

THE
SECOND COMING
OF
OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST,
IN POWER AND GREAT GLORY
BEFORE THE
MILLENIUM.

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TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE
CEDAR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH;
AND
TO ALL THOSE WHO ARE LOOKING FOR THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD, EVEN
OUR SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST,
THIS DISCOURSE
IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED, BY
THE AUTHOR.

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P R E F A C E .

THE unfulfilled prophecies of the Scriptures are, I apprehend, too generally neglected by the Church of Christ at the present day. Not a few ministers and their congregations seem to consider them so obscure, that they can be of no special benefit to the Church till they are fulfilled. They appear to forget that prophecy, which is a narration of facts yet to take place, has been, in all ages, the grand instrument in the hand of God of cheering the Church in the midst of her darkest hours, and in her deepest distress. Our first parents found consolation in relying upon the sure word of prophecy, after their banishment from the earthly Eden. Faith in prophecy saved Noah and his family, while the unbelieving world moved on in their total disregard of it and were lost. The expectations which Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles had of the latter day glory were based upon prophecy. It was a prophecy which led the Christian Church, in her infant state, to meet in prayer for ten days, until the Holy Spirit was shed down upon them. The primitive Christians, and in later days, the reformers were buoyed up in their mighty conflict against the corruptions of Pagan and Papal Rome by the prophecies. And, however strange

it may appear, it is nevertheless true, that it is a prophecy which now encourages the Church to go forward in her efforts to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth,—a prophecy too, literally understood by the Church, while, at the same time, she professes not to believe in the literal fulfilment of the prophecies, and affirms that they are too obscure to be understood, or to have any practical effect upon her faith or conduct.

A thorough conviction of the practical importance of the subject led me, in the summer of 1840, to commence a series of lectures upon unfulfilled prophecy, which were delivered to the congregation under my care. My object was to awaken, if possible, the attention of the people to this too much neglected portion of God's word. My expectations in this matter have been more than realized. I found that the people, generally, were eager to hear, and anxious to know what God has said will yet come to pass. I had not gone far in the series, before I found that the students of prophecy, in different parts of the city, were led to hear what might be said upon a topic so deeply interesting to them. I found, also, that there are some in almost every church in this city whose minds had been turned to this subject, and who had been for years past pursuing the study of prophecy, without having ventured to make known their views to any others.

The interest which was taken by the hearers in these lectures manifestly increased as we advanced, and the prejudices of many, who looked upon the subject as a thing which only concerned the Jews, or a mere matter of speculation, have been in many cases fully removed. To meet the wishes of some, and to excite, if possible, others to think on the subject of our

blessed Lord's pre-millennial return in glory to this earth, this discourse (the tenth of the series) is enlarged and given to the public.

I am well aware that the sentiments expressed in this discourse do not agree with the popular opinion in reference to the second advent of the Messiah, and that any attempt to set aside the views of modern commentators on this point, is looked upon as an evidence of a perverted intellect rather than an honest inquiry after the truth. But to the Christian who looks for the speedy return of his Lord, it is a very little thing to be judged of man's judgment. The cry has gone forth, "Behold! the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him." It, therefore, does not become those who expect to go in with Him to the marriage supper, to neglect the command. The Scriptures forewarn us that the day of the Lord will come upon the world as a snare. And while they shall be saying "peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them; and they shall not escape." The wise and the foolish virgins will sleep together; and, because of the abounding iniquity, the love of many shall wax cold. Yea, saith the Evangelist, "when He cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" There is but little faith now in His personal return to the earth, to exercise the government of that kingdom which he has gone to receive, (Luke xix. 11—27,) and I apprehend there will be still less.

This, most assuredly, is a practical subject, and it behooves every one to be ready, and like a faithful servant, to be found waiting for the coming of his Lord. This is not the time for laying up treasures in this world, or for being at ease in Zion, for the day of the Lord's vengeance draws nigh, and the year of recom-

penses for the controversy of Zion is at hand. That every one may be prepared for the awfully solemn and glorious events which are soon to take place, I would affectionately exhort them in the language of our blessed Lord himself,—“Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare it shall come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man;” Luke xxi. 34—36.

W. R.

SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST.

“He which testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Rev. xxii. 20.

THE revelation of St. John, it is generally supposed, was written about the year of our Lord 96.* As this was after the commencement of the gospel dispensation, and after the

* There is a great diversity of opinion among the learned as to the date of the Apocalypse. The inscription to this book, in the Syriac version, places the banishment of John in the reign of Nero, that is, *before* the destruction of Jerusalem. Sir Isaac Newton advocates this opinion. Grotius, Lightfoot, Harduin, Hammond, Bishop Newton, and Wetstein, are of the same opinion. The unanimous opinion of the Fathers, however, is, that John was banished by the order of Domitian. Domitian died in September, A. D. 96. The opinion of Irenæus, Origen, and Eusebius, is followed by Mill, Le Clerc, Basnage, Lardner, Tomline, Woodhouse and others, who place the date of the Apocalypse in the year 96 or 97. This is now considered the nearest the truth.

destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the coming of Christ, referred to in the text, must be a future event. The sacred scriptures make known to us but *two* advents of our Lord; the one in humility, and the other in glory. To the one, or the other of these advents, all those passages of scripture, which speak of His coming, must have reference.

The outcast and dispersed sons of faithful Abraham, oppressed by their Gentile brethren, and yet cheered by the promise of their future elevation, fixed their longing eyes upon the glorious Epiphany of the Messiah, and wholly overlooked His advent in humility. They are right in their expectations of his future coming in glory; for "the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."* That coming will be "the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion."† Then "the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee

*Is. lix. 20. Rom. xi. 26. †Is. xxxiv. 8.

away."* They are wrong, however, in their rejection of his advent in humility; for the same prophet who foretells his coming "glorious in his apparel, and travelling in the greatness of his strength and mighty to save," speaks also of his being "despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"—of his being "wounded for our transgressions—bruised for our iniquities—oppressed and afflicted—cut off from the land of the living;" and that he finally "made his grave with the wicked and the rich in His death."†

But, are not we, also, who are called by His name, guilty of a like inconsistency? While we hold firmly and truly to the first advent of the Messiah in humility, which our Jewish brethren reject, still, there are many of us who reject his second coming, in glory and in great power to restore the kingdom to Israel; to purify the sons of Levi, so that the offering of Judah and of Jerusalem shall be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years—to destroy antichrist—to bind Satan for a thousand years—to set up his kingdom, and to "reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."‡

A proper understanding of those passages

*Is. li. 3. 11. †Is. lxiii. 1; liii. 3—9.

‡Acts i. 6—8; Mal. iii. 3, 4; 2 Thes. ii. 8; Rev. xx. 2; Is. xxiv. 23.

of scripture which speak of the first and second advents of the Messiah, would, I apprehend, constrain the Jew to acknowledge, with the Christian, that Jesus of Nazareth *is* the Messiah, the anointed of God; and would constrain the Christian also, with the Jew, to believe that the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and that he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; yea, that of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, *upon the throne of David*, and upon his kingdom, to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth and for ever.*

My design in this discourse is, to prove, from the Scriptures, the following propositions in reference to the second advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, viz:

- I. THAT THE LORD JESUS WILL RETURN AGAIN TO THIS WORLD.
- II. THAT THIS RETURN OF OUR LORD WILL BE A VISIBLE RETURN OF HIS BODILY PRESENCE.
- III. THAT IT WILL BE SUDDEN, AND UNEXPECTED BY THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.
- IV. THAT IT WILL BE IN GREAT GLORY.
- V. THAT THIS SECOND COMING OF CHRIST WAS THE HOPE AND EXPECTATION OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

* Luke i. 31—33; Is. ix. 6, 7.

- VI. THAT THE DAY AND HOUR OF THIS RETURN IS NOT AND CANNOT BE KNOWN TO US.
- VII. THAT THIS RETURN OF OUR LORD, WHENEVER IT DOES TAKE PLACE, WILL BE *before* THE MILLENNIUM.

This subject, Christian friends, *is* one of vast importance to the church of Christ. Those who imagine that it is one of idle speculation, and is calculated to bewilder the mind of the Christian, rather than to cheer his heart, and excite his graces, have sadly mistaken the Bible doctrine on this subject. It is as far removed, in itself, from mere theorizing and speculation, as imagination can put it. The whole tendency of the doctrine is to quicken the Christian in his journey heavenward—to cheer him amidst his trials—to strengthen his faith, and shield him against the influence of temptation—to constrain him to live a life of faith upon the Son of God, and like a good and faithful servant, to be in readiness, and waiting for the coming of his Lord and Master. May such be its happy effect upon the hearts of all.

Come, then, and let us look to God for that spiritual illumination, and that humble and docile temper which we need in studying this part of Divine revelation. The Bible alone, the pure word of God, and not the opinions of men, is to be our rule of faith, while the Holy Spirit must lead us into the knowledge of his

own will. If the Bible be not made its own expositor; and if the same Spirit who has indited its sacred contents be not our guide, we shall for ever wander in the labyrinths of error, and be enveloped in total darkness as to the great and glorious things which concern the everlasting kingdom of our Lord, and our interest in the same. To the law and to the testimony let us go; and may God grant to all an humble mind, and a disposition to receive the truth and follow it wherever it may lead us.

The scriptures plainly teach us to believe:

I. *That our blessed Lord will return again to this earth at some future period.*

In proof of this position I would cite the following portions of scripture, viz.: Acts i. 9—10, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly 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 up into heaven."

Heb. ix. 28, "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."

1 Cor. xi. 26, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death *till he come.*"

The coming referred to in this verse cannot be explained to mean a spiritual coming to the souls of believers, nor is it applicable to the day of Pentecost. If it refer to either of these events, then the regular observance of the Lord's supper at the present time by the Christian church is out of place; for it was to be kept in the church only "*till he come.*" But if the coming of the Saviour is a *future* event, then the observance of this ordinance is still binding on the church, and cannot be dispensed with *till he come* who has appointed it.

Comment on these passages seems needless. They plainly teach us that the Lord Jesus is to return again to this earth. And this truth is in exact accordance with his own predictions on this subject, viz.:

John xiv. 18, "I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you." Also, verse 28, "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away and *come again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father."

The coming of Christ, here referred to, is to be *after* he shall have gone to the Father; that is, after his ascension from Mount Olivet. That the coming in these verses does not mean his appearance to them after his *resurrection*, is manifest from the fact, that, after his resur-

rection he said to Mary, (see John xx. 17,) "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father." The return is to be after he shall have been to the Father; that is, after his ascension. It is an event, therefore, yet future, and to be expected by the church.

II. *This return of our Lord will be a visible return of the man Christ Jesus in his bodily presence.*

This is manifest from the following passages of scripture, viz.: Acts i. 11, "This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner (*ὁν τρόπον* in the same manner) as ye have seen him go up into heaven."

How, then, did he go up? He was *seen* going up—"he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight"—he went up *bodily*. Whenever he returns, he will return *bodily*, in a *cloud*, and will be seen.* And

*The meaning of Acts i. 9—11, seems to be this. The Saviour ascended from the earth into the air; the disciples having a full and clear view of him; but, after he had ascended to some distance, "a cloud received him;" that is, intercepted their view. And thus he was taken from their sight. An interesting inquiry now arises, what was the *nature* or *character* of that cloud? Was it mere *vapor*, generated in the sublunary heavens, and which constantly is flitting over the surface of the earth, obscuring the sun or the moon occasionally from our vision? Those who hold to this view of the subject, will, of course, perceive nothing miraculous in this cloud. I am inclined, on the contrary, to believe that

this declaration is confirmed by the following scriptures: Rev. i. 7, "Behold he cometh with (*μετὰ των νεφελων*) or *among* clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth (*πάσαι αι φυλαι της γης*) all the *tribes* of the land, the

this cloud was no earthly product, but something celestial. Our Saviour, we are told, will return to the earth "in the glory of his Father, with his angels," (Matt. xvi. 27.) The Evangelists, Mark, Luke and John, tell us that he will come "*with clouds*," "*in clouds*," "*in a cloud*," "*upon a cloud*," and in great glory. Whatever may be the particular mode of his appearance, it will, no doubt, be correspondent to the greatness of his glory, and the magnitude of the object for which he returns. But when he comes he is to remain. Now Isaiah (iv. 5) tells us that "Jehovah will create (or reproduce) upon Mount Zion the *cloud* by day—and over all shall the glory be a covering." The *cloud*, in the first part of the verse, is explained by the word *glory*, כבוד in the latter part of it. The glory of the Lord, it would appear from this, will then rest over Jerusalem during the Millennium, as it did over the camp of Israel for forty years in the wilderness, and subsequently in the tabernacle, over the mercy seat. In this cloud, I apprehend, Jesus will come. It will be the pavilion in which his glory envelopes itself. But he will come in the same manner in which he went up. It appears to me, therefore, reasonable to suppose that the cloud, which intercepted the view of the disciples, as the Saviour ascended to heaven from the earth, was the *Shechinah*, (שכינה) the visible presence of Jehovah. The translation of Zech. ii. 13, in the LXX, favors this idea. "Let all flesh be devout, or stand in awe at the presence of the Lord; for he has risen up out of his *holy cloud*;" (*Heb.* the habitation of his holiness.) This cloud, it is manifest, is to appear over Jerusalem,

Jews returned, Zech. xii. 9—14,) shall wail because of him."

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

The Saviour has not yet returned, according to this text, to receive them. His return is, therefore, future; and the same person who went away, will come again.

2 Tim. iv. 1, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his *appearing* (ἐπιφάνειαν αὐτοῦ his Epiphany) and his kingdom."

In this passage the apostle connects the appearance of Christ with his kingdom, and leads us to believe that they are to be manifested at the same time. The kingdom, of which the Apostle speaks, is the kingdom of the Messiah, emphatically called *His*. It is the same kingdom that is spoken of in Daniel vii. 13, 14. 17. It is there represented that "the Son of man (the Messiah) came (μετα

after the return of the Jews to their own land, when "the Lord shall inherit Judah, his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again."—Zechariah ii. 12.

των νεφελῶν) with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, (the Father,) and they brought (placed) him near before him. And there was given him (the Son of man) dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." The simple description of this kingdom shows that it is yet future, while the 17th verse points out the *locality* of this kingdom in the following language: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom *under the whole heaven*, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

The present state of the church is called the gospel dispensation, or the time for publishing the gospel of the kingdom; (Matt. iv. 23;) but it is not the kingdom referred to in Daniel. That kingdom is yet future; and hence it is that we are taught by our Saviour to pray that it may come. "Thy kingdom come," Matt. vi. 10. If it be not future; or, if this state or dispensation of the church be the kingdom referred to by the Prophets and Apostles, then that part of the Lord's prayer is superseded by the realization of the kingdom prayed for. For it *has* come; and why should the church be praying for a state of things which she already enjoys? "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it?"

Again, Paul adds, in 2 Tim. iv. 8, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of right-

eousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at *that day*, and not to me only, but unto all them who love his *appearing*," ἐπιφάνειαν αὐτοῦ his Epiphany.

The bestowment of this crown requires the personal presence of the Lord Jesus, and it will be given at his appearing and kingdom.

In his Epistle to Titus, (ii. 11—13,) Paul teaches us that the grace (or gospel) of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching them to "look for that blessed hope, and (*καὶ even**) the glorious appearing of the Great God, and (*καὶ even*) our Saviour Jesus Christ." This certainly is a future event, and means a personal appearance of Christ.

The same Apostle, in writing to the Thesalonians, 1 Thes. iv. 16, says, "For the Lord himself † (αὐτός ὁ Κύριος) shall descend

* See also Matt. x. 30; xv. 16; John vi. 37; 1 Cor. iv. 5; *καὶ even*.

† Paul, it is probable, refers to Is. xxxv. 4, which is a clear prediction of the state of things in the world at the second advent of Christ. And that there might be no mistake as to the reality of his personal coming, the Holy Spirit uses the following language, v. 4, "God himself יהוה אלהים will come and save you." Our translators, by merely using the pronoun *he*, have not given the full force of the Hebrew words. Diodati has it correctly, "Egli stesso verra." So, also, Junius and Tremellius, "Deus vester—*ipse* advenit." Also Martin, "Vôtre Dieu *il* viendra *lui-même*." Vulg. "Deus *ipse* veniet. LXX. ὁ Θεὸς αὐτὸς ἦξει." The Hebrew, and these translations quoted, leave no doubt upon the mind

from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." This must, without doubt, be a personal coming. The Prophet Joel, iii. 16, I apprehend, refers to the same time, when he says, "the Lord shall *roar* out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake, but the Lord shall be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." This shaking, the Apostle, in Heb. xii. 26, affirms, is yet future, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. See also Amos i. 2; and Ezek. xxxviii. 19, 20.

The last passage I shall adduce is, 2 Thes. i. 6, 7, "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 (ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει) at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his mighty angels." This designates the precise time when this blessing shall be conferred upon them, viz: at the *personal coming* of the Lord Jesus. The texts already quoted are amply sufficient to prove what, I presume, no believer in the Bible thinks of denying, viz: that the return of our Lord will be a visible return of the man Christ Jesus, in his bodily presence, whenever that may take place. But

of the reader as to the character of the coming here spoken of. It is a personal one. As Paul uses similar language, he has, we think, the same idea in his mind.

many Christians habitually speak of it as an event which must, certainly, be very remote. They talk of human institutions and laws and improvements as destined to outlast ages. With them the end of time lies beyond a long cycle of ages; whereas, they know not that this dispensation may not be suddenly terminated, even within their own life time, by the glorious Epiphany of the Lord Messiah. This leads to the third topic for discussion, viz:

III. *The return of our Lord will be sudden and unexpected by the church generally, and by the world.*

Matt. xxiv. 37—42, "But as the days of Noah were, so also shall the coming (*ἡ παρουσία*) of the Son of man be. For, as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not, until the flood came and took them all away; so, also, shall the coming of the Son of man be."

Luke xvii. 24, "For as the lightening, which lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven, so shall also the [coming of the] Son of man be in his day." Matt. xxiv. 27.

These passages have usually been applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, as if *that* was the grand event to which the Saviour had reference. This mistake arises from confound-

ing his answers to the three questions proposed to him by his disciples in the 24th chap. of Matt. and 3d verse, and the application of them, in whole or in part, to the wrong questions. The questions are the following: 1st. "When shall these things be?" that is, when shall the temple be thrown down, and not one stone be left upon another? 2d. "What shall be the sign of thy coming," which is referred to in chap. xxiii. 39? And 3dly, "What shall be the end of the world;" or rather, the completion of the age, or dispensation, *οὐρανία τῆ αἰῶνος*, which, without doubt, must refer to chap. xxiii. 38, the period of time that the temple should be desolate, and Jerusalem be trodden down of the Gentiles.

As the end of the age, and the coming of Christ synchronize, we have a distinct answer to the second and third questions in verses 4—14. We are here assured that "the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a *witness* unto all nations; then shall the end come." That this "*end*" means the termination of the Jewish dispersion, and of the desolations of Jerusalem is manifest from the testimony of Paul, in 1 Thes. ii. 16, "for wrath is come upon them (*εἰς τέλος*) to the end."* The same truth is taught by Luke, chap. xxi. 24, "Jerusalem shall be trodden

* The expression *εἰς τέλος* occurs also in Matt. x. 22; Mark xiii. 13; Luke xviii. 5; and John xiii. 1, which see.

down of the Gentiles until the *times* of the Gentiles be fulfilled." These "*times*" (*καιροι*) of Luke mean the same thing as the "fulness" (*πληρωμα*) of Paul in Rom. xi. 25, or the "mercy" of the Gentiles, in xi. 31.* Whenever, then, the gospel of the kingdom shall have been preached as a witness in all the world, so as to fulfil this prediction, the end of Zion's desolation will close, and the set time to favor Zion shall have come.†

* There is an evident distinction between the meaning of the words *καιρος*, and *χρονος*—"time," as used by Luke. *χρονος* denotes the mere length of time that may intervene between two events; whereas *καιρος* has reference to the character of that time. And hence Paul explains *καιρος*, time, by the word *ελεος*, mercy, Rom. xi. 31.

† Many who hold to the literal and political restoration of the Jews, imagine that it will take place much in the same way that Greece has been restored to the family of nations. They suppose that Judah and Israel will arise and take rank with England, France, Spain, Portugal, Austria, &c.—that being thus restored, they will be converted to the faith of Christ, and be an eminently holy people, and thus will be fitted to exert, and actually will exert, upon those other nations an eminently religious influence. There is reason to believe that these nations, or some of them, will be employed by God to bring back to Zion her scattered children; but that Judah and Israel shall exist as a nation contemporaneously with the kingdoms of the *image*, or of the *four beasts*, is nowhere taught in the Bible. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down (i.e. held in subjection) by the Gentiles, *till* the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled." What is meant by "the times of the Gentiles," but the times of their political being or existence as nations;

In the fifteenth verse we have the answer of our Saviour to the *first* inquiry of the disciples as to the *time* when the *temple should be destroyed*. This is followed by appropriate advice to the disciples under the afflictions about to come upon them, and which should continue throughout the whole of their dispersion. The destruction of the temple is the beginning of their affliction. And although great afflictions have passed over them, yet it is manifest to my mind that the "*great tribulation*," spoken of in the 21st verse, is yet future, and will be just before, or at the close of this dispensation. Such will be the awful character of that "time of trouble," that none would be able to survive, if God, in mercy, and "for the elect's sake," should not shorten those days. That this tribulation is future, appears also from Dan. xii. 1, which has reference to the same period. "Immediately after," or, as the Greek is, *immediately within*, that is, before the tribulation of those days shall close, "the sign of the Son of man shall appear in heaven." This will be terminated

and what being will those nations have after their times are fulfilled? The great image is to be crushed to powder, Dan. ii. 35: the beast is to be consumed by the burning flame, Dan. vii. 11, 26. Whenever Judah and Israel shall be restored to their own land, and once more exist as an independent government, these kingdoms will be no more. "The kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ."

by the personal appearance of our Lord himself, as declared in the 30th verse. This affords a specific answer to the second question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" Thus we have a clear and distinct answer given to the three questions which the disciples proposed to our Lord for solution: and we sadly mistake their full and solemn import by applying them wholly to the destruction of Jerusalem, or to the final judgment which is to take place after the Millennium, i. e. after the 1000 years of John are past.*

* That the interpretation of this most interesting portion of God's word, as given above, is not arbitrary and forced, will be apparent. I am inclined to believe, to every one who will take the trouble to examine the passages in the Greek and Hebrew already quoted, and others also, where the words may occur. The rendering of *μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν*, *within* or *during* the tribulation, is confirmed by Mark viii. 31, where *μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας* after three days, is explained by Matt. xvi. 21, by *τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας*, *on* the third day. In the same sense the word is used in Matt. xxvii. 63, *μετὰ*, "after three days I will rise again," which is explained by the following verse to mean *εως*, "until the third day." So also Josephus, Ant. lib. 1, cap. 12, § 2, speaking of the circumcision of Isaac, says, "εὐθὺς ΜΕΤ' ἑβδομῆς ἡμερῶν περιετμήθησαν" "they circumcise them immediately *within* or *on* the eighth day." The words used by Matthew and Josephus, it will be seen, are the same. The Son of man is to appear immediately *within*, or *at* the close of the tribulation spoken of by Matthew. That Jesus Christ did *not* thus appear at the destruction of Jerusalem, is confirmed by the whole record of scripture which touches on this point. Now, by reference to Dan. xii. 1, we learn that at that time, viz., at that very time,

To be convinced more thoroughly that these predictions did not receive their fulfilment in the destruction of Jerusalem, we need but advert to the facts in the case. First, the influence of the coming of the Son of man is to be like the *flood* in the days of Noah, viz: *universal*. The flood swept them *all* away. The whole *earth* was covered with water. So, or in like manner, the coming of Christ is to be seen and felt by all the globe. Ezekiel tells us that the *fish* of the sea, the *fowls* of the heaven, the *beasts* of the field, all *creeping* things, and all the *men* who dwell upon the face of the earth, shall shake at *his presence*, and that the mountains also shall fall down. Now, I ask the question, did these things, or anything like them, happen in the year A. D. 71, when Titus destroyed the city of Jerusalem? The unqualified answer must be, no; nothing like them. But, 2dly, the Son of man

(בןך הריא) in which there will be trouble, such as the world has never yet witnessed, *Michael*, the great Prince, shall stand up for the people of Israel and shall deliver them. The name "Michael" is merely descriptive of the person who is then to appear. It is composed of three Hebrew words, (מי) who (כ) *cha*, (is) like (אל) *el*, God. Jesus Christ, and he alone, is like God. The person, then, referred to in this verse, can be no other than the Son of man, who is to come in the clouds of heaven, according to the evangelists, and whose feet in that day shall stand, according to Zechariah xiv. 4, on the Mount of Olives, and at whose presence the earth and the inhabitants shall shake. Ezek. xxxviii. 20.

is to be like the *lightning* in his coming; i. e. *sudden*, like a flash, illumining the whole heaven. Was there any such appearance of the Saviour at that time; or was the city destroyed suddenly? The contrary is the fact. The besieged had ample time to escape for their lives after the Roman army made its appearance, and many of them embraced the opportunity before their temple was destroyed. We justly conclude, therefore, that his coming is yet future.

In addition to the passages already commented on, we may mention Rev. xxii. 20, "He that testifieth these things saith, surely, I come quickly, (or suddenly.) Even so, come, Lord Jesus."* As this was written

* The Greek of this passage is, *ναὶ ἔρχομαι ταχύ ἀμήν. Ναὶ ἔρχομαι κέλευθ' Ἰησοῦ*, "Indeed, I come suddenly. So be it. Indeed, come, Lord Jesus." The word *ταχύ* occurs in John xi. 29, "She (Martha) arose *suddenly*." The word *suddenly*, I doubt not, expresses her act better than *quickly*; though it is probable that she rose up both quickly and suddenly. The word *ταχύ* also occurs in Rev. ii. 16; iii. 11; xi. 14; xxii. 7, 12. *Shortly* or *quickly*, (meaning a brief space of time,) is expressed by *ἐν τάχει*. See Luke xviii. 8; Acts xii. 7; xxii. 18; xxv. 4; Rom. xvi. 20; Rev. i. 1; ii. 5; xxii. 6; *ἢ ταχύ (χρόνῳ)* in a short time,—i. e. without any delay. In confirmation of the idea that *ἔρχομαι ταχύ* means "I come suddenly", we may refer to those passages of scripture which speak of the Messiah's coming. It is to be like the lightning, which suddenly bursts from the clouds. The idea of *suddenness* differs from *soonness*. An event may not occur until after a long interval, and yet when it comes, it may come sud-

long after the Jewish dispersion and the destruction of their temple, it remains yet to be fulfilled.

There is but one passage more that I shall adduce in proof of the proposition under discussion, and which may be found in Luke xii. 40—46. "Be ye therefore ready, also, for the Son of man is coming (*ἔρχεται*), at an hour when ye think not. But, and if that servant say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat the men servants and the maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looked not for him, and at an hour when he was not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and appoint him his place with the unbelievers." This passage, I

denly. The coming of the Son of man will not only be *sudden*, *ταχύ*, but it will be *ἐν τάχει*, *without delay*. God's providence will hasten the event, so that it shall occur at the earliest possible time, consistent with the purpose of redemption. God will not bring it to pass prematurely, neither will he (*ἕξειναι*) delay. Matt. xxiv. 48; 2 Peter iii. 9. His coming is also compared to the deluge—to the fire upon Sodom—to a thief—to a snare—to travail on a woman—all of which mark the *suddenness* of the event. And so sudden will it be, that Christians must be very watchful if, after all the warnings they have received, it do not come upon them unawares. Luke uses the word *ἕξαπνως* for suddenly, (Luke ii. 13; ix. 39; Acts ix. 3; xxii. 6.) The idea of John is, that Jesus will not only come quickly, i. e. after a short interval of time, but that he will also come *suddenly* and *unexpectedly* to the whole world.

take it, describes the state of things which will exist in the church at the coming of Christ. Oppression of their brethren; unbelief as to his coming, and worldly mindedness, and covetousness, will characterize the great body of the church, and the whole of the ungodly world in that day. How wholly unprepared will such a people be for the glorious appearance of the Son of God! No wonder that all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him.

As to what will be the real state of the world at the advent of Christ, we are not left to vain conjecture. We might have knowledge enough on this subject, if we would only consider the truths which result from what we do know. The Saviour tells us that the world will be as it was in the days of Noah before the flood. Then they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the very day that Noah entered the ark, and knew not till the flood came and took them all away. So was it with Sodom, in the day of her doom. The people eat and drank, they bought and sold, they planted and builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. So shall it be in the day that the Son of man is revealed. Thus we are assured that the present state of the world is an exact picture of what the world will be at the moment that the Son of man shall appear.

The world will be busy in its schemes of selfishness and pride. The whole family of man, from the chief rulers of the nations, to the humblest and most obscure individuals of the land, with but few exceptions, will be found in that day in listless indifference to the things that are coming upon the earth, and engaged in those things which make not for their everlasting peace.

There, in council met, sit the statesmen and the politicians of the earth, concerting schemes of diplomacy—codes of laws—plans of improvement for the resources of the country and the encouragement of manufactures, agriculture, and commerce—levying armies, and collecting them for new invasions, or for defence.* While thus employed, the sign of the Son of man suddenly appears. Crowns fall from the heads of monarchs; and their sceptres drop from their paralyzed hands. All scenes of political aggrandisement are dashed to the ground. Cabinets and parliaments are dissolved. The governments of the earth are overturned. A new administration comes in, and the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the chief captains, and the mighty men flee to hide themselves from the face of the Lamb, for fear of the Lord and the glory of his majesty; for he has risen to shake terribly the earth.

*It is supposed by many that there will be a time of *universal peace* immediately preceding the advent of Christ.

Yonder, on the wide sea, behold the murderous pirate ship bearing down hard upon the peaceful little band of Christian men and women, who are wafted, by the gentle breeze of heaven, on their errand of mercy, to a heathen shore.—On land see the execrable assassin, who, having planned upon his bed some deed of death, goes forth to burn, to rob, or kill, as may best suit his purpose, sparing neither infancy nor age; while his accomplice in crime is bearing off his ill gotten booty, or dividing it with his companions in sin.—There is the actor in the midst of his play, while the Christless and licentious crowd rend the air with their notes of applause. The young man, void of understanding, having been met by her who is subtle of heart, has entered the chamber of death. The husband and the father, regardless of his solemn vow, raises to his lips the intoxicating bowl, while his destroyer, in serving the wretched crowd who press around him, is filling up to the brim their cup of iniquity and of his own. The profane song delights the ear of the giddy circle. The impious jest has just been told to gain the reward of a laugh. The lie has just escaped from the man of business for the sake of gain. The lips of the slanderer are not yet closed. The merciless task-master tortures with the bloody lash the victim of his covetousness and rage, while the cries of the sufferer are entering into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. There flees the servant from the oppressor's power, while yon-

der the wife is torn from the embrace of her husband, and the child of her affection is snatched from her arms. The miser feasts his eyes upon his hoarded wealth, while the prodigal revels in sin. The hum of business is heard on all sides. The mixed multitude—the rich and the poor—the proud and the humble—the bond and the free—the old and the young—the strong and the weak—the noble, the mean, jostle each other in the crowd as each one presses on after the object of his pursuit.—Yonder goes the slowly moving hearse, followed by the long train of real and feigned mourners, carrying to his grave the only son of his mother, and she a widow; while the cheerful bridegroom and his bride, with their joyful companions, stop to let them pass. Beneath one roof the cry of infancy is heard, and the youthful mother is filled with joy that a child is born; while in the next dwelling bends a fond, and broken-hearted parent, over the lifeless body of a darling boy, whose spirit has just ascended up to God. Yonder lies the victim of vice breathing out his soul in despair; while here the humble follower of the Lamb, filled with joy and peace in believing, looks up with faith and hope from his dying bed, and amidst the supplications of praying friends around him, exultingly exclaims, as the visions of glory burst upon his view,—“Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.”—See that crowded assembly in the sanctuary of God. The ambassador of Christ, filled with the Holy

Ghost, is beseeching men to be reconciled to God, for they know not the day nor the hour that the Son of man cometh. A few are dozing away the last moments of mercy that God has given them; the hearts of others are as the eyes of the fool, to the ends of the earth, or are musing upon the pride or display which themselves or others have made: but one poor sinner's eyes are fixed upon the messenger of God, while his cheeks are bedewed with his tears. The truth has found an entrance into his soul, which is now filled with peace. He weeps over his sins. He adores the mercy that has saved him from woe. He longs to see Jesus, that he may fall at his feet, confess his sins, and praise him for his unmerited grace. By his side sits the aged saint, who drinks in the truth with delight. New views of God's goodness and mercy and love fill his soul, almost overpowering the feebleness of his nature. He admires and adores—and longs to be absent from the body, that he may be present with the Lord.—There is another sanctuary of God. The Spirit has been poured out upon the people. The young and the old, the tender-hearted and the obdurate, have all bowed to the sceptre of mercy. And now they gather around the table of their Lord, to testify their love to him, and to show his death *till he come*. The emblems of his broken body, and shed blood have been received. The servant of God expatiates upon the love of Jesus. He exhorts them to be faithful unto

the death, and they shall receive the crown of life. Some of their kindred and friends have gone over Jordan—they are on their way, and soon Jesus will come and receive them to himself; “Wherefore comfort your hearts with these words.”—While he yet speaks, suddenly a light shines around them. They are filled with awe. The wicked tremble. Saints adore. The Lord descends from heaven with a shout, and with the trump of God. Earth hears it, and recognises the voice of her Creator. The wicked are dumb. They wail in anguish. Cover us, ye mountains, they cry. Hide us from the face of the Lamb. The saints shout for joy, for the day of their redemption has come. The Saviour draws nigh. The earth trembles. The graves are opened. The bodies of the saints arise. The sea gives up its pious dead. The living saints are changed. Ransomed families meet to part no more. The bread and the wine of the Lord's supper are left as useless now, for Jesus himself is come. They rise to meet him. The funeral procession stops, and the saint bursts the bands of death and ascends on high. The mourning of the pious train is turned into rejoicing. The dying saint is saved from death, for his Lord is come. Corruption seizes not on his body; it is changed into the likeness of his Saviour. The prison doors are opened wide, and the captive is free. The cry of the oppressed is heard. Jesus is come to save his people. Angels rejoice, for the family in heaven and on earth are united

in one. Two are in the field; one is taken, the other is left. The bridegroom and his bride are parted, ere they have reached their earthly abode. Parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters are parted for ever. The wheat is gathered into the granary of the Lord; the jewels are set in the diadem of the King of Kings. Satan is bound. The curse is removed from the earth. Vengeance falls on the enemies of God; upon them that knew him not, and that obeyed not the gospel of his love. The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and earth holds a jubilee for a thousand years.

Oh! how sudden! How unexpected will be the day of the Lord! It will come upon all the earth as a snare. Be ye therefore ready, so that ye may escape the judgments which are coming upon the world. It is the day of Israel's redemption. This is the acceptable year of the Lord. That will be the day of vengeance of our God.

IV. The return of the Lord Jesus will be in great glory.

Read the following passages. Matt. xxiv. 30, "Then shall the sign of the Son of man appear 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."

2 Thes. i. 7, "He 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."

Zechariah says, xiv. 5, "And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

Is. lxiii. 1—4, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth." Bishop Lowth, on the authority of ancient manuscripts, renders the verse thus,—
"and I crushed them in mine indignation, and spilled their life blood on the ground."

This portion of scripture has been pretty generally misunderstood and misapplied. It is usually quoted as in some way or other applicable to the *first advent* of the Messiah. But this is done, I apprehend, without due

thought. By carefully looking at it every one must see how utterly impossible it is to apply it, in any form, to that event. The whole prophecy is yet future. Let us look at the facts in the case, and we shall see that the prophecy remains to be fulfilled.

1. At the first advent, the Messiah came from *Nazareth*, where he dwelt, and entered upon the public duties of his mission. But in the prophecy before us, he is to come from *Edom*, a country entirely separate from Palestine.

2. Then he came as the *babe* of Bethlehem, and was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. Deep humility characterized his birth, and his subsequent life. But here he comes, glorious in his apparel, and marching in the greatness of his strength.

3. He came to suffer and to die, and thus to make an atonement for the sins of men; but then he will come to save his people Israel, and to redeem his saints by the greatness of his strength.

4. During his *first* advent his garments were stained with his *own* blood: but in the advent here referred to, they will be stained with the blood of his *enemies*.

5. It was the day of *mercy* during his first advent. The offers of life and salvation were made to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile. It is still a day of mercy to the Gentile world, even to the enemies of our Lord; while wrath is upon the house of Israel to the end.

But his second coming will be the day of vengeance of our God upon the Gentile world—the day of recompense for the controversy of Zion, for the year of his redeemed is come.

6. At his first advent he came as the meek and lowly Saviour, the messenger of mercy, with offers of life to a guilty world—and to do the will of his Father, as the *Prophet* of his people; then he will come as a *King*. He will tread down the people in his anger, and make them drunken in his fury.

7. At his first advent he could not expect any to help him in the work he had undertaken; for it lay not in the reach of mortal power; but at his second advent he is described as wondering that there was comparatively none to uphold the cause of righteousness and of truth, notwithstanding his church had been on the earth during his absence; for “when he cometh shall he find faith on the earth?”

From this brief examination, it must be manifest that this prophecy has not the slightest reference to the *first* advent of Christ. It must refer to a time yet future, when he shall come in the magnificence of his apparel, and travelling in the greatness of his strength.

Bishop Lowth denies the applicability of this prophecy to the *first* advent of Christ; and says that he knows of no event in history to which it can be applied. He supposes it may refer to the destruction of Gog and Ma-

gog spoken of in Ezekiel. With this opinion Dr. Clarke also agrees. And, I would add, that this opinion is correct, and it goes to establish the point we are endeavoring to prove. For, upon comparing Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. with Rev. xx. 8, it is evident that the armies there mentioned are wholly distinct. Ezekiel's army is to be destroyed *at* or *before* the Millennium by the presence of the Lord. The army of John is to be collected *after* the loosing of Satan, and just before the final judgment. They are to be consumed with fire from heaven, whereas those mentioned by Ezekiel are to be for food for ravenous birds--their bones are to be buried by the redeemed Israelites in the valley of Hamon-gog, and a city, to be called *Hamonah*, is to be built in commemoration of the event, and will, no doubt, remain during the millennial period of the church's glory.*

Poole says, in his judicious annotations upon Is. lxiii. 3, "although this may be true of his passion, in which sense some would carry it, yet doth it not so well suit with the design, &c." He applies it to the church, and looks upon it as descriptive of Christ's power over his enemies, without referring it to any particular period of time.

In this opinion Henry and others agree,

* המון גוג Hamon-gog means the multitude of Gog, and המונה Hamonah, a multitude.

though with different views, as to those who may constitute the church.

Rabbis Kimchi and Ben Jarchi refer it to Rome, while Jerome applies it to Jerusalem, and White to the Chaldeans.

Now, after all the darkness that is made to envelope this portion of scripture, how simple and how plain it appears, when applied to the Messiah at his *second* advent. It is one of the many texts which go to prove that the next advent of our Lord will be in great glory, and that, too, before the millennium.

In Isaiah xlii. we have a description of the first and second advents of Christ, drawn by the pen of the inspired and evangelical Prophet. As the prophecy concerning his first advent has been fulfilled to the very letter, let us refresh our memories by a recurrence to it, and this will also aid us to understand how the remaining parts of the prophecy are to be fulfilled.

In the beginning of this chapter the Father is represented as speaking to the church and the world in reference to his Son, saying, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have

set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law. Thus saith the Lord—I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison-house. I am Jehovah; that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.” That this language refers to the Messiah, at his first advent, and that it has been exactly fulfilled in him no one will pretend to deny. If there should be a doubt remaining upon the mind of any one, let him read Matt. xii. 17, 21, where the evangelist quotes this prophecy, and says that it was fulfilled in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

But the Prophet, looking at these things as past, hastens to contemplate the Saviour in his glorious advent. “Behold,” he adds, “the former things are come to pass, and *new* things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.” Having made this announcement, he breaks forth in an anthem of praise to the Lord, for the glorious things that are to take place at the *second advent* of the Messiah. “Sing unto Jehovah a *new* song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up

their voice, the villages that Kedar* doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains; let them give glory unto Jehovah, and declare his praise in the isles.”

Having finished this anthem of praise, and the call to the people to praise the Lord, the Prophet unfolds to us the glorious events which are to take place, and which have given rise to such exalted feeling. “The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man. He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war. He shall cry; yea, roar; (see Joel iii. 16, and Amos i. 2;) he shall prevail against his enemies. I have a long time holden my peace; I have been still and refrained myself; now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once; I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands; and I will dry up their pools. And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them. They that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images ye are our gods, shall be turned back—they shall be greatly ashamed.”

* *Kedar* includes Arabia: the wilderness means the desert bordering on the Red Sea; and by the inhabitants of the rock are meant the people of Arabia Petraea.

Here is the prophecy in full; and every one must perceive that it can refer only to the Lord Jesus Christ. There is, however, no event in his life, as recorded by the evangelists, to which this prophecy can apply. We are compelled, then, to look for its future fulfilment, when he shall return again to the earth. The prophecy recorded in the first part of the chapter, refers to the first advent of the Messiah, and we have seen that it has been literally fulfilled in him. On what principle of interpretation, then, can we affirm that this subsequent part of the prophecy, which refers to his second advent in glory, shall not, in like manner, be exactly and literally fulfilled, so that the history of its fulfilment shall be as manifest to the minds of generations to come, as the history of the first advent, in the fulfilment of its prophetic announcements, is to ours? The fulfilment of the past is our guarantee for the fulfilment of what is yet future. Heaven and earth may pass away, but one jot, or one tittle of the law, or of the prophecies, shall not pass away till all be fulfilled. "I the Lord will hasten it in due time."

How glorious must be that day, when the Messiah shall come forth in his might to destroy idolatry, and to set up his everlasting kingdom! Mountains and hills shall be thrown down at his presence: yea, the heavens and the earth shall shake at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. How glorious must be King Jesus, travelling in the greatness of

his strength! How utterly insignificant will all the triumphal processions of the mightiest conquerors of this world appear, when compared with the glorious triumphal procession of the Lord of Glory! The Universe shall behold it. Angels and saints, redeemed by his blood, shall be his retinue. Devils will tremble, and his enemies—oh! my soul, what a day to them! He will trample them in his anger, and crush them in his indignation. Their life-blood shall be spilled on the ground, and his garments shall be sprinkled therewith. It will be the day of the vengeance of our God, for the year of his redeemed shall have come. Oh, impenitent soul! what will be thy state in that dreadful day? Now make the king thy friend. Prepare to hail his advent as thy Lord and thy friend, or thou wilt be trodden down in his anger. But rejoice, ye saints; rejoice, rejoice! For thy Redeemer cometh in the greatness of his strength, to subdue all the enemies of himself and of his church—to gather his saints into his arms, that where he is, there they may be also. "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus."

V. The second coming of our Lord and Saviour was the hope of the Apostolic Church.

The Apostles and the church, in that day, looked forward to the coming of Christ as the time in which their bliss would be consummated. They considered that day as near at

hand, and knew not but that it might be in their life time. Hence it is that we find them constantly drawing their motives for obedience to the commands of God, confidence in his word, and zeal in his cause, from their expectation of that day. The church now is disposed not only to say "My Lord delayeth his coming," but even to doubt his coming altogether, and to fix her thoughts upon the *final judgment* at the utmost limit of time, and to overlook the coming of Christ as a motive to holy living. Hence it is, that the oft-repeated exhortation of "I beseech you, by the solemnities of death and of the judgment, that ye repent," is uttered in the various pulpits of the land. But when do we hear the ministers of Christ exhorting their people, or of private Christians exhorting their neighbors to lead holy lives, because they expect the speedy coming of their Lord in glory and in might? Thus did not the Apostles. The coming of their Saviour, according to his promise, was the point of time to which they looked forward with such intense delight and interest. They knew not what hour he might come, and hence they endeavored to be in the attitude of faithful servants, who were waiting for their master, and prepared to obey immediately his commands.

Let any one read the 1st Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, and he cannot fail to perceive the manifest difference which exists between the teachings of Paul and the great

body of ministers, of the present day, on this subject. Every chapter contains a specific mention of the coming of Christ. They are urged forward in the performance of their varied Christian duties, from the consideration that the Saviour will soon come and receive them to himself. The Thessalonian Christians were comforted in these thoughts. But, it is a source of consolation, of which the great body of the church are now deprived of, merely through their own unbelief of this soul-cheering doctrine.

Let the following passages of scripture suffice as a specimen of their views and feelings on this subject.

Matt. xxiv. 42, 44, "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord *doth come*. Therefore, be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, *the Son of man cometh*. Also Matt. xxv. 13.

Acts iii. 19, 20, "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted.—And he shall *send Jesus Christ*, who before was preached unto you," &c.

Luke xii. 37, "Blessed are those servants whom the *Lord*, when he *cometh*, shall find watching."

1 Thes. ii. 19, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the *presence* of our Lord Jesus Christ at *his coming*." Also iii. 13.

2 Thes. ii. 1, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the *coming* of our Lord Jesus

Christ, and by your *gathering* unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind."

James v. 7, 8, "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the *coming of the Lord*. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the *coming of the Lord* draweth nigh." (*ἡγγιξε* hath drawn nigh.)

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

1 John, iii. 2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and he (Christ) hath not yet appeared what we shall be; but we know that when *he shall appear* φανερωθῆ we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." The rendering of *ὄπω* φανερωθῆ 1. ind. pass. "he hath not yet appeared," by "*it doth not yet appear*," by no means gives the force of the original, nor does it, I apprehend, give the idea that the Apostle meant to convey. When Christ appeared on the earth, it was in *humility*; but when he shall appear *next*, it will be in *glory*; and then we shall be like him; for we shall then see him as he now actually is, in glory. What a powerful motive is this, to live in expectation of his coming. (See also 1 John ii. 28.) And this is the idea the Apostle had in his mind, and wished to impress upon the minds of others.

Heb. x. 37, "For yet a little while and he that shall come *will come*, and will not tarry." Consult also Phil. iii. 20, 21; iv. 5; 1 Cor. iv. 5; Rev. xvi. 15; xxii. 7, 12.

These passages are quite sufficient to show us that the advent of Christ was the grand object to which their eyes were constantly directed, and which tended so much to excite them to the performance of every duty. Why should it not be so with us?*

It may be worthy of remark, that so long as the primitive Christians lived in the expectation of the coming of their Lord, they lived like pilgrims and strangers here as all their fathers were. They esteemed not their lives, dear unto themselves, so that they might fulfil the work of the Lord assigned to them. The caves and the dens of the earth were then the dwellings of many of them. Their property, influence, and life itself, were all con-

* It would be useful if the reader would peruse the whole of the New Testament, with reference to this point. He would find, in the Epistles alone, at least *forty-five* plain references to the coming of Christ. See Rom. ii. 5, 16; 1 Cor. i. 7, 8; iii. 13; iv. 5; xi. 26; xv. 23; xvi. 22; (Maran-atha, the Lord cometh;) 2 Cor. i. 14; iv. 14; Ep. iv. 30; Phil. i. 6, 10; ii. 16; iii. 20; Col. iii. 4; 1 Thes. i. 10; ii. 19; iii. 13; iv. 16; v. 2, 23; 2 Thes. i. 7; ii. 1, 8; iii. 5; 1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. i. 12, 18; iv. 1, 8; Titus ii. 13; Heb. ix. 28; x. 25; (that is thirty-five such references in Paul's Epistles.) James v. 7, 8; 1 Pet. i. 5, 7, 13; iv. 13; v. 4; 2 Pet. i. 16; iii. 10, 12; 1 John, iii. 2; iv. 17; Jude 14; Rev. i. 7; ii. 25; iii. 11; xxii. 20, &c.

The only way, however, in which the reader will be able to appreciate this distinguishing feature of the instructions of the Apostles, is to carefully read their Epistles with special reference to this subject.

secrated to God. But whenever they began to say, "the Lord delayeth his coming," disputes arose among them; pride and worldiness sprang up; simplicity of life was changed for pomp and luxury; lands were called by their names; castles were builded, as if the earth was to be man's final abode. But, above all, corruption crept into the church; and hence was laid the foundation for that spirit of domination and oppression which, in after times, and especially in those called the *dark ages*, sought to crush the native independence of the soul of man, and to legislate from men the right of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences and the commands of the Most High.

No Hierarchy could have been established in the church—no Diotrefes-like spirit would have been allowed to spread its unhallowed influence abroad, if the servants of the Lord had still felt that they were brethren, and had obeyed the command to call no man "Master." One of the blessed effects of the coming of Christ will be to break down, and to scatter to the winds of heaven, every vestige of that spirit that exalts itself against God, and lords it over God's heritage. The church shall be then as she was designed to be, a pure and a holy church; of one faith, one baptism, and under one Shepherd, the Lord Jesus. This is our hope. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

A question of grave importance arises here,

and it is worthy the consideration of every lover of the truth, and especially of every Christian. It is this: Was it not morally impossible that Popery should arise while the expectation of Christ's speedy return predominated in the church? For one, I am free to confess, that I cannot see how it could have arisen. Could men, who hoped and expected, and prayed with apostolic fervor that the Lord should return quickly, even in their own day, and take the kingship of the earth to himself, and destroy all earth-born power—could such men sympathize with Popery, in its spirit and forms, as it ever has existed? Is there not reason to believe that the denial of this doctrine was the chief means (providentially permitted) by which the Papacy arose? There was *a falling away first* from this doctrine. All the motives which it furnishes to a holy humble walk in Christian love and hope were expunged from the Christian's creed. The religion of the major part of professors, and of those especially who, like *Diotrefes*, loved the pre-eminence, began to make a home for itself in this world, and lay its plans for long cycles of ages. From this corrupted state of Christianity arose the Papacy which has waxed great, and powerful, and persecuting, and which will continue until the Lord shall consume it with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy it in its civil and ecclesiastical forms, by his glorious Epiphany.

Chillingworth has some thoughts on this

subject worthy the reader's attention. See his works, p. 729, Philada. Ed. 1840.

VI. *The DAY and the HOUR of the second advent of Christ is not known to us, nor can it be.*

Whatever knowledge we may have on any subject that is yet future, must be obtained by revelation. The simple reason, therefore, why we cannot tell *when* the second advent of our Lord shall take place, is the fact that it has *not* been revealed to us. God has, no doubt, wise purposes to accomplish, by concealing this most important event from us. Some of these purposes we may know now, and others hereafter. It becomes us to be content with what has been revealed, and to live in expectation of that day, so that it may not come upon us unawares, and find us wholly unprepared for its solemn scenes.

Just before our Saviour ascended up into heaven, his disciples asked him saying, "Lord, wilt thou, *at this time*, (*ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ*) restore again the kingdom to Israel? The question shows their full belief that the kingdom would be restored to Israel; but the point of their inquiry was as to the *time when* it should be done. The answer of our Saviour is given, in reference to that fact. He does not deny that the kingdom will be restored; nor does he give the slightest intimation that the disciples were wrong in their expectations, which he undoubtedly would have done, if they had

been mistaken on this subject. I am well aware that it is a common thing for Christians of the present day to attribute this question to a *Judaizing* spirit in the Apostles, or to their *ignorance* of the real nature of Christ's kingdom. The charge of ignorance is, I apprehend, by no means appropriate to these disciples. They ask merely as to the *time* that a certain event is to take place: the certainty that the event will take place is not doubted by them, nor denied by their Lord. Accordingly our Saviour replies, "It is not for you to know the *times* or the *seasons* (*χρόνους ἢ καιρῶν*) which the Father hath put in his own power."*

*This passage is involved in not a little obscurity.

As I have not yet seen any explanation which has fully satisfied my mind, I would venture the following explanation, which may aid to illustrate it. The point of difficulty is as to the *time*. It is evident, from John xiv. 28, and xvi. 6, 7, 16—33, that the disciples were fully persuaded that the Saviour was about to leave them, and to go to the Father for a season. He had told them so before his passion, and in consequence of it, their hearts were filled with sorrow. The three days of his death was not the fulfilment of that promise; for he plainly tells them, after his resurrection, that he is *not yet* ascended to his Father. His ascension was a future event. After his resurrection, we learn that Jesus opened their understandings, that they might understand the scriptures. However much they may have mistaken the views of the Saviour before, we have reason to conclude that now they understood his will much better. When he led them out to Bethany, they, no doubt, believed that he would ere long go from them,

But not to leave them wholly in the dark as to when that long expected day should arrive, he tells them that *two* things must happen, viz.: 1st. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:" and 2d, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." By a reference to Luke xxiv. 21. 26, we learn that a similar expectation had been expressed by Cleopas, and his companion in travel, to the Saviour, immediately after his resurrection—"we trusted that it had been he who should have *redeemed* Israel." The Saviour corrects their mistake as to the *time* of this redemption, by informing them that *two* events must precede that restoration, viz.: 1st, Christ must suffer these things, (which was now past;) and 2d, "He must enter into his glory"—a future

but the *precise time* they did not know. They also knew that he would restore the kingdom to Israel, but they did not know the precise time of that event. The point of the question, then, seems to be this: "wilt thou, at *this time*, i. e. before thy departure, and before thy ascension to heaven, restore the kingdom to Israel; or will it not be done till after thy return? The Saviour replies, "it is not for you to know the *times* or the *seasons*" in reference to this event. But ye shall receive power *after* that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, &c. This answer was, undoubtedly, satisfactory, as to one point, viz.: that it would *not* be before his ascension, for it was not to take place till after the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit was not to be given till after the ascension of their Lord.

event. Thus we learn that there are *four* links in this chain of events, which are to pass on in the order of time before Israel's restoration can be looked for, viz.: 1st, The sufferings of Christ. 2d, His entrance into his glory. 3d, The descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles: and 4th, The preaching of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

One of these events had already taken place. *Forty* days afterwards the *second* was accomplished, Christ entered into his glory. *Fifty* days after that the *third* was fulfilled viz.: the spirit was poured out upon the disciples; and now there remains but *one* thing more to be done, viz.: the publishing the gospel to the ends of the earth. Whenever that shall be accomplished, in accordance with the mind of the Saviour, then shall Israel be restored, and the Son of man shall appear. It is easy to perceive how this concealment of the purpose of God operated as a most powerful motive upon the minds of the Apostles and primitive Christians to be holy, and to labor for the spread of the gospel throughout all the world. Three of the events promised were already fulfilled; and although they had no right to expect that a similarly short period should elapse between the third and fourth events, as between the second and the third, still they hoped the work might be accomplished in their day. They kept in view the crown of life, which was promised at the coming of their Lord, which event would be pre-

ceded by the universal spread of the gospel as a witness among all nations. Thus, we find, that although the disciples did not know the *times* nor the *seasons* which should precede the advent of Christ, they knew that it would happen as soon as the work assigned them should be accomplished. And this same truth is now held out to us as a powerful inducement to send the gospel to the ends of the earth; for "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and *then* shall the *end* come." Matt. xxiv. 14.

In connection with the passage now under consideration, there is another of similar import, which may demand an explanation in this place. It is in Mark xiii. 32, "But of that day (the coming of the Son of man) and that hour *knoweth* no one, (οὐδείς) no, not the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son,* but the Father."

Here it is affirmed that the Son doth *not know* the day nor the hour that he is to return to the earth; and the conclusion is then drawn, that it is utterly impossible for man to know anything about it.

If it be true that the Son is ignorant of the day of his return to the earth, then it is clear that *we* cannot know it. But this is the point to be examined. On the supposition that Jesus Christ is, in truth, ignorant of this fact, a difficulty of no ordinary magnitude arises before us, and one which, in my view, would tend to

shake the foundation of our faith—the Deity of Christ. For if the Son does not know the day of his return to the earth, the inference is plain, he is finite in knowledge; he is not God!

To answer this difficulty, it is replied that the Son, *as God*, does know the day, but, as *man*, he is ignorant of it. This, to say the least of it, is an exceedingly unsatisfactory reply. It does not relieve the difficulty, but rather increases it, for it divides the two natures of Jesus Christ, the union of which, for ever, are essential to his existence as the God-man Mediator.

An interpretation, however, may be given of this verse, which is simple, and completely solves the difficulty, while it has the merit of being strictly in accordance with the principles of sound interpretation. In 1 Cor. ii. 2, Paul uses the following language: "I determined not to *know* (οὐκ εἶδέναι, not to *make known*) any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." In this verse, and also in others, the meaning of the word evidently is to *make known*, to *publish*, or *reveal*. Adopting this sense of the word, (εἶδέναι, I know*) the meaning of the passage is plain.

*The word *εἶδέναι* occurs upwards of 650 times in the New Testament, all of which I have examined. As it has various shades of meaning, the sense of the word is to be determined by its location and connection. The only passages that I have discovered, besides Mark xiii. 32, where it is used in a *causative* sense, are in

It might very properly be rendered, "concerning that day or hour no one *maketh it known*; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither doth the Son, (make it known) but the Father." This rendering is not only grammatically correct, but is in accordance with the truth in the case. Jesus Christ, as a Prophet, came into this world to teach the *will* of his Father. In the performance of that duty he never violated his commission. To *reveal* to man the day of his *second advent* was no part of his commission. It is *not* to be made known. The day shall declare itself. As it formed then no part of Christ's *official* duty, the Evangelist very properly tells us that not even the Son knows it, or is commissioned to make it known.

Now, although the *day* and the *hour* of Christ's second advent is *not* known to us, nor *can* it be, still there are, we perceive, certain things to take place before it, of which we do possess the knowledge. And these things are to be followed by others, which shall happen immediately before, or at the time of his advent. The gospel is first to be preached as a witness among all nations. The fulfilment of this duty will be connected with the restoration of the Jews to their own land. The other events, which are to follow shortly after, are,

1 Cor. ii. 2. 11, 12; xi. 3; Col. ii. 1. Where the sense requires it to be rendered by "*to make known*," see McKnight, Locke, and Whitby and others.

1st, the great distress of the Jews, in consequence of the attack made on them by the army of Gog; 2d, the destruction of the army; 3d, the downfall of antichrist; and 4th, the overthrow of the kingdoms of this world, so that they may become the kingdom of our Lord. All these events will follow in rapid succession, for the conversion of the Jews is to be brought about by the *personal* manifestation of the Son of God to them, as is also the destruction of the army of Gog, and the shaking of the nations of the earth, as is manifest from Ezekiel xxxviii. 14—23, and Zech. xii. 10. The Saviour, speaking by this latter Prophet, says, "I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall *look upon me*, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son." And again, when leaving the temple for the last time, he says to the Jews, "Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not *see* me henceforth *till* ye shall say blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Their house (or temple) has been left to them desolate, and it will be trodden down of the Gentiles, *till* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; and that will be the time when they shall say "Hozanna! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." They saw him once, and they will see him again. And it shall be in that day, saith the

Lord, that thou shalt call me *אִישִׁי* Ishi, (my dear husband,) and shalt call me no more *בָּאֲלִי* Ba-a-li, (my master.)

This is a glorious truth, that God's ancient people shall again acknowledge their Lord, and shall no more depart from him. And what, I ask, mean these recent and astonishing developments of the providence of God concerning Israel? I ask, what do they mean that the *lost tribes have been found*? Surely the hand of God is in this thing. "He hath set his hand again the *second* time to recover the remnant of his people, which he left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea." And soon "He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the *outcasts* of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Is. xi. 11, 12.)

In the year 722 b. c., Shalmanezzer, the King of Assyria came against the house of Israel in Samaria. After a siege of three years, he carried away the *ten tribes* captive into Assyria, and placed them in Halah, and in Habor, and by the river Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. The cause of this captivity we learn from 2 Kings xvii. 22, 23; "For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; and they departed not from them; *until* the Lord removed

Israel out of his sight, as he had said by his servants the Prophets."

In the 2d Book of Esdras, xiii. 40—50, we are informed by the writer, who ever he may be, that the *ten tribes* were carried beyond the river Euphrates—that they took council together, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt, that they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land—that they went through the country a great journey, even of a year and a half, into the region of Arsareth, and that there they will remain till the latter time—until the *times* be ended, when they will be brought out again by the direct interposition of Divine Providence. I merely refer to this author as a historical record of great antiquity, and not as an inspired portion of God's word.

Now, for 2560 years, the world has been in ignorance of the hiding place of the ten tribes. Even the Jews themselves, i. e. the house of Judah, seem to have had no correct knowledge of what had become of their brethren. But see the hand of God in this matter, seeing that the "set time to favor Zion" approaches. Two Jewish merchants come into Europe, the distance of 3000 miles or more, and make known the fact that not less than *five millions* of Israelites are settled in *Buchara*, and in *Little Thibet*, and that they have remained

there since shortly after their captivity.* The recently published account of the Nestorians in Khoordisthan, by Dr. Grant, shows us also that a remnant of the tribes have been saved, and have been witnesses for the Lord, while the Christian world was for centuries wrapped up in the darkness of Popish superstition.† Thus has the Lord, in these latter days, revealed to the world the dwelling place of his outcasts. His purposes in hiding them are accomplished; and his purpose in revealing them is made known to us by Jeremiah the Prophet. "Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel—for lo! the days come that I will bring *again* the captivity of my people, *Israel* and *Judah*, saith the Lord; I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it." Jeremiah xxx. 3.

These interesting discoveries should strengthen the faith of the Christian in Israel's God; and they should make the infidel and the scoffer to tremble. Jehovah's promises hasten on to their complete fulfilment. Will Infidels still be unbelieving? Will Christians be faithless? Let them connect the fact that the ten tribes of Israel have been found, with the fact that the tribes of Judah have been raised up to

* See "Lectures on the Jews," by the Rev. Hugh McNeal, of Liverpool, p. 128.

† See Dr. Grant's account of the Nestorians. A most interesting work, and worthy an attentive perusal.

an equality with the nations of the earth. And now they look forward with anxiety to the day when they shall again possess the land of their fathers. Five millions of Israelites, and five millions or more of the sons of Judah! What an army of witnesses will they be for God! What a proof of "the goodness and of the severity of God!" A man must close his eyes to all reason and revelation, in times like these, who can refuse to see the hand of God, as stretched out in behalf of the Jew, or deny that the day of Israel's redemption draws nigh. God will plant them again in their own land, (Jer. xxxii. 41,) and will make them "*one nation* in the land, on the mountains of Israel." (Ezek. xxxvii. 22.) But that day will be a day of trembling and of fear. "All faces will be turned into paleness. Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Jer. xxx. 6, 7. Then will God chastise the nations of the earth for their oppression of his people. And whatever judgments may fall upon this land for her sins, she will not be chastised for the sin of grieving those whom the Lord has chastened. She alone, of the nations, has opened her arms of affection, and has afforded an asylum for the *Jew* as well as for the Gentile. But will America escape the judgments of God? Will not God put the cup of trembling into her hand also? Yes; for he will shake *all* nations. And although we have not afflicted the sons

of Shem, we, alas! have oppressed the children of Ham. The cry of the oppressed has come up before God, "Behold the innocent and the righteous blood crieth unto me, and the souls of the just complain continually; therefore, saith the Lord, I will surely avenge them, and receive unto me all the innocent blood from among them."

As God has now discovered to the world the tribes which have long been lost, I doubt not but that, being influenced by his spirit, they will soon begin to devise plans for their return to their own land, and their settlement therein. God will also move upon the hearts of the kings of the earth, as in the days of Cyrus, to favor their return, and to prepare the way for it. Soon shall we hear that the tribes are moving on towards Canaan. The day draws nigh. The times of the Gentiles are well nigh accomplished. Zion's redemption is at hand. Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Then shall his saints rejoice, who shall be privileged to live and see that day—to see their Saviour return in his glory, and to share in the blessedness of his triumphs. May such be our happy lot. But if not, may we, like Daniel, go our way till the end be—rest from our labors—and stand in our lot among the redeemed of the Lord, at the end of the days.

VII. *I shall now consider the last topic proposed, viz.: that the return of our Lord, whenever it does take place, will be before the Millennium.*

In the discussion of the previous topics, I presume that no professing Christian would deny that the texts quoted fully prove that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again personally to this earth. Some may be disposed to say, that while they hold to a real coming of Christ; yet it is only a *spiritual* one. There are others, who are convinced that the texts quoted prove conclusively that the Lord Jesus Christ will return again to the earth *personally*, but who maintain that it will not be till *after* the Millennium, and immediately before the final judgment, and the consummation of all things.

From both of these opinions I differ entirely. In opposition to the first opinion, viz. that Christ's coming is a *spiritual* one merely, I maintain that it is a *visible* and *personal appearance* of the Saviour. And as to the second opinion, the only difference is in the locating of the 1000 years of John. I maintain that they are *after* the personal return of our Lord, while they affirm that they are *before* it.

I have reserved for this place the arguments which support the doctrine of Christ's *personal* advent; believing that it is connected with the *setting up* of his Messianic kingdom, during which time he is to reign in Mount Zion, (Is.

xxiv. 23,) and not after the affairs of his kingdom shall have been administered by its absent King. Before entering on the argument proposed, it may not be amiss to give a right exposition of a passage which has been considered an unanswerable objection to the views here maintained. The passage is the following, Matt. xxiv. 34, "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." The objection is, that the destruction of Jerusalem—the end of the age, and the coming of Christ, were all to take place before *that generation* should pass away. As a generation does not exist more than 30 or 40 years, it is inferred that all those events are past nearly 1800 years ago, and it is vain now to look for their fulfilment.

To this I answer, that the word (*γενεα*) "*generation*" often means a *race*, as well as a life time or period of 30 years. In fact, the latter is a secondary, and the former the primary signification of the word.* That our Saviour meant the *race*, or *Jewish nation*, is manifest, 1st, from the fact that the Jewish race hath not yet passed away, although others have; and 2d, it is not true that all those things predicted did take place within the short space of thirty years after the ascension of our Lord. The meaning of the verse

* See Leigh's *Critica Sacra*. ver. γενεα. Theophilact in loco.

evidently is, that the *Jewish people* should not become extinct, notwithstanding all the calamities they might be called to endure, until all these things should be fulfilled. The *Jewish nation* (*εθνος*) has been destroyed by the Romans, but the *race* (*γενεα*) still exists in a dispersed condition, not as a community or body politic in the proper sense. The promise of God is pledged for their continued existence as a people until the *end*, or the *times* of the Gentiles be fulfilled, and until the Son of man come. This sense is not only consistent with other portions of scripture, but also in accordance with the facts in the case. It is therefore a strong argument in favor of the personal and future advent of the Messiah, and by no means against it.

In answer to all those who maintain that Christ's coming can only be a *spiritual* one, and that we have no scriptural authority to look for any other, I remark that such a coming is utterly impossible, in the very nature of the case. If we are not to have a *personal* advent of Christ, we can have none at all. The reason is obvious. *Only that can be returned which has been taken away.* Christ has never been removed from the earth *in spirit* since his incarnation. "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" or, I am with you *every day* until the completion of the age. (See the Greek of Matt. xxviii. 20.) There has not been a day, then, since his ascension, that he has not been with

his people *spiritually*, according to a previous declaration made to his disciples, viz.: "I will pray the Father and he shall send you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the spirit of truth." It is also clear that he never will be absent *spiritually* from the world. With what propriety, then, we can expect him to *return* to us, seeing he has *never* been absent from us, I leave for others to decide. But the Saviour is absent in his *bodily* presence; and it is this, and this only, that we can scripturally look for to be returned to us. "A little while," saith the Saviour, "and ye shall *not see* me; and again, a little while, and ye shall *see* me—because I go to the Father."

If, then, we have proved that we have a right to expect the return of our Lord to the earth, in his bodily presence some time, we are now prepared to consider the glorious truth that he will come *before* the Millennium.*

* I am well aware that some Christians maintain that the Millennium is *past*; and that others advocate the sentiment that this world is not to be blessed with a period of unbounded, temporal, and spiritual blessings, for a period termed a thousand years, nor are the Jews to return to their own land, and once more be a distinct people upon the mountains of Israel. These last named hold, however, to the *personal* advent of Christ in great glory—and that he will then set up his everlasting kingdom,—and that this, his coming, which they daily expect, is to bring the affairs of this world to a close. We do not agree with this opinion, but still rejoice that there

Argument 1. My first argument to prove the *personal* pre-millennial advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, is drawn from the fact, that he will appear personally at the destruction of the army of Gog, which is to take place before the Millennium.

are so many who hold to the great and all-important doctrine—the speedy personal return of our blessed Redeemer. There is much, concerning this whole subject, which is purposely hid from us for the present; and yet there is enough revealed to excite us to duty and to watchfulness and prayer, so that we may be ready to meet him with joy at his coming. To all such as look for and wait for the coming of their Lord, we say affectionately, "Be patient, brethren, for the coming of the Lord hath drawn nigh, " *ἤγγικεν*." As to the former opinion, its inconsistency with gospel truth is so apparent, that its greatest advocate in this country has wholly abandoned it. The world, never yet since the fall, has been in such a state as to answer, in any degree, to the glowing descriptions given of that period by the Prophets and Apostles. The binding of Satan—the peaceful and happy condition of man, and of the animal creation—the renewed fertility of the earth—the restoration of Israel—the unity of the church, in fact and in form—and especially the universality of holiness upon the earth, are events which are clearly predicted in the word of God, and are all future.

The prayer which our Lord taught his disciples to use, and which is offered up daily by the church throughout the world, leads us to expect still greater blessings than the world has ever enjoyed since the fall. When he taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done *on earth, as it is done in heaven*," I cannot believe that he meant us to pray for that to which it was not the will of God to give a *full and literal reality*. The will of God is done *perfectly and constantly*

Ezek. xxxviii. 18—20, "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*, (ἡδὲ ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου LXX,) and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground."

The destruction of Gog is not only a future event, but is also to take place before the Millennium. The only places where Gog and

in heaven, and we are commanded to pray that it may also be done *on the earth* as it is in heaven. If this be the will of God, then, so completely to restore this lost world to its allegiance to God, that his will shall be done on earth as perfectly as in heaven, the kingdom, or state of things prayed for, is yet future; for no man, since the fall, has ever rendered such obedience as we are here taught to pray for. But, if it be not the will of God to produce such a state of things on the earth as shall accord with the full meaning of the prayer, then we are driven to the conclusion that the Saviour has taught us to pray for that which he never meant to bestow upon us. Such a result is opposed to every proper idea we have of the character of God. Let us, therefore, believe that what God hath promised he will perform, and let us earnestly pray that he may speedily accomplish all these glorious promises.

Magog are mentioned together in connection, are in Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix., and in Rev. xx. 8. In some things these powers are similar; but the difference is so striking in other things, that it is astonishing how they ever have come to be confounded together. They are similar in the following particulars, viz.:

1. In their name.
2. In being the enemies of God's people.
3. In their being gathered in a hostile manner.
4. In their having evil thoughts towards the church.
5. In having fire and brimstone rained upon them from heaven, and being in this manner destroyed.

They differ, however, materially in the following particulars:

1. The Gog and Magog of Ezekiel shall be led on by the prince of Meshech and Tubal; but the Gog and Magog of John are to be led by Satan.
2. Ezekiel's army is to come from the north quarters; John's from the four quarters of the earth. Ezek. xxxviii. 6; Rev. xx. 8.
3. Ezekiel describes them as coming against Israel, after they shall have returned to their land, and after it shall have lain a long time desolate. They are described as dwelling safely in it in unwall'd villages, without bars or gates, and *before* the Millennium. John describes his army as coming up against the

camp of the saints, and the beloved city, and after the loosing of Satan, that is, after the 1000 years, or the Millennium.

4. The army described by Ezekiel shall prevail in a degree, and shall bring Israel into great distress. It is called the time of Jacob's trouble. The army of John shall only make the assault, and shall be suddenly destroyed.

5. The destruction of Ezekiel's army is by a variety of means. 1. Their own swords shall be turned against them. 2. Judah shall fight against them. 3. The Saviour shall personally appear and discomfit them. 4. They shall be smitten with disease. 5. There will be an earthquake, an overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire and brimstone from God; their bodies will be food for the beasts of the field, and for the fowls of the air. The army of John, on the contrary, is to be *destroyed* by fire out of heaven, and shall be *consumed* in no other way.

6. The bones of the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel are to be buried in the land of Israel—their funeral will last seven months—their weapons will serve the Israelites for fuel for seven years, and a time of peace is to succeed. The army of John is to be *consumed* by fire; there is to be nothing of them left that can be buried. Their destruction is to be followed by the final resurrection—by the day of judgment, and the end of the world.

This is sufficient to show that these armies

are wholly distinct, and are both future, though a thousand years apart.

This destruction of the Gog of Ezekiel is to be by the presence of the Lord. That this presence of the Lord is a *personal presence*, I would prove.

1st. From Zech. xiv. 4, "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." This may refer to Joshua x. 1—14, where the Lord destroyed the armies of the five kings of the Amorites, which united with Adoni-zedec against Joshua. They were destroyed, in part, by the "great stones which the Lord cast down from heaven upon them." The point of comparison is, that they were destroyed by the direct interposition of God, as the people of Gog will be. There is, however, a difference in other particulars. There is to be an *earthquake*, and the *Saviour* is personally to appear. For, continues the Prophet, "His feet shall stand in *that day* upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof towards the east and towards the west, and there shall be a great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove towards the north, and half of it toward the South."

One would think that the simple reading of this prophecy would be sufficient to convince the most incredulous that it is yet future. And yet, strange to tell, it has been tortured

to apply alone to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. With what propriety I leave for the thinking to decide. The editors of the Comprehensive Commentary say, in a note on verse 4, "The best idea to be gathered from the dubious opinions of Commentators on this passage seems to be, that it refers to an extraordinary interposition of the Lord in the restoration of the Jews." Dr. Gill refers it to the resurrection. The language of the Prophet is peculiar, and certainly it is very strong; and if it do not prove the personal appearance of the Lord in that day, I doubt whether a passage can be found in the whole word of God to prove it.

2. The personal presence of the Lord is further proved from the language itself, which is used by the Holy Spirit to express that appearance. "At the same time—all—shall shake *at my presence*," מִנִּי "before the face of the Lord," ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου, as it is rendered by the LXX.* Ez. xxxviii 18—20.

Upon a careful examination of the places where the words (מִנִּי) rendered, "*at my pre-*

* The word προσωπον, (from προσ, to, and ὤψ, the eye,) occurs in the New Testament 77 times; and in every instance it includes the idea of the personal presence of the person or thing referred to; ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου occurs but three times, viz.: Luke i. 76; Acts iii. 19; 2 Thes. i. 9; and in each of these places it must mean the actual personal presence of the Lord. We thus learn how the LXX understood the words (מִנִּי) *at my presence*.

sence," occur in the Hebrew Bible, it will be found that they invariably mean, not a *spiritual*, but an actually visible or personal presence of the object referred to. Take the following examples as a specimen.

Gen. iii. 8. "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence (מִנִּי at the personal presence) of the Lord."

Num. xx. 6, "And Moses and Aaron went from the presence (מִנִּי the personal presence) of the assembly."

1 Kings, xii. 2, "Jeroboam fled from the presence (מִנִּי the personal presence) of Solomon."

Ps. lxxviii. 55, "He cast out the heathen also *before them*, (מִנִּיהֶם at their personal presence.)"

2 Kings iii. 24, "So that they (the Moabites) fled *before them*, (מִנִּיהֶם at their personal presence.)"

Gen. vi. 13, "The earth is filled with violence *through them*, (מִנִּיהֶם at their personal presence.)"

Zech. xiv. 5, "Like as ye fled *from before the* (מִנִּי at the presence of the) earthquake, i. e., not a figurative or a spiritual earthquake, but an actual shaking of the material earth."*

Gen. vii. 7, "And Noah went in, and his sons—into the ark, *because* (מִנִּי at the visible presence) of the waters of the flood."

* See Lyranus, Jarchi, White in loco.

Ex. xix. 18, "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, *because* (כִּשְׁמַן at the personal presence of) the Lord descended upon it in fire."

Thus, by making the Bible its own expositor, we arrive at the truth in this matter.

In Isaiah lxiv. 1—3, the word occurs *three* times. Reference is here made to the *second advent* of Christ, which, all acknowledge, will be a *personal* coming, whenever it does take place. "Oh, that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down *at thy presence*, כִּשְׁמַן. This chapter is evidently connected with the preceding chapters, which must undoubtedly refer to times yet future; and not only so, but especially to the scenes to take place in connection with the Jewish nation. A part of chap. lxi. has been fulfilled by the first advent of the Messiah, as we learn from Luke iv. 18—21. "The acceptable year of the Lord" has come, but "the day of vengeance of our God" is yet future; and hence the Saviour stopped in his reading, in the very middle of the verse, when he reached this clause, simply, because it was *not then* fulfilled, nor has it yet been. Those who feel determined to apply this prophecy to the *first* advent of Christ, will find that they have undertaken a work which the Saviour himself did not attempt. His knowledge of the truth led him, in reading, to stop just where he did; our ignorance hurries us onward, and hence our in-

consistencies in the exposition of this animating portion of God's word. Our prayer should be with the prophet, "Make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble *at thy presence*."*

Now, as the word invariably is applied to the actual presence of the *person* or *thing* spoken of, and is thus applied to the Saviour in the passage before us, we feel fully authorized to say that the presence of the Lord, in Ezek. xxxviii. 20, must mean a *visible* and *personal* appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. This visible and personal appearance of the Lord is to be at the same time that the army of Gog shall be destroyed, which is *before* the Millennium. It, therefore, clearly follows, that the visible and personal advent of our Lord to this earth, is to be *before* the Millennium.

Argument 2. My second argument to prove the pre-millennial advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is drawn from the fact, that the destruction of antichrist, which is, most undoubtedly, to take place before the Millennium, is to be by the glorious appearance of our Lord.

2 Thes. ii. 8, "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume

* See parallel passages in Ez. xxxviii. 20; Joel iii. 16; Amos i. 2; Hag. ii. 6, 7; Zech. xiv. 4, 5.

with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the *brightness of his coming.*"

It is of no consequence to decide now the much disputed question, *who* or *what* is meant by that "*wicked one*" (ὁ ἄνομος) in the text, as that does not affect the issue of this argument.* All agree that the destruction of antichrist, or that "*Wicked*," (one) is to be *before* the Millennium; for the whole description of that happy period of the church and of the world is utterly at variance with the existence of any such power during that time. The usual interpretation, however, which is put upon this verse is, that, by the coming of Christ, no more is intended than the universal diffusion of the knowledge of Christ; that is, that the simple and unostentatious gospel is the thing which is to destroy antichrist. How far this opinion is consistent with the principles of sound exposition of God's word, others may have their doubts; but, as for myself, I view it as entirely at variance with the mind of God, as well as utterly subversive of every rule of sound critical exposition.

Paul affirms that "that *Wicked*" (ὁ ἄνομος) shall be destroyed by the brightness of his coming, (τῆ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ,) by the Epiphany of his coming, or appearing and coming. This coming is a thing to be *seen*

* For the best information on this subject read "Ben Ezra's Coming of the Messiah," vol. 1, phenom. iii. pages 177—266. Also "Cunninghame on the Man of Sin."

by the bodily eye, as well as to be felt by the soul in its effects. A careful examination of the meaning of the words used, may go far to fix, permanently, the meaning of the verse. If it can be shown that the word (ἐπιφανεία) "*brightness*" always means a personal appearance of the object to which it relates, and that when applied to our Saviour, it invariably refers to his *glorious* appearance; and if it can also be shown that the word (παρουσία) "*coming*" always means a *literal*, a *personal* coming, we cannot perceive how the conclusion can be avoided, that the "*Wicked one*," or antichrist, is to be destroyed by the actual presence of our Lord and Saviour returned to the earth before the Millennium.

The word (ἐπιφανεία) *brightness* or *appearing* occurs but *six* times in the New Testament, in the following places.

1 Tim. vi. 14, "That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable until the *appearing* (μέχρι τῆς ἐπιφανείας) of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Tim. i. 10, "But is now made manifest by the *appearing* (δια τῆς ἐπιφανείας) of our Saviour Jesus Christ." This refers to the *first* advent of Christ, which, of course, was a personal one.

2 Tim. iv. 1, "I charge thee, therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead *at his appearing*, (κατὰ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν) and his king-

dom." His kingdom is here united with his appearing, showing that they synchronize.

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

Titus ii. 13, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the *glorious appearing* (*ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης*) of the Great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ."

2 Thes. ii. 8, "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy by the *brightness of his coming*," *ἐπιφάνειά τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ.*

The word (*παρουσία*) *coming* occurs twenty-four times in the New Testament, and in every instance it refers to the actual appearing or coming of the object referred to.

Matt. xxiv. 3, "What is the sign of thy coming, *τί τὸ σημεῖον τῆς ἡμετέρας παρουσίας.*"

Matt. xxiv. 27, "As the lightning—so shall the *coming* (*ἡ παρουσία*) of the Son of man be."

Matt. xxiv. 37, "As the days of Noah—so shall also the *coming* (*ἡ παρουσία*) of the Son of man be."

Matt. xxiv. 39,—“till the flood came—so shall also the *coming* (*ἡ παρουσία*) of the Son of man be."

1 Cor. xv. 23, "They that are Christ's at *his coming*, (*ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ.*")

1 Cor. xvi. 17, "I am glad of the *coming* (*ἐπὶ τῇ παρουσίᾳ*) of Stephanas."

2 Cor. vii. 6, "God—comforted us by *the coming* (*ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ*) of Titus."

2 Cor. vii. 7, "And not by *his coming* only, &c. (*ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ.*")

2 Cor. x. 10, "But his (Paul's) *bodily presence* (*ἡ δὲ παρουσία τοῦ σώματος*) is weak."

Phil. i. 26, "That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Christ Jesus for me, by *my coming*, (*διὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας παρουσίας*) to you again."

Phil. ii. 12, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, (*ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου*) but now much more in my *absence*, (*ἀπουσία*) &c."

1 Thes. ii. 19, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at *his coming*, (*ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ παρουσίᾳ.*")

1 Thes. iii. 13, "To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at *the coming* (*ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ*) of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

1 Thes. iv. 15,—“we which remain and are alive, and remain *unto the coming* (*εἰς τὴν παρουσίαν*) of the Lord shall not prevent (be before) them which are asleep."

1 Thes. v. 23, "And I pray God your whole soul and body be preserved blameless

unto the coming (ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ) of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thes. ii. 1, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by (concerning) the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (ὡς περ τῆς παρουσίας) and by our gathering unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind."

2 Thes. ii. 8,—“shall destroy with the brightness of his coming, (τῆς παρουσίας.)”

2 Thes. ii. 9, “Even him whose coming (οὐ ἡ παρουσία) is after the working of Satan.”

James v. 7, “Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord, (ὡς τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ Κυρίου.)”

James v. 8, “Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, (ἡ παρουσία τοῦ Κυρίου ἤγγικε.)”

2 Peter i. 16, “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (τὴν παρουσίαν) but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.” Peter refers here to the transfiguration of Christ on the Mount, which was an *actual* appearance (so far as humanity could bear it) of what the Son of God will be in his second advent.

2 Peter iii. 4, “Where is the promise of his coming? (τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ.)”

2 Peter iii. 12, “Looking for and hasting the coming (τὴν παρουσίαν) of the day of God.”

1 John ii. 28, “And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear we

may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming, ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ.”

These are all the places that I have been able to find in the New Testament, where the words (ἐπιφάνεια) *appearing* and (παρουσία) *coming* occur. The mere reading of them must convince every one that they can only refer to a *personal* appearance of the object referred to. There is no place where the sense of the passage can be preserved by making the word denote a *spiritual* or *figurative* advent of the object to which the word relates. As this, then, is the case, we feel that we are fully authorized in maintaining that the *coming* of Christ here spoken of must be a *visible* and *personal* coming. But the Apostle tells us that one object of the coming of Christ is to destroy antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition, as he is called in verse 3d. The destruction of *antichrist*, it is manifest, must be *before* the Millennium, consequently Christ's second advent in glory must be *before* the Millennium.

The language of the Apostle is peculiar in the verse under consideration, “Whom the Lord shall *consume* (ἀναλώσει) with the spirit of his mouth; and shall *destroy* (καταργήσει) with the brightness of his coming.” There is, most evidently, a two-fold influence to be excited against that “*Wicked*” by the Lord. The one is “*the spirit of his mouth,*” and the other “*the brightness of his coming.*” These

two expressions cannot mean the same thing. The word *spirit* (*πνεῦμα*) occurs in the New Testament about 389 times, and in no instance does it apply to the coming of Christ. It does, however, mean the gospel. See 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8, "If the ministration of death (the law) was glorious—how shall not the ministration of the *spirit* (the gospel) be rather glorious?" The expression, "the spirit of his mouth," I do not find in any other place in the New Testament. It may, then, mean, that the powerful and faithful preaching of the gospel will effectually break down or dissolve the ecclesiastical power of the man of sin, and thus be preparatory to the destruction, which is to follow, by the personal appearance of Christ.

It is not necessary to suppose that these two events synchronize; or, that the destruction of the man of sin should *immediately* follow this consumption by the Spirit, and yet, it would appear, that when the Lord begins the work of destruction, He will soon finish it. This verse may mark out to us distinctly the *order* of events in reference to this power. The same thing is foretold by John, in Rev. xiv. 6, 8, where the angel, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, and every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people, is followed by another angel declaring that "Babylon is fallen, is fallen."

To me it appears clear that the apostle, by the peculiarity of this expression, has reference

to the *two-fold* aspect in which the Man of Sin presents himself, viz. in a religious and a political character. The gospel faithfully published to all the nations of the earth must inevitably loosen the religious hold he may have on the minds of the people, but the destruction of his political power is to be accomplished by the personal appearance of the Lord Jesus. The particular mode of this destruction is not fully revealed to us, but it will no doubt be by awful judgments upon those who have the mark of the beast upon them. The words of Daniel will then be fulfilled "and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was, since there was a nation, even to that same time."

As to the time of antichrist's* destruction, the scriptures show us that it is *before* the Millennium; for, during that period Satan is to be bound, so that the nations of the earth may not be deceived by him till the thousand years are past. To suppose that this power will exist on the earth during that period, when all shall be peace and happiness and holiness among men, and harmony among the beasts of the field, is too glaringly opposed to the plain statements of the Scripture to need any serious answer. The destruction of "that Wicked" (*ὁ ἄνομος*) being before the binding of Satan, and that be-

* It will be evident to all that the "*Man of Sin*," "*Son of Perdition*," or "*Wicked*" of Paul, is the same as the "*Beast*" of Daniel, and the "*Babylon*" and "*Scarlet-coloured*" woman of John, which go by the general name of *antichrist*.

ing accomplished by the brightness of the coming of the Lord *personally*, we have abundant reason for maintaining, as we do, that our blessed Redeemer will return again to this earth in the greatness of His might, and in His glory *before* the millennium.

3. My third argument for the pre-millennial advent of our Lord, is drawn from the fact that the conversion of the Jewish nation, which is to take place *before* the Millennium, is connected with the personal appearance of the Saviour.

That this subject may be made plain to every mind I will prove from the Bible the following points, viz.

1. That the Jews *as a nation or people* are to inherit their own land again, and are to be converted to God, and to embrace Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah.

2. That this conversion of the Jewish people will be before or at the beginning of the millennium. And

3. That it is to be accomplished by the personal appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to them, accompanied by the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon them.

(1.) The Jews *as a nation* are to possess the land of Judah and to embrace Jesus of Nazareth as their long expected Messiah.

By the term *Jews*, I include all those who are the decendants of Abraham, comprehending the houses of Israel and of Judah. The schism

which took place between them in the reign of Jeroboam the son of Solomon, B. C. 975 has has never yet been healed. About 253 years after their separation, the kingdom of Israel was overthrown by Shalmanezzer, the king of Assyria. The people were carried away captive, and dispersed in the various districts of Assyria. About 117 years afterwards the house of Judah were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, from which many returned under Cyrus 70 years afterwards. Their final dispersion was under the Romans, when their temple was destroyed in the year A. D. 71. Some of the Israelites and some of the Jews, in every age, have embraced the truth, and have confessed Jesus Christ; but, as a people they still adhere to the law of Moses, for the veil is upon their faces while they read Moses and the Prophets. "Nevertheless," says Paul, "when they shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."*

The Prophecies concerning their captivity and dispersion, are very explicit, and they have been fulfilled to the letter. And the prophecies concerning their union, and their conversion are equally explicit, and we doubt not that in like manner they will be exactly and literally fulfilled.

* Dr. Grant's recently published, and interesting account of the Nestorian Christians of the house of Israel, shows us that great multitudes of them have been converted to Christianity. His work is well worth the careful perusal of every lover of the Jewish people, and of every student of Prophecy.

In Leviticus xxvi. Moses predicts their dispersion, and also their gathering. The first has taken place, and concerning the latter, he says, "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God." "I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and my covenant with Isaac, and my covenant with Abraham I will remember; and I will remember the land."

Hosea, who lived before the overthrow of Israel, predicts their captivity in the following language, (ix. 3) "they shall not dwell in the Lord's land; but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean things in Assyria." In chap. xiv. 4—9, we have a joyful prediction of their return. God says, "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."

Jeremiah (xvi. 14,) predicts their return, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said the Lord liveth who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth who brought up the children of Israel from the *land of the North*, and from *all the lands* whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again to their land that I gave unto their fathers."

In Jer. iii. 17, 18, we have a distinct pro-

phesy concerning the return of Israel and of Judah. "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the *throne of the Lord*;* and all nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem, neither shall they walk any more after the imaginations of their evil heart. In those days the *house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel*, and they shall come together out of the land of the North, to the land that I have given them for an inheritance unto your fathers."

Jer. xxx. 3, "For lo, the days come saith the Lord that I will bring *again* the captivity of my people *Israel and Judah*, saith the Lord; and I will cause them to *return* to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they *shall possess it*."

The prophecy of Ezekiel xxxvii. 15—28 is remarkably explicit both as to the *return* of the Jewish nation, and also as to their *union* and *conversion*. "I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen—and I will make them *one nation* in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be *no more two nations*, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all." These passages may suffice to prove their return from captivity, and from their dispersion, to their own land.

The following passages prove that they will be converted to God from all their idolatry and sin, and will be a holy nation.

Ezek. xxxvii. 26, "Moreover I will make a

* See also Ezek. xliii. 7. Zach. xiv. 9.

covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them, and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle shall be with them; yea I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do *sanctify* Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore."

Ezek. xxxix. 25, "Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and *have mercy* upon the *whole house of Israel*—neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have *pour-ed out my spirit* upon the house of Israel."

Jer. xxx. 31—34 "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. And this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days (viz. after their dispersion and their return) saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God and they shall be my people—for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more."

Zech. xii. 10, "And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, *the spirit of grace and of supplication*, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced (viz. Jesus) and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son.

Read also Romans, xi. 1—36, which clearly proves the restoration of the Jews to the favour of God as in days past; and also the clear predictions of Hosea chap. ii. 14—23.

And in Malachi iii. 4, we are told that in a future day the "offerings of Judah and of Jerusalem shall be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, as in former years."

These passages sufficiently prove that the Jews, as a nation, are to possess the land of Judea again, and to be converted to God, and acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

2. This conversion of the Jews to the Saviour is to take place *before* the Millennium.

From the preceding prophecies it is very evident that their return to their own land is *before* that happy period. Indeed, it is the union of the Jews, and of the Gentiles, under one shepherd, that so distinctly marks out to us that time, as peculiarly the glory of the church, and of the world. The conversion of the Jews, with that of the Gentiles, is in fact the Millennium. If they be not grafted again into their own olive tree, and if the Gentiles "partake not with them of the root and fatness of the olive tree," then the prophets and the apostles have predicted that which will not come to pass, and the whole church of God, from the days of Joel, the first of the Prophets, till the present day, have been deceived. It is true that now the Jews, "as concerning the gospel, are enemies for our (the Gentiles) sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved

for their fathers' sakes." But "there shall come a deliverer out of Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob," so that Israel shall be saved.

A careful perusal of Ezekiel, chapters xxxiv. xxxix, will convince the reader that the Jews will return to their own land, in their *unconverted* state, and that their conversion to God, upon the mountains of Israel, will be *after* their return. It is needless to quote these chapters in full; only let them be carefully read. "Thus saith the Lord, now will I have mercy upon the *whole* house of Israel, *after* they have borne their shame, and *when* they dwell safely in their land, and none make them afraid." Both of these events, viz., their return, and their conversion, are yet future; and their conversion is to be preceded by their restoration.

3. This conversion of the Jews, *nationally*, is to be by the *personal appearance* of the Saviour, accompanied by the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The question is often asked, what is the necessity of his appearance for the conversion of the Jews? We might answer it by asking another, viz.: what was the necessity of Christ's appearing to Paul to convert him? The truth is, we know nothing of the mind of God in any matter, except as he may see fit to inform us. In this case, we only know the *fact* which God has revealed; but the reason *why* he will do so cannot now be known to us.

Seeing that it *is predicted*, we can see the necessity of its taking place; for every jot, and every tittle of all that God has spoken must be fulfilled. The simple word of God, and not our views of the propriety or the necessity of things, is to be our rule of faith and duty.

In Zech. xiii. 9, we are explicitly told that those who shall be saved in the great day of their distress, shall say, "The Lord is my God." In the following chapter, verse 4th, "The *feet* of the Lord are to stand, in that day, on the Mount of Olives." And in chap. xii. 10, they are to *look upon* him (הביטו אלי) whom they have pierced. The *piercing* was a literal thing, and so will the *looking* be. The allusion is, no doubt, made to the brazen serpent, which Moses raised up in the wilderness, and to which the bitten Israelites were to look. The *same word* is used by the prophet to express the idea of their looking on the Messiah that is used by Moses to express the idea of looking on the brazen serpent. The primary meaning of the word (ביט) is, to *direct the eye; to look*; its secondary and accommodated meaning is, to *look with the eye of the mind, to consider*. If the Prophet had meant to convey to us the idea that the *looking* of the Israelites upon him whom they had pierced was to be merely an act of the *mind*, an act of faith, without any visible appearance, another word (viz. ראה) would have been used. But the choice of this word (ביט)

shows us that a *literal looking* is meant. They shall *see* Jesus in person.

In the Prophet Joel (iii. 9—21) reference is made to the same distressing time that is to precede the appearance of the Saviour, of which Zechariah and Ezekiel speak. The 12th verse speaks of Jehovah *sitting* on the Mount of Olives (Zech. xiv. 4,) to judge the nations that shall be assembled in the valley of Jehoshaphat, (or the valley of Judgment,) which evidently conveys to us the idea of his *actual* presence. If he be *actually* there, what objection can there be to his being *visibly* there at the same time? Surely there can be no good reason for denying it.

Ezekiel's testimony is peculiarly strong on this point. He speaks of the erection of the temple, *after* the reunion of the *twelve* tribes, and of "the glory of the Lord," or the *visible* presence of the Lord in his sanctuary. The Saviour calls it the place of his *throne*, and the place of the "*soles of his feet*," (Ezek. xliii. 7; Is. lx. 13.) This expression shows us what we are to understand by "*the glory of the Lord*," (כבוד יהוה) in the 4th and 5th verses of this chapter, and which occurs frequently in the scriptures, viz., the *actual* and *visible presence* of the Lord Jesus Christ. That the expression "the glory of the Lord" must refer to the *visible* appearance of Jehovah, is clear from the following passages of scripture, viz.:

Num. xvi. 42, "And, behold, the cloud co-

vered it, (the tabernacle,) and the *glory of the Lord* (כבוד יהוה) appeared."

1 Kings viii. 11, "So the priests could not stand to minister before the cloud; for the '*glory of the Lord*' hath filled the house of the Lord."

Ex. xvi. 10, "And, behold, the '*glory of the Lord*' appeared in the cloud."

Is. xl. 5, "And '*the glory of the Lord*' shall be revealed, and all flesh shall *see* it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Compare Acts ix. 3. 5.

Is. lx. 1, 2, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the '*glory of the Lord*' is risen upon thee,—and *his glory* shall be *seen* upon thee."

Ezek. xliii. 2. 4, 5, "The '*glory of the Lord*' of Israel came from the way of the east, and his voice was like a noise of many waters, and the earth shined with his *glory*.—and the *glory of the Lord* came into the house—and, behold, the *glory of the Lord* filled the house."

Ez. xlv. 2. 4,—“this gate shall be shut;—because the Lord God of Israel hath entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut. And I looked, and behold, *the glory of the Lord* filled the house of the Lord.”

Now from these passages, it appears that the expression "*the glory of the Lord*" (כבוד יהוה) invariably means the *visible* appearance of Jehovah, and not mere splendor or honor, apart from the actual personal presence of Je-

hovah. But this "*glory of the Lord*" (the Messiah) is to appear for their deliverance from the oppression of Gog and Magog—and they are to look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn in bitterness over their sins for their long rejection of him.

This view of the subject is confirmed by the following passage in Matt. xxiii. 39, "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh (*ὁ ἐρχόμενος* that is about to come) in the name of the Lord." When the Saviour uttered these words his first coming was a *past* event. The coming here spoken of is yet future. He had been in the temple reproving the scribes and the Pharisees, and had just come out of it, when he gave vent to his feelings in the following pathetic strains: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." And then he utters this awful and significant prophecy, "Behold, your house (the temple) is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth *till* ye shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." If this language have any definite meaning, surely, when Jesus said, "Ye shall not see me *till*" a certain time, one must conclude that whenever that time does arrive they shall see him. They saw him, then, as their Sa-

viour, (for he came to his own,) but they rejected him. He now takes his departure from them, as a nation, and they will never again see him, in the character of a deliverer, *until* after the lapse of ages, (the judgments of God rolling over them in the meanwhile,) and the time come when they shall hail him as their Lord, and rejoice in the deliverance he may bring them.

But what time is here referred to? I reply, it is designated by the time when they shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." It may be asked, has not that period passed away already, when the multitudes cried out, "Hosanna to the Son of David?" I answer, no: for that event took place *before* this prediction was uttered by our Saviour; and, again, it was the exclamation of the *children, and of the multitude* of the disciples, (Luke xix. 37,) as he rode into Jerusalem, and not of the Jewish people, the priests and scribes. The Saviour, then, addressing the Jews as a people, says, as the children and the multitude have said "Hosanna," ye shall not see me *till ye also* shall say, "Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The temple is to remain desolate *till* they shall proclaim Jesus the blessed of the Lord. As the temple is still desolate, it is manifest that this event is future. The time for its desolation, however, is fixed in the purpose of God, as we learn from Luke xxi. 24, "Jeru-

salem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the *times* of the Gentiles be fulfilled." And the *times* of the Gentiles will be fulfilled whenever the gospel shall have been preached among all nations for a witness unto them; then shall the *end* of the Jewish dispersion, and of the treading down of Jerusalem, come. These events having come, the next in order is the coming of Jesus, whom they shall see, and of whom they shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."* This will be at his second advent, before the Millennium. Then they will be converted. Then they will see him. They shall look on him, and with weeping say, "*Ishi*," my dear husband.

There are two other passages of scripture which, it appears to me, have a distinct reference to the *mode* of the conversion of Israel at last, and which have been overlooked by modern expositors of scripture, so far as I have been able to examine them, they are found in 1 Tim. i. 16, and 1 Corinth. xv. 8, "Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering, for a *pattern* to them which should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life." The usual interpretation of this verse is, that Paul's conversion affords encourage-

* Of this verse Theophilact says the meaning is, "Ye shall not see me until my *second advent*." Non igitur me videbitis usque ad secundum adventum.

ment for other sinners to trust in the Saviour; for, if he was willing and able to forgive him, who was a blasphemer and a persecutor, yea, the chief of sinners, no other sinner need despair. This is, no doubt, true; but, I apprehend, that Paul meant to convey a wholly different idea, by the peculiar language here used.

In the previous part of the chapter, in writing to Timothy, he gives him some advice in reference to his official duty—speaks of the goodness and use of the law, magnifies the gospel, and then breaks out in thanksgiving to the Lord Jesus Christ for his great compassion towards him, a vile blasphemer, and a persecutor of his unoffending people; and also, for the exceeding great display of his grace in putting him into the ministry. "Howbeit," the design which the Lord has in my conversion is not merely that I may be saved, and be a chosen vessel to carry the gospel unto the Gentiles, but "I obtained mercy for this cause, viz., that in me first Jesus Christ might show all long suffering, for a *pattern* to them (the Jews) which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

The conversion of Paul, then, was a *pattern* (*ὑποτύπωσις*, a concise representation, an exact form or type,) of the conversion of his brethren, the Jews. Paul was a grievous persecutor. He was on his way to Damascus, with authority from the High Priest to persecute the people of God, the followers of Jesus

Christ. Suddenly a light shines all around him, and he is smitten to the ground—a voice calls out to him saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He replies, "who art thou, Lord?" "I am *Jesus* whom thou persecutest." Then it was that Jesus *appeared* to him in his glory, the insupportable splendor of which struck him with blindness, and smote him to the earth. (Acts ix. 17; xvi. 16.) He then inquires, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The advice was given; and the history of Paul's life shows that he never lost sight of his duty, but pressed on faithfully till he finished his course, and obtained the martyr's crown.

Such is a brief history of Paul's life and conversion. Now, to my mind, there does appear to be no consistent sense in which his conversion can be a *pattern* or a *type* to others, unless in the *miraculousness* of its nature. As to the conversion of Jews individually, or of Gentiles nationally, since the Apostle's day, there is nothing in them which can bear any resemblance to the conversion of Paul. He affirms that he was the "*first*," and the only one; and that he was in this manner converted; and this was done that he might be an illustration of the *mode* in which God will, in after days, convert his brethren. The passages which have already been commented upon from the Prophets, in my view, set forth the same idea.

But there is another passage in Paul's writ-

ings which conveys the same sentiment. It is in 1 Cor. xv. 8, "And last of all, he (Christ) was seen by me also, as of one *born out of due time*." This remark is thrown in incidentally, as it were, while he is speaking of the resurrection, and adds nothing to his testimony in that case; but it has a fund of meaning bearing upon another point, in which Paul felt as much interest as he did in the resurrection, viz., the second advent of Christ. The expression, ὡςπερὶ τῶ ἐκτροματι, rendered "as of one born out of due time," properly means "*as an abortion*," or one born *before* the due time. The meaning of the passage, then, I apprehend, is this: as an *εκτρομα* "one born before the time," is introduced into the light *before* the due or appointed time, so Paul, the last of the Apostles, has been converted, and has *seen* Christ before the due or appointed time. The question now arises, *what time* does Paul refer to? It surely can have no reference to his *conversion*, nor to his *call* to the Apostleship; for he was converted to God in the proper time; and certainly, his call to the Apostleship was at the right time.

But the time referred to by the word *ἐκτρόματι*, as the *due time*, is the time appointed by God for the national conversion of Israel. This event is represented as a birth. Perhaps this word has a specific reference to the expression of the Prophet, "Shall a nation be born at once?" Is. lxvi. 8. That day,

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however, is not revealed, and will not be, except by the event. But Paul, as one of the nation, was converted, and saw the Saviour before the day appointed in the wisdom of God, for the spiritual birth of his nation, in order that he might be a sample or type of their conversion. Whenever that time arrives, they also will be converted to the Saviour. This conversion will be the anti-type of Paul's conversion. It will be sudden, and by the miraculous appearance of the Saviour. They also shall see Jesus, and shall say, "Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." "Hath God cast away his people," inquires Paul. God forbid. For, says he, I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people, whom he foreknew. And, he adds, it is for this cause that I obtained mercy, that Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering in me, the first (*ἐν ἐμοὶ πρῶτον*) of the Jewish nation whom Jesus has converted by his glorious appearing, for a *pattern* (*ὑποτύπωσις*, an exact representation, or type, or mode of conversion,) to all them (the Israelitish nation) which are about to believe (*τῶν μελλόντων πιστεῦειν*) on him to eternal life. Paul was not the first of the Jewish race who was converted under the gospel dispensation; but he was the first who was converted by the *miraculous* appearance of the Saviour to him. And it is only in this sense that he

is a type or *pattern* of the conversion of his nation.

This mode of interpretation gives a point and force to the Apostle's language which are entirely lost by any other exposition. It has, at the same time, the merit of being grammatical and consistent, and in harmony with other portions of scripture, which expressly declare that Jesus will be manifested to the Jews at their restoration. There must, most assuredly, be some sufficient reason for God's conduct in the case of Paul. Why should the Saviour appear to him, and make him *an exception* to all others? We can see no other reason than the one which Paul himself gives us, viz.: that he might be a *pattern* to his brethren of the manner in which God will ultimately bring them into his fold. And, to all human appearance, there is no other means which is likely to have this happy influence upon them. They have resisted the calls of the gospel, and opposed the strivings of the Holy Ghost for 1800 years, with a firmness which has laughed to scorn the efforts of the world to win them to Christ, by the righteous endeavors of godly men, or to drive them from their attachment to Moses, and the rites of their faith, by the cruelties of persecution, or the sufferings of death. Still, they believe in God, and wait for the coming of the Messiah in glory, with a more ardent expectation, and more longing desires than the Christian church now does. This expectation itself is peculiar,

and will, no doubt, be fully realized, but not in the precise way they may expect.*

Now, when we consider all these portions of scripture, is it not reasonable, as well as scriptural, to believe that the Jewish nation will be converted to the faith of the Messiah by his *appearance* among them? Their conversion is linked in with the coming of Christ, which we have shown is a personal one; and as their conversion is to take place before the Millennium, so will the second personal advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be *before* the Millennium.

As the conversion of Paul is a type of the conversion of the nation, so also, I am disposed to believe, that his life, after his conversion, is a type of what the Jews will be after their return to the Bishop and Shepherd of their souls. His labors for God were more abundant than any of the other Apostles. And

*The history of the Jewish nation is an anomaly in the history of nations. Let any one read their history, and he will see that for 1800 years it is a history of persecutions, cruelties, and outrages, which have been perpetrated upon them by those who professed to be the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. The strong arm of persecution has compelled many of them to embrace a faith that they did not believe, for the purpose of saving their life; but a vast majority of them chose to suffer the confiscation of their property, banishment, and death, rather than embrace the faith of those, who, by their conduct, showed that they had less of the love of God, than those whom they unrighteously oppressed.

the Bible holds out the idea that the zeal of the converted Jews will far exceed that of the Gentiles. There will be a peculiarity in their case that cannot exist in the case of any other people. Theirs will be the return of once disobedient, but now penitent children to their father's house, and to his fond embrace. The Jews were chosen to be the first preachers of the gospel. And Isaiah informs us that they will be sent again to the nations of the earth, and they shall declare his glory among the Gentiles. Is. lxvi. 19.*

4. A fourth argument for the pre-millennial advent of Christ, is drawn from the *parables* of our Saviour.†

A parable is an allegorical representation of something real in life, or in nature, from which a moral is drawn for the instruction of the hearers or readers. The scriptures con-

*Since writing the above my attention has been directed to an ancient author, who takes the same view of the passage concerning the conversion of Paul that is here given. See Mede's Works, folio, page 891. Also his answer to Dr. Twisse. Dr. Godwin, vol. iv. pt. 1, page 116, says, "Paul's conversion had a pattern in it, and it is a pattern of the extraordinary conversion of the Jews, his countrymen."

†Bishop Griswell divides the parables into *moral* and *allegorical*. The allegorical he considers prophetic. The parable of the good Samaritan is an example of the moral,—and the nobleman, who went into a far country, as allegorical and prophetic. See his works.

tain many parables. The parable which Nathan, the Prophet, spake concerning David is, no doubt, familiar to all. The instructions of our Saviour abounded in parables; that is, in these figurative representations of truth. They were always very appropriate and plain, and yet there was generally a thin veil of obscurity thrown over them, so that their meaning could not be discovered without strict attention. All his parables are founded upon life, and the reality of things, and are composed of circumstances which every one could perceive might probably happen.

To understand the parables, a writer observes; "1. It is not necessary that the representation of natural things, in a parable, should be strictly a matter of fact, because the design is not to give information concerning these, but concerning some more momentous truth. 2. We must chiefly attend to the *scope* of the parable, which is to be gathered from the inspired explanation of it, from the introduction to it, or from the conclusion of it. 3. Hence, it follows, that we are not to expect that every circumstance in the parable should be answered by something in the explanation; for several circumstances may be added for the sake of decorum, or mere allusion to that from whence the figure of the parable is taken. 4. Yet a parable may inform us of several truths besides the *scope* of it."

Let us now take the parable of our Saviour, as recorded by Luke xix. 11—27. "And as

they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh unto Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said, therefore, a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. And he called his servants and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading." The result of this inquiry is, that some were rewarded, and others were punished.

That this parable has a special reference to Christ, as King, there can, I apprehend, be no doubt upon the mind of any one. There are several particulars which demand our attention in reference to this parable.

And 1. The disciples of our Lord fully believed that he was the Messiah, and that he had come to give them, not only spiritual deliverance from the power of Satan, but also temporal deliverance from the hand of the Romans. They had just witnessed the effect of his power upon the heart of Zaccheus, and had heard him say that "salvation this day is come to this house, (i. e. the family of Zac-

cheus,) for as much as (*καθότι* because that) he also is a son of Abraham." The showing mercy to this Jew, and the reason assigned for it, "*because he is a son of Abraham,*" and the subsequent remark in connection with it, *viz.*, "that the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," no doubt so excited their hopes that they expected Jesus was on his way *now* to Jerusalem to set up his kingdom. They thought that the kingdom of God should *immediately* (*παράρρημα, instantly,*) appear; or was about instantly to be made manifest, (*μέλλει ἀναφανείσθαι,*) and that Jesus would, in fact, *temporarily*, begin his reign on the earth. The disciples mistook the *time*, on this occasion, as they also did afterwards, as we learn from Acts i. 6. We have no intimation here that the disciples were at all mistaken as to the *fact* that Jesus, who came to be the King of the Jews, and was born to possess the throne of his father David, (Luke i. 32,) would at some time set up his kingdom. The answer of our Saviour, so far from opposing the idea of his being a King, most evidently encouraged it. But they were mistaken merely as to the *time when* this kingdom should be set up, and hence his answer is directed to the correction of *that* point. Did he speak this parable unto them because they *erroneously* supposed that he was about to set up his kingdom at some future period? Certainly not; but because they thought he was about to do it *immediately*; and the circum-

stance of their being *nigh* to Jerusalem, and on their way to it, gave the opinion the greater plausibility in their minds. There is not the most distant allusion by our Saviour in this place, or in any other passage of the Bible that I have ever read, that the disciples were wrong in their final expectation of his reigning in Jerusalem, before his ancestors gloriously, according to the Prophet Isaiah. (See xxiv. 23.)

2. Having given them the reason *why* he spake this parable at this time, the Saviour gives them to understand that it is necessary for him to be absent for a season (the length of the time not specified) to receive "for himself a kingdom, and to return" to the earth to rule over it.

This remark was necessary to give them correct views of his purpose, in the general, but especially on the present occasion. They were now on their way to Jerusalem. Jesus put himself at the head of the company and led the way, while the multitudes of disciples and others followed. As he drew nigh to Bethany he commissioned two of his disciples to go before him into the village, and bring the colt that they should find tied there. They did so; and Jesus was placed on it. As they moved on, some of the multitude spread their garments on the road, while others strewed the branches probably of the palm tree before him. These were the usual tokens of subjection to the person thus honored, and of victo-

ries obtained by him. The people in the mean time cried out, "Hosanna to the Son of David, that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!"

When they entered Jerusalem "all the city was moved," and they questioned one another saying, "Who is this?" The multitude replied, "This is Jesus, the *Prophet* of Nazareth." As to the rejoicing of the disciples, Luke tells us it was because "of all the mighty works that they had seen." But what were those things? The history tells us that in this journey they had seen him restore the blind to sight—had witnessed the effect of the Saviour's call upon Zaccheus, and heard his remarks on the occasion;—they had seen him by a word *tame* the colt, "whereon yet never man sat," so that it submitted cheerfully to be used by him; thus showing that under the reign of King Jesus, as Messiah, the dominion of the animal creation will again be in the hands of man; and they had also witnessed the fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy in Zion's King, who is also a Prophet, coming in meekness and riding upon "the foal of an ass."

Now, I ask, would it be at all surprising, when they beheld these repeated acts of Divine power displayed before them, and saw the fulfilment of one prophecy in the case of Jesus, that they should suppose he was about *immediately* (*απαρχρῆμα*, instantly,) to set up his Messianic kingdom? Indeed, it is hard to

conceive how they could have thought otherwise; and hence, to prevent them from doing anything, in their joy, which might convince the people that they did believe the *very moment* of time had come to restore the kingdom to Israel, the Saviour, by this parable, teaches them that this, his present visit to Jerusalem, is *not* the time for the accomplishment of that event. This remark would rectify their expectations as to the *time*, while at the same time it would tend greatly to confirm them in their belief that it would ultimately take place. They now see that a temporary absence of their Lord is to intervene before the Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David, and before he shall reign over the house of Jacob. It is not at all probable that the disciples, at the time, understood what he meant by his going into a far country, nor would they until after his ascension. But the impression left upon their minds by the remark, and the impression our Saviour designed to make was, that *after* his return, and *not before* it, the kingdom of God would be made manifest.

3. The parable informs us again that the *same person* who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, is to *return* again.

The disciples would, doubtless, understand from this, that whenever Jesus should go away, and however long he might stay away from them, in the arrangement of matters pre-

paratory to the setting up of his kingdom, he would come again. And this fact is confirmed by the angels, who appeared to the disciples immediately after the ascension of our Lord. (Acts i. 10, 11.) "This *same Jesus* (ὁ αὐτός ὁ Ἰησοῦς;*) who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go up into heaven." The church, then, has a right to expect the return of her Lord and Saviour in the same body, that is, in humanity, again to the earth.

4. A fourth particular in this parable is, that during his absence, his citizens or townsmen (that is, the Jews,) would not occupy or improve the talents he had given them; nor would they have him to reign over them. And so determined were they in their hatred of his person, and opposition to his commands and government, that they sent him word to that effect.

This has been literally true. Jesus came to his own people, but they received him not. They would not have him while on earth to rule over them. They condemned him to death, while they asked and obtained the release of Barabbas, the murderer, and said, "Let his blood be upon us, and upon our children." Not only during his presence on the earth did they reject him, but during his absence also they have done it. Our Saviour knew that they would do so, and hence he

* See page 16.

tells us that as a people they had come to the firm conclusion not to have him to reign over them. The history of the Jewish people shows us how unwaveringly they have held to their purpose. And this should teach us one fact, viz., that every effort to convert the *Jews, as a people*, to the faith of the gospel is utterly hopeless, until their king return and call them to an account. The history of God's dealings with them, for the last 1800 years, shows us that this is so. A remnant have, in all ages, acknowledged Jesus as their Messiah; but the nation, as such, never will submit to the King during his absence. "We will not have him to reign over us."

I do not mean to insinuate, by these remarks, that there is less hope for the conversion of a Jew than of a Gentile, or that we have not as much encouragement to preach the gospel to the Jew as to the Gentile. No Gentile nation has ever yet received Christ as their King. Indeed, there is no such thing as a truly converted nation. There are governments nominally Christian, and their laws are in many respects based upon the Bible, but the practice of even such nations is directly opposed to their national faith. Individuals there are, in those nations, who are true Christians, but the mass of the people are not such. If we compare the number of true converts from among the Jews, who are a mere fraction of the population of the globe, with the number of true converts from among the

Gentiles, I doubt not but that as many Jews, in proportion to their number, are converted as there are Gentiles. The labors of no preachers of the gospel have ever been rewarded with more than a partial success among the Gentiles. The same is true in reference to the Jews. At the commencement of the gospel dispensation a great multitude of the Jews were obedient to the faith. And there has ever been a remnant according to the election of grace. The truth is, the object of this dispensation, so far as facts have developed it, is to save an *elect church*, composed of Jews and of Gentiles. The Gentiles may, in masses or in communities, be brought to receive the gospel formally; but what is a formal or national adoption of the faith of Christ, without the power of it being felt in their hearts individually? Such converts are no better than *heathen*, so far as their personal salvation is concerned. A converted Gentile is grafted into the true olive, and is thus spiritually a Jew *inwardly*, but an outward conversion is not such a grafting in. From the circumstances in which the Jews have been placed for centuries past, it could not be expected that any more than a remnant should be converted to the faith of Christ. We are not to refuse to labor for the conversion of the Jews, though we know that they will not *all* embrace the gospel, any more than we should refuse to labor for the salvation of the Gentiles, because *they* will not all

believe the gospel. The first nation that will individually embrace the Messiah will be the *Jewish nation*, but it will not be under this dispensation. Now they reject their King; but on his return they will turn unto the Lord, and hail him as their Messiah and their King.

5. We learn another interesting fact from this parable, viz.: that on the return of this nobleman (our Saviour) to the country he left, that is, this world, he will set up his kingdom in it, and will reign here. Then it is that he will reward all those who may have been faithful to him during his absence, and punish those who have been unfaithful. This is to be done, I apprehend, at the beginning of his Messianic kingdom, and is not to be left till its close.

The idea advanced here is in perfect harmony with that expressed by Joel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, viz.: that the setting up of Christ's kingdom on the earth is to be marked by awful judgments upon his enemies, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. And the fact that he is to reign upon the earth, and the saints with him, is affirmed by John in Rev. v. 10, "And we shall reign on the earth;" and also in chap. xx. 6, "And they shall reign with him a thousand years."

From this parable, thus briefly explained, we cannot see how the conclusion can be avoided which we draw from it, viz.: that the Lord Jesus Christ will return again, *personally*, to the earth *before* the setting up of his

kingdom, and that he will reign with his saints during the thousand years of his Messianic kingdom in righteousness and in great glory. Then the prince of this world will be bound. His dominion over man will be broken. Humanity once more, in the person of Jesus Christ, the second Adam, will sway the sceptre over all the earth. The beasts of the field will again acknowledge their subjection to man. The curse will be removed from the earth. The briars and the thorns, the emblems of it, will be abolished, and the *fir tree* and the *myrtle* shall come up in their stead. They shall be to the Lord for a name (שם for renown or glory, Gen. vi. 4,) and to the inhabitants of the earth, as the rainbow is now, for an *everlasting sign* (למדה עולם) that shall not be cut off, Is. lv. 13. The *rainbow* is now a *sign* to the inhabitants of the earth that the earth shall never be again deluged by a flood of water, according to the promise of God. So, also, the *fir tree* and the *myrtle* shall be a *sign* of the restored fertility and peace of the earth, under the reign of the Messiah, the Prince of Peace, and the King of Israel; a sign that shall *not* be cut off.

The parables of the *ten virgins*, and of the *talents*, in Matt. xxv. when rightly explained, lead us to the same conclusion. But my design is not to take up time in unfolding any more of them. With the key already furnished, the reader may unlock their treasures,

and rejoice in the blessedness of their promises.

5. A fifth argument for the pre-millennial advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, is drawn from the expectation of the apostolic and primitive church, and the express declarations of scripture tending to confirm that expectation.

That this was the expectation of the Apostles, and their immediate successors, no reader of the Bible pretends to deny. They expected the kingdom of the Messiah to be set up *immediately*; and that, too, before the Saviour should suffer. This was the view of Peter, of James and John, of the disciples who conversed with Jesus on their way to Emmaus, and, indeed, of the whole body of the disciples. To account for this universal expectation among the disciples, and the Apostles of our Lord, commentators, and many Christian ministers now tell us it was a *Judaising notion*, a *prejudice in favor of an erroneous opinion*. This may do for those who are willing to take things upon the mere word of others, or on the faith of commentators; but, I feel confident, it will not satisfy the mind of any one who is divested of prejudice in favor of an erroneous opinion. It is also confidently affirmed, that our Saviour endeavored to correct the false ideas of the Apostles in regard to the future restoration of Israel, but failed to do so. There is less of *proof* in such remarks

than mere assertion. If it be so, that the Saviour sought to correct their false and absurd notions of a future temporal kingdom, and yet failed; and if, as a minister once remarked, the Apostles were an exceedingly ignorant set of men, I fear we have no guarantee for the correctness of any thing that they have written. If this was a false notion, it was such an one as even the descent of the Holy Spirit, who, it was promised, would guide them into *all* truth, did not rectify. For it is clear, from the New Testament, that the churches and the Apostles, after the gift of the Holy Spirit, were as firm believers in the doctrine of Christ's coming to restore the kingdom to Israel, and to reign upon the earth, as they were before his ascension. If, then, this be an error, the spirit did *not*, according to the promise, "guide them into *all* truth."^{*}

If it be an error, how comes it to pass that Paul, who was miraculously brought to submit to Jesus Christ, and was especially taught by the Saviour appearing to him, should have so firmly believed it, as his writings abundantly testify? If it be an erroneous opinion, why did the Thessalonian church, under the preaching of Paul, embrace it? Did the great Apostle to the Gentiles preach error? If it

^{*} Read 1 Cor. vi. 2; 1 Thes. iv. 13—17; 2 Thes. ii. 1—9; 1 Tim. vi. 11—16; 2 Tim. iv. 1—8; Rev. v. 10; xx. 6.

be a mere Jewish notion, and rather the wish of a down-trodden people than a matter of revelation, why should John, nearly 100 years after the birth of Christ, and long after their temple was destroyed, still teach the sentiment, and ardently pray for his speedy coming to the earth to reign in righteousness and peace. The truth is, the error is with us, and not with the Apostles.

But let us examine some of the expressions of the Apostles and disciples on this point, and then we shall perceive whether they were in an error or not.

Matt. xx. 20—23, and Mark x. 35—40, "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, and her sons, James and John, with her, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, (and unto them, Mark x. 38,) what wilt thou? ("ye," Mark.) "She (they) said unto him, Grant that these, my two sons, (we) may sit the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left in thy kingdom. ("Glory," Mark.) But Jesus answered and said, ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with? They say unto him, we are able. And he said unto them, ye shall drink, indeed, of my cup, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with; but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but (αγα

except, unless,) to those for whom it is prepared by (*ὑπὲρ*) my father.”*

What is the plain meaning of this request, and of the answer? Undoubtedly it is this. They fully believed that Jesus came to save his people from their sins, and to set up his kingdom on the earth. They therefore asked that they might have an honorable station in that kingdom, the one on the right, and the other on the left hand of Jesus. The Saviour gives no intimation that they were in an error as to the *fact* of his having a kingdom on the earth. If they had been, is it not reasonable to suppose that he would at once have enlightened their minds, and have replied, ye are wholly mistaken; I shall *never* have a kingdom on the earth, and therefore your question is wholly out of place. So far from this, his answer is an unequivocal confirmation of their faith on this point. He, however, tells them that only those shall be entitled to this great blessing who can share with him in his suffering. They affirm that they can suffer for him. Then, says the Saviour, it is not at my disposal to give these special honors in my kingdom, except to those only for whom they are prepared by my Father. What, then, is the plain and obvious inference that they must have drawn from this answer? Undoubtedly it was, that if they would be faithful and suf-

* The *italics* in this passage should be left out, so as to give the true meaning.

fer for Christ, they should reign with him in his kingdom. But, as to the particular office they should hold in that kingdom, that was a thing which they must be content to leave in the hands of the Father, who will do all things well, and appropriate these rewards according to his righteous will.

That this is the only proper mode of interpreting this passage, I am the more fully convinced from the answer which the Saviour had just before given to Peter, when he asked, “As we have left all and followed thee, what shall we have?” Matt. xix. 27. “Jesus said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration (*παλιγγενεσία*) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” A correct idea of this passage will aid us to see its bearing upon the verses we have just been commenting upon, and also upon other kindred passages.

The Saviour had, immediately before this, told the young ruler that, if he would part with all he had and follow him, he should have a treasure in heaven. Peter, knowing that he and his brethren had parted with all they possessed for the Saviour, asks the question, “Lord what shall we have?” Shall we not have a treasure also? To this the Saviour replies in the affirmative; and then specifies what that treasure will be in part. It is that they shall be honored by sitting with him

on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. But when shall this be? "In the *regeneration*," (παλιγγενεσία,) in the restoration, in that new condition of things, in the reign of the Messiah, when the universe, men, and animals, shall be restored to their pristine state, according to Luke, (Acts iii. 21,) that is, "when the Son of man shall sit in *his* throne of glory, then shall ye also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This will be your reward; therefore continue to follow me.

I am well aware that this passage has been applied to the present state of things by some, and to heaven by others. But, that it can only be applied, *intelligibly*, to the kingdom of the Messiah, yet to be set up on this earth, that is, the Millennial reign of Christ, will appear from the following reasons:

1. The word (παλιγγενεσία) *regeneration* does not refer to the work of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of the Apostles, because they could not follow Christ in this particular, for the plain reason that he never needed conversion, and never was converted.

2. It cannot mean the *present state of things*, for the Saviour is *not* now on *His* throne. The throne on which He now sits is His *Father's*. See Heb. i. 3. Rev. iii. 21.

But he has a throne, in promise, which he is, in due time, to occupy. That throne is emphatically called *his* throne. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me *in my*

throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father *in his throne*." Rev. iii. 21. The throne referred to here is that of his father David, upon which he shall sit, as the son of David. See Luke i. 32, and those remarkable passages in Is. ix. 7: xxiv. 23. Ezek. xliii. 7: Zech. xiv. 9.

3. It cannot refer to *heaven*, because, in the final state of things, the Jews are not to exist as a distinct and separate people. Much less can they exist as *tribes*. And, besides all this, the heavenly state is not the kingdom over which Jesus Christ alone as the *son of man* is to reign. There is a kingdom, but, it is "*under the whole heaven*," (Dan. vii. 27,) over which Jesus Christ, as man is to exercise authority. He was a king by birth, as well as a prophet and a priest. Two of these offices he has exercised upon the earth. His kingly office, in the full sense of the word, is, I apprehend, yet to be exercised on the earth. This we call the *Messianic Kingdom*. It is the government of this kingdom which he, after having exercised it alone for a thousand years, is to give up into the hands of the Father. After this, and after the final conflagration, the universe is to be governed again by the *Trinity in unity*, as it was before the fall; and not as now, by the Father through the Mediator, the man Christ Jesus.

Now, as the apostles, we are persuaded, took this view of the subject, we can see at once why it was, that the question of James

and John took the shape it did. The answer to Peter had satisfied their minds, as to their participating in the kingdom of Christ, in the *regeneration*; but, the speciality of their request is, "Grant that we may sit, (not merely in thy kingdom, but,) the one on thy *right hand*, and the other on thy *left hand* in thy glory." They were willing to leave it with Jesus to place the one or the other on his right hand, as he might judge proper; but, they wished to forestall the other disciples, and secure that place, by promise, for themselves. And this fact will account for the feeling which the others manifested towards them when they learned what their request was.

Therefore, after a careful examination of these verses, it would appear, that the expectation of a *temporal kingdom*, which the disciples entertained, was founded upon a correct understanding of the Saviour's own words, and was not the effect of prejudice or ignorance.

The question of the disciples in Acts i. 6, is another passage to prove our position. "Wilt thou at *this time* restore the kingdom to Israel?" As I have already remarked on this passage, I will pass over it, by merely making the following observations: 1. They fully believed that the kingdom would be set up, but had no idea of the *time* when it should be done, and hence, their inquiry, "Wilt thou at *this time* restore the kingdom to Israel?"

2. The Saviour does not deny that the kingdom will be restored to Israel; but merely says

it is not for them to know the *times*, (the *χρονoi*;) or the *seasons*, (*καιροι*;) the character of those times,) which the Father hath put in his own power. "That is, the kingdom will be restored, but the *time* of its restoration is a matter which is not to be revealed to you. The day will reveal it."

The Thessalonian Church held that the Saviour was soon to appear again. They were gathered by the apostle Paul in company with Silas, (Acts xvii.) about the year A. D. 53, and must have been taught this doctrine by the apostle. His remarks, in his first Epistle, led them to expect the advent of Christ in their day, in consequence of which, they began to neglect their temporal duties. In his 2nd. Epistle, he corrects their mistake as to the *time* of this appearing, in the following language: 2 Thes. ii. 1—3, "Now, we beseech you, brethren, by (*ὑπερ* concerning) 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 the Lord *is near at hand*," *ἐνίστηεν* is hanging over you.* They supposed that the

* There is a wide difference in the meaning of the words used by the Apostles and the Saviour, which are rendered in English by "is near at hand." The word *ἤγγικε* (Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17,) means, has drawn nigh, has approached. The word *ἐνίστηεν* means, *stands over*, as if just ready to fall. In the first case, the day has not yet come, though near; in the second, it has come, is ready to fall.

day of the Lord had arrived, and was now, with all its solemn scenes, impending over their heads, and no one could tell what hour the Saviour might appear. With this feeling, it is not surprising that they should lose sight of the affairs of earth, and be occupied with things of a heavenly nature. But, as temporal duties were also important in their place, Paul tells them not to be shaken or troubled in mind, as if the day of the Lord had already come and was then hanging over them, for there must come an *apostacy* before that day appears. If the inquiry should be made as to the *time* of the *apostacy*, Paul replies, "that the mystery of iniquity doth already work." This was all the information that he could give them. How soon the mystery of iniquity should be completed, he knew not, but, it was *then* at work. After its completion, the next grand event will be the advent of Christ. It is evident, from Paul's answer that the Thessalonian Christians had merely mistaken the *time* of Christ's advent, and not the *fact* that he should appear. If they had entertained the idea of modern Christians, as to the *order* of events, it would be that the Man of Sin shall be revealed—the Millennium follows next in order, and after it, at the close of the world, the advent of Christ. But such, it is manifest, was not the opinion of Paul, nor that of the Thessalonian Church.

The doctrine of Christ's advent to the earth, to establish his kingdom, was held by the

great body of the christian church, in the first, second, and third centuries. That was the Orthodox faith, and remained so, till Jerome, by sarcasm and perversion, brought the doctrine into disrepute. It was revived again, at the Reformation, after the long and dark night of superstition had passed away: and now again, in these our days, the cry has gone forth. "Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." How far we are now from the great day of Christ's advent, we cannot precisely tell. But, the wonderful movements of God in behalf of the Jews—the peculiar state of the kingdoms of the Beast and of the false Prophet—connected with the wide-spread influence of the gospel, in heathen lands, show us that the day is nigh at hand.*

The opinions of the Primitive Church, on the subject of Christ's kingdom, were drawn from the prophecies of the Old Testament, as well as from the teachings of Christ and of the apostles.

Daniel tells us that the kingdom of the Messiah is to be *under the whole heaven*, and is to break in pieces and destroy the kingdoms of the earth that may have preceded it. In this

* See Writings of Justin Martyr, by the Bishop of Lincoln; Chaps. I, and V. Lactantius, Lib. vii. chap. 24. See also *Brooks*, Essays on the Advent of Christ; for other authorities, also the *Literalist* which is a valuable collection of Essays, on the subject of Christ's Advent, and kindred subjects, and which is worthy the careful and prayerful perusal of every Christian, and especially of Christian Ministers.

kingdom, the saints are to share in the glory and honour of the Saviour. Read Chapters ii. vii. and xii.

Isaiah (chap. xi. and lxv. and lxvi.) gives us a glowing description of the temporal kingdom of our Lord, in language that one would think could not be mistaken. The government of the world is to be on his shoulder—righteousness is to characterize his reign, and peace is to abound among the animals, so that even the lions and the leopards shall lie down with the lamb and the kid, and a little child may lead them in safety. The people are also to build houses and to inhabit them—wars are to cease to the ends of the earth, and the people of God shall long enjoy the work of their hands. These things must take place on the earth, and the Prophet expressly tells us, that they will all happen under the reign of Jesus, the son of David. The description of the Millennium, as given us by Isaiah and Micah, are considered by many as only emblems of the happiness and peace that are to exist in the days of the Messiah. But the peculiarity of the language forbids such an idea. Suppose it were all true to the very letter, is it, I ask, any thing more than what, we have reason to think, was the state of the animal world before the fall? The animals, most assuredly, were not ferocious before the fall. If they should lose their ferocity, and again be mild, it would be only a return to their original state. But, it is objected, if Is. xi. be taken literally, then you have the lion to feed upon

straw like the ox, which cannot be done without a change of his *physical structure*. Very well; suppose there should be a change in his physical structure, is that a thing impossible with God? Has he not explicitly declared that the *lion shall eat straw*, and he will. This is one of the marks that Messiah reigns. But, I affirm that the nature of the lion *now* is a *departure*, from his original structure; and his food now is not that upon which the lions fed in the day that God made them. They fed then *on grass*, Gen. i. 30, and not on flesh; and God tells us that this will be their food again. However much the wisdom of man may revolt at the idea, God will fulfil his word. Lions have been tamed, and have been fed upon a vegetable diet for years (See Bocharts, Hieroz. tom. 1, Lib. 1, Cap. 2, fol. 10,) without any change of their physical nature. In the ark, we know that they were tame, and it is not to be supposed that they were fed upon the flesh of animals during their stay of a year in the ark. And they certainly were mild in the garden of Eden. What has been, may again be. When we are told (Gen. i. 30,) "And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given *every green herb for meat*; and it *was so*," who can deny that the whole animal creation lived upon the *productions of the earth*, and not on flesh in any degree? And when we turn to Isaiah xi., and read, that under the reign of the

Messiah "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb—and the lion shall eat straw like the ox," as he did at first, who can consistently deny it? The strangeness of the thing is not that these animals *should feed* upon vegetables; but that they *should not do so*. There is no other way to account for this striking difference, in the food of the lion and ox at the present time, than to look upon it as a part of the curse which fell upon the animal creation, for man's sake. Adam was constituted *lord* of this lower world. But whenever he threw off his allegiance to God and rebelled against his laws, his subjects also threw off their subjection to him. He lost his dominion over the creatures the moment he lost his holiness before God. In the person of Jesus Christ, however, the *second Adam*, man will be restored to the favor of God, and then the dominion of the earth, with all its animals, will be again in subjection to man. On Is. xi. 7, Poole observes that the lions shall feed upon "the grass and the fruits of the earth, as they did at first, and shall not devour other living creatures as they now do."

Ezekiel says, xliii. 7, that the place of the throne of the Saviour, and the place of the *soles of his feet* shall be in Jerusalem.

Isaiah (xxiv. 23.) "Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." This surely must be on the earth and be-

fore the end of the world, viz: during the Millennium.

Micah iv. 7, "And the Lord shall reign over them (the ransomed nations) in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever."

Zephaniah (iii. 15,) calls upon Jerusalem after the return of the tribes, to rejoice, for "the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not see evil any more."

Haggai ii. 6—9, "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, yet once more, 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 (the latter) house with glory—the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." The reading of this verse in the LXX., is very peculiar, *ἔξει τα ἐκλεκτα παντων τῶν ἐθνῶν*. It may mean "the elect church out of all nations shall come with Christ," as is taught in 1 Thes. iv. 14. Even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him, that is, the *τα ἐκλεκτα παντων τῶν ἐθνῶν*. That this prophecy did not receive its fulfilment in the *first advent* of Christ is evident: 1st. From the fact that Paul quotes it (Heb. xii. 26) as yet future. 2d. The temple which was destroyed by the Romans, A. D. 71, is not the *last* temple, see Ezekiel chaps. xl. xlviii. 3d. Peace was not given in

that temple, but a sword. The Jews had no peace then nor since; but under the reign of the Messiah, and during the time of the *last* temple they will have peace. 4th. "The heavens, the earth, and sea, and dry land, and all nations" were not shook at Christ's first advent, but at his second advent they will be. Read Ezekiel xxxviii. 19—23, Joel iii. 1, 2, 9—17, Amos i. 2.

Malachi says "the Lord shall suddenly come to his temple—but who may abide his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant to the Lord as in the days of old, and as in former years—that day shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up. Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Mal. iii. iv.

This prophecy, like the former, has been usually applied to the first advent. From this interpretation we wholly dissent, for the following reasons: 1. The temple of Herod was not the temple of the Lord, referred to in this passage. His temple is described by Ezekiel. The city in which the temple is to stand, is called יהוה שמה *Jehovah Shammah*, the Lord is there; and is to be *ten miles* square. The sanctuary, in which the Saviour shall especially manifest himself, is thirty miles north of the city, and is *one mile* square. It is emphatically the Saviour's temple. Into this no-

thing unclean shall ever enter. Read Ezek. xl.—xlviii.

2. Jesus did not come *suddenly* into the temple of Herod. He dwelt twelve years in the land before he entered it, and even then his entrance was with the multitude.

3. The Jews did not delight in him, but at his second coming they will, for they shall call him "*Ishi*" ^{אִשִּׁי}, my dear husband, and embrace him with love, Hos. ii. 16.

4. The nations of the earth *did* abide that day.

5. The sons of Levi were *not* purified, and they did *not offer* to the Lord an offering in righteousness.

6. The offering of Judah and of Jerusalem was *not pleasant* unto the Lord, as in former years, for they *slew their Messiah*. This passage teaches us that during the reign of the Messiah, offerings will again be presented to the Lord. They will be, however, *eucharistic* i. e. offerings of thanksgiving, and not *expiatory*, for the purpose of making an atonement for sin as formerly.

7. The wicked were in no sense destroyed, so as to become as ashes under the feet of God's people. The wicked then had, and still have the power over the saints. It will not be so at the coming of Christ; then the saints shall possess the kingdom under the whole heaven.

8. Elijah the Prophet did not come before the first advent of Christ as his precursor.—

John, the Baptist, who was the precursor of Christ, at his first advent, only came "*in the spirit and power of Elias,*" but was not, nor can he be the *very Elias* who was taken up into heaven. It is true that Elias appeared in the days of Christ, and talked with him on the mount of transfiguration; but, that was not the fulfilment of this prophecy: for when he comes, he is to be visible, and is to be instrumental in turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers. Compare Luke i. 17, with Mal. iv. 5. For these reasons we conclude that this prophecy is yet future. The beginning of that day will be at Christ's appearance on the earth—the end of it, when the wicked shall be as ashes, will be at the close of the day.

The angel announcing the birth of the Saviour, at his first advent, said that "the Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke i. 32, 33. This he has never yet possessed. It is future; and to be on the earth.

John says that the Saints shall reign a thousand years on the earth with the Saviour, (Rev. v. 10,) and concludes his revelation with the solemn declaration that he who testified these things saith "Surely, I come quickly." And to this John adds his hearty amen. And

prays, even so; come, Lord Jesus; come quickly."

Such are the views which I have taken of these various passages of Scripture, and the more I examine them, the more am I satisfied that they clearly prove the coming of our Blessed Lord in glory to set up his kingdom on the earth, and to reign here personally for the period termed a *thousand years*. As to the particular mode, in which his kingdom will be governed, we know nothing. The *principles* upon which he will rule are however clearly laid down. This must content us now. If more had been needful for us to know, that also would have been revealed. But the fact itself is enough to thrill every Christian heart, and our duty is to be ready, so that we may have a part in that kingdom.

I have as yet said nothing about the *time* when Christ shall appear, simply because the time is not revealed. The signs of the times will tell us that the time is near, very near; but, that day and hour is known to none of the human family. God has told us that certain things will take place before the great day of the Lord shall come,—from these we may learn that the day is nigh at hand. May God grant to all his grace that they may be ready; for that day will come upon the earth as a snare. Blessed is that servant, who shall be found waiting when his Lord cometh.

Before concluding this part of the subject would add that a strong argument in favour of

the pre-millennial advent of our Lord is drawn from the duty of watchfulness, enforced by the motive "ye know not the day nor the hour when the Son of Man cometh." If we know that the Millennium has not begun (as any man may by opening his eyes upon the world as it is,) and if we know that, after it has begun, a thousand years must elapse before the second advent, how can we watch as those who may have a personal concern in the matter? We cannot live a thousand years we know, therefore, this command is not for us, but for those who shall come into being long after we shall have departed.

But this proceeds on the idea that the thousand years are literal years. This is by no means certain. Some suppose that they are *Sabbatical* years, which would make seven thousand solar years. Others suppose that they may be *Jubiliary* years which would make the thousand years amount to fifty thousand solar years. Others suppose that "a thousand years" is put for a very large, but *indefinite* number of years; and this idea is supported by the fact that God promises mercies to restored Israel for a *thousand generations*. See Deut. vii. 9. Ps. cv. 8. 1. Chron. xvi. 15.— He also speaks of the time of Israel's judgment, as a *little wrath*, a little moment, while he will remember them with everlasting kindness. Is. liv. 8. Now, this *little moment* is found to be nearly *three and a half millinaries*; and the other term of comparison, therefore, must

be very long. We reckon at the present abridged period of human life thirty years to an ordinary life time, as a generation. A thousand generations according to this measurement would be thirty thousand years.— But, if the life of man be prolonged in the new economy so that the days of God's people shall be as the days of a tree, he must reckon a longer period than thirty years to a life time—perhaps a thousand years. This would make a thousand generations extend through a million of years.

If such, then, be the proper view of the Millennium rather than that which regards it as exactly a *thousand solar years*, the advent of Christ is placed at a distance immeasurably beyond our conceptions. Scarce two hundred generations have lived on this earth thus far—a thousand are yet to come of antediluvian longevity, and yet Christians, are commanded to watch for this personal advent *as if it might occur in their time!* This difficulty does not exist upon the supposition that the advent of Christ will occur *before* the Millennium.

No one of those, who adopt the idea here opposed, pretends to be able to say how soon the Millennium will commence. Some suppose it very near; others postpone it beyond the period of a life time. Yet all suppose that it may be ushered in soon. We make the same supposition as to the advent of Christ. We watch for it—hope for it—and even expect it, not because we *know* it is near, but

because we *know not* that it is remote. Our ignorance of the *time*, which the Father hath put in his own power, forbids us equally to say that *it will not occur in our life time*, or to say that *it will occur in our life time*. But one thing we do know. Our Lord has commanded us to watch because we know not the day nor the hour of his coming.

This subject affords matter for many profitable reflections, among which we may note the following:

1st. The doctrine of Christ's speedy and pre-millennial advent shows the Christian Church what is her imperious, and present duty, in reference to the nations of the earth.

The gospel must first be preached among all nations for a witness unto them, before the end of the Jewish dispersion, and the binding of Satan can come. Whenever that work shall have been accomplished, so that the gospel of the kingdom may be preached as a *witness* unto all nations, then the day of Zion's redemption is come. The Scriptures nowhere hold out the idea that the whole family of man must *embrace* the truth, before the Millennium shall dawn upon the earth; but, merely that they, as nations, shall hear it.

Whoever will now look at the condition of the world in reference to the spread of the gospel will find that there are but few languages, now known, on the face of the earth, into which, the Scriptures have not, at one time or other, been translated. How near

this work is to its final accomplishment, no one can with certainty say. But there is every encouragement to labor diligently till the work be done. If the same spirit did but actuate the church *now* that urged on the Apostles, one quarter of a century need not pass away, till these things be fulfilled.

Our facilities for communicating with all parts of the world—the ease with which missionaries can approach the different nations and tribes of the earth, without molestation or danger—the means of multiplying the sacred scriptures by steam presses, and the improvements in printing—and the willingness of the nations of the earth to hear of Jesus Christ, together with the present peculiar position of the Jews, all show us that the day of the Lord is nigh, even at the doors, and that it becomes the church to awake to her duty. The Christian Church, certainly, never had more ground for encouragement than now.—The earth will soon be girdled with the light of the gospel. The last language will soon be learned by the Christian missionary. The Bible will soon be given to all the people of the earth in their own language. And whenever the angel, having the everlasting gospel to preach, shall return to the throne of God with the news that his mission is fulfilled, then will there be great voices heard in heaven, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen—the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he

shall reign for ever and ever." Who can tell but that the last missionary, who has gone from a Christian land, or is now preparing to go, is the person destined of God to make the *last translation* of the scriptures in the language of the *last tribe* to whom the gospel is to be sent as a witness? Who can tell but that the *last contribution* which has been thrown into the treasury of the Lord, is destined to *print* that *last translation* of God's word, and thus to give the final touch to this great work of the Lord? Who can tell but that this mingling up of the lights and shades of the present picture of the world, light to the Jew and darkness to the Gentile—this overlapping of Divine Providence's judgments upon the Gentiles and mercies towards the Jews, is not that *very* state of things, which is to immediately precede the glorious advent of our Lord? The world, certainly is in a peculiar state. Let us watch the developements of God's Providence, and hasten the coming of the day of the Lord. Be ye therefore ready; for ye know not the day nor the hour that the Lord shall come.

2. How full of consolation are these precious prophecies, and the present indications of Divine Providence to the humble and faithful follower of the Saviour!

They teach the Christian that the night is well nigh past, and that the day is at hand.—Seeing, then, that these things are so; what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy

conversation and godliness? Our conversation ought to be in heaven, from whence we expect our blessed Lord. When he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Let us watch, and pray, and keep our lamps trimmed and burning, lest our Lord come upon us as a thief in the night, and we be found without oil in our lamps.

But, how sad must be the condition of that member of the church, who shall say "my Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servant, and to eat and to drink with the drunken? The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites." And what will be the case of that steward, who has refused to improve his Lord's money and to lay himself out for the glory of his God. How many of God's dear people might have been fed with the abundance the Lord hath put into his hands for the purpose of doing good to the household of faith! How many poor, benighted heathen might have been brought to the Saviour, if he had only been faithful to the trust committed to him! How many ministers of the gospel, at home, might have been sustained in their self-denying works—congregations raised and sinners converted to God, if he had not squandered away his Lord's treasures upon the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and the pomp

of living; or, if he had not wickedly hoarded it up to the injury of his own soul and the souls of those who are to come after him! Alas! alas! what an account will many have to render in that day! How little they have done, or are willing to do for God! How unwilling they have been to deny themselves any gratification for the cause of the Redeemer, who died for them! The widow, the fatherless or the orphan have not been blessed by their benevolence. The chamber of the lowly Christian has never been cheered by their prayers, or their presence, while the halls of mirth, the saloons of fashion and the festive table have often found them there. When Jesus shall come and unlock those treasures of wealth, which he gave to them for the advancement of his cause on the earth; but which have been wickedly purloined, and laid by for their children and friends to regale themselves therewith; and when he shall ask wherefore have ye done this? What, oh! what can they say? How can they meet Jesus in peace? Will he not say "depart from me ye workers of iniquity." The earth, Christian reader, is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. While he therefore gives us the comforts of life, and the joys of his salvation—let us not shut up the bowels of our compassion from our fellow men, who are perishing at our door for lack of that knowledge which we have the means of bestowing. Blessed will that man be, who, when his Lord shall come, and shall call him to account, will be

able to say—"Lord thy pound, in my hand, has gained *ten* pounds. I have lived for thee, I have planned for thee. I have spent and have been spent for thy glory." Blessed! thrice blessed will that man be at the coming of our Lord. Of a truth he will grant him the privilege to sit with him in his throne, and share with him in the joys and glories of his Kingdom.

3. The advent of Christ will be an awful day to those who are not prepared for his coming.

Perhaps, some of my readers are saying, all this is theorizing, and mere speculation. They may also, like those, who are described by Peter, say "Where is the promise of his coming?" "The day of the Lord is not at hand. The world will not be visited with judgments from on high. The Saviour will not come." So said the inhabitants of the old world. They believed not Noah, who warned them to escape from the wrath to come. But the flood did come, notwithstanding their unbelief; and they were unprepared for it. The Saviour tells us, "so will it be in the days of the Son of Man." The world will be busy in its schemes of honor, pride and selfishness, and will not take warning till the Heavens shall open and the Son of Man shall appear. Oh! what a day that will be! Some shall rejoice to behold their beloved Lord, and shall hail his approach with "Hosanna! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Others

alas! shall weep and wail. It will be a day of vengeance, and of recompences for the controversy of Zion. Then will Jesus reign king of nations. Iniquity shall be put down—Satan shall be cast out of the earth, and be bound for the thousand years. The wicked shall be cut off. All things will then be subject to the Lord Jesus Christ, for he shall reign for ever. Yea, saith Isaiah, “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 to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even for ever; the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.” “Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus.”