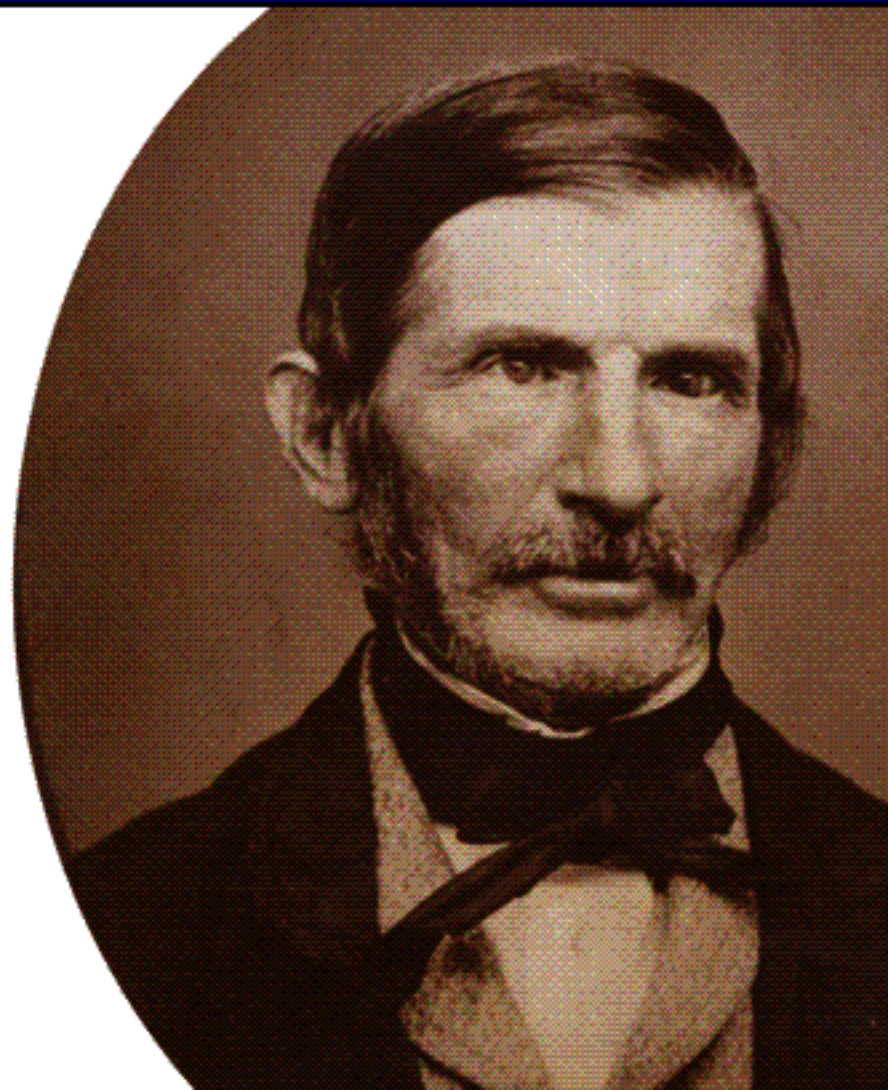


# Robert Townley

“The Second Advent of The Lord Jesus Christ : A Past Event”

Author of  
the Earliest  
Known Full  
Preterist  
Book

(1845)



THE  
SECOND ADVENT  
OF  
THE LORD JESUS CHRIST  
A PAST EVENT.

Τί ἰστίαι ἀλήθεια.

PILATE.

BY  
**ROBERT TOWNLEY, A. B.,**  
LATE MINISTER OF ST. MATTHEW'S, LIVERPOOL.

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LONDON:  
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND COMPANY.  
D. MARPLES, LIVERPOOL.

1845.

# Townley Influenced by Samuel Lee

- "would that Professor Lee's works formed part of a prescribed course of reading for ordination candidates."
- "I will take the liberty of transcribing one or two passages respecting the fall of Jerusalem, in order to show the correspondency between his views of the fulfillment of prophecy and my own"
- We prove, and Dr. Lee admits, that "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ;" consequently the prediction must have been fulfilled."

# Full Preterist Quotes From Townley

(1845) *The Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ, A Past Event.*

"there is not a shadow of a shade of error in the conclusion at which I have arrived."

•"we conceive to be the scriptural doctrine of the Millennium, as confined to the period of the Apostolic ministry."

•Now the resurrection, being part and parcel of that preaching of the gospel to which this promise was made, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the consummation of the age;" therefore the resurrection must be limited by the same consummation of the age, and must consequently be past, the Apostolic age and ministry being now no longer visible, and the promise of Christ being now of none effect.

•"The Lord God, at the destruction of Jerusalem, made his foes his footstool; he completely abolished death, of whom it is said, in 1 Cor. 15, "Death, the last enemy, is disabled" he took away entirely the first covenant, which was "the ministration of death," that he might establish supremely the second, which was the ministration of life ; he removed the things which, in Paul's day, " were shaken, that the things which could not be shaken might remain." (Heb. 9:27) "The heavens (of the Jewish church) passed away with a great noise; the elements ('beggarly') melted with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that were therein, (all that attached to the Mosaic economy, see Heb. 9:1-11,) were burned up, and the new heavens and new earth appeared," (2 Peter 3.)

# Townley Attacks Universalism

Target: Dr. David Thom of Liverpool – Universalism and Calvinism

from the 11th chapter, “ Even so then, at this present time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” This remnant contained “ all Israel,” as Israel then denoted Abraham’s true seed, but according to the common interpretation, there is to be a time when there shall not be one unbeliever in the family of Jacob; a conclusion as preposterous as the universalism which rests for support on passages like that out of Corinthians, wherein the Apostle is discoursing of none but the church, viz., “ As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

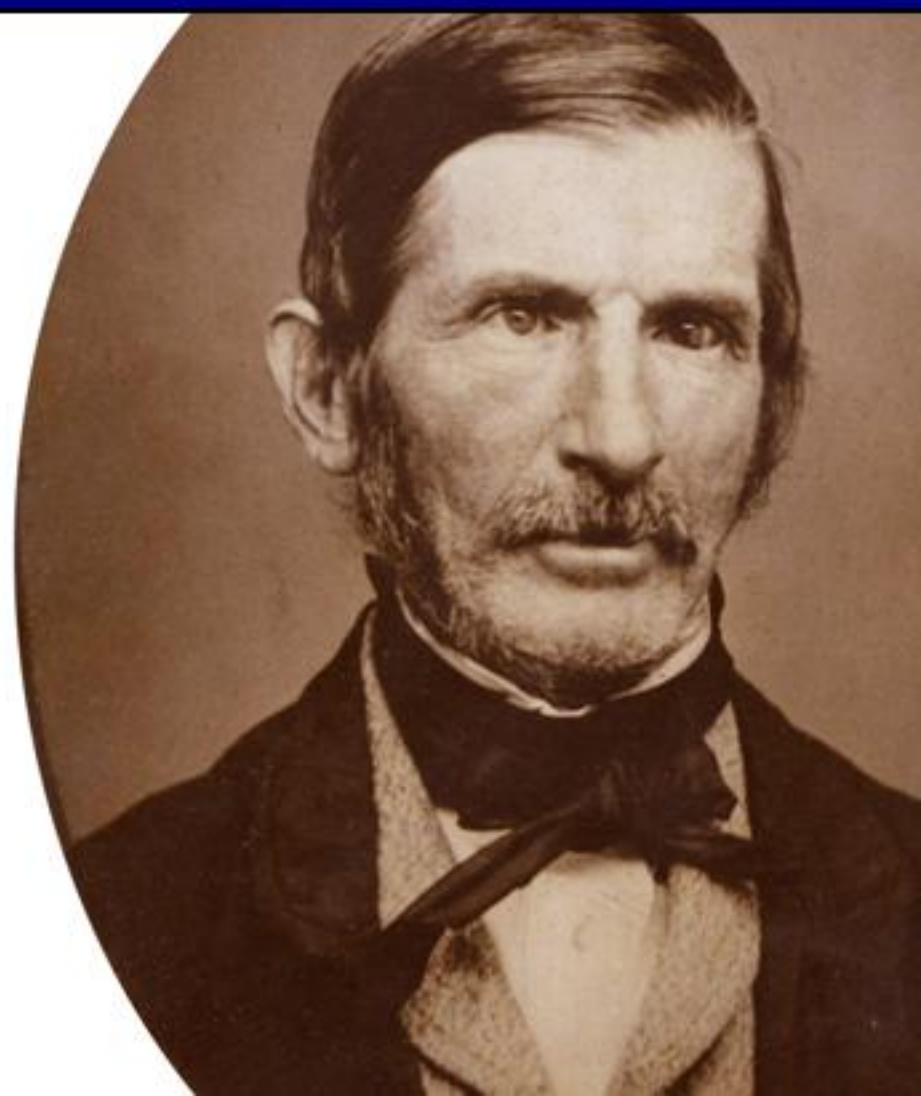
**“If I am to be a believer in Universalism, I must have a widely different statement from any which Mr. T. propounds. “**

I respect Mr. Thom as a man of very superior mental attainments, and have pleasure in conversing with him, or hearing him converse, on any subject save and except his *imaginary* Biblical conclusion.

# Robert Townley

Author of the Earliest Known Full Preterist Book

**Converted to  
Universalism  
Shortly After  
the Publication  
of his book in  
1845.**



# Converted by Dr. David Thom



Thom was "a man of no ordinary character. He is settled as pastor of an Independent Congregation in Liverpool, and is widely known by his published writings, as well as respected for his learning, ability, and piety"

New York Tribune, April 8, 1843

**On What Point  
Did Thom  
Convert  
Townley to  
Universalism?**

**Thom's Berean Universalist Church**

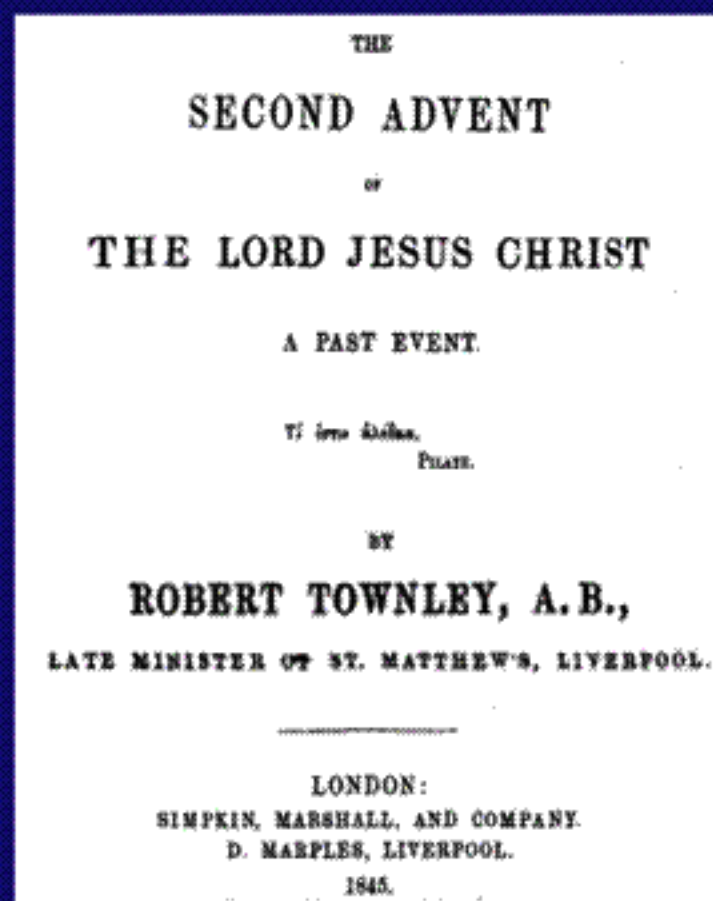
## A View of "The Law" As Mosaic Order

"This was the originating cause of trouble then, from the man of sin, Antichrist, flesh, (the law, see Romans viii. 8,) the carnal mind, which was attached to the law, whose strength was sin, which was the sting of death, the wages of sin, of which death the devil had the power."

**"If sin, Satan, death, and hell have their true and scriptural meaning in reference only to the two covenants of Sinai and Sion, as consequent upon the Adamic transgression...then are we warranted in concluding that the time when the covenant of Sinai was 'everlastingly banished from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power,' being the destruction of Jerusalem, and every thing opposed to God being comprehended in that covenant, and having no meaning out of that covenant - that at the same destruction of Jerusalem all these the enemies were put under Christ's feet...On the other hand, the common opinion of the day is, that so far from sin, Satan, death and hell being destroyed in the finished work of Christ, these several enemies are stronger than ever..."** Townley, p. 17

## A Developed "Consistent Cessationism"

- We object to the entire constitution of the various religious establishments of the day, because we believe that they all maintain the great foundation principle of Judaism, viz., an outward and visible church
- This was the originating cause of trouble then, from the man of sin, Antichrist, flesh, (the law, see Romans viii. 8,) the carnal mind, which was attached to the law, whose strength was sin, which was the sting of death, the wages of sin, of which death the devil had the power.
- At the same destruction of Jerusalem all these the enemies were put under Christ's feet, the fall of Jerusalem being, if his own words are authority, most indisputably his second coming to "reward every man according to his works."



# American Universalist Preterism

Dates Back to Beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Townley Was Sent to Boston, Massachusetts, the  
Apparent Birthplace of Preterist Universalism

Sent by Dr. David Thom, Most Likely Due to Boston  
Universalism's Likemindedness on Preterism

“By some, the (Apocalypse) is considered to have received its  
accomplishment.. at the period of Jerusalem's destruction. **Among the  
American Universalists.. this view is very prevalent.**”

(The number and names of the apocalyptic beasts)

Robert Townley was the minister of the Charlestown Universalist Church from June 1849 to Sept. 1852. He is listed in the Universalist Companion (the almanac/year book for Universalists) as a "former partialist" (meaning he had former pastorates in non-Universalist churches).

His arrival in the US in 1848 is described in the Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate for Nov. 10, 1848, p. 354, which I've attached as a pdf. The second half of the article is not displaying very well in the pdf. I'll be happy to transcribe whatever you can't make out, although it's largely more about his character.

The book that got him into so much trouble in England is in Google books at <http://books.google.com/books?vid=OCLC05272423> (that's our copy, by the way).

His farewell sermon to the church in Charlestown, preached Sept. 26, 1852, was printed as "Christianity in the Nineteenth Century."

We have the records of the Charlestown Church off site. I will request them and look through to see if there is any additional information I can get to you.

The only additional piece of information I could find is his marriage to Mary Wilkinson of Exeter, England, on Aug. 24, 1848, in Charlestown. This from the Massachusetts Ploughman and New England Journal of Agriculture, Aug 18, 1849, p. 2.

I hope this helps.

Cliff

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VOLUME VII.

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BOSTON:  
PUBLISHED BY A. TOMPKINS.  
1850.

years, Chaplain to the Borough Gaol, Liverpool, and is now incumbent of Houghton, Stanwix, near Carlisle. The Rev John Leighton Figgins, B.A., now officiating in St. Clement's, Manchester, and author of at least one published sermon, took charge of St. Matthew's from 1838 or 1839, till the close of 1843; the Rev. Robert Townley, B.A.,\* now minister of the Universalist Church, Charlestown, Boston, U.S., during 1844; the Rev. William Duncan Long, B.A., in 1845 and part of 1846; the Rev. George Cuthbert, M.A., 1847, 1848; and the Rev. Thomas W. Moeran, B.A., 1849.

I may here mention the fact of my having heard from the pulpit of St. Matthew's Church, in the autumns of 1823 and 1824 respectively, two most logically composed and impressive discourses addressed to the Jews, by the reverend and celebrated Charles Simeon, M.A., Fellow of King's College, Cambridge.

The Rev. Henry B. W. Hillocoat, D.D., who for many years was incumbent of a chapel in Bath, had long been proprietor of St. Matthew's, as well as the party by whom its officiating ministers had been appointed. By him the church was disposed of to a Railway Company: its site, as already stated, having been required for the Liverpool *terminus*. Having received in exchange,

### 3.—St. Matthew's, (*present*),

he removed to, and took possession of it about three years ago, with his congregation.

The particulars connected with the origin, building, and early history of this religious structure, which stands in Scotland Road, are so remarkable, that I shall not merely be excused, but probably thanked by the members of the Society for bringing them under their notice. They may be relied on as authentic. Joseph Robinson, Esq., of Falkner Square, in this town, who had no small share in the transactions which I am about to mention, and was one of the original Trustees, is, by the high respectability of his character, a sufficient guarantee for the truth of the facts with which, from documents in his possession, he has been polite enough to furnish me.

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trovsey in 1840, and 1841. A retiring pension of £80 a year was allowed him by the Corporation, in the spring of the year last-named. It will, no doubt, be in the recollection of several members of the Society, that Dr. Buck did duty, in a very zealous, and efficient manner, as Curate at Trinity Church here, during the autumn, winter, and spring of 1848 and 1849.

\* Mr. Townley published in 1845, a work, entitled, "The Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ a Past Event," in which are contained many startling positions.

# American Preterist Universalism

## A Visitor from England

We have received a call from Rev. Mr. Townley, who came passenger by the steamer Niagara, and here to us a letter of introduction from David Thom, of Liverpool. As we wish to introduce him to our American fraternity, we may not do better than publish Mr. Thom's letterature:— [Christ. Freeman.

Liverpool, Eng., Oct. 5th, 1823.

DEAR MR. COBB.—I have great pleasure in introducing to you my friend, the Rev. Robert Townley, B. A., T. C. D., a clergyman of the Established Church in England, and formerly minister of St. Matthew's Church in this town.

Mr. Townley has recently been satisfied of the truth of God's universal love to man in Jesus Christ. And now, excluded from the Establishment, kept at arm's length by the ordinary classes of Dissenters, he seeks your less trammelled country to have an opportunity of proclaiming the glorious gospel of the Grace of God.

In Mr. Townley you receive no ordinary man. With a moral character unimpeachable he unites abilities of a very high order. These have been most sedulously cultivated. Reared at the University of Dublin, of which he is a graduate, he has there devoted himself to literature and science, and has there passed honorably through the strict and searching examination, to which aspirants to literary honor are subject. He is truly a superior

## Introduction of Universalism to America

- Many, many other examples of American Preterist Universalism.
- APU Predates Townley By At Least Fifty Years.
- Preterist Principles are used as Fundamental Proofs of Universalism.
- Apparently Popularized by "Father of American Universalism" Ballou.

things will have lost their belongings their brightness. Th