures delivered at Toronto, stated my views at length as to the Lord’s coming, and the divine purposes and plans in connection with that great event. I do not repeat them here, merely summing up in a sentence or two the whole scheme. But since I delivered those lectures, Dr. Brown’s “Second Advent” has been put into my hands as a kind of unanswerable text-book of those who oppose Christ’s pre-millennial advent. My object therefore here has been to shew the utter untenableness of his views, and unscriptural character of his arguments. I have been as brief as possible, answering a book of nearly five hundred pages in a not very long tract, but I do not think I have omitted anything very material. I have found difficulties greater than those he has alleged, and I believe have solved them, and by a principle Dr. B. admits, so that I have not gone into them in detail here. The direct proofs of Christ’s second advent I believe to be irrefragable for one taught of God—His advent to judge the world and bless it before the end. I have not thought it necessary to follow Dr. B. in all his comments on men’s views. It sufficed to take up those of Scripture.

Two great subjects, after our personal salvation, fill up Scripture—the government of the world; and the church, the special fruit of sovereign grace. Prophecy treats of the former, and, as Paul—who alone in the epistles speaks at all of the church or even names it66—declares, never speaks at all of the church. It was a

mystery hid in God, could not be revealed; for it was founded on the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, on the maintenance of which the Jewish system was founded.

Now the true pre-millennial view is that God's purpose is to gather together all things in heaven and earth under one head, Christ. The church is the centre after Christ of the heavenly system, the Jews of the earthly. The church is caught up, when He comes, to take her place with Him there, as are all raised saints with her; and then He comes with them to establish peace and blessing on the earth. For the world (Greek—the habitable earth) to come—to come, mark, after Christianity was set up in the world—is not subjected to angels, but to man. We have a heavenly place, nor does Christ give up His heavenly place because He takes the earth to bless it. He holds both under His power—only His agents are glorified saints, who certainly appear with Him (Col. 3), and to whom He has given His glory, that the world may know (not believe) that they are loved as He was, proving distinctly the existence of the heavenly visible glory of the saints while the world and men subsist—not the angels, though these ever minister to His glory. Such is the express testimony of Scripture. See Psalm 8, Hebrews 2. He waits at the right hand of God till the time comes for Him to take His power and reign. Psalm 110 and Hebrews 10). Such is the statement of Scripture. (See Ephesians 1 and Colossians 1.)

Now I agree with Dr. B. that this, while leaving orthodox foundations where they are, changes the whole nature and character of Christianity. Salvation remains the same, but all the thoughts and relationship of the saved

are different. “Pre-millennialism is no barren speculation —useless though true, and innocuous though false. It is a school of scripture interpretation; it impinges upon and affects some of the most commanding points of the Christian faith, and when suffered to work its unimpeded way, it stops not till it has pervaded with its own genius the entire system of one’s theology, and the whole tone of his spiritual character, constructing, I had almost said, a world of its own; so that, holding the same faith and cherishing the same fundamental hopes as other Christians, he yet sees things through a medium of his own, and finds everything instinct with the life which this doctrine has generated within him,” p. 6.67 This is thoroughly true, and shews how necessary it is, in all grace and patience, to see where the truth lies. Above all, Christ’s Person, and our being with Him, acquires special importance in the heart of him who holds it. The bride looks for the Bridegroom as a present hope; Christ is coming again to receive us to Himself, not to judge us, though we shall surely be manifested before His “Bema,” but already glorified; for we are raised in glory.

The post-millennial Christian may, nay must, love His appearing as an abstract idea; but it is no present hope: he looks to the gospel spreading and filling the whole earth (I do not say desires—that abstractedly every saint would say Amen to), and thinks it must be so. He can therefore love the appearing though it has no practical reality for him, but he could not say “We which are alive and remain” (the remainers, the apostle putting himself in the class, without fixing a day) “unto the coming of the Lord.” He could not place himself in such a class at all. He could not seek to be kept without rebuke in service till the appearing, nor say of the dead, as Paul in

Thessalonians 4, ‘Weep not, he will be brought with Jesus when He appears, for, raised or changed, we are going to meet Him.’ Such a comfort no saint thinks of now. A present hope it cannot be. It is not that he cannot morally love it (though the making the earth blessed by it he does not believe); but he must look for it across at least a thousand years, and hence (though not altogether with Dr. B., yet even he speaks of a perfect analogy) we constantly see death take the place, as an equivalent, of the Lord’s coming—a thing unknown to Scripture, blessed as death is for the saint.

But this catching up of the saints to meet the Lord in the air and be for ever with Him, and His appearing, and the day of the Lord, are all confounded by these theologians. They all abide His appearing to be judged—a senseless thing for those already centuries in heaven. Then Dr. B. says the Redeemer’s second appearing is the very pole star of the church (p. 14). It is not so at all. It is His coming to receive her to Himself, that where He is, she may be also. It is expressly revealed that when He appears, she will appear with Him. This mixture of hope with judgment leads him to quote its terror for sinners as a part of this hope. Now as no apostle speaks of the church, so no apostle speaks of its rapture, but Paul. He was minister of the church to complete the word of God. But he never confounds the appearing with the rapture. Joy of grace belongs to this last; all responsibility is referred to His appearing. The general thought of His coming runs through all as gladness and joy to saints. The class of texts which present a difficulty are those which speak in a general way of judgment. But, as Dr. B. says, the church is seen as a whole from beginning to end. This is true: and not only so; often the principle of

judgment, applied as it was to come on those then on the earth, as 2 Thessalonians 1, as the Lord says, “to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return”68 (the whole space now of one thousand years being taken as no time because the principle only was in question); this goes yet farther. Judgment is spoken of morally without reference to time or circumstances. “He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before the angels of God.” It does not speak of when. So judgment-day is used as characteristic, not as a point of time— “more tolerable for Sodom in judgment-day than for that city.” It may be a point of time. In this case I suppose it will, but it is not the point which is before the Lord. The result of judgment is given, not the circumstances of it.

Before treating of details, I would notice the way in which traditional theology obscures the truth and complicates men’s thoughts as to it. Christ is spoken of in Scripture as Prophet, Priest, and King. Nothing can be simpler. But, having got hold of these three official positions, everything must come under them. Now these titles grow from Jewish analogies, and the full gospel light is dropped by this. He is King—king to save, they say, to give life, and the like.

All this is unscriptural. He was the great Prophet on earth. He is Priest in heaven. He is in title, and will be in fact, King of Israel, and over the nations. Scripture never speaks of His being King of the church, nor of His saving in the spiritual sense of salvation as king. The whole system of thought is narrow, and, if Scripture be simply received, it is much simpler. He is Son of God, and gives life as such— quickens whom He will. He has suffered as Son of man, and will be head over all things as such. He is Advocate with the Father. He is Head of

the body, the church, His bride—the firstborn, too, among many brethren. I only notice these as examples to point out the narrowness of the system and the far greater simplicity and richness of Scripture.

I proceed to my examination of Dr. B.'s proofs. The first question Dr. B. puts on this subject of judgment, which I take first as the only one having any difficulty for my reader, shews how tradition usurps the place of Scripture. He enquires (p. 261), speaking of judging—ruling and governing being admitted to be a scriptural sense of the word, "Are these the senses in which Christ will come to judge at the great day?" Now this is the traditional assumption that the great day of judgment—the great white throne—is the great day. Now the great day is never used in Scripture for this—save in Jude as to the angels, which does not apply to the judgment of men at all—but for a terrible day on the earth; for Jacob's trouble, Jeremiah 30:7; the day of Jezreel, Hosea 1:11; again, Joel 2:11-31, quoted Acts 2:20, shewing clearly it is on earth. Those who call on the name of the Lord are saved in it (Zeph. 1:14), where it is unquestionably on the earth; Malachi 4:5, where smiting the earth is in question. Does the New Testament help us further? Jude 6: here we have the judgment of fallen angels, as to which we have no further light in Scripture. The expression is general. There is not the smallest hint that it is before the "great white throne"; but the contrary. The dead only appear there. As far as there is any intimation of scripture, it is not there; for we read (1 Cor. 6) that we are to judge angels, so that the character of the judgment is quite different; nor is it a judgment of details of conscience. The devil, not necessarily included in Jude's words, is cast into the lake

of fire, as an adversary, before the great white throne is. set up. Revelation 6:17, and 16:14, both expressly speak of a terrible day on earth. To begin with, therefore, the great day is not a general day of judgment of the dead. That thought is the fruit of tradition, not of Scripture. The dead will surely be judged; but that is not called the great day in Scripture. The terrible time of God's judgment on earth is so called. The fallen angels are reserved for it; but we judge them.

I now occupy myself with the passages. Matthew 10:32, 33: Dr. B. (p. 269) very culpably, I think, adds a passage in Mark—words certainly not spoken at the same time, but which adds "when he cometh" —which is not in Matthew 10. In Mark 8:38 there are not two classes at all; the passage merely states that, when Christ comes in glory, He will be ashamed of those ashamed of Him in His humiliation. It is the contrast of state. Matthew 10:32, 33, which refers to both classes, does not say a word of His coming. It is said, without any reference to time at all, He will confess or deny before His Father. The statement of Dr. B. is positively and totally false. He says, "Here the acknowledging of the one class, and the disowning of the other are expressly said to take place at the same time, namely, when Christ comes in His glory". This is false, and it is a disgraceful way of dealing with Scripture. When Christ's coming is spoken of, there are not two classes; when two classes are spoken of, His coming is not alluded to.

As to Revelation 21:7, 8; chap. 22:12-15, one is in the eternal state of the new heavens and new earth, and at that time Christ does not come at all. He had come at a preceding epoch, when the time of restoring grace was over, and the things which were shortly to come to pass

had come to their climax. Nor does “every man “include necessarily the coming dispensation, though there is nothing at all in pre-millennial views to hinder anyone thinking so; for, according to these and Scripture, the judicial period, as Dr. B. says, is contrasted with this present time. Christ is to judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom. This general application of judgment in contrast with the time of responsibility is universal in the Lord’s teaching, where details are not gone into at all. There is a time of responsibility; another time when actions are weighed.

Here the quotation, however, is unfortunate; for it is closed by a reference to the transfiguration, which in every one of the three gospels follows these words, as in Mark 8:38, and is declared by Peter to be an exhibition of the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the Son of man coming in His kingdom, where we have the excellent glory of the Shechinah, into which the saints enter—the Father’s house—the Lord and His saints displayed in glory on earth, and living saints witnesses of it. Hence we learn that when He speaks of rewarding every man according to his works, He refers specially to the coming in His kingdom, not to the final state, though surely the judgment will endure then.

Matthew 7:21-23. The question is of those fit, not to enter into heaven, but into the kingdom of heaven; and it speaks of their then existing dispositions, as the whole sermon on the mount does, while Christ was on the way with them. Their righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, or they could not enter, etc. Christians are in the kingdom of heaven. That is clear. All Christ adds is, that those who have made a profession, and wielded spiritual power, if not godly, will

be rejected, which is very clear, in that day—the day He judges in (the epoch being left in perfect obscurity). The truth is, the kingdom of heaven was coming in a wholly unexpected way (as shewn in chapter 13), as to which the Lord does not lift the veil here.

The virgins are still more plainly the opposite of what Dr. B. says. The Christian epoch is, as he admits, looked at as one whole, and as if no one would die, as the parables of the servant (chap. 24) and of the talents prove. But none are spoken of but Christians here—those of the kingdom of heaven —shewing that, while He tarried, all would forget His coming. They are both classes; but certainly not, as Dr. B. asserts, of every age. The judgment refers solely to Christians, real or bearing the name. It proves the contrary to what Dr. B. says, but only gives the principle and the true character of Christians: they have gone out to meet Christ; shewing how His coming was to be their present expectation and hope, what characterised them and their faithfulness—not a distant thing, but a present expectation; no thought touching on the resurrection, and the principle applicable solely to this time in connection with the coming of Christ. The discourse refers to the Jews in chapter 24:1-31; to Christians to chapter 25:31; to the nations on earth then to the end. The great white throne does not appear at all. Matthew 25 is thus made as plain as possible; it is the judgment of the nations of the earth.

Matthew 13 refers to the end of this age; and there is avowedly an age to come—a habitable world to come (Heb. 2) subjected to man. Here we find the work of Satan on earth when the good seed had been sown; it is mingled with tares, and the crop spoiled, and this must

continue so till harvest; so that a millennium is impossible till judgment comes, and the saints are in glory. First, the evil doers are gathered together on earth providentially; then the wheat taken to heaven; then the wicked are cast into hell, and the righteous are like Christ in the Father's kingdom. But this, which is the end of this age, applies only to Christendom, save so far as the explanation declares that Christ clears His kingdom as Son of man, that is, the earth; for there were the things that offended, and the field embraced the world, though it is not said all of it was sown. This parable wholly sets aside Dr. B.'s system. It is a judgment of Christendom to purge the field, when the wheat is taken to heaven and shines as the sun; when Christ does not give up the kingdom, but takes His power (left in abeyance till then).

As to John 5, "The hour is coming," Dr. B. admits, gives no argument from the word "hour." It is stated there is a resurrection to life, and a resurrection to judgment. There are "no multifarious and broken transactions" at all. There is a resurrection to life, and a resurrection to judgment quite distinct. How long apart, the passage does not say. Dr. B. admits their entirely mutually exclusive character.

Acts 17:31. Dr. B. cannot have looked at the Greek, in which this passage is a very strong proof of the falseness of his system. It is this habitable world which is judged. There are no fragmentary judgments, but there is a judgment of this "habitable world," which is not the judgment of the dead at all. Then, according to Hebrews 2, we look for a world to come, "habitable world to come."

Romans 2:5-16. Here Dr. B. has most culpably changed by leaving out, as before by adding; nor has he even noted it here. Verses 11-15 are left out, and verses 10 and 16 put together as if they were connected. The direct connection is not with verse 10; but with verse 12 (verses 13-15 being parenthetical as marked in every Bible I can lay my hand upon), so that it applies only to sinners, and teaches no general judgment day; while no one will deny that the general term “that day” may apply vaguely to all judgment. It is only in the vagueness of such language that Dr. B. has the smallest ground to stand upon. “That day” is used all through the prophets, as a Concordance will shew, to signify the judgments which are to burst forth when Messiah comes; and as His first and second comings opened out when He came, so through this present time it is used in the same general way to signify coming judgment. Yet herein revelation opens out a further vista of heavenly glory, and an age and habitable earth to come before the end. This the opppsers of the hope of the Lord’s coming seek to obliterate, and take refuge in the vague term, as the Jew does, in the one coming of Christ. “Last day” and “last days” are similarly used, and “last time,” so that John could say in his day it was “the last time.” This vagueness might cast obscurity on the subject. I have therefore examined the passages in detail: one or two remain.

The reader will see the direct arguments of Dr. B. examined in what follows:2 Corinthians 5:10, 11 is quoted. We must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ. Some have taken this to apply to believers only; I believe it applies to all, and simply believe it. We

must all give an account of ourselves to God: of the time, manner, or anything else, the passage says nothing.

1 Corinthians 4:3. Certainly the Lord will make bare the.secrets of men's hearts, of all hearts. No one doubts it. Here, however, the apostle is not thinking of the unjust, though it be most surely true of them, but of Christians judging their fellow Christians. God's praise is what they had better be looking for, man's day was little matter. Nothing can be more general than the truth referred to, however solemn.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 refers to an immediately expected coming, looking only to those on earth, and gives its character. The saints were troubled now by sinners; when Christ comes, that will not be so. The tables, as men speak, will be turned. The following chapter proves the impossibility of an intervening millennium. But this dwells on the character of the coming, and that character it will surely have. It did not concern the Thessalonians to explain the great white throne. This is sessional judgment, not the coming in power for every eye to see Him and the saints with Him. They thought the day was then: the apostle shews that the character of the day made that impossible. The wicked were to be punished then— so they will be.

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 is merely a judgment of Christian labour in a figure. It has nothing to do with the Christian's works. If even it had, they will surely be judged at Christ's coming, and each get his place accordingly. Colossians 1:23; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20, call for no remark at all, nor 1 John 2:28, which is again the workman, nor chapter 4:17.

As to Revelation 3:5; 1 Timothy 5:24, 25; Romans 14:10, 12, we have simply to believe them as they stand. They offer no difficulty nor question. 2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12 might. I have noticed it elsewhere; I only say here that it is the day in the which, etc.; and with others I am fully persuaded from other passages, it is at the end of the day. Peter (rather the Spirit of God) takes care to add that God does not count a day as we do. Into this Dr. B. does not enter. I have spoken of this and other texts further on.

I now enter on Dr. B.'s general proofs of his views. I would remark in passing, the day-star arising in their hearts is not to be waited for till the end. It was desirable for the apostolic Christians. They did well to look at the prophecies which shewed the judgment of the world, till Christ Himself, their own proper hope to receive them to Himself as His bride, became a brighter and better power in their hearts: Christ, before the day of the Lord, is the day-star; the prophecies a candle in the dark.

The writer has borrowed enormously from Millenarians, and partly admits the good they have done, but even so cannot really enter into what they say, or rather what Scripture says. Thus, he says death is a perfect analogy with the Lord's coming, as it is the saints' summons to appear before the judgment-seat. But death is not resurrection. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son, not when He was dead. When He shall appear, we shall be like Him. Surely death is gain (this too Dr. B. does not reach), for we are absent from the body and present with the Lord. But they are forced to admit the importance of the Lord's coming, and blame the opposers of it, and learn the language of

those who hold it—but they speak the language as foreigners. It is not even necessary that we should die: we shall not all sleep. Mortality can be swallowed up of life, and Paul (2 Cor. 5) was looking for this in contrast with death, and puts himself in this category (1 Thess. 4) —a thing impossible if the thousand years were to come first; and (p. 27) no confusion as to its beginning or ending, or comments on watching or waiting, can alter this. The notice of it is only throwing dust in people's eyes. Men may love His appearing who never thought of the time—perfectly true; but they could not speak as Paul did, if they put a thousand years between.

Dr. B.'s statements as to the mystery of the kingdom are entirely mistaken (pp. 34, 333). It is not said, the field was to be sown; nay, there is plain prophetic proof it would not. The kingdom title reaches over the world. There is not a word of the tree's overshadowing the world, nor of Christianity leavening the mass of human society. All these statements, which are the very pith of Dr. B.'s argument on this point, are not in Scripture. It is said Satan would spoil the crop where it was sown; this Paul looked at as a present time, and so did John, and so did Jude, and dealt with as a then immediate evil. The great tree is merely a great power in the world—Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, the Assyrian. The three measures are not all human society. Paul speaks of it as in principle, "come into all the world."

The times of the Gentiles being fulfilled was as uncertain as the Lord's coming. Men's speculations as to this are not scripture, and I believe wholly false. The measure is Daniel's seventy weeks; and sixty-nine and a half (or at any rate sixty-nine) were fulfilled in the apostle's time; when the seventieth would begin to run, no one could

nor can tell. If the apostles were to be witnesses to the end of the earth (p. 34), they gave it up; and Paul went to the Gentiles, and says it had come into all the world.

The passages Dr. B. quoted (pp. 36, 37) as to the degeneracy of the church, he admits, might be in no long time. His answer is simply his own addition to the parables. But that degeneracy is of all importance; because, if it took place according to Romans 11, the whole system would be cut off, instead of bringing in a millennium. Apostasy or falling away (2 Thess. 2) is not continuing in God's goodness. As to Acts 3:20, 21 (p. 37), the simple answer is, It is a proposal to the Jews, founded on Christ's intercession on the cross, for His present return, cut short by the chief priests.

Dr. B. quotes Luke 19 the parable of the pounds as correcting any speedy expectation of Christ (p. 39). They thought it was then and there to appear on earth. Christ teaches them it would not be, and that He must go away, and the Jews thereon refuse to have Him as king, which they did; Acts 3 and 7. If it is said in Matthew 25 that the bridegroom would tarry, the effect is not to be the spreading of the gospel, but the going to sleep of the saints; and what awoke them was the cry of His coming pressed on them. The present order of things contrasted with a then earthly kingdom was taught by the Lord; so was the delay parabolically; but then the opposite to a millennium of blessing was declared to be the effect—sleep, till they were awakened by the cry of His coming, which made it too late for those not ready to prepare. They were asleep till thus awoke. He teaches us we ought to watch; and He teaches us the church did not when He tarried, but lost the sense of His coming and fell asleep. Note, too, when it said, "My Lord delayeth

his coming," as Dr. B. does, it became worldly and hierarchical, and was treated as a hypocrite.

I do not believe the importunate widow is the church, which is never widowed, but the Jewish people, which is. The connection shews it; and Christ's coming may be expected at any time: the last days were come in the apostle's time.

Next I turn to 2 Thessalonians (p. 42). All Dr. B.'s statements are wrong. Paul insinuates nothing: he refers to false means employed to say, not that the day was at hand or imminent, but then come. The word is always used in the New Testament for 'present,' or 'come'—twice for "things present" in contrast with "things to come." The Thessalonians, excessively pressed by tribulation, were tempted to believe "the day" there—an expression always used for a time of trouble, of darkness and not of light. In chapter 1 the apostle urges it could not be the day of the Lord; for then His people would have rest, not tribulation, and their enemies the trouble; and then he urges them, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, not to be shaken in mind, as if the day were there. We are to be gathered to Christ first, and before the day of the judgment of evil comes. Next the evil must be there to be judged. The passage therefore largely confirms our thoughts, because we are to be caught up before the Lord appears to bring in the day; and events refer to the day, not to our rapture. Of all this Dr. B. is ignorant. He always confounds the day and Christ's coming for us—which, whatever the interval, are certainly distinct; for when He appears, we shall appear with Him, and thus must be with Him before.

When the twelve hundred and sixty days are made years of (save as a general possible analogy) all is false. The three times and a half are the half week of the seventy weeks of Daniel. The days are already years. There have been analogies, as there were many Antichrists (not the Antichrist); but there is no proper date but Daniel's weeks; when it begins is nowhere stated. The church is a heavenly timeless gap in the world's history, while it is said, Sit at my right hand, till—when God puts Christ's enemies under His feet, earth's history, and the Jews, and computation of time, begin again.

Chapter 4, Dr. B. insists that the mystical body is complete when Christ comes. Hence, he concludes that it must be at the utmost end of the world. The mystical body is complete: this is clear; and I fully admit it. It is exactly what makes the subject clear. His reasoning is the effect of judging new truth by old traditions. He assumes that all that are to be saved are the church, which is totally unscriptural. The church, or God's assembly, Christ's body, what He builds on earth, is solely what is His between Pentecost and His coming. There was the congregation of Israel before, the vast majority of whom were not saved at all; and before the exodus there was no congregation at all. There could not be the body before the Head was in heaven. The baptism of the Spirit, by which the one body was formed, as Scripture expressly states, took place on the day of Pentecost; and whatever the millennium is, the marriage of the Lamb takes place before it. (See Revelation 19 and 20.) 1 Corinthians 15 proves nothing good or bad. It does not even comprehend some of the church, for in the verse referred to, and up to verse 51, it speaks only

of resurrection, and thousands, it may be millions, of the church, will not die at all, but be changed.

Hence, his whole argument fails, because those that are Christ's do not comprise all, but only those that are His who are dead; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 23. I simply believe, however, that the church is complete; Scripture leaves no doubt of it. 2 Thessalonians 1:10 proves He will be admired in all them that believe, i.e., who believe the gospel. Paul speaks only of Christians, though I doubt not He will in those who believed before He came; but Paul is speaking only of Christians. All that Dr. B. says here is nothing to the purpose. So Colossians 1:22 is confined to Christians reconciled through the death of Christ, once alienated Gentiles; i.e., Christians and the gospel; though, I doubt not, from other passages, Old Testament saints come it. But against the thesis I have no objection, I accept it fully. But I deny that saints before Christ's first coming, or after His second, are part of the church. The Head of the church is Christ, once dead, exalted above every principality and power, the body [consists] of those united to Him by the Holy Ghost. Dr. B.'s efforts to get rid of Zechariah 14:5: "The Lord my God shall come, and all his saints with thee," are pitiable. They that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful. Angels will come, but these cannot be angels. Angels are not called.

I do not admit the last two chapters of Revelation to be the everlasting state (Gentiles are not to be healed then) but only chapter 21:1-8; and "as a bride adorned for her husband" is a mere description of the beauty of ornament, not the time of marriage. There is not a word of presentation to one another of Christ and the bride there, as Dr. B. states. There is a great difference:

before, she was in the heavens; now, descended, whatever follows thereon, the kingdom being given up. The quotation of Hebrews 12:23 (p. 64) is a blunder; it is not our gathering together to Him at all. Next, “the general assembly” and the “church of the firstborn” are wrongly connected. The first in Greek refers to the general assembly of all the Grecian States, and is used here for the whole heavenly host, the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly. Then, “the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven”; and besides this, there are the Old Testament saints, “the spirits of just men made perfect”; and the new covenant saints, yet another class, alluded to. The divisions of subject in the text are by “and” I leave all the reasonings of men. All Dr. B.’s argument is founded on the church’s comprising all the saved, which is wholly un-scriptural.

The difference of the millennium on earth Dr. B. has not laid hold of at all. Now there are a faithful few, Satan being the prince and god of this world, going against the stream. Then Christ will be the prince of this world, and Satan bound, and obedience will be paid to Christ’s manifested power even when men are not converted. When this obedience is not paid, excision takes place, so that all is peaceful and happy. It is a perfect government of the earth made good everywhere. When Satan is let loose and temptation comes again, those not kept by grace follow him. I have an impression that piety will decline in the millennium; but it is founded on a figure (Numbers 28 and 29), so that I do not insist on it; but the rest of what I have said is revealed. That men should fall when tempted, however sad, is nothing but what is very simple. It is the last effort of Satan. Dr. B.’s reply

(p. 73) to its being only such as have lived up to the millennium is only abuse. Besides, I have already answered it.

The assertion that His mystical body is the universal family of the redeemed, is unscriptural; all the declaration is founded on this gross and unscriptural error, that all the saved belong to the church. Before Christ's exaltation there was no Head for them to be united to, though, as Son of God, doubtless He was the source of life to them. But life is not union. The scripture expressly reveals that the church was not formed, nor the Holy Ghost who formed it given, till Christ was glorified. See John 7:39; Ephesians 2:20-23; Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13; John 1:33; Acts 1:5. Men's reasonings about it I cannot give heed to, nor the inconsistencies of men who do not at all know what the church is. Bickersteth (p. 82) has stated it justly as far as he goes. Only he talks of union with Christ as if it were something else than the church, leaning on tradition, and so lays himself open to Dr. B. Union is by the Spirit and belongs to Christ's body, the church, only. The Duke of Manchester had learned it with "Brethren."

To this, accordingly, Dr. B. gives no answer, because he has none, except that it is founded on most untenable and dangerous views of the difference of Old and New Testament dispensations. Of course, as Dr. B. is ignorant of what the church is, he cannot tell what this difference is. But he might have known that the disciples were far before the Old Testament saints, for Christ says so: yet, that it was expedient that they should lose that, in order to get the Comforter. And, to say nothing of the church, the least in the kingdom is greater than the greatest born of woman. I suppose then there is a difference.

There is no church of God under both dispensations, as Dr. B. and tradition say. If there is let it be shewn. Could Abraham say, I am united by the Holy Spirit to a Man in heaven? Is this nothing? Is it nothing to know that we are in Christ and Christ in us? This is by the Comforter. Surely they will be made perfect with us or we with them; that is, we shall have resurrection together; but God, that passage says, had reserved some better thing for us. What is that? The child then differed nothing from a servant. We have the Spirit of adoption consequent on redemption. The Old Testament saints could not even talk of flesh and spirit. This degrading the effect of known redemption, a Man at God's right hand, and the consequent coming of the Comforter, is deplorable.

And just see the maze Dr. B. gets into. "They without us could not be made perfect, that is, without Christ and the Spirit [!!!], whose proper economy ours certainly is" (pp. 86, 87). And this in a sentence which says, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us, etc. They will not be excluded from the glory; but that does not make them the church. On this, which is the whole point he has:o meet, Dr. B. has utterly broken down. But if this be so, the completing of the bride for Christ's coming, which he brings forward to disprove it, is the pregnant proof that the millennial saints are another class.

Dr. B. (p. 90) says, "united to him by faith as a man" — all this is traditional language. We are never said to be united to Christ by faith. It is wholly unscriptural. All this is unproved by Scripture. All Dr. B., wholly destitute of the word, can say is, "Who ever doubted?" I am satisfied his order of thought dates from Augustine only.

His reasoning from John 17:2, 24, is wholly without force. John never speaks of the church, but of life, of individuals—another truth equally precious. “All the elect get eternal life from Christ’s hands” —an ugly expression; but what it means is fully admitted—Will any get less, Dr. B. asks, can any get more? Now this proves distinctly only one thing: that the idea of the body and bride of Christ has never entered into Dr. B.’s mind at all. By life we are sons with the Father, Christ the firstborn among many brethren. Infinite privilege and blessing! But by union with Christ we are the body and the bride of our ascended Head, the Man Christ Jesus. The very existence of this as a distinct truth does not cross Dr. B.’s mind. See Ephesians 1.

His reasoning on Romans 8 is the only passage that affords the semblance of an argument. But it really proves the contrary; for Paul is speaking all through of the saints of the present day, now delivered from the law, their first husband, and married to Christ risen from the dead, the saints knowing the effect of Christ’s resurrection, set free by the death of Christ, God having sent forth His Son to do what the law could not do, and having, as a sacrifice for sin, in Christ condemned sin in the flesh. He is speaking of those who know it, who had received the firstfruits of the Spirit. If it be used (though as a present thing, we only are spoken of, those whom the Holy Ghost calls “we”) to prove as a consequence that the millennial saints will be finally glorified too, since they are elect: I have nothing against it. It proves nothing at all as to their state and circumstances in the millennial period, which may or may not be (as far as this goes) the same as ours. Paul is speaking of those who have the Spirit of God as come down from heaven,

consequent on redemption. Whether with that he uses general terms which, as to what is said in them, go farther, is a question whose solution does not touch the point we are upon. “Whosoever” Paul uses to bring in the Gentiles. This is spoken of those for whom Christ intercedes now, while at the right hand of God. Whether general terms apply to others, when God’s purposes are accomplished, is a question on one side of our argument. The deliverance of the creature from the bondage of corruption when we have the liberty of glory, which does not take place in the liberty of grace, proves that there will be a deliverance of the present creation system when those who have the firstfruits of the Spirit are glorified and find this deliverance themselves.

I am aware in page 11 this is said to be a new earth after its melting with fervent heat. But I ask if all being burned up with the fire of judgment (for such it is according to Peter) is not a singular deliverance of the creature into the liberty of the glory of God’s children from the bondage of corruption. I admit sufferers with Christ mean all true Christians; but what then? It does distinguish (not martyrs—they suffer for Him, but) those who live in the time of Christ’s rejection and share in it, and those who live when He reigns and do not suffer with Him at all. Those who suffer with Him will be glorified with Him; those who do not will not, but enjoy the full blessing of His reign. There is glory celestial and glory terrestrial: and this difference of a present Christ and an absent Christ is an immense one. Dr. B. calls these differences in external circumstances contrasted with inward and spiritual ones. I have already shewn that his view of the internal ones is wholly unfounded in Scripture, but Christ has too small a place in his mind

here. “Thomas, because thou hast seen, thou hast believed: blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed.” This is the stated difference. Finally the kings of the earth do not bring their glory into it, but unto it— own it as the source of power. Finally, saintship is the same thing for all; but union or membership of the body is not the portion of all saints.

Dr. B. makes a great handle of the pre-millennialists having nothing to say as to the saints of the one thousand years. They have something to say, but not more than Scripture does. That Dr. B. omits, and concludes against plain full statements because of what he says must be. The Scripture states that after the destruction of Gog and Magog—as to which Dr. B.’s statements are the wildest fancy and nothing else—there is the judgment of the dead (of which hereafter), the heavens and the earth pass away, and there is a new heaven and a new earth, and no more sea, and that then the tabernacle of God (nothing more being said of the Lamb, as being in a distinct mediatorial office) is with men, and men are His people. Now here the tabernacle, the bride, the Lamb’s wife, is distinguished from men, when the kingdom has been given up and all things made new. I am not aware, save general principles, that anything is said of the transmutation. It is not only positively said, “As the days of a tree shall be the days of my people”; but it is said “he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” Death is not yet destroyed; but I do not see why they should die during the millennium. God has told the church what is to happen to the church. He has not indulged curiosity: only we know corruption cannot inherit incorruption. This may shew that they will be changed into an incorruptible state, though the

passage speaks only of the saints of this time. Where nothing is said I respect the silence of Scripture; as I receive implicitly what is distinctly and fully revealed. God shall be all in all, the kingdom be delivered up to the Father. The tabernacle of God is with men, this Scripture tells us. Can Dr. B. tell us more? If so, let him produce the passage. His reasonings as to passages that speak of Christ's coming, we have or will examine. His telling what must be is of no avail; he must tell us what will be according to Scripture. This is very plain indeed as regards the church: we openly avow that we dare not go beyond Scripture, and are content to be silent. Scripture does say that the Lord is to be glorified in the church for ever, and that this tabernacle of God will be with men. This prophetical distinction of the church we believe. How the millennial saints are transformed, Scripture does not say; nor do we therefore pretend to know. But we will shew that the scriptures as to the Lord's coming are so plain that they cannot be set aside, as Dr. B. wishes.

We have next to deal with the cessation of the means of grace, chapters 5 and 6. Dr. B. argues that all the means of grace absolutely cease at Christ's coming: hence none can be converted after, as pre-millennialists allege (p. 100). This reasoning is singularly futile, and shews the effect of traditionary teaching as contrasted with Scripture. For if they could not be saved without our means of grace, neither could the saints before Christ. Special means of grace are to be contrasted with the work of grace. That this last is needed no Christian doubts; but to reason from this to the means is to the last degree idle. It is perfectly clear that if the Lord Jesus is manifested in glory, there must be a change as

to the means and ordinances of grace. His death and the Spirit's work remain the unchangeable way of salvation; but the forms of presenting it, of course, must be different. The word will have lost none of its value. The Old Testament is far more valuable for us than for a Jew, though in a different way. We have the divine key to connect it. "The Lord is that Spirit": the true and pure mind of the Spirit in it; not as Dr. B. says, because it was an opening out and carrying forward of the former, for the law was given by Moses, and grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The church was a mystery wholly hidden, hidden from ages and generations, hid in God. It required the breaking down of the Jewish system entirely to set it up. The middle wall of partition, required by the one to be maintained, must be broken down to allow the other to exist. Judaism had its existence by maintaining what the church had its existence by throwing down.

I have no doubt the New Testament will be the source of the deepest instruction to saints in the millennium, a door into the knowledge of the heavenlies, where they are not, and to the understanding of the infinite grace of God which led there. The direct connection between the millennium and the Old Testament is much closer than ours. It is the fulfilment of the new covenant there promised, the presence of the Messiah there foretold, and the scene of peace and blessing, of the restoring of all things of which the prophets spoke. That people cannot expect Christ when He is come, nor suffer with Him when He is reigning, needed no sagacity to discover. But I cannot, with the Old Testament saints, look in patient hope to His first coming, or the sufferings

of Christ. Have they, or the testimonies as to them, therefore lost their value?

As to the sacraments, they will not have, surely, such as we have. What then? If this proves there cannot be salvation, there could not have been among the Jews, for they had not the same; nor the patriarchs, for they had not either. All this is of a futility tedious to reply to. Ministry, in its present form, is peculiar to this, as a distinct priesthood was to the Jewish time. But a certain ministry is spoken of, at any rate, at the beginning of the millennium; otherwise its distinctive revealed character is: “They shall not say, Know the Lord.” Does Dr. B. object to this, when he says that as to the sacraments, passages so implicate the grace conveyed with the means of conveying it, that both disappear together? It is as rash as it is false to say that the communication of grace from Christ is dependent on these means. That the form is suited to the time is certain. It will be in the millennium. It was in Judaism: it is in Christendom. What then? Grace in all has effect according to the wisdom of God’s ways.

As regards the priesthood, I deny entirely that priesthood is for conversion. We have to deal with great ignorance of Scripture in all this class of theologians. Priesthood, save the finished act of sacrifice, maintains reconciled men at the height of their calling and relationship to God, in spite of the actual weakness in which they walk, or restores them to the enjoyment of it. But it supposes man in relationship with God. Our place is in heaven, our priest is there. In the millennium, Christ will be a Priest upon His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between Him and Jehovah. It is another order of priesthood suited to the time. Christ has taken

this as to the power of an endless life already; but He exercises it after the pattern of Aaron in the heavenlies now, then as Melchisedec on His own throne.

The statement, that “the old order of things which Christ’s coming is to supersede (p. 114) includes not only the present means of grace but the grace itself conveyed by them,” is of a character so monstrous as to shew where Dr. B. is. It is tying up the possibility of God’s grace to the outward ordinances of the Christian system, and denying all grace before Christ’s coming, when their ordinances and means certainly did not exist. When he talks of a revelation, he forgets that Christ Himself is there revealed, and that grace so works that it will not then be said, “Know the Lord.” Those who are militant now will reign, not merely be saved. Those who, because Christ reigns and Satan is bound, are not militant may be saved, but will not reign. So utterly blind is Dr. B. to the force of this fact of his argument, that he insists that the agencies of salvation cease, and takes as a first proof Christ’s intercession. “When intercession is done, salvation is done” (p. 119), he maintains; yet he says, it stands intermediate between His first and second coming (p. 116). None, therefore, were saved before His first, if they cannot be after His second. Christ’s priesthood in heaven is confined to His being as man in the holiest. Be it so; for we have access there, boldness to enter into the holiest. While the first tabernacle had its standing, the way there was not made manifest. As I have already said, In the millennium He is Priest on His throne.

As regards the work of the Spirit (p. 119), Dr. B. equally admits that this is consequent on Christ’s exaltation. This work of the Comforter ceases at the Lord’s coming.

Now the passages he quotes shew the sending of the Comforter (p. 120), consequent on Christ's going away. Hence, if this were needed for salvation, none were saved before. He has confounded the work of the Spirit and the sending of the Comforter. This last was consequent on Christ's being glorified. All direct work on the creature is by the Holy Ghost, yea, even creation. There is no divine work in the soul but thus wrought. But this is not the sending of the Comforter. However, I do not doubt from Scripture that there will be not a sending of the Comforter, but the latter rain of the Spirit. Dr. B.'s "continued effusion" (p. 120) of the Spirit is wholly unscriptural: the Comforter came and was to abide for ever with the disciples. He acts continually and as He will. The whole reasoning is simple ignorance of Scripture, and inattention to the force even of what he himself says.

We have now to treat of the kingdom and offices of Christ, and to rescue plain Scripture statements from the garbage of theology. As regards the comments of men who mingle both, I have little to do with them; but Dr. B. is not just in his comments even on them. In the first place, the Duke of Manchester is wholly opposed in his views to nearly all the others. He holds that Christ's kingdom is now, and that He gives it up in the millennium; the others exactly the contrary. These, though there may be confusion in their views, because they mix up traditional theology with the word of God, and do not see what the church is as essentially one, are practically right. They hold that it is a kingdom now, but one of which the proper power is not in exercise, but will be in the millennium; and this is what Scripture teaches.

Speaking of Christ as prophet, priest, and king, and reducing all saving grace to these offices, is a very poor and confused way of considering the Lord's grace. The Son of God quickens whom He will, and with the Father (John 5) is by the Spirit the one source of life to whosoever receives it: He is the one only accomplisher of redemption by which any are delivered and saved. But to make Him always prophet, priest, and king for this, is theology and confusion. He is the Truth. It was by His Spirit any prophet spoke. But to say He was always prophet is only making confusion. God declares by Moses, that a Prophet should the Lord their God raise up unto them. This Peter assures Israel God had done: though all testimony of truth flowed from Him by the Spirit, He was a prophet when God raised Him up in the midst of Israel according to promise. He became a priest after He was made like to His brethren in all things. In other words, He became a man that He might be a priest. But even this, though laying the ground for it in the sacrifice of Himself as the high priest representing His people on the great day of atonement, He did not exercise, the apostle tells us, till on high in heaven. He was King in title when He became incarnate, but did not exercise His royalty.

It is not a question of the efficacy of His sacrifice reaching backward and forward in God's mind, no Christian doubts it, or rather there is no backward and forward there—nor if the love of God be the source of life. It is a question of special positions, taken in time, and which attach themselves to His manhood, and are exercised in it: Christ was a King when a man on earth. He witnessed a good confession to it before Pontius Pilate. But He did not take His kingdom; He sat on no

throne; He was accomplishing a far more important work. And after having, as necessarily faithful to promise, presented Himself to Israel, a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, He forbids His disciples to say He was the Christ (saying, “the Son of man,” a much larger title, in which He passes from Psalm 2 to Psalm 8, “must suffer”), and so, riding in on the ass, passes from that to the cross. Remark here how He shews that, in the literal interpretation of the prophecies as to the kingdom, the Jews did not deceive themselves. He is King as to His title now, but He has not taken His kingdom; He is not sitting on His own throne, but on His Father’s; and He Himself makes the difference. To him that overcometh will I give to sit down on My throne, as I have overcome, and am set down on My Father’s throne. To Him alone, the Son, it appertains in righteousness to sit on His Father’s throne. It would be blasphemy to set us there. He glorified God His Father and is glorified with Him; we with Himself when He takes the kingdom. He is gone to receive the kingdom and to return.

To say the Father’s throne is David’s throne, is nonsense. God was to raise up one of David’s seed to sit on David’s throne, and that means, they tell us, the Father’s (p. 139). Cannot a child see the perversity of such an interpretation? The royalty is not, and is never said to be, to save (p. 186 and following), unless in outward deliverance by power. If it be, let Dr. B. quote the passage. He saves, in giving life as Son of God, in redeeming by His precious blood, in the exercise of His priesthood, from weaknesses. But salvation of souls is not attributed to His royalty, nor is He King over His church. On the contrary, Scripture declares that when

He reigns, we shall reign with Him. It is in vain to use large words about it. There are those who must have Scripture testimony for what they believe. Nor does a teaching which makes the Father's throne David's throne, commend itself to those who have received their teaching from Scripture. Neither the apostles nor the Lord seek to overthrow the prophecies of the kingdom. They give something better. The Lord sanctions the expectations of His disciples when they speak of restoring the kingdom to Israel. They ask, Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? What is His answer? "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." Is that the times and the seasons for not doing it at all, or for doing it? It is impossible that a child could not see that it is to be done, but that the time was not revealed, and that the Lord gives them another work to do now. But He explicitly sanctions their expectations. So Paul declares that the restoration of Israel will be by the Redeemer going forth out of Zion. The object of the New Testament is not the kingdom in Israel; but a rejected glorified Christ and the church, and our present condition. But the prophecies of the Old Testament are expressly sanctioned. "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

When once the place of the church is seen, and its place with Christ in heavenly glory, all falls into its scriptural place, and the church itself is not reduced to an improved Judaism, as it is by these teachers. But it is important to notice here that the kingdom is not everything, but the lower part of the glory, the glory terrestrial. Moreover Scripture carefully distinguishes

Christ's headship over all things and His headship to the church. God will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, in Him, in whom we have obtained an inheritance; Eph. i. We are joint-heirs with Christ. As Son of man He is set over all the works of God's hands, His own creation. All things, the Father excepted, are put under Him. They are not yet actually so (Heb. 2), and He sits on His Father's throne till they are—till His enemies are made His footstool. They are not so yet. Thus He has not taken the exercise of His kingly power to reign, though owned of God and believers as King. But He is given to be Head over all things to the church which is His body.

But though all things are not reconciled, believers are, marking the difference between the heirs and the inheritance, see Colossians 1. He is the firstborn of every creature for He created them: there is one pre-eminence. He is the firstborn from the dead, the Head of the body, the church: there is another. God is to reconcile all things in heaven and earth by Him. "You [the saints] hath he reconciled." Thus, His universal supremacy, supremacy given to Him as man, is distinguished from His headship to the church. Compare Ephesians 1:22, and Hebrews 2:6-9, commenting on Psalm 8: see also 1 Corinthians 15:25-28.

As to the passages quoted by Dr. B. to prove His personal sitting on the throne of David now and His kingly rule, it is striking that not one speaks of His being King, or of sitting on David's throne. David had prophesied (Acts 2:25-36) that God would raise up Christ to sit on His throne, and in view of this, that His mercies might be sure, tells of His resurrection: they are sustained according to the power of that. The fact,

Christ's resurrection, Peter testifies to, and we all believe it. He then explains, not the kingdom, but the point contrasted by Christ in Acts 1:6, 7, with the kingdom as a distinct and different thing, and shews that Christ had been exalted by God the Father. Dr. B. then leaves out a material point, namely, that David was not ascended into the heavens, not a word being said of his throne or kingdom. It shews that Christ was to sit as Lord on God's right hand, according to Psalm no, when His enemies were not made His footstool, i.e., it contrasts Christ's heavenly headship with His royal power exercised against His enemies, and solemnly declares that God has thus made Jesus Lord. That is, that He has the exaltation He was to have till His enemies were made His footstool, an exaltation contrasted with the exercise of His royal power which He was to exercise when He left His Father's throne; and, this being left out, the passage is used to shew He is King in fulfilment of a previous part of the passage. Is this quite honest? Dr. B. leaves out what Peter insists on in express terms, and applies what he says to another part which is in contrast with it (p. 138).

As to Zechariah, it seems to me as plain as can be that it is the reign of Christ on His throne, not on the Father's. He is to re-establish Jerusalem blessings, for that is the question and the only question there.

As to Revelation 5:6, it is not the Father's throne nor Christ sitting on it, nor a throne of grace at all, but Elohim-Jehovah-Shaddai's throne—a throne of judgment with the Lamb in the midst of it—a throne where, if intercession be used, it brings in judgment, not the gospel—the throne, not of the kingdom indeed, but which establishes the kingdom by power. Such it must

be evident to all is the book of Revelation. Not one word of the gospel is in it save the everlasting gospel which declares that the hour of God's judgment is come. And it leads, in Dr. B.'s rapturous hallelujahs, to the conclusion that they will reign over (not on) the earth; i.e., the reign is not come, Christ is not seen building the temple of the Lord. There is nothing about a benign sway (p. 142), but judgment, ever more and more terrible, till He come to smite with a rod of iron. Is a rod of iron Dr. B.'s idea of what he would call the gospel kingdom? When Christ is king in Zion, that is His sceptre to break in pieces the nations as a potter's vessel. He that sits on the throne is carefully distinguished from the Lamb in Revelation. Nor is there a hint on the seven Spirits of God of any gospel service.

Nor is this all. Christ's dealing with the church was complete in chapters 2 and 3, and this is what is to come afterwards, "after these." The question was the opening of the book, not the gospel of salvation. The seven Spirits of God are not the description of the Holy Ghost as Comforter in the church, and the strength of gospel witness in those sent to proclaim it: of this there is not a word here.

As to the key of David, it is used figuratively as one who has a right to shut and open. But Dr. B. has forgotten that, while Christ surely exercises this power, the key of David was not in the king's hand, neither Shebna nor Eliakim was king or David's son. No Christian denies Christ is Lord; none that He has all power in heaven and in earth. But while having the personal title to be king, they say that Scripture shews He has not taken the proper power of the kingdom: of this further on. I notice now a remaining text—Isaiah 9:6, 7. A very short answer

suffices. The reader has only to consult the passage, and he will find that the increase of Christ's government is consequent on the great battle day of God's judgment.

The next quotation proves only one thing—the extreme weakness of Dr. B.'s cause, and the desperate condition he is reduced to. It is said God has glorified His Son Jesus, that is, that Christ is glorified. Dr. B. adds, Ye have killed the Prince of life. This, says he, proves His princedom. Does killing the Prince of life prove that Christ is reigning—is king? This I may leave.

Next (p. 147), a time of restoring all things of which the prophets have spoken (Acts 3:21), is spoken of, and it is said that the heavens must receive Him till then—till the time of restoring takes place, and that then He will be sent. The Jews must repent, the apostle tells them, that this time of refreshing may arrive: till then the heavens must receive Him. This proves, we are told, He must be reigning now and come to put an end to all. The prophets speak of Messiah's kingdom, and that blessed time when all, subjected to Him, shall be set in order (which, being accomplished, we learn in the New Testament that He will give up the kingdom). Till He is sent for this exercise of royal power, the heavens receive Him. He must be sent for its accomplishment. This, we are told, proves that the restoring cannot take place after He comes! The new birth of souls has nothing to do with this restoring. That has been going on from Abel, whereas this time does not come till the end of Christ's present sojourn in heaven as a man at the right hand of God, and it is the time of restoring all things spoken of by the prophets. It is really tedious to reply to such reasoning.

The quotation (p. 150) of the comment on Psalm 2 in Acts 4 by Dr. B.. as a proof Christ is now a king, is curious. Peter declares that the rulers, etc., had combined to accomplish God's counsel, that is, in the death of Christ. This, we are told, was to overthrow the gracious rule of Christ. But if this is it, He was a king ruling on earth, and they succeeded; for they did not rise up against Christ in heaven, but on earth. Not only so, but the psalm does not speak of a gracious rule, but God's mocking at men's efforts, and Christ's rule set up in Zion; and there He rules them with a rod of iron, and breaks them in pieces like a potter's vessel—a singular description of a gracious rule, and, moreover, one which the church is to possess in glory with Him when He comes, according to the promise made to the overcomers in Thyatira. As to Acts 5:29, 31, it is not said at all that Christ is a king, but Leader, nor even prince at all, but a Saviour to give repentance. Christ is called the Author of faith in Hebrews 11. A Saviour Prince is simply a false interpretation.

On Psalm no I have commented. It is the declaration that Christ is made Lord, but would not have royal power over His enemies during the present period. The passage is important. Dr. B.'s reasoning is simply from the assumption that His sitting at God's right hand is His own throne and kingdom; but that is just what he has to prove—the time, he says (p. 153), of this glorious session and enthronisation, for they are both one. My answer is, The passage is to shew that the session is to continue till His enemies are put by God under His feet, then He begins to subdue them by His own power; and when all is complete, He gives up the kingdom. Now the epistle expressly contrasts the glorification and the

putting of things under Him. But now we see not yet all things put under Him, but we see Him crowned with glory and honour. That is, though Jesus personally has the heavenly glory of a crown, the rest of the psalm is not fulfilled, is not the same thing. Therefore He has the glory, but all things are not put under Him. He sits at the right hand of God till God makes His enemies His footstool. He does not, and as to God's counsels cannot, touch them till that—the present time—is past. Indeed, Dr. B. admits it (p. 153). "He is in the attitude of tranquil expectancy till the enemies of His regal authority be made His footstool." He has royal title in the believer's eyes, but He is expecting the exercise of the power, and must till another, God, even His Father, makes His foes His foostool. Then, "He rises up to the prey" (p. 154). One thing is clear beyond all controversy (for it is the object of the passage to state it), that the time of subduing His enemies with His royal power does not come till the time of His session on the Father's throne has closed. Christ contrasts that throne with His own.

Let us add here that Mr. Gipps' distinction of the Greek eita being short, and epeita long, is a mere fable (one is "then," the other "consequent on"). The reader has only to consult 1 Corinthians 15:5, and following, and 1 Corinthians 12:28, where these words are interchanged, to see that there is not the smallest possible ground for such a notion. Eita is the common word where one is used; epeita for a euphonious succession when there are many things succeeding.

The notion of Christ "giving an account of His stewardship" of the kingdom to the Father (p. 160) is as unscriptural as it is incorrect. It is very bad indeed. That Christ remains eternally mediator (p. 162) as to His

Person, as man, I do not doubt; but official mediation is over when the kingdom is given up.

I now turn to some notices of the kingdom, which shew how it is not now His kingdom, properly speaking. He reveals to His disciples that it is a kingdom which is not one. And the Scripture is more full on this than is supposed. The kingdom of God is the general idea of the king of God's power, and the rule of God's principles. Hence, Jesus could say, "the kingdom of God is among you," "come nigh to you": for He was there. He could not then call it "the kingdom of heaven," because the kingdom was on earth, not in the heavens. This was only at hand. Matthew alone uses the expression, "kingdom of heaven." But what, when it comes, is its character? A kingdom is the government of a king over his sphere of rule. A great tree, three measures of leavened flour, a field sown with tares and wheat, and the like—these are the characters the kingdom takes, the mysteries of the kingdom; because the king took no direct rule. Secretly, He orders all things with divine power; but as the Christ He lets all go on without direct intervention of His power: so the Lord teaches in Mark. "It is as if a man should cast seed into the ground—that Christ did personally—and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how… But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Christ acted personally at the beginning, then leaves it to-spring up without interfering (though secretly ministering grace), and at the harvest acts personally again. He is sitting hid in God, though seen by faith, in the holiest during all this time.

I turn to another character of passage relating to the kingdom (p. 334). Whatever Joseph Mede's version, one thing is simply certain: that the stone never grew at all, nor exercised the smallest influence on any part of the image till it destroyed it utterly. Judgment was its first act. The kingdom of the Stone is a pure invention. Not a trace of it is in the vision or the interpretation. The first act of the stone is to smite the image in the very last divided state of it, and then it becomes a mountain which fills the whole earth. No statement could more distinctly shew that the proper kingdom of Christ does not yet exist. The language is as remarkable as Mede's is inconsistent with its tenor. Daniel sees the image on to the toes of iron and clay. He then sees till a stone is cut out without hands, which smites the image on the toes. Of course it is in the days of these kings that God sets up a kingdom; for it destroys them all in order to its setting up. They were there together, for the one destroyed the others. But the statement is distinct that the whole image, toes and all, was there before the stone, and that the first act of the stone was the destruction of the image by smiting the toes, and that there was no growth of the stone till afterwards, no action or influence before. It could not therefore be Christianity, for this had taken possession of imperial power before the toes existed at all. The toes destroyed its then existing power. To such straits is Dr. B. reduced here that he declares, "as kingdoms simply—as a mere succession of civil monarchies—the vision has nothing to do with them [!]. The mission of the church is, not to supplant, but to impregnate and pervade it [civil government] with a religious character, and render it subservient to the glory of God" (p. 340). The former, Christianity had done

before the toes existed; whether the latter, some may question.

But let the reader only consult Daniel 2 and see if it is possible more to contradict what is definitely said. They were “broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away that no place was found for them.” This is impregnating them and leaving them to subsist! If this last be Christianity, it is clear Daniel does not describe it. I do not see how the infatuation of tradition could go farther.

As to Daniel 7, Dr. B. tells us it means substantially the same (p. 342). Quite true. Taking and possessing the kingdom is the same, he says, as the stone smiting the image. It is rather the effect; but I admit it is the same epoch practically. But we are told by Dr. B., the second (the latter of these chapters) has the additional character of a judicial assize (p. 345); yet, solemn as all the imagery is, nothing more is meant than “to intimate to us how righteous will be the destruction of that wicked instrument.”69 Let us, after seeing the kind of comment Dr. B. gives us, which needs none to be made on it, remark the real character of this scene, which is analogous to that of chapter 2. The judgment sits, and the beast is destroyed and given to the burning flame, and then the kingdom is given to the Son of man. That is, the Son of man does not get His kingdom in possession till the judgment is executed. His power is exercised in the destruction of the enemy. To use the language of the Revelation, “in righteousness he judges and makes war.” Thus the adversary is destroyed and the kingdom set up.

It is urged that the Son of man comes to receive the kingdom from the Ancient of days. The remark is just; but it has been overlooked that the horn made war with the saints, and prevailed till the Ancient of days came. For Christ who comes is Jehovah; as He who is shewn by the only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords, is found, when He comes, to be (Rev. 19) King of kings and Lord of lords Himself.

I do not know why Dr. B. leaves out a part of the passage (p. 343): “He shall think to change times and laws.” This it is precedes the words, “and they shall be delivered into his hands.” It is not the saints (long as it has been so interpreted) who are delivered into his hands, but the times and laws, the regular words for the Jews’ periodical ordinances. God may allow His saints to suffer, but He never delivers them into Satan’s hands.

As to Dr. B.’s interpretation of its being ecclesiastical Rome, etc., whatever analogies there may have been, I deny wholly the application of it to Pagan or Papal Rome. Bad and horrible as this last, this Babylon, may be, she is not the beast whom she rides. The horns and the beast subsist together, which has not taken place yet, and Babylon is yet another thing.

We have come to Dr. B.’s statements as to the first resurrection. He profits by the timidity of the advocates of pre-millennialism who are shackled by conventional views. It is alleged on the authority of Mr. Birks that Revelation 20 is the only passage which speaks directly of it (p. 220): I have never quoted this as any proof of a first resurrection, till I had shewn that a common resurrection of all is wholly unknown to Scripture. But even Dr. B. is forced to admit that the resurrection of the

just is a thing wholly distinct, peculiar to believers, exclusively theirs (p. 195): only priority in time is not to be alleged. Now this of itself is all important, the time comparatively immaterial; for it refers more to the duration of the reign consequent on the resurrection of the saints. But if all Scripture, which is the case, presents the resurrection of believers as exclusively theirs, we have made an immense step: a common resurrection, a coming up as one set to judgment, is false.

Let us examine where in the distinction lies. It is exclusively of the children of God (Luke 20:35, 36): such alone are counted worthy to attain the resurrection from the dead and that world. They are raised on a different principle—by (or because of) the Spirit of God which dwells in them (Rom. 8:11)—with a different object; it is a resurrection of life in contrast with a resurrection of judgment (John 5:29)—a class whose righteousness is already wholly established and clear; it is a resurrection of the just; Luke 14:14. It is not together with the wicked in point of time; they that are Christ's only rise at His coming; 1 Cor. 15:23. The end comes afterwards, whatever the interval: the Greek signifies a distinction in time. I have already said (page 360) that the difference of eita and epeita is a mere blunder. Here is the proof—1 Corinthians 15:6. Then (eita) of the twelve; then (epeita) to above five hundred brethren; then (epeita) to James, then (eita) to all the apostles. So 1 Corinthians 12:28: first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, then (epeita) miracles, then (eita) gifts of healing. The excellent Mr. Gipps must have been singularly prejudiced by his views to make the observation. A qualm of conscience as to it, perhaps, made Dr. B. put

the passages in a note. Further, these possessors of life who rise do not come into judgment. Christ shews His power in grace in giving life: His power against the wicked in judgment, that all may honour Him; John 5:24. This resurrection is in glory, heavenly glory like Christ; 1 Cor. 15:42, 49.

Such is the teaching of Scripture as to the resurrection, without looking at the Revelation. A common resurrection is a wholly unscriptural thought—one which has flowed from the loss of the knowledge of redemption. The saints are raised, because they have life, because they are the just, because they have the Spirit dwelling in them, because they are the children of God, and are consequently raised in glory, not to come into judgment, though to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ and receive their reward, giving an account of themselves. It is late to judge a man when he is glorified, when Christ has come to receive him to Himself, that where He is the saint may be also, before the saint gives an account of himself: when he does, it is certain from Scripture he will be like the Judge (1 John 3); conformed to His image (Rom. 8); transformed into the image of His glorious body, Himself, His righteousness. (1 Cor. 1). All this is certain by positive texts of scripture, is indeed but the quotation of them. See 1 Corinthians 15; Philippians 3; 1 Corinthians 1; John 14. If the gospel is obscure, the first resurrection is obscure; and this is the case with these evangelical teachers. And if the first resurrection is not seen, the gospel is obscure. Men have to be judged after they are saved—men who have been even centuries in heaven. I insist on this point because it is a vital one.

I have not quoted Revelation. My readers will judge how far this is the only text. It teaches us one point, namely, that they who have part in this first resurrection will live and reign with Christ a thousand years. That is all. It adds the duration of the reign over the earth, which itself is amply revealed elsewhere; the duration alone is exclusively found here. Instead then of Revelation 20 being the only passage, it merely adds the length of reign over the earth to a doctrine uniformly taught in the New Testament.

As regards the expression “from among the dead,” I must beg also to differ from Dr. B. He says, If the Greek bears it out, it would have weight, but it will not bear an hour’s examination (p. 198). He never loses anything by want of boldness; but boldness, as with Peter, may bring us into a scrape it cannot bring us out of. But, whatever he may think of Greek, or whatever the force of Mr. Elliott’s silence, I affirm that Scripture never confounds resurrection of and resurrection out of the dead.

It is a very important doctrine that there is a resurrection of the dead. For a heathen that is the urgent point; it distinguishes the Pharisee and Sadducee. Martha could believe that, just as Dr. B. does: for in this point Dr. B. goes no farther than an orthodox Jew—a position he seems to dread. A resurrection “from among” or “out of the dead” is a special doctrine for a Christian, the essential character of privilege belonging to his resurrection—what makes it like Christ’s resurrection and gives it all its peculiar importance. A resurrection of the dead is as true of the wicked as of the just. A resurrection out of or from amongst the dead is a divine favour which separates the accepted ones out from among those who have entered into the place

where sin has brought us. Christ was raised from among the dead by the glory of the Father. All that is in that name and relationship was righteously and necessarily in exercise in raising Him, and is so in raising us as in Him. God's delight was in Him. He does not leave Him among the dead. In His case it could not be. He is called up out from amongst them. Is this nothing? Is it nothing that we have part in it?

I shall take the passages referred to by Dr. B. himself, and shew that this difference always has place (p. 198). Acts 24:15. Here a resurrection of the dead both just and unjust makes it impossible to say out of, and it is not found.

Acts 17:31, 32. In speaking of Christ, as proof that God will judge this habitable earth by that man, the apostle says He raised Him out of—from among—the dead. Whereas the Athenians, hearing of the resurrection of the dead, mock. The fact of the resurrection of dead people, not any particular favour shewn to Christ, was the subject of their ridicule.

1 Corinthians 15:12. Christ is preached that He rose out of, from among, the dead; the evil-taught Corinthians denied a resurrection—a resurrection of the dead, not merely a special resurrection. Such an evil would have been quite a different thing. Dr. B. denies a resurrection from among the dead. No one charges him with denying the resurrection of the dead. So by man comes the resurrection of the dead—the great fact, as death came by man. Resurrection "from among" would be wholly out of place here (p. 42); "resurrection of the dead" is its character. It is not here their being taken out from

among others, but what the resurrection is as to the change that takes place in it.

Mark 9:9, 10 is very marked. They were not to tell the vision till the Son of man was risen from among the dead. They wonder, enquiring among themselves what this rising from among the dead should mean. Now they certainly had Martha's faith, or Dr. B.'s, that men would rise in the resurrection at the last day. They were not Sadducees. They had the common faith of Jews. They were familiar with the resurrection of all; but a resurrection from among the dead—this they could not understand at all. They enquire what it should mean. Could we have a clearer proof that a resurrection from among the dead with a distinct and definite idea?

Acts 10:41 is, as others have noticed, Christ's rising from among the dead. As to Acts 13:34, it is Christ's distinctive resurrection out from among the dead to assure the mercies of David.

Acts 26:23 is of more doubtful signification, but not on this point. The translation in English cannot be sustained. I suppose it is "he first, through resurrection (of the dead) should shew light to the people, and to the nations." That is, the doctrine of resurrection was the starting point of this light to them. Hence we must have it general.

So in Romans 1:4, it is just the same. He is determined Son of God with power by resurrection, not by a special deliverance from amongst them, but by the great fact of resurrection—His own, ours, yea even that of the wicked. It is by resurrection.

Thus I have examined all the passages quoted; and they amply bear out the difference and prove it. Philippians

3, Dr. B. is obliged to admit, points unequivocally to a distinct resurrection. The word is unique, formed to express it, a resurrection out from among others. Many add another Greek preposition, but the important point here is that the apostle was willing to suffer anything to obtain this resurrection out from among others, to which he gives emphasis by putting the Greek preposition ek (if it be not repeated) to the beginning of the word itself. This resurrection he was looking for was a resurrection out from amongst. The force of the Greek word is therefore evident.

The first resurrection does not then offer a trial to the faith, as Mr. Birk says, but blessedly brightens the hope of him who trusts Scripture. He believes in the redemption which will give him a place in it, in the power which will accomplish it, if he be not here to be changed into the glory of his Master, and in the truth of His word who has promised it. He does not look to being called into judgment (though giving an account of himself to God) in a common resurrection; because he believes that he will be changed, or raised in Christ's own glory, before he can come before the judgment-seat, for the word of God tells him so.

Dr. B. is surprised at the use of Isaiah 25, and that we should apply the taking the veil of the covering off to men here in the flesh, and swallowing up death in victory to others who are raised. As to the last, Paul is he who is guilty of it in 1 Corinthians 15. He declares it is accomplished in the resurrection of the saints. Clearly it does not extend to the wicked. We have only to enquire if Isaiah 25 refers to blessing to men on the earth. This Dr. B. holds himself (p. 426). "The dark places of the earth to be irradiated by the beams of the

Sun of righteousness." For this I only ask the reader to read through the chapter and the following, or, better indeed still, to the end of chapter 28, which is incontrovertibly one prophecy, and see if there be not the most unequivocal prophecy that can possibly be of the blessing of Israel, and of the Gentiles—the whole world with them. That is the burden of the prophecy and nothing else. What is destroying the veil that is over the nations? Is it not bringing the Gentiles into the full light of blessing? The whole prophecy is clear as possibly can be. The iniquity of Jacob is purged; they are gathered one by one. He smites them only as discipline. Peace is ordained for them; the rebuke of His people will He take away from all the earth, etc., but another great event will take place at the same time— death will be swallowed up of victory. This the apostle tells us is resurrection. But if this be so (and that it is no one subject to the word will deny), all Dr. B.'s system is false, and what he denies is true. For the passage describes the filling the earth with the knowledge of the Lord; yet, if Paul is to be believed, the resurrection of the saints takes place then.

How Dr. B. can appeal to the reader of the Bible, if any one ever saw the distinction of celestial and terrestrial glory, is hard to tell. 1 Corinthians 15 plainly tells us there is this difference of glory celestial and glory terrestrial. Ephesians 1 gives, as the proper and peculiar knowledge given to the saints, that God is going to gather under one Head, Christ, all things in heaven and on earth. Colossians 1 teaches the same thing. That we shall rule over the earth is equally clearly taught. If we suffer, we shall reign with Him; and what is celebrated

in Revelation 5 is that the heavenly ones will reign over the earth.

As regards Daniel 12:2 (pp. 199, 201), it is clear that it has nothing to do with a literal resurrection, for it is said, “Many of them which sleep,” which it is impossible to apply to the resurrection. It would be a partial resurrection of wicked and saints. I applies to the land of which the Lord Jesus speaks, referring only to the Jewish people distinctly. Verse 1 refers to the great tribulation which comes on then in the land of which the Lord Jesus speaks, referring formally to this chapter; verse 2 shews that this reawakening of Judaism will extend to those lost among the Gentiles. Sleeping or dwelling in the dust is a figure of common use to express utter ruin and abasement. I am not aware that it is ever used for death, literally speaking;. I believe not. (Compare Isaiah 26:19-21 and verse 14 of the same chapter. If we take the English, Nahum 3:18.)

As regards the resurrection being necessarily continuous in John 5 (p. 203), because the quickening of souls is, if we take an hour in each to mean an epoch, there is no ground for it whatever. It is a matter of revelation. “Hour “in one case we know to have been eighteen hundred and sixty years or more. “Hour “in the other is an analogous period; but as to what is done in it, or how, is a pure matter of revelation. Souls are quickened in one period, bodies in another; at what epoch or how far successive, we must enquire from Scripture. It does not speak of a first quickening of souls, and then another; it does of bodies.

As regards the expression “dead, small and great” necessarily including all (pp. 210, 211), I reply, clearly

all the dead. But, as the beginning of the chapter had been assiduously shewing that a large and blessed class lived and reigned, it as clearly does not include those carefully stated to be alive. Dr. B.'s argument destroys his own thesis. "They that fear thy name small and great "gives that class universally. No doubt, but as evidently to the exclusion of those: who do not fear it. So "the dead, small and great" gives the dead, as he says, universally or indiscriminately (p. 212). Clearly, but to the exclusion of those who were alive: nothing is more simple. "Now, in the passage before us," are his words, "the only party to whom the 'small and great' belong, as far as appears, is 'the dead.'" Of course, hence not to the living who had been spoken of in the beginning of the chapter—not, even on his own shewing, to the living changed when Christ comes. On his principles what will he do with them?

As to reigning with Christ only a thousand years, the reason is as simple as possible—Christ gives up the kingdom at the end of this period; of course they do not reign afterwards save in the general sense of the glory. It is expressly said, they "shall reign over the earth": this being kings and priests is expressly referred to Revelation 20:6.

As to Revelation 20:4 being all exclusively a martyr scene (p. 244), I deny it. The promise to overcoming saints, and to all redeemed saints, in the Revelation is to reign with Christ. In Daniel, and in 1 Corinthians, judgment is given to all saints. This is here fulfilled. "I saw thrones, and sitters on them, and those who had been beheaded, and those who had not worshipped." These might seem to have missed all, as the Thessalonians thought in a similar case, and hence are

specially named.70 Dr. B. complains of there being none but the wicked in the last judgment. I answer, If God enters into judgment with any one, he is certainly condemned. John 5:24 carefully tells us that having everlasting life we shall not come into judgment (krisis all through the passage), but are passed from death unto life. Think of bringing Paul after living eighteen hundred years in heaven to be judged with the wicked! I repeat, we shall give an account of ourselves all; but the bringing of the saints into judgment is wholly unscriptural. Christ has put away sin for us. He is our righteousness. We shall then be like Him who is the Judge.

Dr. B. connects the expression, “rest of the dead,” Revelation 20:5, with those slain, chapter 19:21. The smallest attention to the passage shews the absurdity of this; “the rest of the dead” contrasts with some dead who had been made alive. Now these are expressly spoken of in chapter 20:4. These lived and reigned; the rest of the dead did not. The words, “rest of the dead,” cannot apply to chapter 19:21, unless some of these had been raised. I recognise fully that the end of Revelation 20:4 refers to the martyrs of chapter 6 and those they were to await (p. 246). But, save by a general analogy, which I admit in the sense in which there were many Antichrists (and such an analogy I believe exists, and is intended by the Holy Ghost), I wholly deny they are pagan and papal sufferers. The conclusion drawn from this reference is without force, because the first part of the verse takes in the whole company of saints, who, according to Paul, are to judge the world.

Dr. B. urges the difficulty that the saints judging means their being avenged, and that consequently their

individual persecutors must be raised. This is every way wrong. The judging by the saints goes much further; as is evident, they reign in judgment. But even as to avenging, it is a mistake. If they sought vengeance against their persecutors individually, it would be evil and sinful. It is not so. They are avenged on the class of the wicked, those that dwell on earth, when these are righteously judged. So the apostles on Babylon, where all the blood of the earth is found. There is no sense in the objection. Dr. B. does not believe in it. He knows it is the power of evil, and those who there wield it, which is to be judged.

As to Matthew 25 (p. 263) nothing can be simpler. There is no resurrection at all. It is a continuation from Matthew 24:31, of what follows on Christ's coming, the intermediate verses being warning to Christians. When the Lord has taken His seat on the throne of glory, having restored the Jews, He will judge the nations. It is the judgment of the quick, and of course, a final judgment. There was a judgment in war. This closes by the binding of Satan: then a sessional judgment. The saints are seen with Christ in both, Revelation 19 and 20: not so on the great white throne. There Christ does not come at all. Dr. B. says it is implied, He has just come. This is a mere invention. In Matthew 25 there are more than two classes. There are sheep, and goats, and brethren, who had been Christ's messengers to promulgate the kingdom.

As to 2 Timothy 4:1 (p. 286), when once God's ways as plainly revealed in Scripture are seen, that there is an accepted time, a time of grace, and a time of government and judgment, this passage is as simple and clear as possible. He says nothing of the when in that

latter period, but that when that kingdom comes, He will judge both quick and dead. Now He judges no man; then He will judge all. Two things may be remarked: that the living and the dead cannot be judged together. The dead —small and great—stand before God, and earth and heaven flee away before the face of Him who sits on the throne. The living are not there; the living are judged on the earth where they live, and judged as living. This judgment of the living has been quite lost sight of by the anti-millenarians. The Jews knew that much better than the judgment of the dead. Next, if the period of the kingdom had not been needed for the judgment, the apostle had not said His appearing and His kingdom. But He shall judge at His appearing and His kingdom. His appearing did not suffice to tell the truth He would teach. Nothing can be simpler or clearer. It is certain that Christ will judge the quick at His appearing. The Lord will plead with all flesh. Details are given. The majority of the Jews will be cut off in the land; Zechariah 13. Those of the ten tribes will never get into it; Ezekiel 20. The beast's armies will be destroyed, not a sixth part left of Gog's. He will send a fire on them also who dwell carelessly in the isles; He will sit, as it is stated, to judge all the heathen round about. This is at His appearing. Now when He appears, it is equally certain we appear with Him. The judgment of the dead is certainly a thousand years after we have appeared with Him, for the armies in heaven follow Him clothed in the righteousness of the saints. They that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful. Nor are judgment and war ever confounded with sessional judgment. But it is a mistake of Dr. B. to say that there is no individual judgment. The day of the appearing of the Son of man is a day like that of Lot and Noe, a sudden and sweeping

day of judgment on the earth; yet two shall be in one bed, the one taken the other left; two at one mill, the one taken and the other left. Sweeping, earthly, and sudden as it is, judging the living, yet two associated as closely as to lie in one bed, will be severed one from the other by it. It is better to give heed to Scripture than to speculate on what can be. I am perfectly aware that this is applied to the destruction of Jerusalem. Whatever analogies there may have been, it is impossible. Let any one do what the Lord tells us to do—read Daniel 12, and, Dr. B. himself being judge, he must see it is the day of judgment come. Further, take days or years, what is stated in that prophecy has had no fulfilment whatever. Further, the destruction of Jerusalem cannot be the Lord coming, in Matthew 24, for the Lord comes after the tribulation is over. I know it is said, the destruction of Jerusalem is His coming as there spoken of; but here the tribulation is over, and concludes by a subversion of all orderly authorities, and then the Son of man comes.

Luke does speak of the siege of Jerusalem, and consequently says nothing of the abomination of desolation, but does of Jerusalem being trodden down till the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. As to the generation not passing away, a reference to Deuteronomy 32:5, 20, will give the plain and sure sense of it, and that in reference to this very subject. The mere common use of the word is a class of persons, as, the generation of the wicked, not the period of a man’s life.

It is curious enough Dr. B.’s insisting that the solemnity of the scene in Matthew 25 requires one general judgment (p. 266), the setting of the throne in Daniel with the judgment set and the books open, nothing of the kind. The arbitrariness of this shews an object in

interpretation not a simple reception of the truth. Daniel 7, for Dr. B., is a mere conflict of interests, in which Christianity triumphs (p. 341, 342), religion shall be uppermost in the world (p. 438).

Dr. B. asks, in his summary (p. 288), how remnants can be spared and converted by occasion of the millennial judgments on the Antichristian nation. The answer is, Every scriptural statement of such judgment declares some will be spared, as Zechariah 13, Ezekiel 20, 38, Isaiah 66, Daniel 12, Isaiah 18, and Isaiah 26. It is expressly stated, “when thy judgments are on the earth, the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness.” That they will be the means of converting others at the beginning of that epoch has nothing I suppose wild in it. The wise will instruct many, says Daniel; the sheep had had brethren whom they had received; the everlasting gospel will be preached; and, when the Lord has appeared, messengers at least will go out to announce it to the nations who had not seen it yet. And I know of no proof that the warlike judgment is a final judgment, save as to the beast and false prophet. The sessional one as in Matthew 25 clearly is. We make the judgment of Revelation 20, that of one class only, namely, of the dead, for the simplest reason that it speaks of that class exclusively.

As to the believers in the millennium—believers have not to be judged at all in the proper sense of the word. Every knee shall bow to Christ, and every soul give an account of itself to God. The wicked will do this before the great white throne. Of the saints who have not died in the millennium, if any have, giving an account of themselves, we have no detail in Scripture.

As to the conflagration, Dr. B. says (p. 293), 2 Peter 3, Revelation 20:11; chap. 21:1, “describe a conflagration to take place when Christ appears the second time.” The simple answer is, None of them say a word of Christ’s appearing. As to Revelation, Dr. B. is rather bold to affirm such a thing, because there is a long description of Christ’s appearing the second time and the saints with Him (p. 19), and there is no other account of His coming at all in Revelation; and the passages Dr. B. cites are confessedly a thousand years after this and something more. I am aware Dr. B. explains away Christ’s coming, as King of king, and Lord of lords. But there is no other coming in Revelation. As to 2 Peter 3, there is nothing of the coming of Christ save the scoffs of the unbeliever, and then the apostle urges how everything the scoffer trusts in will be destroyed in the day of the Lord, but says nothing of His coming. And this suits the subject of Peter’s epistles. His subject, after laying the foundation of the gospel, is the government of God, and the path of the saint in connection with it; in the first epistle in favour of the saints; in. the second, as against the wicked. Hence he follows out this government to its final close, the melting of the elements with fervent heat, shewing the folly of the wicked in reckoning on the continuance of earthly things, and what the saints ought to be, seeing all earthly things were destined to be burned. He does not say that this would be at Christ’s coming, but in the day of the Lord, i.e., the time of His judgment, and so it will.

As regards the state of the millennium (part 2), Dr. B. has no apprehension of the great leading truths as to it at all; he loses himself in details, finding differences in teachers; cannot, as it is said, see the wood for the

trees. Nor does he see the force of the argument as to the subsistence of evil up to the time of Christ's coming, and the distinctness of the character of the millennium. He looks at it as a question of how many tares71 and the like (p. 325 and following). It is one of God's relationship with men, and His ways of government with them.

Up to the death of Christ man was under probation in every form—innocent, without law (promises being given to Abraham), under law, the priesthood given, royalty in Israel, imperial power among the Gentiles, prophets, and at last God's Son. As to all man failed wholly and irremediably. The mind of the flesh was found to be enmity against God. This was one great scene—the display of the relationship of God with man, when man was tried and found wanting, tried in every way, and by all God could win him by, saying, "I have yet one Son, it may be they will reverence my Son" —not only proved failure, when innocent and departing from God; but when God, in perfect grace, sought him when he had failed and where he was, irreclaimable. Man was lost, and had rejected, as far as his act went, Him that had come to save him. Before then God set up His glory publicly in the second Adam, in whom every one of the failing forms of relationship are fully and perfectly established: He calls a people to be joint-heirs with this second Adam—to be in a special place of association with Him, His bride, His body, the church, composed of children of God, conscious—through the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven—of their relationship of sons with the Father. These are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ. Their union in one body, with Christ head over all things, was a mystery hidden from ages and generations, and only now that Christ was gone up revealed to the sons of

men. God's purpose is to gather together in one all things in heaven and earth under Christ. Called to be in the same relationship to God and the Father as Christ Himself, who is gone to His Father and our Father, His God and our God; we are joint-heirs with Him of this inheritance of all things. (Compare Romans 8, Ephesians 1:11, Colossians 1) When the gathering of these is complete, Christ receives them to Himself; and then, setting aside by power, the power and reign of evil, establishes peace and order on the earth, and reduces everything into subjection (everything having been put under Him, as Man, by the Father); and, when all is subjected, delivers up the kingdom to the Father. The mediatorial kingdom of man ceases, though surely not the personal glory of Christ.

All this divine scheme is set aside by Dr. B.'s millennium, and his confounding the fact of efficient grace and salvation with the ways of God on the earth for the revelation of Himself and the instruction of men. From Adam to the end of time no one was or will be saved but by the redemption and the work of the Spirit. But this does not make promise law, nor law gospel, nor any of them God's government of the world.

Thus, promises apart, before Christ, God's way of dealing with men (after His leaving them to themselves, though not without testimony, had closed) was that of definite responsibility by a law, and man's bearing the consequences. "This do, and thou shalt live"; "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law." After redemption was accomplished, it was the revelation of sovereign grace saving the lost, Jew or Gentile, the middle wall of partition being broken down. In the age to come— for

that there is one is declared in Scripture—God's power in the government of this world will be displayed, setting aside the power of evil, according to the clearest prophecies. Now, by grace and the power of the Holy Ghost, saints make their way in patience against the prevailing power of the god and prince of this world. Then, the power of Christ will have set aside and bound down the power of evil. In all, people are saved in the same way.

But the destruction of Babylon and the marriage of the Lamb, the church being complete, are not small things in their nature, though they are not individual salvation. And it is beyond controversy that this, and the destruction of the beast by Christ's coming, and, note, the saints' coming with Him, precede the millennium; while, as I have already stated, on the setting up of the great white throne and the judgment of the dead, Christ does not come at all.

To make the working of grace and the execution of judgment and wrath on a whole system like Babylon the same, as Dr. B. does (p. 353), is really monstrous. And to call the public destruction of Christ's enemies by power, contrasted with gracious influence, carnal, is as irreverent as it is unsound. "Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; yea, when thy hand is lifted up they will not see, but they shall see and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them." Thus grace and judgment are definitely contrasted, and it is stated that it is not by grace but by judgments that righteousness will be introduced into the world. The references in this part of Dr. B.'s book to Daniel I have fully answered.

As regards Dr. B.'s views of Satan's power, I can see nothing but the same ignorance of scripture truth as to what the character of that power is. He says, If unregenerate and regenerate still continue, the doctrine which supposes a cessation of Satan's influence must be erroneous. All this is a mistake, and besides that, leaves the true question untouched. When Adam was innocent there was no distinction; he was neither, but Satan's influence was shewn. When the Lord was tempted by the devil, when his power returned to try Him after having left Him for a season, it had nothing to do with regenerate and unregenerate. Christ bound the strong man and spoiled his goods even in this world. Dr. B. confounds the state of a soul with Satan's action. When the Lord prospectively, as Dr. B. justly says, saw Satan fall from heaven, it had nothing to do with the whole conquests of his people (p. 419), but with casting out devils, the power (miracles) of the world to come when he will be wholly cast out. I have already said that the binding the strong man was first between Satan and Christ in person. When he had failed in tempting the Lord, the Lord removed here below the whole power of the enemy, as manifested wherever He met it—diseases, want, possession, death. But he had departed from Him only "for a season," because another difficulty, the carnal mind, enmity against God when He is displayed in goodness, had to be met. Hence he returns at the end. "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." Still it was Satan's hour and the power of darkness; yet that the Lord might triumph over him, accomplishing the work of redemption.

All this is not merely a conflict of interest on earth (p. 420). It is a change in the whole condition of the world,

and the relationship in which it stands with God, the world's condition. Satan was not yet cast down from heaven by power and victory in conflict carried on there. The promised Messiah present in Person had been rejected, and with wicked hands crucified and slain. Was this simply a battle between Christ's truth and the devil's lies, in the persons of their respective adherents among men? (p. 409). That battle there was, and Christ's adherents, fled, and then—God's purposes were accomplished surely, in the deepest personal humiliation of Christ, self-humiliation (blessed be God it was so!) but in which, an event to which none is parallel, took place by the public power of Satan, we can thank God—the destruction of his power in a total change of everything. And He who was humbled will be glorified, and the head of him who bruised the Lord's heel will be itself bruised.

I will now go through the passages Dr. B. refers to, to shew how monstrous his glosses are; because, once this setting aside of Satan's power by power, as contrasted with overcoming his temptations by grace, is made clear, the whole question is settled between us. In the passages referred to we shall find the proof of that judicial destruction of the public power of Satan, which Dr. B., by a fatal mistake, confounds with the victory of the heart over him by grace, when his power subsists. For this reason I do not insist on the proofs of that destruction now. The discussion of the passages will provide it.

Dr. B. first refers to Revelation 20:1-3, 7. His first objection is that it is found nowhere else: but this is a mistake. He must be aware, or ought to be, that, with the exception of Job and Zechariah, Satan is not mentioned by name in the Old Testament, save in

Chronicles 21:1, Satan provoked David to number Israel, and Psalm 109—both as an adversary. In Job we see Satan as an accuser, raising a storm to destroy Job's sons, smiting Job with diseases. He is only seen to excite lusts in urging Chaldeans and Sabeans to plunder; and in no case of lies and truth in any persons. In Zechariah he is seen in a vision resisting the high priest, as an accuser. So, in Psalm 109:6, it is a judgment on a wicked man to have Satan at his right hand.

The truth is, till the true light came, neither the opposition of flesh and Spirit nor the deceitful working of Satan formed part of the public teaching or experience of the saints. But where the coming of the Lord in the judgment of this world is spoken of (Isaiah 24), introducing the millennial state, even as Dr. B. admits, then we are told He shall punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. (Compare chapter 32:1.) I do not doubt that the flesh was at work, nor that the devil tempted and deceived them; but it is not the subject of Old Testament teaching, nor the acting of Satan's power in the world, nor is its destruction. Satan is never recognised as prince of this world, till he was able to lead the world, Jew and Gentile, against Christ. He could not, while Jehovah ruled in His personal presence in Israel; and till Messiah came, God kept up that system more or less. The rejection of Christ marked out Satan as the prince of this world, yet the rejected One was to bruise his head. This was not done by Christianity nor individuals overcoming while Satan held his power. We wrestle against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places—there where our promises are; as Israel against flesh and blood where their promises were.

The possession of the Holy Ghost and the true light has shewn us the spring and power of evil—the devil and Satan; and we see the Father opposed to the world, the Son to Satan, and the Spirit to the flesh. In Isaiah we have seen a distinct reference to the casting down of these powers on high at the renewal of the world: in the New Testament, this being his place of power, his falling from heaven—his being cast out of heaven, on which ensues a total change of governmental order, while to heaven he never returns. It is declared he shall be bruised under our feet shortly. That is, Scripture clearly contemplates the closing of the exercise of his power. The order of the setting aside of his power is stated. There was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought, and the devil fought and his angels; and the place of these last was no more found in heaven. According to Dr. B. this is Constantine.

Let us see how this hangs together. The accuser72 of the brethren is cast down. Did this cease in Constantine's time? If so, the whole condition of the Christian was changed. But no: this only means "he lost his party "at court (p. 406); and the court, I suppose, was to rejoice, and on the earth (the lower orders, says Dr. B.) woe (those who wished to be pagans: who can tell why?). He has great rage, knowing his time to be short—just twelve hundred and sixty days. But rage against whom? On this, or on what the woman is, total and convenient silence. The woman flees into the wilderness. I suppose we must hop over to Popery here. But that will not do, because those who follow this system say that commenced two or three hundred years later; and at any rate, if all is joy by the triumph of Christianity, how comes the same epoch to be the time of the woman's

flight? Was there ever a lamer interpretation, or one more calculated to bring scripture interpretation into contempt?

Is it not evident that here a display of divine power in heavenly places has cast down Satan from the place where we, it is expressly said, have to wrestle with him? While he was there, he accused the brethren; while he did, they overcame by the blood of the Lamb and their testimony. This accusation had ceased. Satan could no more enter heaven, as in Job, to do it. The dwellers in heaven could rejoice; their trial in this way was over. The rage of Satan was now to vent itself on earth. The woman, the Jewish people as God's people, became his object. Satan could be no longer an accuser. That salvation, strength, the kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ, was come, meant, we are told, that it had taken a glorious start. That it is "the progress of what had" been for centuries finding it hard, in the heat of continual persecution, to keep its ground (p. 406). Yet, strange to say, the chapter tells us that the change was to the great rage of Satan and persecution, so that the woman had to flee entirely out of the scene. Only Christianity was well at court. His being cast out to the earth is his seeking to create a party among the people (p. 407), which, note, he had before.

Dr. B. says the expulsion was brought about by the Christians overcoming by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. But the chapter states that they overcame him while he was the accuser, and in heaven in this way. His overthrow was by the exercise of power in Michael and the angelic host. In every case it is not a victory of faithfulness, but a judicial destruction of power, which brought about a new state of things. It was

not adherents to Christ's cause victorious over the influence of Satan's lies, but a judicial action of God overthrowing Satan's royal power in their favour. It is not a battle "between Christ's truth and the devil's lies in the persons of their respective adherents amongst men" (p. 409 or p. 417), "just the Christians, or Christ in them, believing men sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb undaunted in witnessing for Jesus, as become pardoned men, and ready to go as sheep to the slaughter for his name's sake." "Thus is the devil represented as cast out of the pagan world by the instrumentality of believing men." This is Michael and his angels fighting in heaven, and Satan and his angels cast out, so that he accused the brethren no more there, but persecuted them with relentless rage on the earth—the Christianising of the empire, that is! (p. 405). Afterwards, when the twelve hundred and sixty days are finished, during which the blaspheming beast had his power, the precise period of Satan being on the earth when cast out of heaven, but which is the Christianising the empire, if we are to believe Dr. B., then the beast makes war against the Lamb (the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet having gathered the kings of the earth for the final struggle). The beast is taken, and then Satan, who had raged the three years and a half, is bound in the bottomless pit. Such is the progress of the exercise of the Lord's power against Satan, not of the saints' overcoming.

But there is a statement of this book just alluded to which shews the more than absurdity of this whole system of interpretation. The coming of the kingdom and salvation of God, and the power of His Christ, is Constantine's accession to the throne, we are told.

Thereupon, says the passage, the three years and a half of Satan's great rage and the persecution of the woman begin; but this three years and a half is the time of the reign of the blasphemous beast out of the bottomless pit; so that the coming of salvation, power, and the kingdom, is, according to Dr. B.'s system, the setting up of the power of the blasphemous beast, who is worshipped, and has every one killed he can, who does not do so. Can absurdity of a system go farther?

Now take the chapter simply. The woman is the Jewish system. Satan, the prince of the power of the air, is really cast out from his place of heavenly power, where the church had to contend with him when he was the accuser of the brethren. He is victoriously expelled thence by angelic power. And he thereupon comes down to earth, but raging at his defeat and casting down, to remain yet three years and a half on earth. He then persecutes the woman—the Jewish people, faithful to God; but they are preserved by God—setting up the last blasphemous state of the Roman Empire. At the end of this period (the same as that stated in Daniel 12, to which the Lord refers in connection with Jerusalem) the Lord comes as King of kings, and Lord of lords, the persecuting beast or blasphemous empire is destroyed, and Satan bound, so as not to deceive the nations till a thousand years are over. It is not grace given to overcome his wiles, as is expressly said to be the Christian position, and that in its most advanced state as in the epistle to the Ephesians; but Satan not allowed to exercise his wiles. Power external to man, divine power, figuratively represented by an angel with a great chain, binds the adversary and hinders his attempts to deceive the nations.

It is evident that grace given to overcome is different from the putting down the power, so that it is not there to be overcome. God has taken to Him great power and reigns (Rev. n), and the worldly kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ is come. It was not come before as God's taking to Him His power and reigning. The saints were in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. Christ is now expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. Then He will trample on them. But He has not them now to trample on: He is sitting on the right hand of the Father, expecting that time. Nothing, it seems to me, can be simpler, and proved by, or rather stated from, concurrent passages from various parts of the Scripture.

The difference of interpretation arises from this: Dr. B. judges of what must be from his own notions of what ought to be; the statement I have made is taken from Scripture itself. He says (p. 411), speaking of the binding of Satan, "Has the church, in all time before, come to the help of the Lord against the mighty? and has the Lord, reversing all His former methods, come now to the help of the church against the mighty? I think not. It is Christ's doing, doubtless; but it is His doing in and by His church."

He then refers to Revelation 19:20; and says the church will do both (p. 411). I believe the church will have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air; but let that pass. The Lord does reverse His former methods. Up to this, Christ was expecting till His enemies were made His footstool. Now they are made such, and the Lord takes to Him His great power and reigns. Satan, heretofore an accuser in heaven, is now cast down; the salvation and kingdom of God is come, and the power of His Christ, and Satan is bound who before was not bound, and no

longer allowed to deceive the nations which hitherto he had done. This is a total change in the state of things. “I think not” is no answer to scriptural statement such as this.

The other passages quoted by Dr. B. hardly need a comment. He quotes 1 John 3:8-10, and pretends that no one can sin unless actuated by Satan in all the sin which he cherishes and commits (p. 399). Now that this is the case I do not deny, though most clearly lust exists, and therefore sin, without the present action of Satan. That is fundamental truth. But the apostle has given altogether another explanation of what he says (not what Dr. B. says); the reasoning plainly is, “For the devil sinneth from the beginning.” The sinner has the same character; consequently, by the universal Hebrew idiom they are called his children. There is not a word of being actuated by him in the passage. The reason given as to good is not that God actuates the saint, true as that is, but that he is born of Him—has His nature. The great subject of John in his epistle is life and nature, not the power of the Holy Ghost, which he only refers to as a proof of dwelling in God. There is no ground for what Dr. B. says at all, important as the subject is in its place and far too much forgotten.

The next is Hebrews 2:14, 15. To this I have nothing to say. Death is the last enemy to be destroyed. What then? It is not destroyed till death and hades give up their prey. But how does that hinder Satan, who has the immediate power of it, being bound for a thousand years? Christ can surely, if He see fit, cut off the wicked out of the land. He has the keys of hades and of death, and this scripture speaks of, not of the saints dying at all. These He would not cut off; Psalm 101, Isaiah 65. He

quotes Romans 16:20, alluding surely to the old promise. But it is a fatal mistake, which shewed itself in a previous passage less closely, to suppose that Satan being set aside “is equivalent to the complete destruction of all that stands in the way of our salvation.” It is a fatal lie against the truth. There is our own sinful nature besides. How it acts when temptation is not there, men may have foolishly speculated on. But Dr. B. is utterly and fundamentally wrong. It is even false to say he actuates us in hell. There is no scripture for it at all. He is the most grievously punished there—has no power. All this argument is a total failure. That sin cannot exist without Satan’s presence and tribulation, he has no ground for whatever. That they go together constantly now in us is true, not necessarily always. But there is temptation without sin being yet there, as in Adam, who fell under it, and Christ, who did not; there is temptation and sin as in our case; and there may be a sinful nature without temptation, for it certainly subsists now without it and before it. It is there already when temptation is applied to it. Dr. B. sees only a moral internal state in Satan’s power, not external power, of which scripture largely speaks. “Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means harm you.” So the cases of possession, and Job’s history to which I have referred.

He refers further to Revelation 2 (Satan’s throne being in Pergamos), and says it “certainly refers to the powerful party which Satan had in the place.” Why? A throne is not a party, and no way of expressing it, but the contrary. Satan is the prince and god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the ruler of the

darkness of this world. He has the throne. His having a party is a miserably false gloss.

I have only now to notice Dr. B.'s description of the millennium, which requires little remark, because he applies the same passages to it I should, and our controversy is as to how it is brought in (i.e., whether by Christ's coming again or not), which he does not here speak of, and we have considered it already. But I must object to this constant tendency to set aside Christ's personal glory and its display. Thus Dr. B.'s view of the millennium is founded on 1 Peter 1:11, the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow. Here he takes glories for no personal glories of Christ at all, but "the glorious results of the sufferings" (p. 424). Now that tells the tale of the system. It is one which excludes Christ's Person and personal glory, to substitute results in man for them. I love the view I have, just because it brings in Christ personally. He quotes Isaiah 11:9 (p. 425). It is diffusion of revealed truth! Isaiah says the knowledge of Jehovah (as elsewhere the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah), which is not revealed truth as known by the revelation of the Father in the Son, the Holy Ghost declaring it. Otherwise, of course, we expect the earth to be full of the knowledge of Jehovah. Isaiah 25:7: he speaks of the progress of fulfilment; the passage, of destroying a covering at a particular time. The rod of Christ's strength out of Zion is assumed to be the gospel. Why so? We have already seen it is the time of the resurrection of the saints, if Paul is to be believed. The serpent's power is to be destroyed, judgment executed on the earth. Let the reader only read Isaiah 24 and 27 and see if it be the gospel.

But a few words more precisely as to the quotation: “The rod of thy power out of Zion.” It is from Psalm no, where the time of Christ’s sitting on God’s right hand, that is, the present time of the gospel, is explicitly contrasted with the time of the rod of Christ’s power. He is to sit there till God makes His enemies His footstool, and then rule in their midst in the day of His power, the rod being sent out of Zion which had rejected Him, smiting through kings in the day of His wrath. Is that the gospel? It is easy to quote the passages to which theological tradition has given an interpretation. Reading the passages always dispels these.

Again, Dr. B. quotes Psalm 2:7; but what follows was too plain, and he omits it. It is this: “Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” Is this the gospel too? Let the reader consult the promise to Thyatira in Revelation 2, and he will see that this promise is reserved for the overcomers also, when Christ comes. Till then, Christ sits at God’s right hand, and His saints go to heaven. In Isaiah 2, also quoted, He judges among the nations, arises to shake terribly the earth; the day of the Lord of hosts is on everything exalted for judgment, so that they would hide themselves in caves of the earth. How ridiculous it is to quote this for the gospel! In Isaiah 66 the Lord comes with fire to render His anger with fury, and His rebukes with flames of fire, and pleads with all flesh, judging and destroying the wicked. This, for Dr. B., is the gospel. He is bold enough to quote Zechariah 14:9, where the Lord gathers all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, goes forth and destroys them, and His feet stand on the Mount of Olives, and then the Lord is King over all the earth. To quote this for the spread of the gospel is

infatuation. A person may say, I do not understand it; but to quote it for the gospel is presuming on carelessness or folly in the reader. The examination of the other passages would shew rather that they had nothing to do with the matter, or that they prove the contrary.

A time of peace (p. 428) it will be. But Israel will be definitely owned as God's people (Isaiah 11), which cannot be while the gospel endures—a fact which, of itself, suffices to overthrow Dr. B.'s system. Isaiah 2 I have examined. Micah 4 equally refers to Israel in the most explicit way, and judgment and vengeance on the heathen "such as they have not heard," and Christ's presence in Israel after Israel had been given up for rejecting Him. Its application to the last days is as plain as language can make it. Dr. B. says that the millennium will be distinguished by much spiritual power and glory (p. 431), and to prove it, quotes the revival at Northampton under President Edwards. He afterwards quotes Isaiah 56 and 60, both referring exclusively and expressly to Jerusalem and the Jews: the former insisting on the judgment of the Gentiles, the latter, as we have seen, of all flesh.

To quote Romans 11:26-29 is more than boldness. It is adduced as a description of the millennium, as it surely is, and declares that then there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer to turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Nor is that all. It is explicitly contrasted with the gospel, "as concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sakes." So far from Israel being brought in by the gospel, they were enemies as regards that; yet as a nation (as which they cannot possibly come into the church, where there is neither Jew nor Gentile) they are beloved for the fathers' sake—a principle which can have no place at all

in the gospel as we possess it. And in quoting Zechariah, Dr. B. is obliged to add “by faith”: “they look [by faith] on him.” What right has he to change the express text of Scripture? “Thomas, because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they who have not seen who have believed.” Hence there are those who believe not having seen, and those who believe when they see. And in Revelation we find “behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they who pierced him.” And in the passage itself (the next preceding verse), the Lord destroys the nations which come against Jerusalem (all the people of the earth being gathered together against it). It is the day of the Lord, we further read, and His feet stand on Mount Olivet. Is it not as clear as daylight in all these passages that it is a time of judgment and display of the Lord’s power, as different from the gospel as one thing can be from another?

The last character is the ascendancy of truth and righteousness on the earth (p. 437). Why not of Christ? No, this must not be. What is the proof given of that ascendancy? “I saw one like unto the Son of man.” When the judgment of the Ancient of days was set, and the beast destroyed, and his body given to the burning flame — “and he was brought near before him. And there was given to him dominion, glory, and a kingdom.” Why is Christ carefully excluded by Dr. B. from the fulfilment of this, and the thought changed into the ascendancy of truth? Christ’s personal glory they will not have. Are not all things in heaven and earth to be brought under Him as Man? Is it not the special purpose of God to put all things under man’s feet as man? to reconcile things to Himself in heaven and earth (not the infernal things, compare Phil. 2), and that contrasted with the

reconciliation of the church? (Col. 1). Not only so, but in Daniel 7 the Ancient of days comes. Temporal prosperity there will be; I need not insist on it. But if it be the life of faith still, it is only a great danger, not a blessing.

All own this happy state will end in a final rebellion when Satan is let loose. I believe there will be a decline, as I have said, but this is not Satan's being let loose. He did not deceive the nations then. He is let loose, and does it afterwards. Dr. B. tells us it cannot be an immediate change from piety to impiety—from the hypocritical form of piety to impiety it is, so as to form a complete and definite separation of the good and the evil. They are deceived and gathered together to battle, and the saints crowded into their own camp. There is no description of a decay of love, nor cry of saints, nor failure of faith as to the Son of man's coming. He does not come at all. There is not a hint of it, but a plain description of His coming a thousand years before, after the marriage of the Lamb, which Dr. B. says is not His coming. Now fire comes down from heaven and destroys them; and then, without any coming, the great white throne is set up, and the dead judged.

I have done: if Scripture is to be believed, Dr. B.'s system cannot stand. It is founded on tradition, not on the word. Difficulties of detail there may be: we may expect them. Human additions of theologians, Dr. B. may array in antagonism one to another; but no one can read the scripture with intelligence, and not see the difference between the gospel gathering the saints as Christ's joint-heirs and bride, while He is sitting on the right hand of God, and His judging this world when He takes to Him His power (God having put His enemies under His feet). These Dr. B. everywhere confounds,

mixing up the judgment of the quick with that of the dead, and making the redemption of the church uncertain by bringing it into the same judgment as the wicked; whilst the plainest statements and language of scripture are explained away, so as to leave the personal glory of Christ out of the scene, where the word of God says it will be displayed.

As much excitement has been caused by the question, as to whether Louis Napoleon is the Antichrist or not, I add that I have not the smallest doubt that he is the great agent of the formation of the Latin or ten-horned beast at present, and that his operations distinctly mark the rapid approach of the final scenes. Blessed be God! But firstly, I do not think that beast to be the Antichrist, but that a false Christ in Judea, who will minister to his power and deceive the nations, will be. Secondly, the saints will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before Antichrist is revealed. And, thirdly, the computation of dates is all unfounded. There are general analogies, I have no doubt, as there have been many Antichrists who were not the Antichrist. But the precise computation of time begins again with Daniel's last week (or, more accurately, half-week), when the abomination of desolation is placed in the holy place, and then the computation is by literal days, God's short work on the earth. In a word, exact computations are by literal days, though general statements and analogies may be by years. It is to be feared England will be dragged into the vortex of the ten kingdoms: God knows.

At any rate, for the Christian, his place, and country, his citizenship, is in heaven always. There evils will not come, nor Satan's power. Even out of the created heavens he will be cast for the power of evil to begin on

earth. We justly mourn over the progress of his delusions on earth, and how the wise men of this world are deceived by him. But he cannot touch our portion; and his progress only brings us nearer to it. “Now is your salvation nearer than when ye believed.” May we have our hearts delivered from this present evil world! I think Louis Napoleon a sign of prophetical progress towards the close; but I earnestly desire that the hearts of the saints may be in heaven, where evil or its signs cannot come. I may add that, though events have made progress, the view of the position of Louis Napoleon falls in entirely with Faber’s view of the first Napoleon, that he was the seventh head of the beast who was to continue for a short time; indeed, it was that of others too.

[End of Prophetic—vol. 4]

66 John speaks of a particular church; but elsewhere none but Paul even employs the word.

67 The numbers inclosed thus denote the pages referred to in Dr. B.’s book. New York Edition, Robert Carter, 1856.

68 It is a mistake of Dr. B.’s to suppose Matthew 25 corresponds with Luke 19. It certainly was at another time.

69 Compare remarks (p. 266) on Matthew 25, where a far less solemn description we are told, forbids its being used but for the great final judgment.

70 If the church was gone before they suffered, as I do not doubt, they would have seemed to have lost the heavenly place as too late, the earthly as being killed.

Hence the gracious Lord takes care to shew they had part in the first resurrection.

71 It is revealed that the spared ones of Israel at least, and the nations at large, are all righteous (Isaiah 60:21; Matt. 25); but it is not said of the multitudes afterwards born.

72 This cessation of the heavenly accusing power is collaterally confirmed by the fact that in chapter 13 the first beast only blasphemes those that dwell in heaven—cannot touch or injure them; and the second beast, Satan's active power, is false prophet and false king, as a lamb with two horns, but has no pretension to be an anti-priest now.

A Brief Notice Of A Tract Entitled “Remarks On The Seventh Chapter Of Daniel”

I am glad of an opportunity of taking up the subject of the following brief notice in an instance which precludes all question of personal feeling or opposition—in which my remarks must be evidently divested of it to every upright mind—the writer, on whose statement I comment, having fully, I believe, embraced a wrong doctrinal system, but having never, as far as I know, departed from Christian kindness, or given any possible occasion to myself to do so. His statement of what the church is, in his remarks on Daniel 7, distinctly shews that total and entire rejection or ignorance of its true calling, as presented in the New Testament, which characterises the system he has embraced. I take this occasion of earnestly drawing the attention of saints to it. It is as follows:—

“In Romans 9:24, we read, concerning the saints of God, ‘us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.’ In Romans 11:24, we read of ‘their own olive tree’ (Israel’s), as being that into which Gentile believers are grafted. Now I believe, that if we would give a scriptural definition of the church of God, we should say that they are Abraham’s seed. If we would define the church as it now exists upon this earth, from the time of Christ’s first coming, resurrection, and ascension, to His second coming, we should say, that they are a body of believing Jews, during the time that the nation at large is under blindness, with whom God, in sovereign and marvellous grace, has associated

believing Gentiles, making all one body, joint-heirs, etc. Thus, although on every side we see many Gentiles professing or holding the faith of Jesus, and very few Jews, we must not forget that at Pentecost the gathered company was entirely Jewish as to nation: hopes, thoughts, and glory, were opened to them beyond those of their nation: they were instructed to look upwards to a risen Messiah waiting at God's right hand, till His foes should have been made His footstool (Acts 2:33-35); they were told of blessing, while their nation was in blindness (v. 40); and they heard of judgment as necessarily preceding Israel's earthly blessing: but still they were Jews; and most gradual was the opening to them of the possibility of Gentiles sharing in the new fellowship, hopes, and glory, which they learned to be their true portion. Gentiles were one by one brought into this believing body; and thus we see the meaning of the words, 'us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.' Whatever the church on earth may seem to us now to be, it is still, as to its constituent parts, a company of Jews, partakers of grace, amongst whom God has brought in certain Gentiles."

Such is the account of the church! I trust that, at any rate, it may never be made a subject of reproach again, that the Pentecostal church is said to be Jewish. Now compare the statements of Paul's epistles, the whole of Ephesians and Colossians for example, and see if the idea of the church there given be "a company of Jews … amongst whom God has brought in certain Gentiles." Take Colossians 3:9-11: "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew,

circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all and in all." Can there be a plainer denial in terms of the statement of the writer of the tract on Daniel 7? Is it possible that anyone who had really believed this, and understood it by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, should say, "If we would define the church as it now exists upon this earth, from the time of Christ's first coming, resurrection, and ascension, to His second coming, that they are a body of believing Jews," etc.?

Nor is it merely an isolated passage in Colossians in which the opposite statement to the writer's is declared in express terms by the Holy Ghost. Ephesians 2 is a full development of the doctrine itself, connecting it with the great principles of eternal truth, the Jew being a sinner and child of wrath as well as the Gentile: and both, previously near or afar off, as it might be, as to earthly administration, were brought nigh in the true sense, and made one new man in one body, both being reconciled to God in one body by the cross. That is, not that Gentiles were brought into a company of Jews, but that Jews and Gentiles were alike brought out of the position they were previously in, into a new body in Christ, where there was neither Jew nor Greek.

But it will, perhaps, be alleged that the writer of the tract speaks of the church as it now exists on earth. Truly so: and I press attention to this circumstance, because it is the denial of the real character of the unity of the body, in which there is neither Jew nor Greek, on earth. His statement might leave it to be gathered that there would or might be such a unity in heaven, such a body there, where patriarchs, Jewish saints, and Christians would be found. It would not exclude this; but

as existing now on earth, between Christ's first coming and second, it does not enter into the definition of the church. There "they are a body of believing Jews," etc. Now this is the important point. In the system laid down in this tract, place is left for unity in heaven, such a unity, perhaps, as may include all saints from the beginning to the end of time: but as regards the period of this dispensation on earth, they are always "a body of believing Jews."

Hence, in other statements on this subject, Paul is said to speak of unity in heaven; while, on the other hand, Ephesians 2:19, "fellowship of the saints" is used as meaning the association of the New Testament saints with those of the Old already recognised. That is to say, the doctrine of the epistles to the Colossians and to the Ephesians235 (according to which there is neither Jew nor Greek, but both have been brought nigh in one new man in one body, through the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven) is excluded from all application to earth, and from special application to the time from Christ's first coming to the second. But I go farther than this; and I add, that Romans 11, which is declared to afford special instruction as to what the church is (nay, to supply the materials of scripturally defining it), does not apply to the church at236 all properly as such: so entirely has this system mistaken the teaching of the word of God on the subject. Indeed, the being Abraham's seed is only a consequence to us of our being in the church.

But first as to Romans 11. The epistle to the Romans does not treat properly of the doctrine of the church (that is, of the gathering of the assembly), but of the justification of the saints who compose it, connected

with their spiritual life; and this applies to all saints in any possible circumstances, though the strain of reasoning adapted itself of course to those in which the apostle found himself. This closes, in the full amount of the blessedness of such, in chapter 8. But the apostle's doctrine on the subject having brought out the equal admission of Jews and Gentiles, the question of the faithfulness of God to His distinctive promises to the Jews naturally arose. To meet this, in chapter 9, he alleges the sovereignty of God, and that "Abraham's seed" did not impart, by absolute descent, the possession of privilege, for that then Ishmael and Esau should have shared it (whereas, in both cases, there was an election)— in a word, that, in conferring special favours, God had not abrogated His sovereignty; and that now He was pleased, according to it, to call Gentiles as well as Jews. In chapter 10 He shews that the nation had stumbled at the stumbling-stone; and that this disobedience of Israel, and testimony to others, had been prophesied of.

The question then arises, Had God cast off His people [Israel]? No. The gifts and calling of God were never repented of. Three proofs of this are given, by which also the administration of the promises on earth is explained. First, there is an election now. Next, the fall, by which salvation came to the Gentiles, was to provoke Israel to jealousy— therefore not to cast them off. Thirdly, the Redeemer would come to Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob; when it would not be an election as now called, nor a provoking of some to jealousy by the call of the Gentiles on the fall of the nation, but all Israel (i.e., as a nation or body) would be

saved: for God’s gifts and calling were without repentance.

Now this was the order of the administration of promises on earth, and not the calling of the church, according to the mystery hidden from ages and generations, though the church came into this administration of the promises in the character of Gentiles237 in contrast with Jews in a special way. This is evident to any spiritual mind on considering the statement: but that it is so, that it is not the doctrine of the church which is here considered, is quite clear from the consideration of the following points. By the church, I mean, now, the heavenly body united to Christ on high, and manifested on earth by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

First, the Jews were natural branches, and the olive tree was their own olive tree. This clearly was not the church; no one was naturally in it. Even the unbelieving ones were in the olive tree and had to be broken off, so that they never formed part of the church gathered by faith, though they had ostensibly of the olive tree. Now unbelieving Jews formed, in no sense or way, a part of branch even of what the author of the tract describes the church to be; but they did of the olive tree; yet it was of that olive, existing long before, that the good branches continued a part. Nor, further, if they were living members of the church of God, could they be broken off. Nor are Gentiles grafted into the church in place of Jews: in the account we have of the church in Ephesians, both are brought in together into one new man. Next, the Gentiles, looked at as members of this body, could not be cut off; and still more would it be

impossible to say that the Jewish branches, broken off through unbelief, could be graffed in again.

Considered as the earthly administration of promises, nothing is more simple. The Jews, as a nation, had been the depositaries of them. Then the unbelievers were broken off, and the election continued in them with clearer and better apprehensions. Gentiles became, at the same time, the depositaries of these promises in their administration here below. This system, being unfaithful, would be cut off; and the Jews will be received again to be the depositaries of them in yet another condition, but which, note, will not then be the church either. Proofs might be multiplied from the chapter; but these must suffice for any spiritual mind. But the painful conclusion is forced upon us, that the church, by this system, is teduced to the mere earthly administration of promises, or else is excluded from the earth; and what is affirmed to be its scriptural definition entirely excludes the doctrine of Ephesians and Colossians.

This is a very serious point. It is a denial of the true scriptural doctrine of the church of God, and deprives us (unawares to the author, no doubt) of our own proper place, and blessing, and privilege, in union with Christ our exalted Head. Further, I have stated that we are Abraham's seed in consequence of being in the church. This is plainly shewn from Galatians 3, where the apostle presses that Christ is the only seed of Abraham, "and to thy seed, which is Christ." His, therefore, are the promises. If, therefore, we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed. That is, Christ having taken up alone in His own Person-all the promises, we come in, if united to Him, into the inheritance of them. We are Abraham's

seed, because we belong to the church (that is, are united to Christ as our Head). But the union of the church with Christ is much more than this.

There is another statement in this paragraph, which imports a great deal, though probably it attracts little attention; but it confirms what has been alleged of the entire exclusion of the special instruction of Paul's epistles on the doctrine of the church—I mean the following: "If we would define the church as it now exists upon this earth, from the time of Christ's first coming, resurrection, and ascension, to His second coming," etc. Now, were it merely "Christ's first coming to His second," it would not have called for remark, as expressing merely the general period. But here there is intentional precision, and the epochs are distinctly designated, "first coming, resurrection, ascension"; so that the definition of the church as it now exists is carefully applied to them all. That is, that the definition of the church,238 as it now exists, is as applicable to the disciples during Christ's ministry, after His resurrection and before His ascension, and after the last event, as it is to their state after the descent of the Holy Ghost; which last important event is wholly excluded from forming any epoch in the existence of the church. Hence, too, naturally enough, the author continues: "We should say, they are a body of believing Jews."

Now, if I take up the account given of the church in the Ephesians, is it possible to reconcile it with this? What is there described and defined as the church is a state of things impossible to exist before the death and resurrection of Christ as its basis, and the presence of the Holy Ghost as its formative and maintaining power. Any definition we could give of it according to Ephesians

supposes these two things. The Spirit of God there treats Jew and Gentile as alike children of wrath, speaks of the middle wall of partition as broken down by the cross of Jesus, the actual exaltation of Jesus above all principality and power, and we to be raised and exalted with Him, and both Jew and Gentile reconciled in one new man, in one body by the cross, and “builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit,” so that there is one body and one Spirit; and declares, consequently, that “now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places is made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.” Moreover, while (by its union with its Head as the heavenly ascended man), heavenly, it exists now upon earth, and “increaseth with the increase of God,” by “that which every joint supplieth.” It is where, as we learn in the Galatians, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, but all are one in Christ Jesus.”239 There is no single idea presented by the Holy Ghost in the account of what the church is, which is not negatived and neutralised by the statement we are considering. The Holy Ghost, come down from heaven, unites it to its glorified Head there, and thus it exists on earth; while it is heavenly, belonging to, and witnessing the character of, that place where it will be displayed in glory, and where its Head, whence it derives its being and power by the Holy Ghost, actually is.

There are two great truths dependent on this doctrine: the church united to Christ in glory accomplished hereafter; and meanwhile, as far as existing or developed on earth, the habitation of God through the Spirit. This is its calling, of which it is to walk worthy—a calling clearly impossible in its very nature, till the descent of the Holy Ghost made it such a habitation. The

truth is, the whole basis of the system here commented on is an absolute ignorance of the doctrine and calling of the church of God as given in Scripture—an ignorance not difficult to be borne with as such—we have all been in it; but, when imposed as light and truth, to the condemnation of the instructions of God's own word, it has to be met, not so much by defending what is in Scripture as if it were one's own opinion, as by exposing distinctly that the claim set up to instruct and enlighten is at best ignorance, and too often fighting against the plain and blessed truth of God.

I have not a complaint to make against the writer of this tract on Daniel 7, but everything kind and gracious to acknowledge personally in manner; but, having set himself forward here to propagate this system, his writings come under review as upholding it.

There is much, I judge, in reading the tract, unfounded; and I have seldom read so much assertion without proof; but it is not my object to comment on more than this very important passage.

Reaching round the sea more or less by conquests, has nothing whatever to do with rising out of the sea. The whole idea is a plain fallacy.

I see no similarity in the Son of man coming to the Ancient of days, and the rod of His power being sent out of Zion, though one may depend on the other.

No reason is given why we are to avoid considering verses 13 and 14, as subsequent to the destruction of the beast. It may be true; and I by no means resist it; but all is without proof. Bringing to the Ancient of days to receive the kingdom is not, as is recognised, His coming in clouds; nor is there any proof that it immediately

precedes. The statement that the making His foes His footstool is accomplished by God before they are set as a footstool under Christ's feet, which takes place by the investiture, is one which has not the smallest possible pretence of Scripture to warrant it, and is, indeed, contrary to the evident force of Psalm no, which does not speak at all of accomplishing the making the foes a footstool, and then subsequently putting them under Christ's feet or investing Christ with the power to crush them: not such a thought is found in Scripture in any part of it. Nor is it shewn that the Ancient of days coming, and the Ancient of days sitting in verse 9, are the same thing.

The writer seems to be unaware, that eminent writers on prophecy have taken Nebuchadnezzar's madness as a mystic time. He treats it as such nonsense as to disprove the whole system. It may be wrong, but cannot be assumed to be nonsense in this way. Mr. Faber thinks it so right that, if my memory serves me, he makes it the groundwork of all his computations.

I will add, that in page 37, association with Christ in the kingdom-glory is spoken of as an intimation of union and Christ's death and resurrection as that in which it is brought out. I notice this, not to oppose it, though it is extremely ambiguous, but as shewing how union with Christ exalted by the Holy Ghost is everywhere left out.

My object here, however, is not to comment on these statements, but to rest on the one point—to draw the attention of the saints of God to what the real view of the church which is maintained by this system is: that is, that the real blessed union of the church with Christ exalted, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, is

entirely denied or unknown. I am satisfied that, to a really spiritual intelligent mind, the simple reading of the passage I comment on would be more effectual than any argument. What I have added may only awaken attention in comparing it with Scripture, and shew what it is sought to reduce us to. There may be a unity in heaven in which, as far as appears, all saints of all times will be found; but “the church, as it now exists on earth, is a company of believing Jews, with Gentiles added”; and this applies to Christ’s first coming, resurrection, and ascension. Now, that the saints will all be gathered into everlasting blessedness, as partaking of Christ as their life, and redeemed by His blood, according to the counsels of God, and conformed to the image of His Son, is owned. It has been attempted to be charged on those who hold just views of the church that they denied this, or that it was not founded on the blood of Christ as to some, or on wrong views of the life by which they lived. Most unfoundedly. They are all redeemed by blood, and all quickened with divine life.

But the doctrine insisted on is this: That, Christ having broken down the middle wall of partition by His death, and ascended up on high and sat down on the right hand of God, and thus presented the full efficacy of His work in the presence of God, the Holy Ghost has come down and united together believers in one body, thus united to Christ as one body; which body is in Scripture designated the church or assembly of God, and is His habitation through the Spirit. In this, as founded on the risen and exalted Saviour, and united to Him, as seen on high, by the Holy Ghost, there is neither Jew nor Greek. Christ, so exalted, is entirely above these distinctions. Jew or Greek are alike brought nigh as having been

children of wrath, by the blood of that cross by which the middle wall of partition has been broken down. To make the church a company of believing Jews with Gentiles added to them, and Abraham's seed their proper definition, entirely shuts out this divine teaching; because the position given to the church in Ephesians entirely precludes their being looked at as Jews; and the character of "Abraham's seed" comes in merely to shew they are true heirs of promise, because they are Christ's, who is the Seed of Abraham and Heir of the promises. But, most clearly, this is altogether the lower ground on which to speak of Christ, in comparison with His glorious exaltation at the right hand of God, on which the church as such is founded.

Further, it is equally evident, that the church as one body existing on earth, though heavenly in privilege and character, takes its place consequent on the work of the cross, the exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of God, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost. No one can read the Ephesians attentively without seeing this. Hence, to give any definition of the church which implies its existence (other than in the counsels of God), which speaks of its existence on earth during the life of Christ on earth, or previous to His exaltation and the descent of the Holy Ghost, denies its nature and sets aside its character. The church, as we are taught in the Ephesians, is the one body, formed and maintained by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, consequent on the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God. I add no further comment, having stated the doctrine of the word as presented in the epistles, and compared the statement of this tract with it. If this system be admitted, the saints are deprived of their proper and

blessed privileges, and the view of their present condition, as compared with their calling, will be equally enfeebled and set aside. Abraham's seed we are individually, whatever the condition of the church, and believing Jews or added Gentiles, whether we walk in unity or have the power of the Spirit or not.

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235 So also Galatians 3:27.

236 Great handle is made of this expression, as if, because any passage did not apply to the church as such, it was not for it. But this is the weakest idea possible. Instruction as to the Father's glory, as to Christ's millennial earthly glory, is for, but not about, the church. So instruction as to individual justification does not apply to the church as such, though the members of it in its fullest sense possess it; and it is for them. The church, as such, is not the subject treated of, although deeply concerned in it and affected by it as a dispensation.

237 So that, if we would be indeed exact as to the arguing of this chapter, it rather intimates a Gentile character being attached to the nominal possessors of the promises, as we know has been the case, though it recalls to the original constitution, or rather Abrahamic promises, which set the Jews first: for the branches might in result be all Gentile, yet still they had been graffed into that root wherein the Jews had the first place in administration. But then in the church, according to its heavenly character, this had no sort of place.

238 And the term “church,” otherwise than as it now exists, implied to be applicable to an entirely other state of things.

239 It is somewhat singular, and shews the extreme prepossession of mind and blinding effect of this system, that the passage of scripture in which we are said to be Abraham’s seed (Gal. 3:29) is preceded by a statement of the Holy Ghost, that we have “put on Christ,” that “there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free,” etc., but we are all “one in Christ Jesus.” In the writer’s statement we are declared to be Abraham’s seed, and a body of believing Jews, Gentiles being associated by grace. I would beg the reader to compare the passage in Galatians with the writer’s statement (pp. 38, 39 of the tract).