THE HANDBOOK OF ESCHATOLOGY

A Consistent Biblical View of The Lord's Return, The Resurrection of the Dead And The Judgment

By
Rev. W. Roy Goff, S. T. B.
The Handbook of Eschatology

OR

A Consistent Biblical View of the Lord's Return, The Resurrection of the Dead and The Judgment

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# CONTENTS

**PART ONE.**  
A Consistent, Biblical View of the Lord's Return.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>The Subject Introduced</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Two Causes for Misapprehension</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| III     | Some Objections Answered:  
(A) 2 Tim. 3:1; Luke 21:24; Rom. 11:25 | 25   |
|         | (B) Meaning of "See" as it refers to Christ's Second Coming | 33   |
|         | (C) Acts 1:11, and Others | 36   |
|         | (D) Rev. 20, and the Greek word "mello" in the Book of Revelation | 42   |
| IV      | Why There Is No Historical Record | 48   |
| V       | The Necessary Conclusion of the Whole Matter | 51   |

**PART TWO.**  
The Resurrection of the Dead.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>The Problem Introduced</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>The Resurrection Body as Viewed in I Cor. 15:15-57, and II Cor. 4:18—5:4</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>Exegesis of John 5:28, 29; I Cor. 15:26, and Romans 8:23</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART THREE.**  
The Judgment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>The Subject Introduced</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Exegesis of Acts 17:31 and Matt. 25:31, 32</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>Is the Judgment Day at the End of Time?</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>Concluding Thots</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commendations</td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Scripture Texts</td>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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INTRODUCTION

THERE is a vast literature dealing with the subject of “the Lord’s coming again.” Most of it is painstaking and reverent, some of it is ingenious and fanciful, and not a little of it is controversial and pugnacious.

The present work has several things in its favor. First of all, it is brief; it deals with the main considerations succinctly and cogently and it avoids the alluring subsidiary topics which increase bulk without augmenting force. Secondly, it is sparing of speculation, restricting itself in the most commendable manner to the law and to the testimony. This makes for conciliation as well as for brevity. Thirdly, it interprets Scripture with due consideration for the context and the purpose of the Biblical writers; and it seeks to emphasize the manifest spirit of the writings whose object is religious rather than polemic. Fourthly, it binds up the coming of Jesus with the concrete and immediate issues of human conduct in the light of death, resurrection and judgment; and fifthly, it is written in a style which may be understood by any thoughtful lay reader, the writer’s object being to reach “the man on the street” for whom “the coming of Jesus” has implications of a serious and far-reaching nature.

In religion, as in other matters, men and women are apt to ask, “What of it? Where is the promise of good in an issue of such debatable value as that of the Second Coming? That is something for the theologians to differ and to quarrel about.” On the other hand, the theologians differ and quarrel about it just because the teaching has immense practical significance. How far doctrine in general, and this doctrine in particular, has been able to effect men’s lives, let the famous misreading of Christ’s teaching—the Millerite movement of 1843—bear witness. Always belief influences conduct, and as a man believeth in his heart so is he.

Moreover, the teaching of Jesus, whatever the subject, has imperative claims upon those who recognize His leadership and who profess discipleship. He is to guide us into all truth and there is no truth His people can afford to disregard. Has He a message about His own second
coming, and, if so, what is it? This book is an attempt at answering the question fairly. Not all readers will agree with the answer. That is a small matter in itself. In a question which has given rise to so much discussion and which has been argued to such diverse conclusions on the part of equally able and devout minds, one does not expect the last word even in a treatise so candid and persuasive as this. The author will have served high purpose in his writing if he has quickened interest in the person and teaching of Jesus and has led his readers, not simply to know Jesus better, but to love Him more ardently.

In estimating the worth of an argument in theological debate, one cannot overlook the evangelistic value. It is claimed that the most successful evangelists of the last hundred years were uniformly pre-millenarian. To them the conviction that Jesus was to come shortly in power and in glory, with signs of His coming made manifest to the eyes of men through marvels displayed in the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth,—this was to them an incentive to urgency in getting as many as possible into the zone of safety as quickly as possible. But does not the position of this book minister quite as much to the sense of urgency? There is something in a spectacular advent, whether near or remote, which removes Jesus from the common life of the people. One cannot help recalling that a spectacular coming was part of the popular theology of Christ's own day. Messiah was always thought of in connection with martial display, royal robes, a sceptre and a throne. No wonder the people did not recognize him when he came; no wonder they questioned contemptuously: "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" And no wonder that Jesus was heartbroken over the Holy City which knew not the day of its visitation.

The disciples at Thessalonica had convictions also about a spectacular coming. To them it appears to have been a temptation to live "disorderly lives" and to become "mere idle busybodies." They allowed themselves to become absorbed in speculations about the time and manner of Christ's appearing and neglected their daily business.
Paul, who probably shared the popular expectation, was, however, more deeply impressed with the Christ who had already come in his heart and life and found in this conviction of Christ's actual presence with him the sense of urgency which kept him earnestly and assiduously at work from day to day. To some hearts it might mean something that Jesus was to come in the clouds with all His holy angels with Him and that they should see Him. But surely it must mean more to these same hearts that Jesus is already here, standing beside them in the work of life, keeping them in dark hours of weariness and temptation, comforting them in sorrow, cheering their solitude, imparting to them assurance of sins forgiven, bestowing upon them strength for warfare and peace of mind, and graciously enabling them to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.

This is the genius of the author's discussion: Jesus is here. He "comes" in all the crises of life. His voice is to be heard in every good book, in every helpful conversation, in every uplifting address, in every conscious desire for a better life, in every aspiration towards truth, purity and brotherly kindess. The man who cannot recognize the coming of Jesus in these things would not be persuaded if Jesus should come down from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God. If we know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh, at least we know that we may share His life NOW and know Him not as "coming" but as "having come," and as having come to go no more out of our lives forever.

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PREFACE

Being interested in the subjects herein considered and taking occasion to study them carefully, the writer noted the fact that authorities disagree widely. No decisive, conclusive doctrine seems to be arrived at which takes account of ALL the vital Scriptures on the subject, so that one can feel sure of his ground. Therefore, in presenting these subjects, it is our desire to take up some Scripture passages that have been neglected, and to consider others, which, in consequence of this neglect, have been misinterpreted, in order to show that the writers of the New Testament were of one mind on these subjects, and that the chaos of later years has been caused by too free methods of interpretation. Our aim has been to make a reverent study of the Scripture in a search after truth and to find out the meaning of the Word, and to rest only with a "Thus saith the Lord." Our determination has been to know the truth as revealed in the Word, and to be governed wholly by a loyal submission to its authority.

As there is absolutely nothing written to PROVE that the Book of Revelation and John's Gospel and Epistles were written after A. D. 70, we believe, of course, that they were written prior to that date, as the time of the Coming or Revelation of Jesus mentioned therein should agree with the teachings of other New Testament writers who place that Coming at the end of the age (about A. D. 70). And if the Book of Revelation is prophetic, it must necessarily have been written before that event.

In addition to this, the internal evidence to uphold the earlier date is overwhelming, which cannot be deduced here in the space at our command. On the other hand, no critic of any note has ever claimed that the later date is required by any internal evidence. And one statement alone appears
to be the sole external reason why the later date is held by some, and that statement is capable of two meanings. It is the one by Irenaeus, written about 200 A.D. concerning the name of the anti-Christ, which says, "If it were necessary it would doubtless have been announced by him who saw the Apocalypse; for it was not a great while ago that (it or he) was seen, toward the end of Domitian's reign." The subject of the Greek verb "was seen" is ambiguous and may be either "it" or "he". If "he", referring to John, who saw the vision, is the subject, it does not discredit the earlier date. If "it", referring to the vision, is the subject, there is the one lone testimony to a later date.

It is true, we find the later date upheld by Eusebius, the Ecclesiastical Historian, who wrote about 100 years after Irenaeus, but he expressly quotes this statement of Irenaeus as his authority. Other writers have given no other source for their belief in a later date. So no great stress can be safely laid on the external evidence, especially since an ancient Latin document, probably as old as the writings of Irenaeus, mentions Paul as following the order of his predecessor John in writing to seven churches. This is evidence of a current notion that John's Revelation was written before the decease of Paul, which took place not later than A.D. 70.

We reject the theory of a double sense in prophetic Scriptures, that of a near and a remote fulfillment, because it is unscriptural. To assume such unnatural method, in the absence of a hint or Scripture statement for it and in the face of explicit statements to the contrary, is ungrammatical and unreasonable, and in the words of a recent writer, "is immoral." Such theory unsettles all sound and scientific interpretation. This we affirm assuredly of the 24th chapter of Matthew and the Book of Revelation. On this thot, Melancthon says, "One definite and simple meaning of Scripture is in every case to be sought." Canon Ryle says, "Words of Scripture were intended to have one de-

*Adversus Haereses, v. 30.
**Biblical Hermeneutics, Terry, page 136.
finite sense and our first object should be to discover that sense and adhere rigidly to it—to say that words DO mean a thing because they CAN be tortured into meaning it is a most dishonorable and dangerous way of handling Scripture.” Professor Jowett says,* “The office of the interpreter is not to add another interpretation, but to recover the original one, that is, the meaning of the words as they struck the ears or flashed before the eyes of those who first heard and read them.”

We believe, of course, that the Scriptures sustain the view herein discussed. The only way to set aside the conclusions arrived at is to point out the text wrongly interpreted and bring to bear others which disprove the position in the light of those used by the writer.

We realize that some things herein are contrary to some older theologies, but we seem to see the possibility of some new light on even such a venerable subject. Therefore, we ask that you make a careful reading of the book to see that we have drawn our chief arguments from the WORD, for we reject everything that cannot be proved thereby or that may be in conflict therewith.

We have searched the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully, relying upon the Holy Spirit to lead us to the true meaning of His Word. We sincerely pray that through God’s blessings this book may prove a help and a comfort to many souls.

The view herein discussed is not a discovery of the author, for it might be said to be but the view of my now sainted theological professor, Rev. M. S. Terry, D. D., LLD., which was taught by him to his classes in Systematic Theology for thirty years or more, and finally given by him to the world in his “Biblical Dogmatics,” published in 1907 A. D., pages 212-251, 442-472. The same view was given to the world by the Rev. J. Stuart Russell, M. A., but much more in detail, in his book, “The Parousia,” published in 1887, a volume of 560 pages. Rev. William S. Urmy, D. D., also wrote a very complete volume of 400 pages on

*Essay on the Interpretation of Scripture, Section 1, 2, 3.
this view. All three volumes, together with the Bible, foremost of all with its very plain words on the subject, were constant companions of the author in the preparation of this book, which we hope will be small enough and cheap enough to reach the common people, whom the large theological treatises mentioned could not possibly reach.

W. ROY GOFF,

Blairsville, Pa., Oct. 31, 1917
Part One

A Consistent Biblical View of the Lord’s Return

CHAPTER I.—THE SUBJECT INTRODUCED.

That there is not a little misunderstanding of the Biblical teaching concerning the Second Coming of Christ is evident from the fact that there are so many and such divergent theories afloat in these days regarding that subject.

But as there certainly can be but one true doctrine, there ought to be a way to discover it by carefully comparing Scripture with Scripture.

The post-millennial and pre-millennial interpretations claim the largest following, and seem about equally divided in numbers. These views are widely divergent, however. The first mentioned theorists claim that the millennium will be subsequent to the Second Coming of Christ, at which time all affairs will be ended. We do not care, here, to argue the idea that there may be a coming at the end of time or even at the death of each individual believer, but certainly as we see it, there are but few passages of Scripture that can refer to any such comings. And such comings would not be the Parousia (presence) to which there are very many references, for the Parousia was to be before time ended while men still needed Christ’s presence with them in the world. The pre-millenarians appreciate this feature of Scripture truth, but have failed to emphasize the time of the coming according to Scripture, which fact is brought out more fully in the following pages.

The pre-millennial theorists claim Christ will come and usher in the millennium and will reign a definite or indefinite period on an earthly, visible, material throne in His kingdom.

On any subject whatever there may be found those who will take a theory suggested by some particular passage of Scripture or by individual thought, and build up and around it Scripture proofs. This is a wrong and unsafe
method regarding biblical teaching, as it permits too easily the danger of bending Scripture to suit the theory. Rather, the true method is to use Scripture to formulate doctrine.

In regard to this much discussed subject the best way is to discover what Christ says about the matter first, then search the other biblical writers. One should not, however, interpret the latter so as to make them contradict the true doctrine propounded by the Lord Himself.

The earliest account we have in the gospels from our Lord to the disciples that speaks definitely of the future coming, was on the occasion when Christ sent them out to preach, and told them: "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." (Matt. 10:23). The next definite mention comes in the 16th chapter, verse 28. Here Jesus says, "There are some standing here who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Let it be said on these passages: 1. There is no figurative language here to give rise to ambiguity. 2. He had not yet come. 3. The coming of the Son of Man is coincident with the coming of the kingdom and the one does not take place without the other. 4. The coming referred to was to be in the life time of some of the disciples then living. 5. Since "some" only of the disciples would be living, then assuredly some would die before that great event. 6. This is the only doctrine of the Second Coming published up to that time.

This latter verse has its parallel both in Mark and Luke. In Mark 9:1, the reading is similar to the above: "There are some standing here that shall not taste of death," but ends, "Till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Luke 9:27 is similar to the others, and ends, "Till they see the kingdom of God."

We take up (1), The word "see." Taking these three parallel passages together, then "to see the kingdom" means "to see the king," and vice versa. And if one cannot see the kingdom of God with fleshly eyes, neither can it be meant that he is to see the King with fleshly eyes. One cannot see a kingdom with fleshly eyes. For example, one
might go to England, but he cannot see the kingdom of Great Britain, but he can perceive the effects of that kingdom. No more can one see the Kingdom of God with fleshly eyes. But one can perceive the same and see the influence of that kingdom in human lives. Therefore, we conclude that the word "see" in these three parallel passages and others on the same subject does not refer to sight of fleshly eyes. And if "perceive" or "discern" had been used by the translators instead of the word "see," which is a permissable translation of the Greek, less misapprehension would have been caused.

We next take up (2), "The coming of the Son of Man in His kingdom," (Matt. 16:28). We find this term used interchangeably with "the coming of the kingdom," (Luke 17:20), and to "See the kingdom come with power," (Mark 9:1), and "See the Son of Man coming with power and great glory," (Matt. 24:30), and like expressions, so we conclude that since all these are terms expressive of the time of Christ's second coming, therefore, Matthew 16:28 refers to the time of Christ's second coming. It cannot have been fulfilled in the transfiguration scene of Matt. 17:1-8, because it, together with verse 27, preceding, has in it the judgment scene, (and we have no right to separate these two Scripture verses) which is not a part of Matt. 17:1-8; furthermore, not one of the disciples was dead at the time of the transfiguration as verse 28 compels us to believe would be the case, as truly as that some would be living, at the time of the great event predicted. These two statements of fact seem to us to preclude the only argument used by pre-millennialists, as far as we have ever seen, that v. 28 is fulfilled in the transfiguration. This being so, they have no place in their theory for v. 28, whose phraseology, together with that of its parallels, as given above, they use continually when they refer to Christ's second coming. That the transfiguration was a sample or proof of the coming kingdom and its glory no one could doubt, but there is nothing that says that scene was all that was meant by Matt. 16:27-28. In fact, the kingdom had not yet come at the later time when the Lord spoke of
his coming in that generation (Matt. 24:30,34); nor yet at the last supper, for Jesus plainly infers that the kingdom had not yet come at that time (Luke 22:18).

Neither can verse 28 refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Conclusive argument against this wrong view held by some is given on pages 27-30.

The third definite reference in order of time came about when the Pharisees demanded to know of Jesus "When the Kingdom of God should come," (Luke 17:20), and He answered them and said, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and verse 21, "Neither shall they say, lo here! or there! for lo, the Kingdom of God is within you." This shows (1), there had been talk about the coming of the kingdom. (2), That they thought of the kingdom as material, and earthly, and visible, or else Jesus would not have needed to answer as He did, telling them of their mistaken notions of that kingdom in a general statement that it is not local, but in the hearts of the people. Of course, Jesus did not mean "in the Pharisees," for they had not accepted the Messiah, but His expression was for everybody for all time.

Along this line Jesus further speaks, John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world." If His kingdom were of this world, then would His "servants fight;" furthermore, His throne would likely be earthly, visible, material. This Jesus positively denies.

However, while the source, origin and authority of His kingdom is not of this world, yet we must not fail to emphasize the fact that the world is the scene of its operations. The gospel of the kingdom is to affect all society. It has affected all society, and is to do so more and more. And just as it grips a man's soul so will he begin to bring all material things under the reign of righteousness; and the material world and its conditions must be brought to levels.

But some considerable number teach today that the kingdom is to be set up in Jerusalem as the earthly throne, a visible, material kingdom; that we should be on a constant lookout for our now "absent Lord" to return. This,
however, is contrary to Christ's words, "My kingdom is not of this world."

But how has such misapprehension come about? Through two causes mainly.

1. It is born of a natural desire to "see" with fleshly eyes. And is not that the burden with which the church of today must contend in teaching spiritual things? Was not that the burden of Christ on earth, to teach the disciples themselves that His kingdom was spiritual, not material? He even plainly said to them when talking definitely on the subject of the coming kingdom, "Ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man and ye shall not see it," (Luke 17:22). "See" in this verse assuredly refers to "sight with fleshly eyes," because the general subject of verses 20-22 is the denial of outward show and locality of the kingdom and of the coming king.

2. The second reason for such misapprehension has been the transference of the old Jewish concept of a materialistic kingdom at the first advent of their Messiah to the Second Advent. The Jews were disappointed, because they thought that the prophecies of the Old Testament taught such a materialistic kingdom at the first advent. But those who think and teach that those same Old Testament prophecies refer to a materialistic kingdom to be set up at the second advent are equally wrong and will just as surely be disappointed according to Christ's words just above quoted. Christ's kingdom is not material but spiritual. So materialistic are they now, like the Jews of old who failed to recognize their Messiah when he came, that the modern materialistic thinkers fail to recognize Christ in His Parousia, or Christ's definite teachings as to the invisible nature of His Parousia. They try to read their interpretation of prophecy into the New Testament instead of reading prophecy in the light of the New Testament.

That really serious person who says that nothing has yet transpired which adequately measures up to the prophecies of Christ's second advent should take note that this is precisely the statement that the Jew makes when he is told that the prophecy of Christ's first advent was fulfilled
in the life of Jesus. The Jew says, "The life of Jesus does not adequately measure up to our prophecy of that event." But just as surely as the Jew fails to realize the truth in regard to the first advent, so the pre-millennialists and the post-millennialists fail to realize the truth of the second advent; and the Jew does not as we see it go farther from the truth in his contention than these for they, to maintain their theories must assume many positions not accordant with biblical teaching regarding the Kingdom of God, and its correlate, the coming of the Son of Man.

Further definite reference to His second coming, reported by Matthew, (but in the same discourse according to Luke in which he declared "the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation") was brought about by two (not three) questions of the disciples regarding the destruction of the Jewish temple, as Christ had just said, "there shall not be left one stone upon another."

The first question was, "When shall these things be?" and in the same breath, not waiting for an answer, and as if they clearly understood from past references and utterances that their second question referred to the same time, asked, "And what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end (or consummation) of the age?" Matt. 24:3 (Revised version).

Does the expression "end of the world" of the King James' version mean what is commonly thought about that expression? It is used by only two New Testament authors, Matthew and the writer of The Hebrews. The latter writes (Heb. 9:26), "Now once in the end of the age ('world' in the King James' version) hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself". In regard to this passage, we think no one questions that "the sacrifice of Himself" refers to Christ's death on the cross which took place near to the end of that age, instead of the end of the world, as in both instances the original Greek expression is precisely the same. With this proper translation understood much misapprehension will be obviated.

What did the "end of the age" mean to these questioners? Undoubtedly it meant to them the then existing
age of the Levitical law, which was to be fulfilled in Him, a period of time just preceding the second coming of Christ of which He had previously told them would take place in the lifetime of some then living. That was their chief concern, while the destruction of Jerusalem was only an incident to happen in those days just preceding the coming (parousia or presence). Looking back in history we think no one doubts but that the dispensation or age or Jewish Church State ended at the destruction of Jerusalem at which time the sacrifices in the temple ceased and have never since been resumed. There is no reason to doubt that the disciples connected the destruction of the temple with the end of the age, as their questions clearly show.

If no bias had crept in to influence interpretation and Scripture had been permitted to explain Scripture, there never would have been any difficulty in seeing that the end of that age was to be before that generation had passed away (Matt. 24:34) “This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled,” and that the Parousia was to have been “in those days” (Mark 13:24); “immediately after the tribulation of those days” (Matt. 24:29), and as verse 34 asserts (before that generation should pass away), which is the direct answer to the two questions the disciples asked, “When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end of the age?” of verse 3, as to the time.

Matthew very consistently used this same expression “end of the age (Greek, aeon)” in chapter 13:39,40,49*, referring to the judgment, which is in perfect agreement with chapter 16:27,28)** on the subject, the end of the

*Matt. 13:39, 40, 49, “The harvest is the end of the AGE.” “As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be in the end of the AGE, the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the righteous.”

**Matt. 16:27, 28, “The Son of Man shall (Greek, mello, IS ABOUT TO) come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then shall He render unto every man according to his deeds. Verily, I say unto you, there are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom.”
age (aeon) coming within the lifetime of some of the disciples. (See article on "The Judgment," Part Three of this book).

Similarly, in Matt. 28:20*, the only other place the expression "end of the age (aeon)" occurs in the New Testament, Jesus refers to a special sense in which He would not leave them alone until the end of that age (aeon) when He would return to their midst in His second advent as another Presence (Parousia) to abide and reign forever.

This expression in Matt. 28:20 is perhaps one of the hardest points for the old interpreters to concede. The church has so long read this expression as promising Christ’s presence to the end of time that she has lost sight of the meaning it conveyed to the first hearers, the Apostles. They positively understood that the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple marked the end of the age (Matt. 24:3), but they just as certainly understood that Christ was to come back again at the end of that age to abide and reign in the world forever. But were they to be alone in the interim? No, this passage assured them on that point. Not only would these words be comforting from the moment their Lord ascended, but they also had that other promise, the promise of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete who was to be their guide into all truth. We do NOT understand that this expression in Matt. 28:20 refers either to the gift of the Holy Spirit or to Christ’s presence in the world to the end of time; however, it may be so used, and properly, in an accommodated sense. The positive Scripture assurances of Christ’s presence in the world now are all those passages which refer to His return, which return, however, was to be at the end of that age, immediately following the tribulation days in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem of which Matt. 24:29 is a sample. Christ is now in the world in His invisible, PERSONAL presence as certainly as that the Holy Spirit is now in the world in His invisible, PERSONAL presence.

*Matt. 28:20, “Lo! I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the AGE,”
The Scripture, Matt. 24:34, "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled," answers not only the two questions of the disciples but it also answers other queries brought out by Jesus in this memorable discourse and which are included in the "all things" mentioned.

However, some insist that because the events predicted did not come to pass visibly in that generation, therefore the word "generation" (Greek, genea) does not mean what is usually understood, but that it must mean "race or nation," and that Jesus meant to say, "The Jewish race or nation would not pass away until all was fulfilled. But, upon examination, we find the word used forty times in the New Testament and every time the Revised Version translates the word, "generation." Some of these would have no sense if translated "race or nation." For examples, take the following:

1. Matt. 1:17: "So all the generations from Abraham unto David are fourteen generations." Put "race or nation" instead of "generation" and one realizes at once that such is not the meaning, and not a possible translation.

2. Matt. 23:36: "All these things shall come upon this generation." No commentator has ever proposed to understand this as referring to any other than the existing generation. Race or nation is not a translation to be thought of. Why, then, in the same subject should Jesus use the same word in Matt. 24:34, if He meant race or nation?

3. Mark 8:38: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me in this sinful generation." Even pre-millennialists agree that Jesus meant generation, not race, in this passage.

4. Luke 17:25: "The Son of Man must be rejected of this generation." This is a reference to the particular generation that rejected the Messiah or words have no sure meaning.

Can anyone believe that the assertion of our Lord made with, "Verily, I say unto you," amounts to no more than, "The Hebrew race shall not become extinct till all these things be fulfilled?" Suppose a prophet in our day, predicting that New York City would be leveled to the
ground and a fearful slaughter take place, should be asked, "When?" and he would answer, "The American nation or race shall not become extinct till all these things come to pass." Such would be an affront to the hearers. "Safe prophesying, when it is so far in the future," we would say.

Was it for this extinction of their race that the waiting disciples were to wait and watch? The bare supposition of such a meaning in our Lord's predictions shows itself to be a REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM.

But by an easy, natural interpretation we see no need for anyone to aver that verse 34 must have got dislocated in copying manuscripts or that verses 29-31 must be highly oriental language still connected with the destruction of Jerusalem, or that these verses may have fallen out of proper place by carelessness of scribes or even that Jesus just spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem as an earnest of what was to happen before his second coming in some very distant future.

As it is, we see no possible way to set aside these statements as facts except to read into them another meaning not originally intended and not justified by other Scripture.

Since all the above Scriptures are what Christ averred regarding His second advent and since in them appears no figurative language to make interpretation difficult, and since Christ must have meant just what He said in plain words, we take it that all that figurative language referring to His second coming should be used and interpreted in accord with these His words and not with contrary meanings, else we make Christ contradict himself or other writers contradict their Lord. The Lord's plain words must be the basis of interpretation of all figurative language on the subject.
CHAPTER II
TWO CAUSES FOR MISAPPREHENSION

Two things in this memorable discourse have apparently caused misapprehension. However, these can be explained satisfactorily and easily to any open mind. We refer to the statement in Matt. 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end (of the age) come."

This is one of those queries brought out by Christ and answered, as to the time when, as one of the things (v. 34) that shall be fulfilled before this generation passes. However, some labor to show that that gospel preaching has just now in the 20th century been accomplished and they are consequently looking for the Lord to come soon.

If we will not take Christ's own words for it, then let us see if we can find any other Scripture that will clear up the matter. The only true method of interpretation here would be to find out the meaning of the expressions, "all the world" and "all nations." Fortunately God has not left us in the dark. Luke wrote in Acts 2:5, "There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews * * from EVERY NATION UNDER HEAVEN." And from the enumeration of those sixteen countries following we see that Luke's conception of, "every nation under heaven," did not go beyond the then known world or Roman Empire. More to the point, and letting Scripture explain Scripture, see what Paul has to say in Col. 1:5, 6, "Ye heard the Gospel which is come unto you as it has in ALL THE WORLD bearing fruit," and v. 23, "Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye heard, which was preached in ALL CREATION UNDER HEAVEN."

This epistle was written in A. D. 61. Now compare Matt. 24:14, above, and we see the direct Scriptural fulfillment declared which agrees with the words of Christ, "All these things shall be fulfilled before this generation shall pass." "Then shall the end (of the age) come."

Thus we see that the Gospel was preached in all the world in Paul's day, which was before that generation
passed. And do not they make a mistake who would say that Jesus' words were not accomplished until now; and having left the Bible and taken to a theory, they try to make the Scriptures bend to suit the theory?

The second cause for misapprehension in the discourse is the language of vs. 29-31, "The sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light and the stars shall fall from heaven and the powers of heaven shall be shaken—and they shall see (Greek, opsontai) the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Some say this is too majestic to describe the fall of the Jewish temple and the end of the age, and as to "The Son of Man coming in the clouds," this has not yet been witnessed and consequently is not fulfilled, tho Christ says, in vs. 34 and 35, "Verily I say unto you this generation shall not pass till all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away but My words shall not pass away." Are they wise above the Lord himself?

However, the tension can be relaxed when we discover that such gorgeous language and almost the identical words were used by Joel in describing the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:16, 19, 20, "This is that which hath been spoken by the Prophet Joel. And it shall be in the last days • • • And I will show wonders in the heavens, and signs on the earth. Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon into blood before the day of the Lord come."

This is majestic language and we note four things. 1. The prophecy described a great event. 2. Peter said the prophecy was fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. 3. The gorgeous language was not meant to describe a spectacular, physical change in the heavens. Indeed, people would be saying to this day this has not yet happened if Peter had not distinctly said, "This IS that." 4. It was fulfilled "in the last days," which meant to all then, the last days of the Levitical dispensation or the Jewish age.

But one says, "Why did Joel use gorgeous and misleading language?" This is not for us to attempt to answer
here, further than to say, it was customary for the prophets and other oriental people to use highly rhetorical figures to describe the downfall of nations and great events. We refer you to some of these should you wish to look them up: Isa. 13:6-14; 19:1; 27:13; 34:1-5; Joel, 2:1-11; Micah, 1:3, 4; Dan. 7:13, 14.

We refer to the prophecy of Joel as fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit without any change in the physical heavens in order to show and say that we believe this is what happened and what was meant by the prophecy of Isaiah which Jesus quoted as referring to his second coming in this misapprehended passage in question, Matt. 24:29-31—fulfilled without physical change in the heavens.

The prophecy of Isa. 13:9-13, part of which was quoted by Jesus, had in it no more idea of the spectacular in the expressions "the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not cause her light to shine. I will shake the heavens," etc. than had the prophecy of Joel with similar expression, which was declared fulfilled by Peter in the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost without change in the physical heavens.

Furthermore, Jesus could not have had any thought of the spectacular, for His words were spoken to the disciples whom He had previously warned and charged (in the same discourse according to parallel in Luke 17:20 and following) that the Kingdom of God was not to be ushered in with observation, or else it would MAKE HIM CONTRADICT HIMSELF. He simply appropriated the prophetic method of describing a great event, and the hearers understood it the same way.

In these days some read these words literally, and, since there is no history of the spectacular having taken place declare it is yet to take place; some say in the near future and some at the end of time, tho Christ declared, All these things would be fulfilled in that generation.

"There are other Scriptures which speak of a spectacular coming in the clouds?" True, and wherever they appear, the essential truth of Christ's coming is the same, whether we read of Jehovah riding on a swift cloud in
Isa. 19:1, or of one like the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven in Dan. 7:13, or of Christ saying, "Henceforth, ye shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven," Matt. 26:64, or of Jesus coming again "in like manner as" he went away, Acts. 1:11, or "behold, he cometh with clouds," Rev. 1:7, or of the Lord descending from heaven with a shout, (by the way, not "in like manner" as the poor translation of Acts 1:11 leads one to think), or the ones alive and remaining being caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, I Thes. 4:16, 17. All these Scriptures are given in the true prophetic style to people who understood them to be such and with no more thought of the spectacular than Joel had about the coming of the Holy Spirit, which was a great event quite distinct from Christ's second coming as clearly prophesied in other Old Testament Scriptures.

That Paul had no idea of the spectacular in that much abused passage in I Thes. 4:15-17, is easily believed when we read II Thes. 2:1-3*, and reason that, if he had such a thought he would have stated it simply to the Thessalonians, who were troubled as to whether Christ had not already come, that since they had not seen Him come in the clouds, nor had He set up an earthly throne in Jerusalem, therefore He was not present. Had Paul believed in the bodily presence of Jesus at His coming that fact would be mentioned in just such an argument as this.

But since they had not been taught such materialistic notions of a spectacular coming but one in the invisible world only, agreeing with Jesus' words "not with observation," therefore Paul could do no better than to use the expression "that day shall not come except there be a falling away first" (v. 3), and this had not yet taken place when this letter was written, about A. D. 52.

Since Joel's gorgeous language was fulfilled and we have no history of a physical change in the heavens, then

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*II Thes. 2:1-3, "Now, *** touching the coming (Parousia) of our Lord *** as that the Day of the Lord IS PRESENT (Greek), let no man deceive you, for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first."
we have no reason to doubt that Isaiah's words, quoted by Jesus in Matt. 24:29-31, in regard to the second advent, COULD also have been fulfilled without any spectacular and physical change in the heavens, especially since we have Christ's words, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

The one thing above all other arguments necessary to set forth is the fact of the invisibility of Christ's reign in his kingdom. This established as Bible teaching, all other strange and erroneous twisting of Scripture to bolster theories, materialistic, and local, and still to take place in the future, will yield. That His coming to the Apostles was to be personal, sudden, unexpected, with power and great glory, not knowing the day nor hour, is perfectly correct, but NONE of these DEMAND visibility, nor that we must believe such refers to OUR future. (See page 30).

In the early part of the 19th century in our country one William Miller thought he read in Daniel that the coming of Christ would take place in the year 1843. He had many followers, and his assertions caused great consternation among multitudes of people. Some sold their farms and houses; some cast the goods from their stores into the streets to be taken by whomsoever they might; others completely lost their reason. The most serious result of this craze was, however, that many sincere Christians, made to believe that the Bible taught something not fulfilled as written, lost all confidence in the Scriptures and became skeptical and worldly. And well they might.

As emphasis on the literal, spectacular coming has thus done harm in the past, so it continues to do harm among sincere believers now.

Under such influence one may hear certain enthusiasts speak of "our absent Lord." This certainly would do harm when Jesus would have His ACTUAL PRESENCE preached for the encouragement of believers. Further, they say, "according to Matt. 24:14, the church is only to 'witness to all nations;' it cannot hope to make progress against the evils all about 'till He come.'" If Christ meant that He was
to come as he told the disciples within their lifetime, (Matt. 16:28), then such pessimistic thoughts and feelings in this day will certainly have a tendency to laxity of effort. This certainly would harm the work of the kingdom on earth, and for this reason only is this subject now given such earnest attention by the writer. Those who teach that the mission of Christ has failed in the present dispensation, but will succeed in a future, certainly dishonor their Lord who said, “All power IS GIVEN unto Me,” (not WILL BE GIVEN), commit grievous error, and have left the Bible teaching and betaken themselves to the doctrines and theories of men.

That the church was to be a “witness to all nations” and “then shall the end come” refers to the time before the end of the age A. D. 70, as the argument on page 18 proves, and does not refer to the 20th century, for now we not only witness for Him but also reign with Him. We say this because we believe He came to judge and to reign in the lifetime of some of His disciples, as He said He would (Matt. 16:27, 28), “For the Son of Man shall (Greek, mello, IS ABOUT TO) come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. Verily, I say unto you, there are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

In view of all the above, how can anybody say the second coming of Christ is yet to be? Will not such advocates have to leave the plain words of Christ, and take to figurative language, to build such a theory? We realize we cannot convert everybody, for, after all is considered, some will pull out the peg that has been driven as representing the coming of Christ soon, and drive that peg ten years or 50 or any number of years ahead, and go on proclaiming their theories. If we were to prophecy, we would not hesitate to say that the year A. D. 2000 will be much heralded by this class of interpreters as the year of the Coming of the Lord after all the other numerous dates previously held have yielded to plain words of
Scripture, as also has the year 1000 A. D., which was the most universally accepted date up to the present, and 1843 of Wm. Miller fame, and October 1914, appointed by Pastor Russell, and a host of others.
CHAPTER III
SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

(A) II Tim. 3:1; Luke 21:24; Rom 11:25.

But some will say, "Does not Scripture say in the last days of the world perilous times shall come, and evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse?"

No; the Scripture does not say that. It says: "In the last days perilous times shall come," etc. (II Tim. 3:1), but Paul wrote this to Timothy in the last days of the age before A. D. 70, and there can be no doubt he referred to those days, just as Peter said (Acts 2:16, 17): "This is that" which Joel said would come to pass "in the last days." We are unable to find any reason for believing that the perilous times spoken of were meant to be in our future, except that some have set up a theory that Christ is yet to come, and consequently the perilous times spoken of in Matt. 24:15-22 are yet to come, though Christ declared that this would take place in the lifetime of disciples then living, and that, when it came on them, they were to flee to the mountains (purely a local expression for the last days of that dispensation or Jewish age). This is another instance, apparently, of bending plain Scripture words to suit a theory. One should be careful to be consistent, and let Scripture explain Scripture.

Another misinterpreted passage appears in Luke 21:24, "Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Here is one sentence in a discourse (Luke 21:20-33) on the destruction of Jerusalem and concomitant features, which is taken out of its setting, and made to refer to "a parenthesis of time which has existed from that day to this" (a wholly arbitrary statement with no Scripture proof), when distinctly, clearly, verse 32 says, "Verily this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." Consequently "the times of the Gentiles" of the passage in question is a subject of fulfillment in that generation as truly as is the other half of the verse, from which this has been torn by those who have a preconceived theory to fortify, and which other half no one, as far as we have
learned, ever denied its having reference to that genera-
tion, which also history confirms.

But to the satisfaction of the one who, for con-
science sake, must hold to the plain Scripture words as to
the time of Christ's second coming during the lifetime of
some of the disciples, that same history writer makes men-
tion of the Idumeans (one of the Gentile nations) "tramp-
ling down this place" (Jerusalem), in almost the same
words our Lord used in the passage in question. (See
Josephus, Book 4, Chap. 4). This invasion of the Holy
City by the Gentiles lasted from between A. D. 66 and 67
to A. D. 70, at which time the city was finally over-
thrown. This agrees perfectly with a parallel passage in
Rev. 11:2, which says, "It is given unto the Gentiles:
and the Holy City shall they tread under foot forty and
two months," or the identical three years and a half of
the Idumean Gentile occupation of the city, as has just
been mentioned.

There is no reason whatever for saying that the plain
words forty-two months, or their equivalent, 1260 days,
of Rev. 11:3, and other similar passages refer to so many
years according to an arbitrary year-day theory, when,
as it stands, it agrees with the facts of history.

Josephus in the same chapter above cited, ascribes
the capture of Jerusalem and the overthrow of the Jewish
commonwealth to the crime of these Gentiles, and so we
may readily believe that God was using these Gentiles
as His instruments for the terrible physical judgment He
foretold would come on "that wicked generation," and
when these "times of the Gentiles were fulfilled," that is,
when the times of their use as God's instrument of judg-
ment in the destruction of the city, were fulfilled, which
history shows to have been in A. D. 70, "then shall they
see (Greek; opsontai, the meaning of which is shown on
page 31) the Son of Man Coming" (Luke 21:27), and any
other meaning is quite unnatural, and to make v. 24 mean
"from the destruction of Jerusalem until now or until the
end of time" is positively without any Scriptural reason,
and, therefore, is to be rejected by right thinking interpreters.

Another passage is sometimes used as if it were parallel to the one just discussed. We refer to Rom. 11:25, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." But upon examination one readily finds that it treats of an entirely different theme. The subjects are different. One is "the times of the Gentiles," the other "the fulness of the Gentiles." Of the first of which subjects it is predicated that they would "be fulfilled," the last to "come in," not "to be fulfilled or completed" as some seem to read it. We see Paul's meaning to be this: that the fulness of the Gentiles was to be accomplished when the Christian church was established on a non-Jewish basis. It COULD not "come in" in fulness until the fabric of Judaism, the Mosaic economy, was obliterated, and this happened at the destruction of Jerusalem, and then "the fulness of the Gentiles" as well as of the Jews (Rom. 11:12) was ushered in. "The law" which Christ came "to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17) was then fulfilled. The Kingdom of God, so long looked for, came, which was the same as to "see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. 16:28). "It is not necessary to look for any later events as the fulfillment of this assurance than those of the Apostolic age," says Daniel Curry in Clarke's Commentary, in loco. We would not, indeed have anyone believe that the destruction of Jerusalem WAS the coming of the Son in His kingdom. The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple was only an outward evidence of the end of the Levitical age. However, at the end of that age the "parousia" was to take place, a very distinct and separate event.

The coming (parousia) of the Son, we understand, is the correlate of the coming of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God, we understand, means the "reign of God" in the hearts of men (few or many). The parousia, however, was an event ushering in or beginning that kingdom's peculiar "fulness." Paul says such "reign of God" was limited in the Old Testament saints, "blindness in part hath happened in Israel, until the fulness of
the Gentiles be come in” (Rom. 11:25, also verses 11, 12).

In the fulness of time Christ came in His first advent; He preached, and instructed His disciples to preach, that that kingdom was near at hand. It was still being so preached when John’s Revelation was written, some time between A. D. 54 and 70. He wrote of Jesus’ return and Revelation and the things that “must shortly come to pass” (Rev. 1:1), and “which shall (Greek, mello, IS ABOUT TO) be” (verse 19), “for the time is at hand” (verse 3); He died and rose again to make its inauguration possible; he gave the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to be a guide and help to the disciples and believers to proclaim that same truth and “witness to all nations,” which witnessing, having begun at Pentecost, continued thereafter until every nation and every creature had been reached, and that before A. D. 70, according to Paul (Col. 1:5, 6, 23): while Jesus himself during the same period, having ascended to the Father, “tarried, expecting until His foes,” that wicked generation, be put under his feet. But that “reign of God” did not and could not come in its “fulness” either to Gentiles (Rom. 11:25), or the Jews (v. 12), until the whole visible fabric of Judaism, the Mosaic economy, was obliterated, and this happened only at the destruction of the temple, which marked the end of the Levitical age. The observations of Conybeare and Howson on this point are clear, “While the temple worship still existed the way of salvation would not be fully manifest” (“Epistles of St. Paul,” Chapter 28).

The writer of the Hebrews speaks definitely on this point (Heb. 1:1-3; 9:8-10; 26-28; 10:13, 25, 27), saying: “God spoke in times past by the prophets” (1:1), and having lived in the end of those days, said, “God hath at the end of THESE days spoken unto us in His Son,” (v.2), and “when he had made purification of sins sat down on the right hand of God” (v. 3). Again he says, “Having now at the end of the ages been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, Christ shall appear a second time unto salvation” (9:26, 28); that is, for the purpose of bringing in the “reign” of God in its “fulness.” So then, the setting up of that kingdom did not take place at
Christ's crucifixion, nor at the resurrection or ascension, nor yet at Pentecost, for He had not yet appeared that second time at the writing of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as we see in Heb. 10:25, "but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the DAY approaching," that is, the day of the Lord, the time of his appearing, after "his enemies had been made his footstool" (v. 13), "for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come" (v. 37). And the fulness or perfection of salvation had not come because the way into the holy place had not yet been made manifest, neither could it be while the first, or outer, tabernacle was still standing (9:8, 9), "until a time of reformation," (v. 10), that is, the introduction of a new order. The crisis between the old dispensation and the new era took place only at the destruction of the old order in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, which occurred A. D. 70.

In regard to the Jews, some seem to think a curse and "blindness in part" is now resting on them. However, it is a significant fact that we today do not think of a curse resting on a Jew—a thot taken from Matt. 27:25—after he becomes a Christian; neither do we think of his now having a "blindness in part" on him—a thot induced by a wrong setting as to time, of Rom. 11:25—after he becomes a Christian; nor do we believe that the unrepentant Jew is in any more precarious condition of soul than any unrepentant Gentile. Both can find salvation by believing on the same Jesus, for there is "no other name under heaven given among men wherein we must be saved." Some Jews have believed and have found the joys of salvation as have countless others who are not Jews. All Jews could obtain the same experience as can all others. The Jews are not becoming Christians in greater numbers, not because that "blindness in part" is still on them, but because they still do not accept the salvation of Jesus as is the case of any sinner who does not accept. It is widely believed that the "fulness of the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:25) will occur at the Lord's return, but some kind of blindness must have happened to certain Gentile theolog-
ians, for they seem never yet to have realized that the "fulness" of Jews, mentioned by Paul in Rom. 11:12, as certainly as of the Gentiles (verse 25) was to "come in" at the second advent of the Lord in the lifetime of some of Christ's contemporaries, namely, at the end of the (Levitical) age, which our argument shows to have been about A. D. 70.

This wrong view in regard to the Jews—that official blindness is still on them, which Christianity of the present age cannot overcome—we believe, has led Christian workers to disregard their duty of propagating "missions for Jews" as well as "missions for Gentiles," which, by the way, is another reason why so few Jews are getting the Gospel light. When the Christian world sees the light of truth on this subject, Christian workers will get anxious about the non-saved among the Jews as among the Gentiles. We believe that no "blindness in part" can NOW be on the Jews, because, if we believe the prophecy of Jesus and the apostles regarding the coming, then Jesus has come, and at His coming that "blindness" was to have been overcome.

Some will say, "Does not Christ say His coming shall be as the lightning?"

If we take notice, it does not say it was to be as the brightness or visibility of the lightning but particular mention is made by Jesus, "as the lightning cometh OUT OF THE EAST and shineth UNTO THE WEST, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matt. 24:27; Luke 17:24). Not visibility, but extent, is the emphatic thing and is certainly incompatible with local bodily presence in either case. In fact, it seems that the Saviour was careful to limit this figure of speech so as to eliminate the possibility of that the coming was to be visible, as one may perceive in the parallel in Luke 17:20-24. The coming of the kingdom was to be without observation (verse 20); it was not to be local, but "within you" (v. 21,23); you shall desire to see, but you shall not see it (v.22); for, in extent it is to be universal, as the lightning that lightens from one part of heaven to the other (v. 24). The latter is ex-
actly what the Son of Man is doing, lightening the whole world. The parallel in Matt. 24:27, says this coming as the lightning as one of the “all things” in v. 34, was to be fulfilled in that generation, which agrees with Matt. 10:23 and 16:28, that the coming of the Son of Man was to be in the lifetime of some of His disciples.

According to this comparison of parallels, we see that the disciples were plainly told of the invisible nature of the coming, so then, least of all could we believe that Luke, the writer of the words compared, should in another place (Acts 1:11) teach a visible coming, as many in this day attempt to make a poor translation “in like manner as” teach. To believe so would make Luke contradict himself as well as his Lord. (On this passage see a fuller discussion on page 36.)

Likewise, other passages in the Epistles and Revelation which may seem (taken separately) to indicate a visibility of the coming, some of which were written before the Gospel narratives, certainly would not be written with any intention of teaching contrary to the Lord’s words. We cannot think that the Apostles ever expected Christ to come visibly in his second advent. Such doctrine began to be taught only in later days.

But someone may ask: “How can one explain away the Scripture passages which say that we shall SEE the Lord’s return, such as Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7?”

One need not try to explain away these Scriptures, for they are not formidable when properly considered and interpreted.

1. Matt. 24:30 has already been considered as a part of a larger passage, Matt. 24:29-31, on pages 19-22. There we find the passage in question is language from the Old Testament written in a picturesque, prophetic style, with no thought of the spectacular, and to people who understood it as figurative. Therefore, we have no right to take the word “see,” a part of that prophetic language, and today read it as if it meant “SEE” with our FLESHLY EYES.
2. Matt. 26:64 is also an Old Testament quotation from Dan. 7:13, written in an oriental style, which originally was a vision. We see no reason for reading, in this day and age, the passage in question other than that it actually was to be accomplished in the invisible world, as the word “see” does NOT necessarily DEMAND fleshly eyes to fulfill its meaning.

3. Acts 1:11. It is true that the disciples saw Jesus with fleshly eyes leave the earth in the ascension, but this passage does not say that they would see Him return. It does NOT read as some seem to read it: “This Jesus you SHALL SEE COMING in like manner as you have seen Him go.” The word “see” is used only once and that refers to His leaving them. When properly translated this passage has nothing more nor less in it than in this paraphrase, “This Jesus which was received up from you into heaven shall come again as truly as He was taken and the latter you know to be a fact because you have seen Him go.” The idea of the manner of His coming is not necessarily in this passage as you may see in a fuller discussion on page 36.

4. Rev. 1:7 is also a direct quotation from the Old Testament, picturesque language written to a people who were accustomed to reading and interpreting such language in its true significance, which in this case would not be to understand “see” as referring to “fleshly sight,” simply because Jesus had already told them: “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. * * * You shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man but you shall NOT SEE it” (Luke 17:20-22), “I go to the Father, and ye behold Me no more” (John 16:10); also the argument that that coming was to be universal, “from the East extending to the West,” of Luke 17:24, and “every eye shall see him” of the passage before us disproves the idea of local seeing with fleshly eyes, because it presents a physical impossibility. Still another argument against the word “see” of this passage referring to fleshly sight is the fact that Heb. 9:26, 28 teaches us by contrast of words that the two advents of Christ were different as to
their appearings. "Now once ** hath He been manifested (phaneroo) **, so Christ also ** shall appear (optomai) a second time." The first coming is indicated by a word that means to bring to light, to show or display; but the second is denoted by a word that means incorporeal knowledge or spiritual sight in 53 instances out of 57 in the New Testament (Urmy). And, indeed, why were two different words used in the same context unless a distinction was meant in the nature of the perception? Now take notice that it is this Greek word "optomai" which is used in Rev. 1:7, (as will be more fully discussed in the following section) and is translated "see" which refers to incorporeal knowledge or spiritual insight. The materialists, therefore, have no good, and certainly no consistent, reason for using Heb. 9:28 and Rev. 1:7 as arguments for a visible return of Christ.

CHAPTER III (B)

Meaning of "See" as it Refers to Christ's Second Coming.

5. The word "see" in all four of these passages is translated from the Greek verb optomai, "to see," and its derivatives, which does not at all times require fleshly eyes to fulfill its meaning, but, in fact, is used often where sight with "fleshly eyes" is not meant or is impossible. For example, note the following references:

(a) Matt. 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall SEE (optomai) God." This is not with fleshly eyes, for God is Spirit, and has not been and can never be seen.

(b) Matt. 27:4: "SEE (optomai) thou to that," and Matt. 27:24, "SEE (optomai) ye to it," do not carry any idea of sight with fleshly eyes.

(c) Luke 13:28: "Then shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall SEE (optomai) Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, and (see) yourselves thrust out." Not with fleshly eyes, for it describes something after death in the heavenly world.
(d) John 3:36: "Shall not see (optomai) life." Not with fleshly eyes, because an inner spiritual sight is clearly meant.

(e) Acts 2:17: "Shall see (optomai) visions." The meaning is directly opposed to any idea of fleshly eyes; likewise, Acts 16:9, "A vision appeared (optomai), the word, "appeared" being the translation of the Greek verb in question.

(f) I Cor. 15:8: "And last of all he was seen (optomai) of me." Not with fleshly eyes, for Paul had been blinded as to his fleshly sight (Acts 9:8, 9), and it was while in this condition that "He was seen of me."

(g) Luke 1:22, Acts 26:19, II Cor. 12:1, each has in it the word "vision," which is translated from a derivative of the Greek word in question, and visions are not objects of fleshly sight.

Therefore, we see (not with fleshly eyes, either) that the four main passages which are supposed by many people to mean that we shall see with corporeal eyes the Lord's return have about them abundant reason for any careful interpreter to say they do not contain such literal meaning. And if this is so, then the disciples did not expect a visible return of their Lord after the statement of the men in white apparel (Acts 1:11), as some assert, unless, perchance, they were still laboring under a mistaken notion as to the nature of the coming even as the disciples were mistaken on the way to Emmaus and said, "We hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel"—that is, to set up an earthly throne. But that was not Christ's expectation, nor can it be so now nor for the future, according to plain Scripture words.

And those today, who build up their argument for a visible return on these four passages and others like them, must be wrong, especially since there are definite passages denying a visible coming, (Luke 17:22), "Ye shall desire, * * * * but ye shall not see," (John 16:10), "I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more," and since Jesus said He was coming while some of His disciples were still living (Matt. 16:28), and since, speaking definitely
about seeing "the Son of Man coming in the clouds" and other connected happenings, Jesus says (Matt. 24:34): "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

So there is no need to try to "explain away" supposed difficulties in the four main Scriptures that have the word "see" in them, for it is clearly perceived that "see" does not require fleshly eyes to fulfill its meaning. And since this is so, and for this reason, these same Scriptures must be denied the right of use as "proof texts" on this subject. Proof of the contention for a visible return of the Lord, should there be any, must depend on words and phrases that can mean nothing else, not on words of possible ambiguity. If the writer could have found but one passage of Scripture that definitely and positively asserted a visible return of the Lord, this book would not have been written.

If Jesus came when He said He would, He either came visibly (and we have no history from those who saw with fleshly eyes), or He came invisibly. The writer sees no sufficient reason to deny the latter; and those who do deny it build their argument on inferences and lack of positive Scripture proofs.
CHAPTER III (C)

Acts 1:11 and Others

But some will say, "How can you answer the definite statement in Acts 1:11, in which it says, 'This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven?""

The puzzling thing to some who cannot read the original Greek is the expression, "in like manner as." But to go a little deeper than the English version we find these facts: (1) The word "same" is not in the original text, (2) the Greek words (on tropon) translated "in like manner as" in the passage in question is nowhere else translated with those words. The Greek words appear in the New Testament in but four places besides the passage in question, Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34; II Tim. 3:8; Acts 7:28. The first three of these have the translation "even as" for the Greek words, the last one simply "as." The passage in question has the same words translated "in like manner as." Why this change? We see no reason other than that some doctrinal bias in the minds of the translators colored the translation. There can be no necessity of language, because in some of the passages named the meaning could not bear the translation "in like manner as" and maintain sense. Therefore, we maintain that Acts 1:11 can not bear the translation "in like manner as" because it makes the passage contradict other clear passages bearing on the subject of the second coming of Christ. In fact, there is no other Scripture held by interpreters to refer to Christ's "coming again" whose language could be made to mean literally "in like manner as." We have already pointed out one such discrepancy in a passing reference to Rev. 1:7 on page 21.
Let the passage in question be translated as all other passages with “even as” or “as,” and leave out the idea of manner, which is not required, and the whole difficulty disappears, and the doctrine of Christ’s coming in Acts 1:11 agrees with other passages of Scripture on the subject.

It is the belief of the writer that the English translation of Acts 1:11, as it stands, has been the greatest cause of the modern, and, as we think, erroneous, teaching of a visible, local coming of Christ rather than an invisible, universal, not-of-this-world, spiritual coming.

Another difficulty for some is in the following: “Does not Christ say that Christians should observe the Lord’s Supper till I come?” If He is now reigning, as some affirm, the church has absolutely no authority to celebrate the Lord’s Supper as she does.”

In direct answer we must say, “Emphatically, no! Christ did not say that. Therefore, the church today has the best authority to celebrate the Lord’s Supper now.” Jesus in His words of institution did not state any limit (Luke 22:19, 20).

It is true that PAUL said to the Corinthians, “As oft as ye drink this cup and eat this bread, ye do show the Lords death till He come” (I Cor. 11:26). According to I Thess. 4:15-17, we see that Paul expected to be alive at the coming of the Lord, and would be “taken up.” Therefore the Corinthians, who would have the same privileges, would have no more opportunity after He would come to celebrate the Lord’s Supper, as assuredly those to whom the Apostle wrote would cease to exist on earth. It was evidently a local item. We today must read this as we do all other epistles with due consideration of items which apply to the local church only and not to the future.

Other passages that the Pre-millennialists often quote to show that Christ has not yet come are Heb. 9:28, “Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time
without sin unto salvation;” and Rev. 20:2, which says that Satan was to be bound for a thousand years. These, they say, show that there will be no sin after Christ’s second coming, and since sin is in the world, therefore, Christ has not come.

But how they arrive at such conclusion, is hard to know, for neither here nor anywhere else in Scripture does it say that there is to be no temptation nor sin after Christ comes. As to Satan being “bound,” one may turn for elucidation to II Tim. 1:10, which refers to Christ’s first coming, where it speaks of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, having abolished death, which means that death has LOST ITS STING, was MADE USELESS, of NO MORE ACCOUNT. The verb “abolished” is translated from the same word used in regard to the devil in Heb. 2:14, “through death he might BRING TO NAUGHT ** the devil.” In the first passage, the facts show us that the word “abolished” does not indicate cessation of death, for people still die; likewise, in the latter passage “to bring to naught (abolish) the devil,” does not mean the devil is not to exist, but rather, that he has LOST HIS POWER, HIS GRIP. Nor can such passages mean that there will be no more temptation, else man would become a machine with no free will to act, no wrong way to choose if he wills to. But, on the other hand, the Christian is given power over Satan so as to live right, if he will. This is a binding of Satan in accord with other representations in Scripture. (See a fuller discussion on pages 43-45).

And Christ’s reigning in righteousness with His saints consequently cannot mean that there will be no more sin, but that His reign shall be a righteous reign in justice, in truth, tho not all shall bow to him at the beginning of that reign. A good ruler on earth may establish ideal laws, but because He is on the throne and has those ideal laws is no assurance that every subject is going to obey; yet the rule may be of a righteous order. Similarly, the rule of Christ is the highest order but as long as man is on the earth men will sin, it seems.
We believe, however, that the faithful will increase more and more until the end of time, if there is to be any end, the kingdom having begun as the mustard seed of the parable (Matt. 13:31, 32), and as the parable of the leaven teaches (Matt. 13:33), with very small beginnings, about A. D. 70, after the coming of Christ as prophesied by Christ Himself, and has kept on growing and increasing until now one-third of the population of the earth is evangelized. And Christ is now reigning, doing His best, to have us do our best.

However, there is one passage of Scripture among others which we wish to mention here, whose wrong interpretation has led the post-millennialists to think that all the world will be converted before Christ comes. We refer to I Cor. 15:24, "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God." The mistake has been to interpret "the end" of the passage in question, as referring to the end of time, which it does not say; and, to think that "the kingdom that Christ shall deliver up to God" is the Kingdom of God or of Christ, namely, the mediatorial kingdom, which had so often been spoken of as "at hand," and which was to be ushered in at Christ's second advent. This the passage also does not say.

Therefore, since there is no other passage in all the Bible on which any man who has looked into the matter would care to base a doctrine of the end of the world; and since "the end" is an expression used several times by Jesus particularly in answer to the question of the disciples, "What shall be the sign of thy coming (parousia) and the end of the age" (Matt. 24:3)? Jesus here refers to "the end" mentioned by the disciples, saying, "the end is not yet" (v. 6): "He that shall endure unto the end shall be saved" (v. 13), "Then shall the end come" (v. 14); all of which refer to the time before that generation then living would pass away (v. 34); and since writers of the New Testament, heretofore mentioned, including Paul himself, used the same expression to designate the end of the (Jewish) age or dispensation, at which time the coming (parousia) was to take place, then it would not be natural
nor reasonable to interpret the same expression used by Paul in this place, without positive proof to the contrary, to refer to "an end" other than that of the Jewish age, as the coming (parousia) is particularly spoken of in the sentence just preceding and in the closest connection with it, "Afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming (parousia); then cometh the end" (v. 23, 24).

Having arrived at the conclusion that Paul meant by "the end" just what his Lord meant, "by whose word" he obtained his knowledge of "the last things" (I Thess. 4:15), and having found nothing positive to the contrary, now comes the query as to the interpretation of "the kingdom" in the passage in question.

It cannot refer to the Kingdom of God, the mediatorial kingdom, for it was to continue forever, "Of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:33); "the eternal kingdom of our Lord" (II Pet. 1:11). Jonathan Edwards says, according to Dr. Urmy, "Christ's mediation between the Father and the elect will continue after the end of the world, and He will reign as a middle person between the Father and them to all eternity." Since we find this to be so, the alternate meaning of "the kingdom" of the passage would be the Messianic kingdom, of which Christ was King. This then was the kingdom which Christ was to cease to administer, after ascending to the Father, and reigning there until all enemies were put under His feet (I Cor. 15:25), that is, all the wicked rejecting Jews of that generation as seen in Matt. 23:34-36. This reduction of His enemies took place at the terrible judgment of the Jewish nation at the destruction of Jerusalem, after which time Christ's kingdom, freed from the retarding force of Judaism, proceeded to grow as the parable of the mustard seed suggests at the ushering in of His kingdom, which was to take place at the end of that age.

Thus we see that this passage is most naturally and reasonably interpreted as referring to events about to take place in Paul's generation, which in turn forces one to the conclusion that the kingdom mentioned is the Messianic
kingdom which came to an end about A. D. 70, when Christ began His reign in His mediatorial kingdom. For, was not Jesus sent "only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel" in His first advent (Matt. 15:24), and to make sacrifice for the world and to prepare to begin His mediatorial reign of the Kingdom of God sometime in the near future of His disciples, according to plain words of Scripture? We are forced to conclude, also, that the world is now to be converted through our instrumentality, Christ having come in His second advent, we reigning with Him and having his parousia (presence) with us. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21).

The question has often come to the writer's mind, What advantage can anyone see in Christ's coming to destroy the world and wind up affairs after the wickedness in which it had remained so long has been overcome and the world converted? Certainly there is no Scripture which, properly interpreted, teaches any such doctrine. It would seem to us that God would then wish the world to continue even more than when it was in its wickedness. Our interpretation sees the world abiding long after the wickedness has been overcome, of course. And, again, what advantage can anyone see in contending for a visible return of the Lord after Christ Himself said, "It is expedient for you that I go away (become invisible)" (John 16:7)? And Jesus never abrogated that statement, but rather enforced it forever, saying, "I go to the Father, and YE BEHOLD ME NO MORE" (John 16:10). It is true, certain other Scriptures seem to suggest a visible return when taken out of their context, and when figurative language is made to answer for plain speech, but a careful interpretation, comparing Scripture with Scripture, will reveal the fact that Christ is here now reigning in His invisible presence. The difficulty of all the highest service of life is that the spiritual is invisible. Were Jesus present visibly, it is supposed that greater results would accrue from Christian service, but the supposition must be mistaken, inasmuch as He to whom such service is infinitely dearer than it ever can be to ourselves has determined that the manner of
Christian evangelism was to be with His invisible presence ever after the ascension, “I go to the Father and ye behold Me no more” (John 16:10). The great duty and privilege of the church is to realize the presence and influence of the Invisible. The church is actually to see the Unseen.

Again, I John 3:8 says “The Son of God WAS manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil.” The pre-millennialist says the works of the devil will be destroyed at Christ’s second coming, that Christ’s mission on earth has failed as far as overcoming sin is concerned until then. They therefore pass by this important passage just quoted, or else make it read as it does not: “The Son of God WILL BE manifested, that He might destroy the,” etc.

CHAPTER III.—(D)

Rev. 20; and the Greek word “Mello” in the Book of Revelation.

There still remains another Scripture which in recent years has been much abused, Rev. 20:1-6. In this as with other Scriptures on the coming, interpretation must be both consistent and accordant with Christ’s own words on the subject.

In our search, we have found no good biblical authority who does not believe that the “angel” of verse 1 is a figurative expression for Christ, and certainly no one will contend that the symbols in the vision of John demand a literal or physical chaining of the dragon with material chains. He is a spirit being, and no spirit being can be restrained by anything material. Further, we read that John saw (v. 4) the “souls”, not physical bodies of those called “blessed and holy” in v. 6, who lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. And since Satan, who is an invisible being, has earth as his field of operation, so Christ and the souls who live and reign with him could also “reign on earth” during the thousand years invisible to our eyes.

With practically everybody in agreement with the
above propositions, we feel it to be quite consistent and
in perfect agreement with other Scriptures on the second
advent of Christ to interpret Rev. 20:1-6, according to
the following:

1. Since the entire Book of Revelation is really a
treatise on Christ's second coming and its concomitants,
and since Rev. 20 is the logical place in the argument for
a description of that coming, therefore, the coming of the
"angel" of verse 1 represents the coming of Christ in His
second advent—at least one phase of the coming.

2. Since Jesus said He was coming again in the life-
time of some of His disciples, according to Matt. 16:28, and,
before that generation passes away, according to Matt.
24:34, therefore, the chaining of the dragon, the devil,
which was to take place at the coming of the "angel"
(Rev. 20:2), actually took place at the time indicated,
namely, at the close of the Jewish dispensation or age.
The latter, all know, took place during the terrible trib-
ulation of the Jewish wars, when the sacrifices in the
temple ceased, never to be resumed. Of the chaining
of Satan, even common sense would teach that all that is
meant is the repression and restriction of Satanic power
during the period indicated, even if we did not have
Scripture to sustain the truth, (and there being no Scrip-
ture to the contrary), for did not Jesus infer that there
would be sin during the millennium, when He said, "Who-
soever speaketh against the Son of Man, it shall be for-
given him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy
Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age
(Greek, aionos), neither in the age to come" (Matt. 12:32)?
The "age to come" was understood, then, as well as now,
as the age to be ushered in by the coming of Christ. Conse-
quently, sin was to be possible during the millennium. If
sin was possible, then Satan was not bound in the sense
that he could not tempt. And, furthermore, men were not
to be machines without free will, which would be the case
if there were but one way to go, and no possibility of sin,
no temptation.

This binding of Satan agrees with the first prophecy
in the Bible regarding Christ, “it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15). To the same effect are the words of our Lord (John 12:31) “Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out.”

Before and during our Saviour’s incarnation, there was an activity of moral evil, everywhere ascribed in the New Testament to Satan, far exceeding anything now known among men. Let anyone consider what Rome was in the days of Nero, and what Jerusalem was in the closing period of the Jewish commonwealth as described by Josephus, and he will concede that all has actually happened which is described in II Tim. 3:1-9 as referring to the last days of the age then existing, and which ended with the fall of Jerusalem. From that time (described as the time of the binding, repression and restriction of Satan) on down thru the ages, knowledge of God and Christ as Saviour has been progressing remarkably, as will be shown in our quotations, pages 48, 49.

Again, in our Saviour’s time nearly the whole world was living in the sin of idolatry—a system which the Scriptures recognize as preeminently the work of the devil. But when we consider that that idolatry of the Apostolic age, so time-honored and inveterate, the popularity of the gods, the worship of whom had entwined itself around every act of public and private life, and then to see it as having wholly disappeared from the face of the earth, this goes to show restriction of Satan’s power, or else makes one at a loss to account for the remarkable change. We believe it due to the presence of Christ in His reign with the saints, bringing righteousness, gradually, but certainly, until “every knee shall bow and tongue confess” Him as Lord.

Again, the abolition of Judaism was the removal of the most formidable obstacle to the progress of the Kingdom of God. By Judaism we mean all that man-made system built up after Israel demanded a king, rejecting the theocracy, which was God’s intention for them from the first. This Satan induced, man-made, ritualistic system was that
which was abolished, and was one item in that binding of Satan that had to take place before God's theocracy in Jesus Christ could again be established. And believing it was ordered of God, we see in Rev. 20 the actual representation of that curbing of Satan's power.

We conclude, therefore, that at the end of that age or dispensation, about 70 A. D., a marked and decisive check (the cessation of an unparalleled activity of evil, the disappearance of a peculiar and persistent form of idolatry, and the abolition of Judaism, being the prominent features) was administered to the power of Satan, which check is symbolically represented by the chaining and imprisoning of the dragon in the abyss.

It does not follow from this that all error and evil were to be banished from the earth at the binding of Satan. It is enough to show that this was, as Schlegel says, "the decisive crisis between ancient and modern times; and that the introduction of Christianity has changed and regenerated not only government and science, but the whole system of human life."

3. Since Rev. 20:4 speaks of souls (not bodies) as living and reigning with Christ, one cannot rightly reason, as some do, that the reigning was to be on earth in visible form. But they live and reign with Christ; they are with Him where He is, "beholding His glory." Being "souls" not bodies, they would be invisible to fleshly eyes, which agrees with the words of Paul (I Cor. 15:44) about the resurrection body being a "spiritual body;" therefore not visible; and incorruptible, and immortal (I Cor. 15:52, 53), therefore not fleshly.

4. The thousand years, or millennium of Rev. 20:2-7 appears nowhere else in the Bible. Its meaning is much disputed among theologians. It is enough for us to say that we believe the "thousand year" expression to be a figurative expression, as all agree that other terms in connection therewith are figurative, and as such it becomes a synonym for the period of the reign of Christ as it spreads over the earth, bringing universal peace and religious prosperity.
Let us suggest here that Rev. 20:5-10 appears to be parenthetical in the chapter, separating the subject, the coming of Jesus and the reigning of souls with Christ, from the judgment scene which is depicted in verses 11-15, the latter section being introduced by the same words “I saw,” found throughout the book, which marks that which comes under the personal observation of John.

In interpreting it, therefore, it is a mistake to separate the two sections making the latter section 1000 years later than the former, inasmuch as it is true that everywhere else the coming and the judgment are shown to be in close connection. It must be the same judgment scene as Matt. 25:31-46, for it has in it the same “throne of glory,” the same gathering of all nations, the same judgment according to their works, the same “everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” And if this judgment is identical with that described in Matt. 25, it does not come at the end of the world, as many think, but at “the end of the age” as heretofore discussed and as will be shown in the chapter on The Judgment, Part III of this book.

This parenthetical passage seems to be the only part of the whole prophecy which was not to be fulfilled in the near future of the prophet. As to the time of the fulfillment of all the other prophecies of the Apocalypse, there are several definite statements, all of which preclude any idea of the time as future to us. Some of these we mention here:

The Greek word “mello” and its derivatives, which means something ABOUT TO take place, or AT THE POINT OF being done (Liddell and Scott), is used twelve times in the prophecy. The same meaning holds good in every place, and, in fact, were it translated by either of the two meanings just given in every instance, much misapprehension and speculation would have been precluded. Rev. 1:19, “Write ** the things which shall (mello, ARE ABOUT TO) come to pass after these;” Rev. 2:10, “Fear not the things which thou are ABOUT TO (mello) suffer; behold the devil is ABOUT TO (mello) cast some of you in prison.” Here in the Revised Version the Greek word
(mello) is translated to bring out the proper meaning without a doubt, and that is, that the passage refers directly to the condition at Smyrna, and not to our future; Rev. 3:10, "I will keep thee from the hour of trial, which is to (mello, ABOUT TO) come upon the whole world." The phrase "whole world" refers only to the then known world, or Roman Empire, not to the world as we now know it, for John wrote of what was to take place in his near future as "mello" certainly designates; Rev. 10:4, "I was ABOUT TO (mello) write." To translate "mello" here with "will" or "shall," as is done at some other places, could not make sense.

Since we see that the Greek word "mello" is properly translated "ABOUT TO" to indicate the true meaning in these places, therefore, there is no reason to give it a meaning that refers to our future when it is used in connection with the second coming of Christ, or, so as to state that Jesus has not yet returned simply because He was not seen visibly by fleshly eyes, or, when such would make it contradict other plain statements about the time of the coming. The Scripture, including John's prophecy, is against that idea in that it uses this Greek word (mello, ABOUT TO BE) when it refers to the time of that coming, as in Matt. 16:27, "For the Son of Man shall (mello, IS ABOUT TO) come," and Rev. 1:19, quoted just above. In this last reference "the things which shall (mello, ABOUT TO) come," includes the coming of Christ. And all this agrees perfectly with that coming referred to as "shortly to come," (Rev. 1:1); as, "the time is at hand," (Rev. 1:3 and 22:10); and as, "I come quickly," (Rev. 3:11; 22:7; 22:12 and 22:20).

By these references we see that the limitation of time in the Apocalypse is not a mere conjecture. The nearness of the events it predicts are explicitly and repeatedly affirmed. Yet some interpreters ignore these limitations of time, regarding the Book of Revelation as an almanac of political and ecclesiastical events to the end of time. Surely this is an inexcusable blunder, and to our mind would carry with it the plagues spoken of in Rev. 22:18, 19.
CHAPTER IV

WHY THERE IS NO HISTORICAL RECORD.

Another question that arises is this: "Is it not strange that there is no record in church history that such an event took place?"

In answer, let us say, there was nothing spectacular to write about. There was nothing written about the spectacular in the heavens as prophesied in regard to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. However, we have history of the result of the coming of the Holy Spirit. So we have abundance of church history to show the wonderful results of the spread of Christ's kingdom on earth after his "parousia," prophesied to take place in the lifetime of some of his disciples. By 325 A. D., in spite of fierce persecution, the kingdom had spread so fast that Christianity was declared the State religion by Constantine. On earth now 400 millions are professed followers of a reigning Christ. Compare the world and "The Kingdom" today after the last 100 years even.

"One hundred years ago, nearly every country in Asia and Africa was closed to the Gospel; there were almost no missionaries; now there are 25,000 Protestant Christian missionaries in foreign lands.

"Then the Bible had been translated into 65 languages or dialects; now into more than 500.

"Then there were contributed a few thousands of dollars a year; now $30,000,000 are given to foreign missions by Protestant Christians.

"Then there was no native ministry; now over 112,000 pastors, evangelists, Bible women and other native Christian helpers.

"Then there were no single women missionaries; now there are over 6,000.

"Then there were a few mission schools started; now there are over 35,000 Protestant schools and colleges with nearly 2,000,000 pupils.

"Then there was not one mission press; now there are
160 publishing houses and mission presses, and 400 Christian periodicals published on the mission field.

"Then no American denomination, as such, was committed to foreign mission excepting the Moravians; now every denomination of any size has its home and foreign missions.

"Then there was not one mission hospital, orphanage, or other charitable institution; now there are 700 mission hospitals and over 500 orphanages and asylums.

"Then Judson, Carey, and Morrison had to labor from seven to ten years for a first convert; now there are more than 120,000 Protestant Christians added to the churches in heathen lands every year."

To go to the original that, ask the church historian where Christianity is most obscure, and he will tell you "Just following the end of the Acts of the Apostles." Neander says, "There was a total want of sources for this part of church history." Renan, in his "St. Paul," speaking of this period, says, "Black darkness falls upon the scene; no more books are written; no more messengers are sent; the very voice of tradition is still." "History had a chasm of 60 to 80 years," said another. This is another reason for no historical notice, if we, indeed, could expect one.

The writer sees no reason, however, for rejecting the theory put by several authors that the silence in church history is expressive. Silence, where before A. D. 70, all was life and activity in the church. James says, Acts 21:20, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews which have believed." Paul and others had established churches throughout the known world among Jews and Gentiles as the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles show. The Christian church had had a remarkable growth. What became of the members and the ten thousands of believers? After the destruction of Jerusalem history records they had dwindled to two sects of Ebionites and Nazarenes. No strong church at Corinth; none at Thessalonica and other places founded
by the Apostles were ever heard of after A. D. 70. Where did they disappear so quickly?

They were gone. What more evidence would be reasonably required to conclude that Matt. 24:31, 40, 41*, and I Thess. 4:17** had been fulfilled, and that that which is commonly denominated "the rapture of the saints" actually took place.

Grant that Christ's own plain words had not failed of fulfillment in that generation as He declared and all is clear. And if they had a veritable accomplishment, no wonder that there should be a "total blank" in contemporary history; that St. Luke should stop the narrative and life of St. Paul in "The Acts of the Apostles" so uncereemoniously and abruptly.

**"And He shall send His angels—and they shall gather together His elect." Then shall two men be in the field, the one is taken and one is left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, one is taken and one is left."
***"Then we that are alive shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."
CHAPTER V

THE NECESSARY CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

Other questions or objections can be answered as readily and conclusively as any alert mind would require by simply letting Scripture explain Scripture where required. No Higher Criticism will be necessary to formulate this doctrine. No questionable methods of interpretation are pursued. The natural method of letting Christ's plain words be the basis and determinate factor for all figurative language used and for all doctrines taught by the Epistles on this important subject, is the only method of interpretation required. And such is the logical and true method, surely.

We are, therefore, now living in the times of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, not in the times of the Father and Holy Spirit as those aver who hold that Christ is yet to come and who speak, reverently to them, of their "absent Lord."

Were the church to preach with the full belief that Jesus is here in the world reigning in his kingdom much more good would be accomplished. We believe the results would be pentecostal in character. Rather than that the church is suffering harm because of the indifference of her children to the coming of the Lord in our future (which the Scripture nowhere states), she is suffering because of her failure to proclaim that Jesus has come and is now reigning and living within us and among us all. The advantage to be gained by looking forward to a coming of Christ is not to be compared to the sweetness and joy and help realized by acknowledging Him as having come in in His "presence." Such is a mighty incentive when temptation to evil presents itself.

Certainly the Scriptures sustain the doctrine herein discussed. At any rate the only way to set aside the conclusions arrived at is to point out the text wrongly
interpreted and bring to bear others which disprove the position in the light of those used by the writer.

We realize, as some will say, that the Church has always taught that the second coming was to be in our future and that some things herein are contrary to the older theologies, but we seem to see the possibility of some new light on even such a venerable subject. We believe that the Church, very shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Apostolic Church having been raptured (I Thess. 4:17, fulfilled), and no New Testament canon yet being in existence, started wrong. And since then she has been clinging to these old theories which must sooner or later give way to consistent, biblical knowledge on the subject.

If the actual accomplishment of the second advent is a fact, that is, if the plain words of our Lord have been fulfilled, we have no choice but to hold it fast in faith, and follow on to know its perfect harmony, especially since there is absolutely no Scripture saying that the coming of Christ would be in the future 1800 years or more.

On the other hand, if we still say, "He has not yet come," we thereby teach that plain words do not mean what they say or that Christ and the Apostles said what was not to be true about his appearing, thereby leading the Church and people wrong. If the latter is admitted, as the premillennialists affirm, by their teaching in regard to the second advent, then we can see no reason to demand of the world to believe other things the Apostles taught. We, therefore, see that many of the religious teachers of the day are treading on dangerous ground. The doctrine taught in this book cannot be productive of harm such as has been and will be the case with the pre-millennial. With a general acceptance nothing will be lost to Christianity that we now have. On the other hand, we believe there will be a positive gain to the church in that it emphasizes the presence of Christ always with the believer.

We think we can close not being found guilty of argument not in keeping with our subject, "A Consistent, Biblical View of the Lord's Return."
CHAPTER VI.—THE PROBLEM INTRODUCED.

"How are the dead raised up, and with manner of body do they come?" (I Cor. 15:35).

The intelligent man wishes to know what is the truth about the resurrection as revealed in the Scriptures. That there is ambiguity in the biblical teaching seems to be evident, since so many divergent theories are held.

One school holds tenaciously to a material resurrection. They imagine they can see the graves opening and a re-creation taking place. But this is nothing more nor less than a re-creation, as, at the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, among which was man.

Another school says that the word resurrection refers to the soul, and not to the body, and is but an expression for the beginning of existence after death, which, they say, was a necessary line of argument for that time and age, which knew very little about the life hereafter.

Let us study the Bible at first hand and obtain a consistent, biblical view of the resurrection as stated therein.

The word resurrection is translated from the Greek word "anastasis" which means, literally, "a standing again." It does not receive its meaning from the associated word, and, therefore, does not necessarily maintain a connection between the buried body and that which "stands again." The soul in its fleshly body would be represented by the Greek word as "standing." When the earthly house was no longer habitable for the soul, Jesus and the Apostles spoke of the souls condition as that of "sleeping." When it was to take on its resurrection body it was designated as "standing again" (Greek, anastasis). This Greek word would have its meaning fulfilled perfectly,
as far as the soul was concerned, were the soul not to take on the fleshly body, but some other body. The same body is not necessary in order to complete a true "standing again," as some have taught.

However, we do not believe that in the resurrection the soul takes another body, but rather that it takes one identical with "the body of humiliation," or mortal body, of the same person, in the sense of its being body to the same spirit and constituting with that spirit the same soul, the same self, the same personality. Paul calls attention (I Cor. 15:36-41) to the identity of the blade with the kernel that was sown. Various terms are used to indicate the differences between the present body of a person and his resurrection body. One is earthy, the other heavenly, one physical and the other spiritual, one corruptible and the other incorruptible. Jesus taught that in the resurrection men are like the angels (Luke 20:36). Paul expands this idea of a heavenly, spiritual, incorruptible body in numerous passages which speak of the changing of our mortal bodies (I Cor. 15:51, 52; II Cor. 5:2, 4; Rom. 8:11; Phil. 3:21). The emphasis is particularly placed on the idea that the resurrection body is not subject to the perpetual change which we think of characterizing matter. Christian teaching should be the same as that of Paul who expressly tells us (I Cor. 15:50) that the resurrection body is not a body of flesh and blood and, therefore, it is not to walk this earth after its resurrection in the same sense as we now do.

Science suggests that as the seen universe is composed of matter, the unseen is composed of ether, and at every point of investigation we "are led from the visible and tangible to the invisible and intangible;" and science also concludes that the visible universe will in the end be swallowed up by the invisible. This agrees with Paul, as he says that eternal things are not seen (II Cor. 4:18). The body of the future cannot, therefore, be material, but is likely to be etherial, a body to which matter could offer no obstacle and whose mobility would be incalculable.
The resurrection body, we believe, will be an invisible body as far as this world is concerned. Rather than, that all that which is now invisible will be made visible to fleshly eyes in the resurrection, all that which is now visible will come to a higher form of organization in the invisible realm.

"How are the dead raised up?" Does the word "dead" refer to the body in the grave or to the soul as disembodied? The amazing fact to be discovered by the material resurrection theorists is that the Scriptures nowhere affirm the resurrection of the fleshly body after the time of Christ. That expression is taken wholly or chiefly from the Apostles' Creed, which expression was inserted in the Creed about 340 A. D., and is not a biblical expression.

It was evidently inserted by the materialistic school and the modern church has inherited it, and without much question has accepted it as biblical, tho the Nicene Creed has the correct expression, "resurrection of the dead."

The meaning of the expression "the resurrection of the dead" may be made clearer to the modern mind were it couched in different wording, which is its equivalent, namely, "the standing again of those who have laid down their earthly bodies." The expression itself does not designate with what manner of body they come or stand again. The manner of body is positively stated, however, in regard to OUR "standing again" in I Cor. 15:44, "It is raised a SPIRITUAL BODY," not with flesh and blood (v. 50). To this extent our resurrection or "standing again," we understand, is different from that of Christ whose "standing again" was with His same fleshly body, not with the spiritual body (Luke 24:37-39); and different from that of the other individuals who were raised with fleshly bodies, namely, the son of the widow of Nain, Lazarus, or the ones mentioned in Matt. 27:52, 53, and others.

We certainly believe in the resurrection of the dead, tho just as strongly disbelieve in the materialistic recreation of the body now for years or thousands of years buried in the earth, because the former is biblical, the latter is not.
There is another query to be settled in our minds, the settling of which has much to do with a proper interpretation of the Scripture before us, "How are the dead raised up?" We refer to the word of Jesus to Martha with regard to Lazarus, "Thy brother shall rise again" (John 11:23). Lazarus arose to life on earth again at the word of the Master. His separated soul was reunited with its former earthly body. The query is, is this resurrection of Lazarus an exact representation of the resurrection of the dead spoken of by the Apostolic writers?

The writer holds: That since the sickness, death and resurrection of Lazarus was that the Son of God might be glorified, and that the disciples might believe; since Lazarus had to die again a natural death, that this resurrection cannot represent and was not intended to represent the future "resurrection of the dead," tho even Martha understood Jesus' expression, "Thy brother shall rise again," to refer to that resurrection, for she said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." However, Jesus corrected her misapprehension and said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die," and then proceeded to work the miracle of reuniting the body and soul of Lazarus.

Before leaving this instance another misconception should be explained. We refer to the idea of the resurrection "at the last day." Some think of it as the last day OF THE WORLD. In Jesus' answer He gave Martha to understand that the resurrection He spoke of was not "at the last day" of the world, but was abiding in Him then. If abiding in Him then, so is the resurrection of the dead abiding in Him now and for the future. In this connection let us refer to Jesus' words to the dying thief, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise." This leaves no thought or conception of his going to the grave and being raised at the last day of the world, but emphasizes the fact, "This very day is your entrance into Paradise." And does not this accord perfectly with the words, "I am the resurrection," not only for them but for us now?
THE RESURRECTION

It is recorded that a certain poor widow who was kind to a French soldier, was the recipient of a gift of a French note worth $250 from him, but, as the widow had never seen the like, thinking it was but a beautiful memento and picture, had it framed and hung on the wall. Years after she was informed of the value of the note, which really meant a little fortune to her, and she exchanged it for something of more benefit than an ornament.

The widow was like Martha, for the latter took the words of Jesus, "Thy brother shall rise again," and put around them a cheap frame "in the last day." And so the beautiful doctrine of the "resurrection of the dead" is spoiled by many putting the frame around it of material re-creation and also tacking to it "in the last day of the world," neither of which did Jesus allow in his teaching.

"He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." And certainly this is more comforting than the old Jewish conception which Martha held, and that which some hold tenaciously today, in spite of the words of Jesus on the subject.

Where Jesus says in John 6:39, "This is the Father's will that all which he has given me I shall lose nothing, but should raise it up again AT THE LAST DAY," there is every reason to believe He has reference to the time when, "Before Him shall be gathered all nations," of Matt. 25:32. This was to be "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory," Matt. 25:31, and the time was to be in the lifetime of some of His disciples, according to Matt. 16:27, 28. It may be quite possible, too, that Martha referred to such a time in her expression, "He shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day," which would properly come at the time all others were "Before Him," for judgment and reward, but Jesus at this time had a miracle to perform that the Son of God might be glorified.

Again, let us answer the question, Is the resurrection of Christ an exact representation of the resurrection of the dead spoken of by the Apostolic writers? We think we have sufficient proof in the expression of Paul that it does not, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of
heaven” (I Cor. 15:50), since Jesus himself, speaking to his disciples, who, seeing him after the resurrection supposed they had seen a spirit, told them that He was not a spirit, “For a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see Me have,” Luke 24:39. Paul states that the resurrection body shall be a “spiritual body,” I Cor. 15:44. If so, it would be without “flesh and bones,” and furthermore, if spiritual, would be invisible. Jesus resurrection was meant for proof of his divinity and Godhead, and a pledge of ours; and as we see it, was not intended to be an exact representation of the resurrected dead. Christ was to be the “first fruits” (I Cor. 15:20, 23) of these resurrected dead inasmuch as had He not been raised no one would ever have been raised, tho the followers were to be raised, not in exact likeness to that of their Lord, but with a spiritual invisible body, fit to inhabit heaven, such as Christ would change to in the ascension, doubtless.

Jesus Himself gave us the idea that is representative of our resurrection when He talked to the Sadducees (Luke 20:27-38), where, in verse 37, He says, “Now that the dead ARE raised even Moses showed at the bush.” Here, Jesus cites the fact of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then living, as proof that the dead ARE RAISED. And we know that they did not have fleshly bodies. Therefore, we can conclude that in our resurrection we will be as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, inasmuch as Jesus used such as proof of the dead being raised. And if in the resurrection “neither can they die any more” (v. 37), then such is to be the eternal condition, and if so, then they necessarily are unseen of fleshly eyes (II Cor. 4:18) “The things that are not seen are eternal.”

That Jesus appeared in the room where the disciples were gathered (John 20:26) is absolutely no argument that Jesus had a spiritual or glorified body after His resurrection, as some wish to affirm, for Jesus had power to work such a miracle if such need be, after the resurrection as before, and enter the room unnoticed even with a body of flesh and bones, as He affirms was his physical condition.
From Jesus' word we are unable to construct any theory of the resurrection of fleshly bodies that have returned to dust; nor that all dying daily are to be raised at the same moment of time, but He does leave with us absolute assurance of immortality and eternal life for the believer. The manner, mode and condition of the resurrection and the doctrine are left for others, his disciples, to formulate.
CHAPTER VII.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY AS VIEWED IN I COR. 15:15-57; II COR. 4:18—5:4

By far the fullest elaboration of the doctrine is given by Paul in I Cor. 15:15-57. However, even in this Paul was not clear enough to prevent difference of opinion as to how are the dead raised up and with what body do they come. This difference of opinion is brought about chiefly because of the misconception of the doctrine of Christ's second coming, of which Jesus spake fully and plainly. Some leave out, of consideration Christ's plain words that His coming again was to be "in that generation," the one then living, and have built up a theory of His coming at the end of time, arguing that, since the resurrection and His coming are connected in time, therefore, the resurrection must be at the end of time. This, however, we find is not a reasonable conclusion, in view of all that is said on the subject in the Scriptures. (See a fuller discussion of the second coming in Part I of this book.)

Difference of opinion is encountered on the interpretation of I Cor. 15:42-44, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." The important question is the Apostle's meaning of the word "sown" (Greek, speiro). This word does not mean "bury" but "plant" in order to reap. Had Paul meant "bury" in this verse, there is no reason why he could not have used the word "thapto" which he used in this same chapter to describe Christ's burial (v. 4). But since Paul used a word that nowhere else is used to represent the burial of a dead body, it would be expected that other terms used in conjunction would not conform to that idea either. This is just what we find.

1. We take the word "corruption" (Greek, phthora). Altho in modern usage "corruption" is a term commonly associated with the grave, the Greek word for corruption in this text does not connote this idea in the New Testament.
In Gal. 6:8 “He that soweth unto his flesh shall of the flesh reap CORRUPTION,” it is a moral and spiritual destruction, opposite of “eternal life.” So it is in Rom. 8:21. Creation groans in expectation of deliverance “from the bondage of corruption unto the liberty of the glory of the children of God.” Peter tells us (II Pet. 1:4) of a possibility of becoming “partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the CORRUPTION that is in the world by lust.” From this common usage it appears that by SOWING IN CORRUPTION the Apostle does not mean interment of a corpse, but rather the decaying process thru which the natural body is constantly passing. Paul says this in so many words (II Cor. 4:16), “Though our outward man is decaying (Greek, ththeiretai, PASSING THROUGH A PROCESS OF CORRUPTION), yet our inward man is renewed day by day.”

2. The expression IN DISHONOR, and IN WEAKNESS are less appropriate to a dead body than IN CORRUPTION. We never think of our beloved dead as IN DISHONOR, but rather, we have them honorably embalmed, and sometimes interred in costly mausoleums. To speak of a dead body as buried IN WEAKNESS is also unthinkable. We know of the weakness of the flesh in life, but we would never think of a corpse as weak.

3. A defunct corpse cannot properly be called a natural or PSYCHICAL BODY (Greek, soma psychikon). Such a body must have in it a living soul. This psychical body is an outward and visible organ of the human soul, here put in contrast with the SPIRITUAL BODY (soma pneumatikon), the heavenly organ of the spirit, adapted to the conditions of heavenly life. The transition from the psychical state to the spiritual state, however, is possible only on the death of the outward organism, the body.

Furthermore, the analogy of the seed (v. 36) does not fit the conception of the lifeless body being buried and then raised again, for the seed is sown in full life, and dies after it is sown; the invisible germ sprouts into new life, while the old body remains in the earth and is not made alive again at all. The particular grain that is sown is not the body that
The new body that is made alive is not the dust of the old body quickened into new life, but a God-given body (v. 38). And as far as this applies to the question at hand, we are left to infer that the body of the resurrection is not resuscitated and brought up out of the dust of the old body of the flesh in a moment of time, but it is the perpetuation of the personal life that was in the body of the flesh in a new body of its own, supplied according to a divine order of things in the Kingdom of God.

We believe, therefore, that man's destiny is to be something far beyond a mere living soul. While man continues in flesh on earth, he is earthy, sown in corruption, in dishonor, in weakness, but in the resurrection (THE STANDING AGAIN) the earthy is superseded by the heavenly (v. 49). We see Paul's answer to "With what manner of body do they come?" (v. 35) is, that we are to exchange the psychical and earthly body for the image of the heavenly. And we conclude, withal, that I Cor. 15:35-44 has no reference to the burial of defunct, lifeless, NON-psychical bodies.

In I Thessalonians, the first book of the New Testament to be written, Paul speaks of Jesus' coming and bringing with Him those who sleep in Jesus, as we read, chapter 4:13-18. These words were written to state that they who had fallen asleep really precede the living into the presence of the Lord. And this we see was to be before "We shall be caught up," the "we" including Paul himself then living. This agrees perfectly with the words of Christ (Matt. 16:27, 28) that His coming was to be in the lifetime of some then living.

The answer to the question with what manner of body do they come, together with certain connected ideas, seems to be most clearly given by Paul in II Cor. 4:18 to 5:4, "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens for in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."
In these words appear these truths:

1. What is seen is temporal. So then as the literal recreation of the body from the grave is seen, therefore, temporal, such cannot be eternal, and cannot be a condition of the heavenly. Such ideas, too, would be contrary to the words of Paul in I Cor. 15:50, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," and 15:44, "It is raised a spiritual body."

2. Two bodies are referred to, "The earthly house" and "the house from heaven." This accords with I Cor. 15:44, "there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body."

3. The dissolution of that earthly house was to occur at the time of death. The earthly tabernacle was then put off.

4. At the very time that earthly house was to be put off, that heavenly house was to be put on. It was not to be in the future or at the end of the world, the earthly house laying in the meantime in the grave awaiting "the resurrection morn."

5. This heavenly house was to be eternal. If so, it would not be visible to fleshly eyes.

6. That which was mortal was to be dissolved and superseded by that which was living.

7. When in possession of that heavenly house, the possessor is to be at home with the Lord, and all groaning will have ceased forever.

8. There is no reason to say this "being clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" is to be in some future time, but when we die.

9. The resurrection body is a spiritual, invisible body awaiting every faithful soul to take the instant life leaves the earthly body.

Is there any statement in the above not in accord with the Scriptural truths in those verses? We have endeavored to include only that which is clearly stated.

As to the thoat that those who die are clothed upon with the resurrection body at once upon death, the writer can believe nothing else in the case of a woman at whose death bed he stood. The woman said within two minutes
before breathing stopped, "Mother, I see Jesus coming." With that she held out her hands, then her hands gradually folded and breathing ceased. A perfect illustration of Paul's teaching in Corinthians. A spiritual body was ready for the soul whose earthly house became no longer habitable.

Since there is no Scripture to compel one to feel such belief is wrong we wish to believe with Paul, that the resurrection body is given as we lay off this mortal.
EXEGESIS OF JOHN 5:28, 29; I COR. 15:26; ROM 8:23.

But some will say "What then is the meaning of the words in John 5:28, 29, 'for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation?' Does this not show that the bodies shall come forth from the grave?"

In answer let it be said that the expression, "all that are in their graves" offers no difficulty to us, because:

1. We see in the words simply a mode of expression meaning "those now dead," or from the Hebrew viewpoint, those in "Sheol." This is in perfect agreement with the thought of the times in which spoken, as all were taught that those who died went to "Sheol," the place of departed spirits. One cannot insist on a rigid literal interpretation, for the dead are not all in the graves. Certainly we can see no convincing argument here for a resurrection of the fleshly body that returns to dust.

2. Christ did not refer to our future, for His was an expression possible only for that age before the Coming of Jesus, as Rev. 20:11-14 teaches us that at His Coming to judgment "death and Hades (Hebrew, sheol) were cast into the lake of fire" (v.14). So, if we believe that Christ's plain words of prophecy were fulfilled (Matt. 16:27-28), as Part I of this book attempted to prove, and that He has, therefore, come, then in our day there is no such place as "sheol," but each soul at the death of the fleshly body will be raised a "spiritual body," taking "the house from heaven" awaiting it, as Paul assures us in II Cor. 5:1-4. And those who say that Rev. 20:11-14, and particularly v. 14, has not yet been fulfilled argues that "sheol or hades" still exists, and, therefore, all who die still go thither instead of to the presence of God, if deserving that end. But this is not the evangelical teaching of today and should not be, for it is
just such that has given rise to the "soul sleeping" heresy and its natural companion "second probation and purgatory."

3. The voice of the Son of God is addressed to the soul, not to the dead body. And viewed in this way it agrees perfectly with Paul in II Cor. 5:1-4, aforementioned, and with Rev. 20:4, 5 where John, referring to the first resurrection, says he saw the "souls" (not fleshly bodies) of those who lived and reigned with Christ.

And whosoever holds to the notion of the graves opening and the dead bodies being re-created make Paul and John, also the Gospel of John and Book of Revelation, by the same author, to differ and contradict one the other, as the above references would show.

But the true meaning is that when all that are in their graves, that is, all that have died previously, shall hear His voice, they shall come forth with their house not made with hands, spiritual, invisible, because eternal, some "unto resurrection of damnation, some unto the resurrection of life."

As to when this "coming forth" for all that are in the graves shall be, all we have to guide us is the plain words of Scripture in Matt. 16:27, 28, which says His coming to judgment shall be before the death of some of His disciples, and at the judgment scene, according to Matt. 25:31, "Shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them."

A like expression to John 5:28 is found in Revelation 20:13, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it." This does not mean that the dead bodies which had been eaten by sea monsters, going to make up bodies of animal or plant life, were to be re-created, but rather as John saw (Rev. 20:4, 5), the "souls," not bodies, were the subjects of the resurrection and with perfect alignment with other passages. The souls of those lost in the sea will be judged just as those who are living at the coming of Christ in judgment, "and they were judged every man according to his works."
A question is often asked in regard to I Cor. 15:26, "The last enemy that shall be ABOLISHED is death." Does not this mean that some time in the future there will be a cessation of death, translation of our bodies taking its place? In answer, let us say that the verb "abolished" is the same used in another passage by Paul (II Tim. 1:10), saying, "Jesus Christ who ABOLISHED death, and brought life and immortality to light." In this passage Paul declares that Jesus had already abolished death. Facts, therefore, show that the word "abolished" does not indicate cessation of death, for people still die. Such argument is unnecessary, however, for the Greek verb from which this verb is translated does not mean cessation of, but MADE USELESS, OF NO ACCOUNT. This, Jesus has accomplished for us. Death has lost its sting. Christians die triumphant in their Lord. Death is of no account. And since this is so, there is presented before one another argument for the point we tried to prove in Part I of this book, namely, That Jesus is now here in His "parousia," for the passage before us is given by Paul in connection with that Coming (parousia) of Christ (I Cor. 15:23, 24). (See our discussion of this passage on page 39). Then all enemies were put under His feet, and the last enemy, death, was to be MADE USELESS, OF NO ACCOUNT. By this we see that this passage does not refer to our future as the time for its fulfillment and the original question is asked on account of a misconception as to the meaning of the verb "abolished."

In regard to Rom. 8:23, "We groan waiting for adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our body," we see but a reiteration of the same writer's thought in I Cor. 15:44, 51, 53, of a "standing up" (Greek, anastasis) of the spiritual bodies, and the changing of those still living at the parousia into incorruptible, immortal, invisible bodies. And if so, then it does not refer to fleshly bodies, for all the future being brought from the grave at the end of time. Paul was here speaking in close connection (Rom. 8:18) of "the glory which shall (Greek, mello, IS ABOUT TO) be revealed," which in turn refers to the parousia of the Son of Man,
when the misery, bondage and groaning for deliverance from that terrible age of persecution would have adequate response. He was not referring to our future, as we see it, for that parousia was expected in the lifetime of the Apostle himself and his fellow-believers. Part I of this book shows that such must have taken place at the end of the age, about A. D. 70.

But as to the nature of that redeemed body, the clearest statement in Scripture is found in II Cor. 5:1, heretofore quoted. We know that when our earthly house of this temporal residence is dissolved we HAVE—not shall have—a building of God not made with hands, a residence of eternal elements in the heavens. And this is the comfort we are allowed to give believers that are in affliction—as soon as their eyes close on earthly scenes they will open the eyes of their spiritual bodies upon the realities and glories of the mansions of the Father's house, there to abide forever.

With these objections and queries answered by Scripture, which is the only proper way, and finding no Scripture compelling us to deviate from Paul's plain words on the subject of the resurrection, we rest our case, hoping that new light may have been made possible on this important subject, the opposite teaching of which has retarded the action of Christians. A positive Scriptural message we have hoped to give, full of force and comfort for the righteous.
Part Three---The Judgment

CHAPTER IX.

THE SUBJECT INTRODUCED

In connection with a consistent, biblical view of the Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, there must be inseparably connected a consistent, biblical doctrine of the Judgment, for they are found inseparably connected in the Scriptures.

For a basis of thought on the judgment we take as text, II Tim. 4:1, which reads, "The Lord Jesus Christ shall (Greek, mellontos, IS ABOUT TO) judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom."

This is doubtless one of the sources of the expression on the subject of the judgment in the Apostles' Creed as expressive of the Apostle's teaching, "From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Here a judgment of the living is spoken of as well as of those who had or would have died before His coming or appearing.

Matt. 25 is the great chapter on the judgment. This is divided into three distinct parts. 1. The parable of the wise and foolish virgins whose main teaching is that a constant watch is necessary. 2. The parable of the talents whose main teaching is that of a reward for faithful service, and since there was no difference in the wording in regard to the rewards of the two faithful servants (verses 21 and 23) tho one gained five talents and the other only two, we conclude that the basis of reward is not on the "results" of works and deeds, but on the basis of faithful service as seen in those works and deeds whether we have done the best possible according to the time allotted and talents with which endowed. 3. The third part of this chapter on the judgment depicts the actual separating of the bad from the good, the goats from the sheep. And since God knows the intents and thoughts of the heart, the motives and principles of human action, there would be no
more difficulty for God to make a division between good and bad than to reward the servants of the parable for faithful service or not.

Likewise, II Cor. 5:10 says, "all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." "Results and influence" are not here mentioned (nor anywhere else that we can find), but whether or not there has been faithful service, and the latter term we use as the equivalent of "works" and "deeds" as used in Matt. 16:27 and Rom. 2:6, which describes the basis of our rewards.

The time of the judgment is spoken of as "In the day that ye think not," or as Acts 17:31, "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness." But this does not say, nor can we believe, that Paul meant that day to be the last day of time, or else it makes Paul and Jesus to disagree, for Jesus says plainly (Matt. 16:27, 28, and parallel in Mark and Luke), that His coming for judgment will be in the generation then living, and (II Tim. 4:1) that the judgment was to be in the lifetime of some of the individuals then living, according to practically all Scripture in the Gospels and epistles referring to that appearing.
CHAPTER X.

EXEGESIS OF ACTS 17:31; MATT. 25:31, 32.

And if one is not yet convinced that Acts 17:31 does not refer to the end of time for the beginning of the judgment, let him consider the word "will" of the verse. Take note that in the Greek it is not a simple future tense of the verb "to judge" as would seem in the English translation, but is translated from the Greek word "mello," which means something ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE, or AT THE POINT OF being done (Liddell and Scott). It is not and cannot be used to designate an occurrence in a very distant future as the future tense of any verb may. When it is used, there is a significance attached other than simple futurity.

This Greek word and its derivatives are used quite a number of times in the New Testament, some of which are the following: John 4:47, "for he was AT THE POINT OF (mello) death;" John 7:39, "This spake He of the Spirit which they were to (mello, WERE ABOUT TO) receive, for the Spirit was not yet given." The Spirit was given at Pentecost and "mello" represents a futurity between the time spoken and the Pentecost blessing. Luke, the writer of the Acts, used the word thirty-five times in that book, both before and after the passage in question, and not once is it used when "about to be" as a translation of "mello" does not suit. For example, in the chapter preceding (Acts 16:27) "He drew his sword and would (mello, WAS ABOUT TO) have killed himself;" in the chapter following (Acts 18:14), "When Paul WAS ABOUT TO (mello) open his mouth, Gallio," etc.

Therefore, we see that Acts 17:31 could have been translated "He hath appointed a day in the which He is ABOUT TO (Greek, mello) judge the world in righteousness." And what Paul understood as to the extent of futurity represented by his word "mello" as regards the time of this judgment, we can discern from the fact that Jesus used the same Greek word in his statement concern-
ing the time of the judgment in Matt. 16:27, "For the Son of Man shall (mello, IS ABOUT TO) come, and then He shall reward every man." And then, Jesus doubtless seeing the astonished faces because of the use of "mello," ABOUT TO COME, took pains to express to them the futurity existing in His word "mello," and said (v. 28) "Verily, there are some of them that stand here who shall in no wise taste of death till" it come to pass. This is the word of Jesus himself, and Paul says he received his knowledge of the Coming "by the word of the Lord" (I Thes. 4:15). Furthermore, Paul writes Timothy and tells him (I Tim. 6:14) "Keep this commandment without spot unrebukable until the appearing of our Lord," which clearly implies that Timothy might expect to live until that event took place, and then writes him (II Tim. 4:1) "I charge thee before God and Christ Jesus, who shall (Greek, tou mellontos, WHO IS ABOUT TO) judge the living and the dead at His appearing."

We see, therefore, that Paul's idea of the time of the appointed day of judgment was at the Coming of Christ, which he implies would be while Timothy yet was living; and while he himself was still living, (I Thes. 4:17) "We which are alive and remain shall be caught up." Consequently he would not, and in fact did not refer to the end of time as the judgment day when talking to the Athenians.

The further idea to be made prominent is that this judgment is not the same time for all. It does not say that “all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ at the same moment of time.” There is, however, no passage of Scripture that says precisely that the general judgment is to be a process. But inference is as strong as if it had been so said, since there is nothing more definite on the theory of a simultaneous judgment than this well-known Scripture (Acts 17:31), "God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world," and we have shown just above that this passage cannot refer to the end of time.

On this last reference let it be noted that the word "day" is the same term used to designate long periods of
time, as in John 8:56, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see MY DAY," and John 16:23, "In that DAY ye shall ask me nothing," and many others.

"Day" as a word or expression in Acts 17:31 could, therefore, contain a meaning in extent covering the period commonly designated "the day of the Lord," reaching from the coming of Christ in judgment, about A. D. 70, until the last living soul had left time for eternity. In view of the other Scriptures on the subject, to many of which we have called attention in these pages, we believe this certainly is the necessary interpretation to be given it here.

There is absolutely no reference, as far as we can see to a far distant judgment day at the end of time in Acts 17:31. And if this Scripture is proved to refer to a judgment day in their near future while some of the contemporaries of Jesus still lived, then there is not a ray of hope left for those accustomed to believe in a general judgment at the end of time, as there are no other passages taken with their proper context which can refer to such.

It is thought by some that the judgment scene (Matt. 25:31, 32) refers to the end of time. But there is nothing in the passage to indicate that it is not connected with the foregoing context, which includes the preceding chapter, where the Coming of the Son of Man had already been predicted by our Lord (Matt. 24:30), and the time is expressly defined in verse 34, "Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

The description of the Coming of the Son of Man in these verses tallies in all points with Matt. 16:27, 28, of which it is expressly affirmed that some then present would live to witness it. Comparing these two passages let us take note that:

1. In both the same subject referred to is the Coming of the Son of Man—the Parousia.
2. In both He is described as coming in GLORY.
3. In both He is attended by THE HOLY ANGELS.
4. In both He comes a king, "In His KINGDOM." "He
shall SIT ON THE THRONE," "then shall the KING say."

5. In both He comes to judgment.

6. In both the judgment in some sense is universal, "reward every man," "gathered all nations."

7. In one (Matt. 16:28), it is expressly stated that His coming was to take place in the lifetime of some then present.

We are warranted then in regarding the Coming of the Son of Man of Matt. 25 as identical with that of Matt. 16, which some of the disciples were to live to witness.

The expression "all the nations" of Matt. 25:32 is a stumbling-block for some in that they think of it as meaning "all nations of the world," when in all probability it means only "all the nations of Palestine." In our Lord's time it was usual to speak of the inhabitants of Palestine as consisting of a number of nations with their own kings. Josephus speaks of "the nation of the Samaritans," "the nation of the Batanaeans," "the nation of the Galileans," using the very same Greek word (ethnos) which is used in the Scripture before us. Judea was a distinct nation; also, Samaria, Idumea, Galilee, Perea, Batanea, Trachonitis, Iturea and Abilene.

On this point, it would seem that the same phrase in the great commission just three chapters later (Matt. 28:19) "Go and teach all the nations" was not understood and probably was not meant that it should be so understood at that stage of development, by the disciples, as referring to the whole population of the globe or to any nation beyond Palestine. If they did, they were certainly slow in heeding the command. It was fourteen years after the ascension before Paul left for the first time to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Neither is there any evidence that during that period the other Apostles passed the bounds of Judea. And nothing more astonished them than the discovery as late as the time of Acts 11, (v. 8), that "then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life." They did not seem to know it before, and when Peter was challenged for going to Cornelius of the Gentiles, an un-
circumcised one, he did not vindicate his conduct by appeal to the words of the great commission. Rather, it required a distinct revelation from heaven to Peter to make the Apostles know that they were to go to other than "all nations of Palestine."

In view of the above, it is reasonable to see in "all the nations" of both Matt. 25:32 and 28:19, a restricted signification. And in this sense it harmonizes perfectly with the words of our Lord when He was instructing the Apostles, who were to go out, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come" (Matt. 10:23), also, with the words of our Lord in Acts 1:8, "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the land," (Greek, ge). In regard to this last reference: The fact that Jesus in such a declaration used only names of divisions within the borders of Palestine, Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, naturally gives the Greek word "ge" the restricted signification, which it very often has anyway, to mean "the land" of Palestine. If it had the meaning that our English translation leads us to read into it, "earth," it would seem that countries outside of Palestine would have been mentioned, such as "Egypt, Rome, Arabia and unto the uttermost part of the earth." From words and the facts, however, we can feel quite sure that the disciples understood only the "uttermost part of the land" of Palestine, as we mentioned in the preceding paragraph in regard to "all the nations of Palestine."

We are brought to the conclusion, therefore, that we do not have in Matt. 25:31, 32, the final judgment of the whole human race, but that of the guilty nations of Palestine, who rejected their King, and whose day of judgment was near at hand.

However, there is no reason to doubt that the other statements of Jesus in this judgment section are as true today as they were in the beginning of that Great judgment day, and which has continued from that time and will continue till the last man has finished his probation on earth.
IS THE JUDGMENT DAY AT THE END OF TIME?

We believe, therefore, that we are in the midst of the judgment day now. Jesus Christ is the Judge and the world is being judged in righteousness: a continuous process. Each one of us is either on the right hand or the left, with the sheep or goats now. Whenever the last man dies then will be the end of the general judgment, not its beginning.

The only reason we can find that makes some believe that the judgment begins at the end of time is, as they think, that it is necessary in order to measure the extent and influence of men's deeds after their death. But this we believe to be wrong—that the influence of our deeds does not enter into our rewards, which conclusion the following illustrations would show.

The first to be mentioned is the fact that Rev. Robert Morrison, the pioneer missionary who worked 34 years, but could point to only three souls as having embraced Christianity in all that time. The influence of these three, if they were to measure the extent of Morrison's reward, certainly could not be as much as some of our missionaries today who are baptizing thousands every year. A wrong reward would be granted Morrison if results or influence of deeds counted.

What then? Just this: Morrison was faithful but with little results for a lifetime of work. Our later missionaries for example could not be more faithful to duty than Morrison but results for their 34 years, and perhaps longer, showed up by the tens of thousands. Now, according to the parable of the talents, if both men did the best they could, the rewards would be the same. And this would be perfectly just. But results and influence would not count.

Further, it would be quite possible that a missionary today could point to 10,000 as having embraced Christianity, yet, if he were even more faithful and earnest, he might have pointed to 20,000 souls as trophies. According to
the theory of influence affecting our rewards the missionary with 10,000 souls, but not doing his best, would obtain a better reward than Morrison who did his best.

Let us suppose another perfectly plausible case. Two men of the same age, both converted at the same time, both equally earnest and faithful, start to work for God, and, for the sake of argument, let us grant that both had equal talents for work, naturally, results and influence would be the same if both lived. But God saw fit to call one hence within a year; the other remained and worked for God a lifetime of 50 or 60 years. According to the theory of influence affecting rewards, the man living the longest would have a better reward. But this would be unjust toward the man who died early, who was just as faithful as the other, but had nothing to say as to whether he was to live or have time to work. These men, we believe, would receive similar rewards, which would be wholly on the basis of "faithful" service with the talents each possessed. In the case of the parable of the pounds (Luke 19:11-19), where the servant who had gained ten pounds was given authority over ten cities, the second who had gained five pounds was given authority over five cities, the Lord speaks from the standpoint of ability or capacity possessed in the light of faithful service. The parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-23) considers the judgment from the standpoint of faithfulness alone. In the hereafter each one's vessel of enjoyment will be filled to its capacity, and in that sense each will get similar rewards on the basis of faithful service with the talents or ability each possessed.

Again, consciousness and memory being the "books opened," the influence of works after death cannot increase reward because, as we learn thru psychology, there can be no consciousness and memory added after death of deeds done on earth. And no matter what advance we may make after reaching the heavenly condition, none of it will affect the reward granted for the period of probation on earth. We believe that the condition of our character at death, produced by the degree of faithfulness in life, will be the basis of our entrance and progress in the heaven-
ly world. The one judged more faithful during life, the period of probation, will start higher and advance more rapidly than the one whose character is less developed. Therefore, do not let any one live on false hopes that the influence of a few good works might somehow multiply and at the end of time bring a better reward than if judgment were completed at death.

If one were to hold to such theory of reward for “influence,” then one who may have worked and obtained a convert who turned out to be a mighty man of God would get greater reward than another who worked just as hard but obtained a convert who remained true to God but never of any marked influence in the world, a washer-woman, for example, compared with a “Billy” Sunday or some other mighty worker for God. Such greater reward would be injustice to the worker. But accept the biblical theory of rewards for faithful service only, as the parable of the talents surely teaches, and no injustice is done, and both workers will receive the same reward, if in God’s knowledge, both were equally faithful.

Thus, we see there can be no reason for waiting till the end of time for the Judgment Day. It is in process now. You are either condemned or not now as you read. As you die you obtain your resurrection body as II Cor. 5:1-4 teaches, and you enter the other world. See the discussion on this passage in the chapter on the resurrection, page 62. Your reward is meted out according to your own consciousness as to whether you have used your best endeavor for God while you lived or whether you have not.

The conception that the judgment and judgment day are to be at the end of the world or time has led to wrong conclusion and wrong living in a number of ways, two of which we shall mention. We will refer, first, to the doctrine of soul-sleeping, which would be a natural conclusion easily reached by a process of reasoning. This would lead to wrong living because, naturally, it would not be conducive to great endeavor to desire to enter heaven nor could
one say with Paul, "I desire to depart and be with Christ" (Philippians 1:23). The judgment day at the end of time is not a Bible truth.

But the general view has led to further error—the "second-chance" theory and purgatory. This belief would, of course, give one a tendency not to be careful to deny self the pleasures of this world, but wait and repent then. But alas! then is eternally too late.

On the other hand, believe the plain words of Christ, that He was to come in the lifetime of some of His disciples to begin the judgment, and as the text (II Tim. 4:1) says, "of the living," and the doctrines "soul-sleeping," "second-chance theory," purgatory and the like would not even be thought of.

Peter seems to bring to us the knowledge that the judgment was only to begin at the Coming. If only a beginning then, it is inferred that there is a continuation of the process begun (I Pet. 4:17): "The time is come that judgment must BEGIN at the house of God." Note in passing that this last Scripture speaks definitely that "the time is come." It was written, perhaps, in the very beginning of the war which ended in the complete overthrow of Jerusalem, and thereby agrees perfectly with the words of Jesus, herefore quoted from Matt. 16:27, 28, that the judgment was to be, or begin at least, in the lifetime of some then living.
CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUDING THOTS.

It is true that certain passages like John 12:48, and II Pet. 3:7, 10-12, taken alone, might appear to uphold the belief that the judgment day is the last day of time; but taken with other Scriptures heretofore used in these pages, and recognizing the fact that one of these passages just mentioned is in figurative language, and the other does not say "the last day of time," it is easy to harmonize the apparent leaning to agree with plain and definite words in almost every New Testament book that the Lord was "at hand," the time of His Coming, "quickly," and the like.

In the judgment scene Christ will separate the sheep from the goats in His own way, but we cannot think of it as in the visible realm, after having our attention called to the fact that Christ coming to judgment is not in the visible, as the argument labored to prove in the former chapter on the Second Coming, and further, that the resurrection bodies of the dead are to be spiritual bodies (I Cor. 15:44) and therefore invisible, as our argument brought out in the chapter on the Resurrection of the Dead (I Cor. 15:52), "In a twinkling of an eye • • • the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed," inferring a process not visible, or as the figurative passage which refers to Christ's coming "as a thief," a thief comes in the night all unseen. Therefore, we think of the judgment scene as one in the unseen world.

Much confusion and false impressions would be avoided if due attention were given to the fact that the judgment is conducted in the spiritual realm with no spectacular manifestation, no material throne; no breath-filled trumpet; no great assembly in a locality; no sheep and goats separated by actual space; no real fire; no printed books opened (but that each man's consciousness and memory are the books). Wherever these expressions occur they are used
because we must rely on similes from the material world to express the spiritual. Abstract truth is conveyed to us by concrete illustrations and representations. And if any of the above terms require the spectacular, that involves and necessitates that all the others be spectacular.

If the books that are opened at the judgment are men’s own consciousness and memory (and we believe this is the fact from such Scriptures as I Cor. 4:5; Rom. 1:19; Malachi 3:16; Rev. 20:15), then the judgment is a spiritual process, and since rewards are for faithful service, and are to be for the living as well as for those who had or will have died before Christ’s coming or appearing, therefore, we can easily understand that Matt. 16:27, 28 teaches that His coming to judgment was to be or commence while some of the Apostles were still living, “For the Son of Man shall (Greek, mello, IS ABOUT TO) come in the glory of the Father with His angels, and then He shall reward every man according to his works,” which means faithful service or not. Here a judgment scene is depicted, certainly. And many stop reading at this point, but the next verse is in such close connection that it cannot be separated from the one preceding except by doing violence to the words and meaning of Christ, and reads, “Verily, there are some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming.”

Connecting these two verses quoted, the conclusion appears to be that, after that coming in the lifetime of some then living, the judgment of the living spoken of in II Tim. 4:1 means those who live at and after that time. If so, it means those of us living today also.

Another thought on the subject is that “to reign” and “to judge” are words often used interchangeably. The King is Judge, and the Judge is the King. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ” (II Cor. 5:10); “Then shall the king say unto them on His right hand,” etc. (Matt. 25:34). In His one person, Christ combines the two important offices of reigning and judging; so then as long as He reigns He judges and the judgment would be a
continued process as long as men lived, as Christ's reign was to be "forever and ever."

The essential thing from the evangelical standpoint to be carefully considered is, "Nothing is hid that shall not be manifested," and "Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). And not in the future a million years but now. John 5:24 says, "He that believes in Him that sent me * * * shall not come into judgment." John 3:18 says, "He that believeth not is judged already," and John 12:31, "NOW is the judgment of this world." Christ as judge is now constantly approving or disapproving our conduct. But He suspends both penalty and rewards till the end of our lives, as Heb. 9:27 shows, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." But take note that this Scripture does not say nor even infer that the judgment for the individual was to be delayed until the end of time, nor that all will get their final pronouncement of sentence at one day or hour, but says "after death, the judgment," that is, after probation is ended for each individual. The idea of "formal pronouncement of sentence," used by the post-millennialist, is one gathered from our earthly jurisprudence rather than from the Bible.

Let the one interested take note that the "harvest" usually thought to be at the end of the world was stated by Jesus to be at the end of the AGE (Greek, aeon), as found in Matt. 13:39, 40 and 49. This is the same expression used by the disciples in Matt. 24:3, "When shall be the sign of Thy coming and the end of the age" (aeon)? It is both consistent and in accord with other passages that show that the judgment was to be initiated at Christ's return, which return was to be in the lifetime of some of the disciples or at the end of the Jewish dispensation or age, which age ended about A.D. 70. And "harvest" means the harvest that was to be garnered before that notable event for which all the New Testament Christians were told eagerly to watch, the return of their Lord. There is a great stretch of time between that "end of the age" of Matt. 13:39, and the end of the world.
CONCLUDING THOTS

In the meantime what? The gospel is to be preached. The call to repentance is to be made. Teaching of righteousness is to progress. God doing His best to get us to do our best.

When Jesus tells us in John 12:48, "the word which I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," there is no reason or virtue in believing Christ meant the last day of the world which it does not say, but rather, "in the last day" of him (the one who rejects), or more probably, "in the last day" of the age, immediately following which Christ himself was to come in judgment as spoken in Matt. 16:27, 28.

Many have implicitly believed the statement of the Apostles' Creed in regard to the judgment of the dead, but have passed over the idea of the judgment of the living after His appearing just as clearly taught.

We would that all might come to believe in the judgment of the living now—we either are on the right hand as sheep now or on the left hand as the goats. If on the left, repent now before it is too late.
CONCLUSION.

In conclusion we may say that as a result of our study we note the following:

1. We have failed to find any Scripture upholding the doctrine that the Lord's return is to be in our future or at the end of the world. Those who hold such theories have gotten them elsewhere than in the Bible, or have used selected passages out of their proper context and in conflict with other clear passages on the subject.

2. No longer do we need to use the Scripture statement, "Jesus is coming," for He is now here. The Old Testament prophesied of the coming Messiah. He came in His first advent, and we now look back to that great event. The New Testament prophesied of Jesus' second coming in the lifetime of some of His disciples. We believe He came as was prophesied, and now we look back to THAT great event. And this makes us in our day look back at both prophesies as having been fulfilled.

3. The great day usually called the Day of the Lord, or Lord's Day as the Book of Revelation puts it, which was to be ushered in at the Lord's return, is now here. We need not look for another such great day, except it be in the glory land, which will be the unending great day. And there is no good reason to believe that Rev. 1:10 has reference to the first day of the week.

4. If our interpretation of Paul's teaching on the resurrection in II Cor. 4:18—5:4 is correct (and as yet we have found no serious person who denies the correctness of our interpretation), we have failed to find any Scripture to uphold the idea of any general resurrection of the fleshly body at any future coming at the end of time. The term "general resurrection" is not biblical.

5. Jesus is now reigning, and as long as He reigns He is officially judging. Therefore the judgment day is now in process. The term "general judgment," or its idea at
the end of time, is not biblical. All of Christ's words which men have taken to refer to a general judgment in our future are those regarding the guilty nation of the Jews, which judgment took place at the end of the Jewish dispensation, A. D. 70.

6. We understand that the close of the Jewish dispensation and the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple indicate the dissolution of the peculiar relation between Jehovah and the nation of Israel. The nation had rejected its Messiah and King, and the King came to judge the nation. The Messianic mission both for mercy and for judgment was fulfilled. The faithful remnant were gathered into the New Jerusalem. The Kingdom of God, which was spoken of so often as being "at hand," then came in its fulness. The covenant nation no longer exists. There are no longer Jews and Gentiles. God is no respecter of persons. All find salvation on the same plane and for all the future. The Jews are not a chosen nation any more. In the mind of God Jew and Gentile are as one. There is no reason, therefore, to look for the Jews' return to Palestine as God's chosen people or that they will ever see Jesus as their Messiah. They can only see Him as "Lord of us all."

7. We have failed to find a single passage of Scripture which teaches that the affairs of this world are to end, or that even hints at the end of the race of men. The nearest approach to any such teaching is II Peter, chapter 3, but here there is sufficient evidence to show that it is the destruction of evil that is in the mind of the writer, rather than the destruction of the material universe. Therefore, since there is no revelation as to the future of this earth, it would be folly to dogmatize on the subject. All that we know is that the Kingdom of God now is in progress of building or "Coming," or as the Lord's prayer says, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done," and will continue to grow and come until "every knee shall bow." The future, not revealed further than this, is in the Father's hands.
8. In this day and age, rather than “comfort one another with these words” of a second coming future to us (of which we have found no sure Scripture reference), the Christian’s joy is in the fact of Jesus now reigning and living with us, in us, among us all. When this thought dawned upon the writer as God’s truth, it was a great joy indeed, perhaps next to the joy experienced by him when he definitely took his stand for Christ as his personal Saviour. And the joy still abides.

9. While both Isaiah and Micah predicted an era of universal peace to follow the Lord’s return at the end of the Jewish age of New Testament times, yet we must not interpret these prophecies so as to make them nullify the words of the Lord himself, when He says of the kingdom, that it is to grow, likening it to the mustard seed, very small at the beginning but growing finally to large proportions, and to the leaven in the lump which finally leavens the whole. The prophets looked forward to the time when this kingdom had become full grown, when “the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, neither shall they learn war any more.” But the kingdom has not as yet reached those proportions. However, that time is in the coming for “the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” The nations are now weary of war and bloodshed, and the prophets’ words were never nearer being written in actual fact than now.

10. Many do falter and despair. This appears to us to be the way by which the enemy of souls is endeavoring to retard the coming of the kingdom. When in localities the progress of righteousness is slow, or even appears for the time being to be retrogressing, such pessimistic believers say, “We are now entering the apostasy. We cannot expect anything else.” And most naturally there is little incentive for such people to fight the adversary. The ground already gained gives way before this disbelief. But rather, “of the increase of God’s government and peace there shall be no end.” Believe this and you will work for it. Disbelieve it, and you will not work for it.
11. Both pre-millennial and post-millennial theorists must assume positions and beliefs that are not and cannot be proved by Scripture. For example, Scripture nowhere says that the Second Coming is to be in our future, or at the end of the world; Scripture nowhere says that the judgment of all living is to be on the same day or hour at the end of time; and many others that could be cited. The view presented in these pages assumes no position or idea not thoroughly in accord with Scripture. The main premises of the argument have definite Scripture references for their foundation. Otherwise, this book would not have been written.

12. The distinction between the coming of the Holy Spirit and the second coming of Christ is one of office work only as far as we have been able to see. The Holy Spirit is designated as a "Comforter or Advocate," who is to abide with us forever, whose business is, "to convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment;" to testify of the Christ, and to guide us into all truth, Christ's second coming being one of those truths. The Spirit's peculiar office work began on the day of Pentecost and is still going on. The business of the Christ in His second advent is spoken of as that of Judge and King. His peculiar office work had not yet begun when the Epistles and Revelation were written, for the Lord is spoken of in them as about to come, which agrees perfectly with the definite words of Christ, while still with His disciples, "The Son of Man shall (Greek, mello, IS ABOUT TO) come in the glory of His Father, and then shall He reward every man according to his works," which coming was to be in the lifetime of some of His disciples. This statement, along with other definite statements, leads one to think that the office work of Christ as Judge and King, bestowing all the privileges and blessings that such terms connote, as designated in the Scripture, began about A. D. 70, which is the burden of Part I of this book. And that peculiar office work is also still going on and will continue to go on forever. Wherefore, our blessed experience now may be as in the words of Jesus, "If a man love me, he
will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." These two persons of the Godhead together with the Holy Spirit, now make our hearts the abiding place of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

13. The pre-millennial theorists must assume, among others, six very questionable and disputed arguments to maintain their claims, the failure of any one of which would seriously damage, if not completely destroy, their theory.

(a) They must assume that a double sense is in all prophecies pertaining to the Second Coming, which is, that all prophecy has two fulfillments, one near at hand and the other in the distant future. If they did not assume this they would have no argument whatever. But let one accept the "double sense" theory and he may nullify all, for who shall tell what the true sense is?

(b) They must assume that the Greek word "genea" does not mean GENERATION, but only RACE or NATION in Matt. 24:34. But that this word does mean GENERATION in some places even they affirm. Therefore, no conclusive argument for pre-millennialism can be claimed in such a strained use of the word in this connection.

(c) They must assume that Matt. 16:27, 28 is fulfilled in the transfiguration scene. This, many prominent authorities deny and if these authorities are right, the pre-millennialists have no place in their theory for these important, plain words regarding our Lord's return.

(d) They must assume that the Greek word "optomai" and its derivatives, many times translated SEE, must, in all cases when describing the Lord's return, mean SIGHT WITH FLESHLY EYES. These they use as proof of the visibility of the Second Coming. But since this word is used many times referring to incorporeal knowledge or spiritual sight in the Scriptures, this word must be denied use as PROOF. And if not so used, the doctrine of a visible return has very little left on which to base its claim.

(e) They must assume that the Greek word "mello" does not mean the only meaning given to it by lexicograph-
ers, namely, "about to" or "on the point of," but that it refers to a very distant future instead. This nullifies its true meaning entirely. Let its true meaning be accepted and their theory must fall.

(f) They assume that the coming of Jesus is to be "as a flash of lightning" so that every eye shall see Him, which, in turn, infers that after the flash He will not be so seen. But "parousia" means not only an event, but also a continuing presence, tho neither the event nor the presence may be visible, but in the unseen world.

All the above assumptions, none of which are justified because of plain words of Scripture to the contrary, must be maintained as facts by pre-millennialists in order to hold their theory together. On the other hand, doctrine taught by the plain words of Scripture cannot be said to be assumed, for nothing is assumed when one accepts what words plainly and literally say. The only assumption required in this book, vital to our contention, is that the English word "see" as regards the Lord's return, refers to fleshly sight. We assume that it does not because other plain words distinctly designate an invisible return, which makes our assumption justifiable.

Furthermore, they who still look for Jesus to come in our future not only assume, but do positively assert, that all writers of the New Testament must have been mistaken in regard to their Lord's return, that He was coming soon, in their lifetime and of that of their first readers. Some have even gone so far as to say that the Lord himself must have been mistaken, which is consistent, as that must be maintained just as surely. But all this is certainly inconsistent with the infallibility of our Lord and with the divine inspiration of the Apostles. And it follows, that, if the latter were in error respecting an event about which they had most ample means of information, we can repose no confidence in them on other subjects, especially those which in their nature may be obscure and mysterious. We believe, however, in the infallibility of our Lord and in the inspiration of the Apostles, and that the latter were guides worthy of our confidence on this subject as well as others.
We believe it to be a fact that all Scriptures which men of modern times have taken to bolster up their theories of Christ’s coming in our future, except those in regard to His invisible, continuous coming, are only those passages which, if taken in their proper connection, refer to that coming, imminent to the Apostolic writers, and if so, we have no right to refer them to our future.

14. Both the pre- and post-millennialists seem to think that the words glory, glorious, glorify, have in them a meaning which necessitates visibility, outward show and dazzling brightness, when they have reference to the Second Coming. Since there is no history of any such Second Coming, they, therefore, say that the Lord’s return is not yet manifest, even tho certain plain Scripture statements, if believed, would make one know that He has already come. That coming, however, “in the glory of His Father,” “with power and great glory” and the like, was not intended to be with visibility or outward show. Rather, it is with “praise” and “honor” which are the synonyms of “glory.”

We, as true Christians, glorify God. Christ is come in His glory when we in our character and life show Him up to advantage—that is to glorify Him. But all know that character and life are neither visible nor tangible.

In his book, “Jesus is Coming,” page 138, W. E. Blackstone says, “Jesus coming in His kingdom and His coming in His glory are synonymous.” This is biblical. Now, since a kingdom is not subject to physical vision, the coming in GLORY, therefore, is not visible to fleshly eyes. The same is true regarding the other biblical expressions, “gloriously,” “with power and great glory,” “with brightness,” when they are used in reference to His coming. Take note that “with brightness” of II Thess. 2:8 is translated “WITH MANIFESTATION” of His presence, in the Revised Version. This shows that it does not necessarily carry with it any idea of visibility as would seem to be the case of the King James version. Christ’s kingdom being in men’s lives. He Himself is in “glory” and in “praise” thru them. Christ receives glory in our overcoming the
dragon thru His power. And we need not deny the trustworthiness of the Bible statements regarding the Second Advent in the lifetime of some of His disciples, because of making words mean what they do not mean.

We would like to have answered, What advantage can one hope to gain in wishing to declare that Christ is to come visibly?

When the pre- and post-millennialists have come to realize the true meaning of the word glory, they will then have made much progress toward a consistent, biblical view of the Parousia of our Lord in His invisible presence.

15. The truth demands that changes be made in the phraseology of some church rituals, articles of faith, collects, creeds and hymns, where reference is made to eschatological subjects. They were written by men who had wrong conceptions of these subjects, and now they should be made to conform to the consistent, biblical doctrine. Some of the most important changes necessary are the following:

(a) The wording of the service of the Lord's Supper. No longer should ministers keep before the minds of the people at each communion season the words of Paul, "Ye do show the Lord's death TILL HE COME," for this evidently was a purely local item, meant only for the Apostolic Corinthian church from the time written until about A. D. 70, when that church would be raptured along with other saints; and she ceased to occupy the pages of history about that time. A parallel case of a similar local item only, is found in Rev. 2:10, "Fear not the things thou art about to suffer; the devil is about to cast some of you in prison." We should read this only as referring to the church at Smyrna, as plain words indicate. So, instead of Paul's words, those of the Lord himself should be used. Jesus states no limitation in His words of institution.

Our Lord must feel that that old expression still in use is very dishonoring to Him, since He declared He was ABOUT TO BE present in His "parousia" before some of His disciples died, to reign forever. In fact, it would be a parallel case were we today to continue to read the Old Testament where it prophesies of a Messiah to come, as
if He had not yet come. This the Jews still do. If Jesus' own prophecy of His second coming in the lifetime of His contemporaries was fulfilled, and if the expectation of the writers of the New Testament was realized, then we as Christians are in the same category as the Jews who believe that Jesus has not yet come as the Messiah, if we still read these words as if they were to be fulfilled in our future. The writers of the New Testament who lived “in that generation” told their readers to be on a constant lookout for their Lord as about to return, in expressions incompatible with divine inspiration if the “parousia” were not to take place until our day or at the end of time. And would we not be unbelievers in the Word if we say such was not fulfilled?

(b) Change should be made in the Apostles’ Creed to give it the Scriptural phrase, “the resurrection of the dead,” rather than “resurrection of the body;” which latter was inserted in the creed about 340 A. D., and is not a biblical expression.

(c) In the burial service of some churches the expression, “looking for the general resurrection in the last day,” should be altered to read, “believing in the spiritual body,” or some such expression. In fact, the departed has already entered upon his resurrection life with his “house which is from heaven,” and we cannot be actually looking for something that has already taken place. The same might also be said of the expression intimating that there is to be a judgment day for the departed yet in the future. Alteration should be made to conform to true Scriptural doctrine on these subjects.

(d) Certain hymns and songs or parts thereof, which treat of the fulfilled prophecy of our Lord’s return as if it were yet to be, should be eliminated. The same should be said of those references which treat of a final judgment still in the future, because they are not biblical.

(e) Finally, let us suggest a uniformity of teaching in the Sunday School lesson helps, so that true biblical teaching on these subjects may be imparted to our oncoming generations.
CONCLUSION

These changes being made, we feel that we will present to the world a more consistent, biblical view of things eschatological and this will be a more acceptable body of truth to the church in general.

We solicit honest criticism for and against the view herein given and whenever any such appears well taken (founded on Scripture, not on the opinions of men), we will endeavor to take them into consideration in the second edition.

The writer would be pleased to know if anyone has been helped by reading these pages.
COMMENDATIONS

I have read your manuscript with much care and find so much in it with which I agree—so many positions which are in accord with a sane and spiritual interpretation, that I wish to tell you with what pleasure I have followed your argument against material or physical interpretations of the words of Jesus and the Apostles. To you the key to the whole eschatology of the New Testament is the coming of the Lord concomitant with the destruction of Jerusalem. You have worked so diligently with it in mind, that I feel almost sure any attack upon these points will find you impregnable. You are certainly right in your conception that the coming of the Son of Man is the correlate of the coming of the kingdom; that that coming was to be invisible—really a coming to the hearts and lives of men; that its coming is attended with judgment upon those who do not receive it; that it came while "some of those standing here" did not taste of death. I am glad that you look upon the resurrection as a process and the judgment also. The coming of the kingdom, the resurrection as a process and the judgment as a process are going on together. What you have worked out will certainly stimulate others to read their New Testaments again, and I hope will set a check upon the prevalent materialist views. May your little book be widely helpful in showing its readers another way of interpreting the New Testament than the millennial with its pathetic literalness.

(Signed) JAMES S. RIGGS, D. D., Presbyterian. Professor, New Testament Language and Literature, Auburn Seminary, Auburn, N. Y.

Your manuscript has proved of entrancing interest. Although I have no right to speak authoritatively on this subject, I must say that your argument appeals to me forcibly. Your method appears to me to be sane and wholesome and certainly to accept your position is to escape many puzzles and follies of speculation.

(Signed) CAMDEN M. COBERN, D. D., Methodist Episcopal. Professor, Department of English Bible and Philosophy of Religion, Allegheny College, Meadville, Pa.

I have read your manuscript with care, some parts of it several times. I think you have covered the question well and established your conclusions scripturally. I have little patience with millennialism of every variety. However, if the cause of truth will be advanced by discussion, I should like to see your manuscript have a wide circulation.

(Signed) (Rev.) C. F. SANDERS, Ph. D., Lutheran. Professor, Department of Philosophy, Pennsylvania College Gettysburg, Pa.
Your book is extremely interesting and timely in view of the recurrence of millennial heresies occasioned by the European war. Your positions are well taken, and agree with the spiritual teachings of Scripture and also the plain teachings of history. You establish the true doctrine of the imminence of God in Jesus the Saviour, and well refute all arguments for the materialistic and carnal return of Christ, the Jewish Messiah. The war is not over, and you will be attacked by sincere and earnest contenders for a sort of galvanized Judaism, but your grasp of the situation spells victory for your sane views of the program of Jesus. You have the most straightforward and consistent paper on the things you discuss. Publish by all means, and the sooner the better. Send me the first dozen books.

(Signed) E. M. STEPHENSON, D. D.,
Director of Baptist Bible School and Young People's Work in Pennsylvania, Camp Hill, Pa.

In your manuscript, I was much impressed with your exegesis and conclusion. You are consistent throughout. I fear that you may meet adverse criticism, but if they express your honest belief, all honor to you in giving them. Why not give new truth to the world? Perhaps because of their being so new to us is the reason of our not being fully prepared to receive them. But let me thank you heartily for permitting me to read your manuscript, and to get your view of these great subjects, and to express the hope that it may find its way into print as early as possible.

(Signed) GEORGE W. ENGLAR, D. D.,
Pastor, Bethany Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.

I have just finished a careful reading of the manuscript of your book on “The Second Coming, the Resurrection and the Judgment.” For a few decades thoughtful men have been breaking away from the bondage of materialistic misinterpretations of the teachings of the New Testament upon these subjects, that grew and fastened themselves upon the church during the dark ages.

The Protestant Reformation eliminated many errors of interpretation, but through the fire of that purification there slipped by an eschatology as inconsistent as it is illogical, as uncomfortable as it is unscriptural; and which comes near contradicting all the teachings of Christ about the Kingdom, bereaves humanity of the Kingdom, and suggests to the saints
to wait for another Coming of Christ to bring in the Kingdom which He specifically SENT US TO BRING IN.

The Kingdom has lost immensely by the dominating views held either by pre- or post-millennialism, which have nothing to commend them as interpretations of the New Testament teachings upon these subjects, except their age, and folks are beginning to discover that even age does not make an error a truth.

I agree with you in the positions and conclusions of your book, and there is no doubt that it will stimulate its readers to study anew the Scriptures relating to the subjects, when they too will discover how much has been read into, and added to what Christ said upon these momentous facts, which changes the spiritual Kingdom of God intended for the righteousness and comfort of humanity, into a huge materialistic force, which would minister quite as much to the selfishness of fallen human nature as many other mental fabrications that have gripped men in various ages.

I bespeak for your book both a wide reading and an intense adverse criticism, for the church has not as yet had a chance to hear this subject except from the pre- and post-millennialists.

(Signed) J. R. WOLF, D. D.,
Minister, Mifflin Avenue M. E. Church, Wilkinsburg, Pa.

I have just finished a second reading of your most interesting book. It has been a source of unusual interest and profit to me. Your first part is simply masterly, and, as I understand, Scriptural. I rejoice with you beyond measure at your statement concerning the fact that we are reigning with Christ now; we are not to wait for some coming period for a carnal Christ to come to this earth, and then the disciples to reign with a carnal Christ on a carnal earth. I shall want to study very carefully your cogent arguments. They are timely indeed. Really, it would be an injustice to such a scholar, and closely reasoned out work as yours to express an opinion without adequate study. I thank you for the privilege of reading the manuscript. I shall want one of the first copies from the press. I am sincerely,

(Signed) G. J. BURCHETT, D. D.,
Minister, Baptist Church, Vineland, N. J.
I have read the manuscript of your book with great delight and profit, not however, without the element of sorrow entering into the reading. Many old and pleasant foundations were swept away with the flood of truth that poured from its pages. However, the truth given in return has delighted my heart beyond comprehension. Why have we been so ignorant about this most vital teaching? Why can this materialistic view of our Lord's return lay such a hold upon the church? You may have much adverse criticism from among the present day Bible students, but is not that the history of all great truths born into the world? Your book will speak for itself, and because your position is founded upon the impregnable rock of the Holy Scriptures it will endure altho, for a time, it may be rejected. I ask that I receive the first book off the press, which I will prize as one of the most profitable additions to my library.

(Signed) (Rev.) R. L. SMITH,
Pastor, Lutheran Church, New Castle, Pa.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEX OF SCRIPTURE TEXTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genesis:</strong> Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Isaiah:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:9-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:6-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34:1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daniel:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:13, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Joel:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Malachi:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:27, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17:1-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23:34-36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23:37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:1, 13, 19, 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:4, 13, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:15-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:29-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17, 19, 20, 22, 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Romans:</strong> Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:11, 12, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:12, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I Corinthians:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:16-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:23, 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58, 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:42-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63, 67, 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:51, 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:52, 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II Corinthians:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:18-5:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Galatians:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Philippians:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colossians:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I Thessalonians:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II Thessalonians:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I Timothy:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II Timothy:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:1-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:5-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:26</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:26-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:13, 25, 27-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I Peter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:17</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II Peter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:4</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:11</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II Peter:</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:7, 10-12</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I John:</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:8</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revelation:</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>28, 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>28, 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:7</td>
<td>31, 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:19</td>
<td>33, 46, 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:10</td>
<td>46, 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:10</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:11</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:6</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revelation:</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:2, 3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:1-6</td>
<td>42, 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:2</td>
<td>38, 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:2-7</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:4</td>
<td>42, 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:4, 5</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:5-10</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:11-14</td>
<td>46, 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:13</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:15</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:7</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>22:10</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:13</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:18, 19</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:20</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goff, Walter R.  

The handbook of eschatology