THE BEREAN:

A MANUAL

FOR THE HELP OF THOSE WHO SEEK THE FAITH OF THE

PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

BY JOHN H. NOYES.


PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICE OF THE SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE,
PUTNEY, VT.

1847.
fical interests, is that of attainable, necessary experience. But the very men who say so much against lowering the standard of the law, are the first to turn away from the primitive standard of experience, and level all hopes to the height attained by certain modern saints, whose biographies are highly esteemed. We appeal from all these biographies to the record of that church which established this standard of experience:—"He that is born of God doeth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Boldly may we say of any saint, ancient or modern, who has fallen short in knowledge and experience of the holiness and the security defined in this standard, though he may have been greatest of all that have been born of women, 'he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

§ 40. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

On almost every page of the New Testament we find the second coming of Christ held up as the central beacon-light of the hopes of believers—an event which should bring them a perfect, secure, and glorious redemption. We select the following passages as specimens of a multitude of expressions relating to that event:—'Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory: and when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh,' Luke 21: 26, 27. 'Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, and make it like unto his glorious body.' Phil. 3: 20. 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.' Col. 3: 4. 'Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing.' 2Tim. 4: 8. 'Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.' Tit. 2: 13. Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.' Heb. 11: 28. 'Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain: be ye also patient, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.' James 5: 7, 8. 'Gird up the loins of your minds—be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.' 1Pet. 1: 13. 'We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him.' 1 John 3: 2, &c.

The glorious event which thus animated the faith of primitive believers, marking the period of the perfection of their faith, and their entrance upon the possession of the fullness of the gift of God's grace, though seemingly nigh at hand at that time, is at this day generally thrown forward, in the faith of
the churches, into the shadows of a distant and indefinite futurity. Our object in the present article, is to call the attention of those who love the word of God more than creeds, to the testimony of that word concerning the time of the second coming of the Son of man.

I. DEFINITION OF THE SECOND COMING.

What is meant by the second coming of Christ? We may answer this question by referring to one of those parables in which Christ presents a miniature of the whole dispensation introduced by his first coming. 'A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, we will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him,' [and he reckoned with them, and rewarded them according to their several merits, both good and bad, and then said]—'But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.' Luke 19: 12. This illustration represents the first coming of Christ, as the period when he delivered the treasures of the gospel to his servants, and went away; and his second coming as the period when he returned and reckoned with them, rewarding the faithful, and taking vengeance on his enemies. The parable may also be understood as intimating that Christ in his first coming was comparatively powerless; but when he came the second time, he had 'received a kingdom' and was clothed with full power to judge, reward, and execute vengeance. By the second coming of Christ, then, we mean his coming in the power of judgment, to reckon with, reward, and punish, those to whom he delivered the gospel at his first coming—we mean the day of judgment for the primitive church and the Jewish nation.

We do not mean by the second coming of Christ, the final and general judgment. The popular notion concerning the judgment of mankind is, that it is to be a single transaction, occupying a single period of time. Joining this notion to the discovery, which every reader of the New Testament must ultimately make, that the judgment of the second coming is clearly predicted in the New Testament as immediately to follow the destruction of Jerusalem, many have believed and taught that 'the judgment [meaning the whole, or final judgment] is past.' These views, whether held by Universalists or Perfectionists, we disclaim, and instead of them, insist that the judgment of mankind, according to scripture, is divided into two acts, occupying two periods of time, separated from each other by an interval of more than a thousand years. In the twentieth chapter of Revelations this division of the judgment is unequivocally described. John saw, when Satan was first bound and cast into the pit, thrones and judgment given to the martyrs of Christ, and they lived and reigned with him a thousand years, but the rest of the dead lived not. 'This,' says the apostle, 'is the first resurrection;' and we may properly add, this is the first judgment. Rev. 20: 5. Afterward Satan is loosed again, gathers Gog and Magog to the great battle, is defeated and cast into the lake of fire forever. Then again appears a throne, a second resurrection and a second judgment. Rev. 20: 12.
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

The same division of the judgment into two acts, separated by a long interval, is very conspicuous in the vision of the seals and trumpets. Rev. 6: 7, &c. When the sixth seal opens, the Lamb appears on the throne of judgment and the tribes of the earth wail because of him, saying, 'the great day of his wrath is come.' Afterwards the seventh seal is opened, and seven angels with trumpets are introduced. As they sound their trumpets successively, a variety of events transpire, necessarily occupying a long period of time. At length, after the sounding of the seventh trumpet, Christ is proclaimed sovereign of the world, and a second and final day of judgment is announced. Rev. 11: 15—18. Unless the sixth seal covers the same period with the seventh trumpet, (which cannot be maintained with any show of reason,) it is manifest to mere inspection that there are two acts of judgment—two periods of wrath and recompense.

As God divided mankind into two great families—the Jews and the Gentiles—so he has appointed a separate judgment for each. The harvest of the Jews came first, because they were ripened first. God separated them from the rest of the nations, and for two thousand years poured upon them the sunshine and the rain of religious discipline. When Christ came he said the fields were white. By the preaching of Christ and his apostles, the process, necessary to make way for the judgment, was complete. At the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews as a nation were judged. Then the kingdom of heaven passed from the Jews to the Gentiles. Matt. 21: 43. God commenced a process of preparation for a second judgment. The Gentiles came under the sunshine and rain, which had before been sent upon the Jews. For nearly two thousand years the Gentile crop has been maturing, and we may reasonably look for the Gentile harvest as near.

That we may therefore speak of the judgment scripturally and intelligently, we will distinctly recognize the division of it which is made in scripture, by calling one of the acts the first judgment, and the other the final judgment. With this explanation, we shall be understood when we say, that in speaking of the second coming of Christ we refer to the first and not to the final judgment. It is not our object in this article to discuss the subject of the second or final judgment. The simple confession here that we believe it to be future, will sufficiently preclude any honest inference from the doctrine we are about to present, that we believe, or wish to believe that the day of our judgment is past.

II. CHRIST'S DESIGNATION OF THE TIME OF HIS SECOND COMING.

In our inquiries about the time of the second coming, it is important that we receive the testimony of scripture in its proper order. The first question is, who shall be our first witness? Shall we call Daniel upon the stand, and taking his prophetic numbers for our starting point, plunge ourselves into a chaos of arithmetical calculations—and when we have made out a case by his testimony, then admit Jesus Christ, and judge and modify his testimony by our reckoning of Daniel's numbers? Common sense points to a different mode of trial. Jesus Christ certainly ought to be our first witness. His own second coming is the matter in question. He is a greater than Daniel or any other prophet. He lived nearer than Daniel to the event. If he has spoken
of the time of his advent, let us hear him first, and then if necessary judge and modify all other prophecies by his testimony.

In the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, after predicting the unexampled tribulations of the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ says: 'Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened . . . . and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.' Matt. 24: 29, 30. The nature of the coming here described is fully determined, not only by the attendant 'gathering of the elect,' but also by the parallel description in Rev. 6. The language of John concerning the 'great day of the wrath of the Lamb,' ushered in by the opening of the sixth seal, is so perfectly identical with the language of Christ in the passage quoted, that we may reasonably believe he copied it; and we cannot doubt that he used it with reference to the same events. As little can we doubt that both describe a day of judgment. Understanding then that our inquiry relates to the first great judgment spoken of in the sixth of Revelations, as well as in the twenty-fourth of Matthew, we ask, what must we conclude is the true meaning of Christ's prediction concerning the time? He says that the time of that judgment should be 'immediately after the tribulation' of the days of Jerusalem's overthrow; but since prejudice and tradition must for the present dictate to common sense, we are still obliged to ask—does he mean what he says? In answering this question, we shall appeal to several statements in the subsequent context, and in other discourses of Christ.

1. After the above introduction of his second coming, Christ goes on to say, 'Now learn a parable of the fig-tree. When his branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye see all these things, [viz. the visible signs which he had foretold in the former part of his discourse,] know that it [i.e. his coming] is near, even at the doors.' Matt. 24: 32, 33. We perceive in this that Christ had it directly in view to so instruct his disciples concerning the time that they should be in no danger of mistake; and therein we have a pledge of the simplicity of his language. So that there is no conceivable reason for doubting that he intended to convey the idea which lies on the face of his words; viz. that his second coming should follow the visible signs he foretold, as closely as summer follows the budding of the fig-tree. The last of those signs was the destruction of Jerusalem; and of course his statement here is precisely what it was before, viz., that the Son of man should come, 'immediately after the tribulation of those days.' Moreover, it should be observed that his language plainly implies, that the persons he addressed would have an opportunity of observing the whole series of tokens that were to precede the second coming. On any other supposition the parable is impertinent.

2. But the context furnishes another and still more indisputable index of the real meaning of Christ. As though he were determined to accumulate emphasis to the uttermost, upon the truth he was uttering, he proceeds in the usual form of his most important affirmations, and with all the solemnity of a tremendous oath, to state once more the limitation of the time within
which his coming should take place. ‘Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.’ Matt. 24: 34, 35. It is fashionable with those who have theories to maintain that are inconsistent with this statement, to work out—each for himself—ingenious expositions of the word generation. One refers it to the Jews, another to the righteous, a third to those that persecuted Christ, and a fourth to a generation that will be living when Christ appears! These expositions are confidently if not plausibly supported, in most cases, by quotations of examples from the Psalms and prophets, in which the word generation means, not the mass of men living at one time, but a peculiar race or sort of persons: as for instance, ‘God is in the generation of the righteous.’ Psa. 14: 5. Now the only fair way of arguing from usage, when the case admits of it, is to appeal to the usage of the writer himself, whose language is in question. Instead of going to David and Isaiah, in another age and another language, we will let Christ himself determine what Christ means by the word generation. And indeed we need not go out of the book of Matthew. Christ uses not only the word, but the very phrase in question, ‘this generation,’ at least five times in the previous discourses recorded by Matthew; and we need only to quote the passages to make manifest his meaning. ‘Whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.’ Matt. 11: 16—19. ‘The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.’ 12: 41, 42. [As the unclean spirit returning with seven other spirits worse than himself, makes the last state of the wicked man worse than the first.] ‘even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.’ 12: 43—45. ‘Behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation.’ 23: 34—36. Now who would think of going to the Old Testament for help to determine the meaning of the word generation in these passages? And who can imagine that the same word loses its plain meaning and becomes figurative, in passing from almost the last verse of the twenty-third chapter

*See Clarke’s Commentary, Miller’s Lectures, Signs of the Times, T. R. Gates’s writings, &c.
into the twenty-fourth? The passage in dispute, (Matt. 24: 34,) is the last in the series of instances in which the phrase ‘this generation’ occurs with evident uniformity of meaning, and it is almost a literal repetition of the instance which immediately precedes it—Matt. 23: 36. Viewing all these passages in their connection with each other, we discover most clearly that the people concerning whom Christ habitually used the phrase ‘this generation,’ were they who as a mass had heard and rejected John the Baptist and himself, and were thus rapidly becoming ripe in wickedness. Foreseeing that this same generation would crucify himself, persecute the apostles, and persist in their unbelief and malice till the measure of their iniquities would be full; he justly threatened them with the gathered vengeance due to all the murders of the righteous from the beginning of the world. As they by their pre-eminent wickedness were becoming the representatives of the sinners of all past generations, it was meet that the debt of wrath due to the whole world should be paid to them, and should be paid without delay, before the generation had left the earth, that their sin and punishment might be seen together. Accordingly after saying in the 23d chapter, ‘Verily I say unto you, all these things’ [to wit, the punishment due to all previous persecutors] ‘shall come upon this generation,’ he goes on in the 24th chapter to specify the items of that punishment. He speaks of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, a most terrific and swelling series of outward calamities, ending with the destruction of the holy city; and then continuing the series by passing into the spiritual world, he predicts as immediately to follow this climax of outward ruin, the appearance of the Son of man in the majesty of eternal judgment, the wailing of his crucifiers, and the glorious gathering of his elect. In perfect keeping then, with his former sayings, and with the demands of the case, he adds, ‘Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.’

Even in the Old Testament there is a very appropriate illustration of the meaning of the word generation in the case in question. ‘The Lord heard the voice of your words,’ said Moses, ‘and was wroth and sware, saying, surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, save Caleb, the son of Jephunneh.’ Deut. 1: 34—36. The generation that came out of Egypt saw and despised the wonders which God wrought in delivering them from Pharaoh and maintaining them in the wilderness, and thus became dreadfully wicked, insomuch that God destroyed them, and only suffered their children to enter the promised land. In like manner, the generation that lived in the time of Christ and his apostles, saw and despised the mighty works of God. It was unquestionably the wickedest generation that ever lived on the earth. Indeed it is not possible that any other generation should be so wicked; for they crucified the Lord of glory, and he cannot die again. It was meet, therefore, that upon that generation should come ‘such tribulation as never was, no nor ever shall be.’ Therefore Christ said ‘this generation shall not pass’ till the wrath of God shall be revealed against them to the uttermost.

3. The meaning of Christ’s statement in the 24th of Matthew is, if possible, still more clearly determined and manifested by the three following
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

Equivalent statements, which occur in his other discourses. (1.) 'Verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.' Matt. 10: 23. (2.) 'Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.' 16: 28. (3.) 'If I will that he [John] tarry till I come, what is that to thee?' Jno. 21: 22. Here we have three separate forms of the same prediction, all terminating in the same point—all affirming directly or by obvious implication, precisely the truth which we have found in three other forms before.

Some of those who are determined not to receive the simple meaning of these texts, dispose of them by referring them, especially the two former, either to the transfiguration of Christ on the Mount, or to the day of Pentecost. But we ask, where is the proof that either of these events is ever called elsewhere in the Evangelists the coming of Christ? If we suppose Christ to have used in these three instances, with reference to those events, an expression which every where else in his discourses refers to the day of Judgment, and that too without any explanation, we impute to him the most outrageous duplicity. These time-serving interpretations trample not only on usage but on common sense; for at the transfiguration, Christ had not gone away; so that it would have been nonsense to have called that event his coming; and the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, was the coming, not of Christ, (for he had gone away only forty days before,) but of that 'other comforter' which he promised to send his disciples in his absence.

We shall perhaps be referred to 2 Peter 1: 16, as an instance in which the transfiguration is called the 'coming' of Christ. But a slight examination of the passage will show the fallacy of the reference. Says the apostle, 'We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' When and where had he made known to them his power and coming? Obviously in his previous epistle and preaching. Turning to the first chapter of that epistle, we find his first and favorite theme was, 'the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, at the appearing of Jesus Christ—-the grace that was to be brought unto the saints, at the revelation of Jesus Christ.' We find him also in other records of his preaching, like the other apostles, prominently presenting the second coming of Christ as the great hope of the church; e. g., Acts 3: 20. To assure his readers more fully of that glorious hope, he refers them in his second epistle to the transfiguration. 'We were,' says he, 'eye-witnesses of his majesty on the holy mount;' i. e., we have seen his spiritual glory, and we therefore know what will be his power at his promised coming.' Observe the apostle does not say he was an eye-witness of Christ's coming, but only of his majesty. The transfiguration was an anticipative glimpse of the power and glory of the second coming; and as such, Peter very properly referred to it for confirmation of the hopes of those who were waiting for the Lord.

But, supposing it were possible for those who wish to evade the testimony in question, to bring some plausible proof that the first two of the three passages quoted, refer to the transfiguration or to the day of Pentecost—what will they say to the third? Christ had predicted Peter's death. Thereupon Peter
asked him what should be the lot of John. He answered, ‘If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.’ Here is a plain intimation, first, that John should outlive Peter; secondly, that he should live till the second coming; and of course, thirdly, that the second coming should take place after the death of Peter, and before that of John. Now Peter was crucified long after the transfiguration and the day of Pentecost. Of course, ‘till I come’ can not refer to either of those events. But John certainly departed soon after the destruction of Jerusalem. Of course ‘till I come’ must refer to an event which took place near the period of that destruction.

We may sum up and concentrate the testimony we have examined in this section, thus: Christ designated the time of his second coming in six different ways. 1. He placed it immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem. 2. He instructed his disciples to expect it, when they should see the fearful signs, that should precede and accompany the destruction of Jerusalem, as they would look for summer after the budding of the fig-tree. 3. He most solemnly declared it would take place before the generation contemporary with himself would pass away. 4. He assured his disciples that it would happen before their ministry to the Jews would be finished. 5. He said there were some standing with him who should live till the event. 6. He plainly intimated that John should tarry till his coming.

III. THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

There is abundant proof in the New Testament that the primitive believers understood the foregoing predictions of Christ in their most obvious sense; and accordingly expected the second coming within the lifetime of some of their own number. We will notice a few specimens of their customary manner of speech concerning the second coming. ‘Ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.’ 1 Cor. 1: 7. ‘Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.’ Phil. 3: 20. ‘Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven.’ 1 Thess. 1: 10. ‘The grace of God . . . hath appeared, . . . teaching us . . . that we should live soberly, &c., looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.’ Tit. 2: 11–13.

Such language as this is perfectly natural on the supposition that they understood Christ’s predictions as setting the period of the second coming nigh at hand; and perfectly unnatural on any other supposition, as is proved by the fact that such language at the present day, when the churches generally believe the second coming to be afar off, is altogether obsolete; except among those whose theory, like that of Miller, places the second advent very near the present time. Men do not wait and look for a far distant event. Such language implies that the event expected is supposed to be impending.

The following may be taken as examples of another class of passages, which occur on almost every page of the Epistles. ‘Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; . . . that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.’ Phil. 1: 6, 10. ‘I pray God your whole spirit and
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ 1 Thess. 5: 23. ‘I give thee charge, . . . that thou keep this commandment without spot and blameless, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ 1 Tim. 6: 13, 14. Nothing can be plainer than that the second coming of Christ, in the minds of those who use such language as this, was the event which stood at the end of their trial of obedience. They manifestly waited for it as though it were so nigh that their temporal probation would reach ‘unto’ it.

In the following instances the expectations of primitive believers are expressed in the most explicit terms: ‘Let your moderation be known unto all men: The Lord is at hand.’ Phil. 4: 5. ‘Let us consider one another, &c., exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.’ Heb. 10: 24, 25. ‘Ye have need of patience, &c., for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.’ Heb. 10: 36, 37. ‘Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.—Stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.—The Judge standeth at the door.’ James 5: 7—9. ‘The end of all things is at hand.—The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.’ 1 Pet. 4: 7, 17.

In those remarkable passages of Paul which relate to the resurrection, it is impossible not to discover clear evidence of the same confident expectation of the speedy coming of the Lord. ‘We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.’ 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52. ‘For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [i. e. anticipate] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.’ 1 Thess. 4: 15—17. If Paul had believed the resurrection to be a far distant event, he would have said, ‘We who will then be dead shall be raised incorruptible, and they that remain alive shall be changed.’ But in both the instances, where such language might have been expected, he transposes the pronouns we and they, as though he studiously sought to make it manifest, that he expected to be himself among the number of the living at the coming of the Lord.

We will not further multiply citations showing the expectations of primitive believers, but refer the reader, if he needs further evidence on the subject, to an examination of the whole New Testament. The position which we think the evidence already presented abundantly sustains, is, that as Christ predicted, so the primitive church expected, his second coming within the lifetime of their own generation.*

* It might be proved by the testimony of secular historians, that the primitive church believed the second coming to be nigh at hand. The following extract from Gibbon is a specimen of such testimony:

‘In the primitive church, the influence of truth was very powerfully strengthened by an opinion, which, however it may deserve respect for its usefulness and antiquity, has not been found agreeable to experience. It was universally believed, that the end of the
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

Let it be borne in mind, that the primitive church were cotemporaries with Christ—that many of them received Christ's predictions of his second advent from his own lips—that the language in which those predictions were uttered was their mother tongue—and that they were favored with unexampled measures of the spirit of interpretation and revelation—in a word, that they were in the most favorable circumstances possible for correctly understanding the language of Christ. Now shall we suppose that they made a mistake of eighteen hundred years in their construction of his plain predictions; and that a generation of interpreters living at the present day, at a distance of eighteen hundred years from the time of Christ, without any knowledge of the language in which Christ spoke, except what they get from translations and lexicons, and confessedly without the spirit of revelation, have risen up to set them right!

IV. THE FULFILMENT OF THE SIGNS PREDICTED.

Several of the prophets of the Old Testament foretold events that should go before the 'great day of the Lord,' and should be signs of its approach. Thus Malachi says, 'Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.' Mal. 4: 5. We have it on Christ's authority, that this prediction was fulfilled in his day. He says of John the Baptist, 'If ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come.' Mat. 11: 14. Again, Joel says—'I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days I will pour out my spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.' Joel 2: 28—31. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, announced that this prophecy was then in course of fulfilment. When the people were amazed at the works of the Spirit, and said of them that spake with tongues, 'These men are full of new wine,' Peter said, 'These are not drunken as ye suppose, . . . but this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel'—and then he proceeds to recite the passage above quoted.

world and the kingdom of heaven, were at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the apostles; the tradition of it was preserved by their earliest disciples; and those who understood in their literal sense the discourses of Christ himself, were obliged to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of man in the clouds, before that generation was totally extinguished which had beheld his humble condition upon earth, and which might still be witnesses of the calamities of the Jews under Vespasian and Hadrian. The revolution of seventeen centuries has instructed us not to press too closely the mysterious language of prophecy and revelation; but as long as, for wise purposes, this error was permitted to subsist in the church, it was productive of the most salutary effects on the faith and practice of Christians, who lived in the awful expectation of that moment when the globe itself, and all the various race of mankind, should tremble at the presence of their divine Judge. This expectation was counteracted by the 34th chapter of Matthew, and by the first epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians. Erasmus removes the difficulty by the help of allegory and metaphor; and the learned Grotius ventures to insinuate, that, for wise purposes, the pious deception was permitted to take place.'—Gibbon's Rome, Vol. 1, p. 261.
In the twenty-fourth of Matthew, Christ takes up the series of signs where Malachi and Joel leave it, and predicts with much minuteness the principal events of the period between the day of Pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem. It should be noticed that these predictions, though mingled together, are of two distinct sorts; 1, those which relate to events in the history of the Christian church—such as persecutions, the appearance of antichrists, the universal publication of the gospel, &c.; 2, those which relate to events in the history of the Jews, and other nations—such as wars, pestilences, earthquakes, &c. We naturally look to external history for a record of these last events; and as the history of the downfall of the Jewish nation is generally familiar, and no one denies that the fearful physical calamities which Christ predicted in the 24th of Matthew, actually came to pass in that generation, we need not offer any proof in relation to the second class of predictions. It is of more importance to direct the reader’s attention to the evidence we have of the fulfilment of the first class of tokens—those which, by their connection with the history of the church, and by their spiritual nature, were more emphatically the precursors of the coming of Christ. It is not generally supposed that those tokens—especially the appearance of antichrist, and the universal publication of the gospel—did actually come to pass in that age; so that it is the more necessary that we should present our proof in relation to them. We find proof in the New Testament, that antichrist was revealed, and that the gospel was published to all nations, before the destruction of Jerusalem. The following synopsis presents Christ’s predictions relative to these events, with the record of their fulfilment in the opposite column:

**Predictions.**

- "Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." Matt. 24: 11.
- "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Matt. 24: 12.
- "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets." Matt. 24: 24. [Paul repeats this and the preceding prediction in 2 Thess. 2: 3.] "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed."
- "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24: 14.

**The Fulfilment.**

- "Many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4: 1.
- "Thou hast left thy first love." Rev. 2: 4.
- "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot." Rev. 3: 15.
- "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." 1 John 2: 18.
- "They went forth and preached everywhere." Mark 16: 20. "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world." Rom. 10: 18. "The gospel . . . is come unto you, as it is in all the world." "The gospel . . . which was preached to every creature which is under heav- en." Col. 1: 6, 28.
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

It may be noticed that while Paul, as the chief preacher of the primitive church, announces the universal publication of the gospel, John, the disciple who outlived most of his cotemporaries, is the principal reporter of the facts which fulfilled Christ’s predictions concerning antichrist. When Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, antichrist was not revealed; but he said the ‘mystery of iniquity’ was already working. In the later record of John, its manifestation is announced.

The language of 1 John 2: 18, is far more forcible in the original than in our translation. The word rendered time, is hora, from which the English word hour is derived, and is almost invariably elsewhere translated hour. It should read thus:—‘Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour.’ The plain meaning of John is, ‘We are on the very verge of the second coming; for the prophecies of Christ and Paul concerning the revelation of antichrist, are already fulfilled.’

Now what is there in the nature of things, to obstruct our belief of the plain testimony before us? Forty years was surely time enough for such workmen as Paul and his fellow apostles, to announce to the whole world the approach of the kingdom of God. The ‘testimony’ which they had to bear to all nations, was not a system of theology, or a long series of discourses on morality, but simply the message of a king, sent before him to forewarn his subjects of his approach. Paul took his station at Rome, the centre of the empire of the world, and from that spot his voice could be heard to the ends of the earth. He says expressly of the church at Rome, that their ‘faith was spoken of throughout the whole world.’ Rom. 1: 8. Forty years was long enough, too, for the development and ripening of the elements of evil within the church. The miracles which abounded during the ministry of Christ and his apostles, while on the one hand they furnished occasion and food for faith, on the other, naturally excited a morbid craving for the marvelous. Thus while the work of salvation was going on in the inner church, a market was opened, and a strong demand created, among the crowd of the outer court, for signs and wonders; and as demand always attracts supply, ere long a host of false prophets, false Christs, deceitful wonder-workers—in a word, speculators on the credulity awakened by the miracles of Christ, appeared, as might be expected, and as Christ predicted; and we might infer with strong probability, from the nature of things alone, without the predictions of Christ or the testimony of history, that the ‘mystery of iniquity within the church, kept pace in its growth, with the ripening corruption of the Jewish nation; and that the judgment of Antichrist followed hard upon the destruction of the Holy City.

If it should be said of the signs we have particularly noticed, as well as of the others, that, admitting them to have been fulfilled in the apostolic age, they are still to be regarded as signs not of the second coming, but merely of the destruction of Jerusalem, we reply, Christ certainly predicted one sign, and that the most notable of all, of which this cannot be said, and that sign was the destruction of Jerusalem itself. It is a very great mistake to suppose that that event occupied the chief place in Christ’s mind when he uttered the pre-
dictions of the 24th of Matthew. His language plainly shows that it was in his mind only the last and greatest sign of his invisible coming. The principal question of the disciples was, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" His answer was—"Jerusalem shall be destroyed; the tribulation of its people shall be such as never was, and never shall be;" and "immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, . . . and the sign of the Son of man appear." The tribulation then, of the destruction of Jerusalem, was the true sign of his coming.

This accords with the prophecy of Daniel. "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book; and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12: 1, 2. Here is a resurrection of many, a redemption of the righteous, and a destruction of the wicked—in a word, a judgment immediately following the tribulation that is without example. Christ quotes Daniel in his description of the tribulation; (Matt. 24: 15;) so that there can be no doubt that he followed and repeated the above prophecy of Daniel when he said, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened," &c. The chief and last sign, then, of Christ's second coming, did actually and confessedly take place about forty years after his crucifixion, and of course within the lifetime of his own generation; and if, according to his prediction, his coming immediately followed that sign, his word, "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled," and the expectations of his followers, founded on that word, were found true.

V. THE NATURE OF THE SECOND COMING.

It can be proved by many examples, that popular anticipations, and even the calculations of the learned, are not safe guides to an understanding of the nature of events predicted in the Bible. Take a case already referred to, that of the mission of John the Baptist. The prediction concerning him was, "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of that great and dreadful day of the Lord." This was written some hundreds of years before the appearance of John, and doubtless had been a subject of much meditation and calculation among the Jews, both learned and unlearned; and yet, after John had finished his ministry with great notoriety, and with the credit of being "a prophet indeed," even Christ's own disciples asked, "Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?"—a question that shows they had not yet recognized John as the Elias. Christ's answer, while it unequivocally settles the question as to the true application of the prophecy, holds up to view the blindness of the "scribes," in terms that are fitted to humble and warn the students of prophecy in all generations. "I say unto you that Elias is already come, and they knew him not, and have done unto him whatsoever they listed." Matt. 17: 12. Christ also himself, in the mode of his first coming, wholly disappointed the expectations which the Jews had formed concerning him, from the prophecies of the Old Testament.

It would not therefore be a strange thing, if it should be found that the second coming was an event very different from the conceptions of it, wheth-
or popular or learned, which men have gained by private interpretations of prophecy. Christ may have come at the time appointed, though the scribes 'knew him not.' Taking the caution of past examples, we will not assume that he did not come, because popular anticipations were not fulfilled; but rather that those anticipations were false, and wholly unworthy to be placed in the balance against the credit of those plain predictions which, as we have seen, appointed the time. At the outset of our inquiry concerning the nature of the second coming, we are bound to take for granted that it was an event which, though it may not have been recognized by external historians, was not inconsistent with the true history of the external events which followed the destruction of Jerusalem.

This assumption leads us at once to the general conclusion—that the second coming was an event in the spiritual, and not in the natural world.—Let us see, then, if Christ's own language does not warrant and require this conclusion. Before his description of his coming, in the 24th of Mathew, he speaks particularly of the mode of it, and cautions his disciples against delusion in relation to it, thus: 'If they shall say to you, Behold he is in the desert; go not forth: Behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.' Matt. 24: 26, 27. The contrast here presented, is evidently that between the limited presence of the impostors that were to be sought for in the desert and secret chambers, and the extended presence of the Son of man in his coming. He was to be looked for, not as a material and circumscribed body, but as an all-pervading essence; not to be found by searching here or there, but to be seen everywhere. And this is the very distinction between bodily and spiritual presence. Says Paul, 'Though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order.' Col. 2: 5. Here we have the omnipresence of the spirit in contrast with the limited presence of the material form. Christ's caution, then, amounts to this:—'My coming will be in that world where I can be like the lightning, omnipresent—the world of souls.'

This exposition of Matt. 24: 26, 27, is fully confirmed by a parallel passage in Luke 17: 20—24. This same comparison of Christ's coming, to the lightning, is there introduced thus: 'When he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them, and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; [i.e. in such a manner as to be observed with the eyes:] neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.' Putting these passages together, (and they clearly belong together,) we see that Christ did not teach that his coming would be like the lightning in respect to outward visibility, but simply in respect to its extended presence. That presence was to be looked for in the kingdom that is within. It is manifest then that Christ's predictions in the 24th of Matthew, figurative and mystical as they are, are accompanied by such explanations and cautions as leave no reasonable excuse for the error of those who understand them in a literal and material sense, and look for his coming in the outward world.

If we bear in mind the theory with which we commenced, viz., that the
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

Judgment of the second coming was for the subjects of the first gospel, we shall see there was a necessity that the principal sphere of its manifestation should be in the spiritual world. That evil generation, which grew ripe in iniquity, under the ministry of John and of Christ, and on which Christ declared should come all the righteous blood shed from the foundation of the world, the crucifiers of Christ and the persecutors of the church at Jerusalem, had doubtless chiefly passed away, before the destruction of Jerusalem. So also had by far the greater part of the righteous followers of Christ. Moreover there is evidence that a large proportion of the subjects of the first gospel, were the spirits of the previous dead. 1 Peter 4: 6. So that nearly all the principal actors in the drama which terminated in the second coming, were already within the veil, and there, of course, was the fitting place for the denouement. A remnant, it is true, both of the believers, and the rejecters of Christ in his first coming, remained on earth, and also a whole generation of their descendants, to whom in a secondary manner the judgment of the second coming pertained. But as the spiritual world was nevertheless the main scene of action, the appropriate commencement of the judgment to this secondary remnant, was a summons to that scene; and that summons, to the righteous was the instantaneous change from a mortal to an immortal state, by which they were introduced to the personal presence of the Lord; to the wicked, it was death, by the sword, pestilence and famine.

But here let it be observed by way of caution, that in placing the second coming in the spiritual and not in the natural world, we give no place to that foolish unbelief which conceives of nothing but unsubstantial and shadowy existences and events, as pertaining to that world. To some minds, we may seem to belittle the glorious appearing of Christ, by referring it to the world of souls instead of the world of bodies; for it is fashionable to regard things spiritual and invisible, as little more than things visionary and poetical. But in our philosophy, mind is more truly a substantial entity than matter, and there is less of poetical nothingness in the spiritual than in the natural world. With these views, if we would magnify the coming of the Lord, we must refer it to a spiritual sphere. We measure the greatness of the event thus:—

As the body is to the soul, so was the awful overthrow of Jerusalem to the second coming of Christ. The slaughter of eleven hundred thousand Jews, was the bodily representative, the visible and inferior index, of that spiritual judgment in which ‘the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men; and the chief captains and the mighty men, and every bondman and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come.’

It will be objected to these views of the spirituality of Christ’s second coming, that the prediction was, ‘every eye shall see him.’ Rev. 1: 7. We may answer this objection in three ways—

1. By referring to the circumstances and context of the prediction. John is addressing the churches; and after speaking of the grace and glory which Christ had conferred on them, he says—‘Behold, he cometh with clouds;
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

and every eye shall see him." This is naturally to be interpreted as a glorious promise to those whom he addressed; as if he had said, "Christ has washed us from our sins, and has made us kings and priests,—now he is coming personally, and we shall all see him." He adds, "and they also which pierced him;" which implies that the wicked were not included in the preceding statement.

2. The language of John is necessarily limited by the nature of the subject concerning which he speaks; and since Christ was a spiritual and not a material being, the meaning of the apostle must be, "every spiritual eye shall see him." The nature even of Christ's body, after his resurrection, was such that his appearance to his disciples, is in all cases described in the very terms that are used in relation to appearances of angels. When they were assembled together, and the "doors were shut," suddenly he "stood in their midst," and in like manner he "vanished out of their sight." When he walked with them, "their eyes were holden and they knew him not." In several instances he is said to have "appeared to them," and when he ascended up, "behold two men stood by them in white apparel." (See Mark 16:9—14, Luke 24: 16, 31, 36, John 20: 18—28, 21: 1, Acts 1: 10.) In all this it is evident that Christ, after his resurrection, had the nature of angels; and the perceptions of those who saw him were not natural, but spiritual. His appearance was, in proper language, a vision, and none saw him but those whose spiritual eyes were opened. Stephen "being full of the Holy Ghost, saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God;" (Acts 7: 55;) and he saw him because he was full of the Holy Ghost, and not with his natural eyes, for the others saw nothing. So Paul saw Jesus Christ and talked with him, when those that were with him saw no man, and heard not the voice. (See and compare Acts 9: 7, 22: 9, 18, 1 Cor. 9: 1.) John, also, on the isle of Patmos, was "in the spirit" when he saw the Lord. (See Rev. 1: 10.)

There is no evidence that Jesus Christ has ever been seen by any natural eye since his resurrection. Indeed he expressly declared on the eve of his crucifixion, "The world seeth me no more." When therefore John asserted that every eye should see him, he must have had in his mind the limitation which the nature of Christ, and this declaration required.

3. There is a sense, in which it may truly be said that every eye did see...
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

Christ, after the destruction of Jerusalem. He came at the beginning, preaching the approach of the reign of God—that kingdom of heaven which had been predicted as about to break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. Of that kingdom he claimed to be the sovereign. Before Pontius Pilate he confessed himself a king; and to the high priest of Israel he declared, 'Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power.' Yet his title to the throne of the world was not practically asserted and manifested in his first coming. He came to preach and heal and suffer—not to reign. After his resurrection, he said to his disciples, 'All power in heaven and on earth, is given unto me;' and they thereafter proclaimed him the royal Son of God. Still, through the whole period of the apostolic age, his sovereignty was not manifested to the world. Stephen saw him on the throne, and believers knew that he was king; but the world still denied and despised his claim. It was reserved for the awful period of his second coming, to make the world know its master. The testimony of his claim had gone into all the world for a witness unto all nations. He had proclaimed that within the age of one generation, he would come and prove that claim, by destroying Jerusalem and dashing in pieces the Jewish nation. The report of that proclamation had gone with the gospel into all the world. Thus the destruction of Jerusalem was the appointed sign and proof of his sovereignty. It was as if he had said in his first coming, 'For the present, imagine, if you will, that I am a boasting impostor; but when you see this temple, city, and nation swept with the bosom of destruction, then know that I am King. That tremendous event came to pass at the time appointed; the sign he gave the world, appeared; and all nations were compelled to see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power.' Thus it may be said that every eye saw him, and every heart knew by a sure token, that to him it was given to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. The destruction of Jerusalem was the most public event that ever happened; and in that, all the tribes of the earth saw and trembled at the majesty of the Son of God.*

The word of the angels at the ascension of Christ, '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,' (Acts 1: 11,) is sometimes urged as an objection.

* If any one objects that these views are not sustained by the testimony of history, it may be answered, in the first place, that the light of history on the remarkable period immediately following the destruction of Jerusalem, is little better than total darkness. The predictions of the Bible are a safer guide through the confusion of that period than any external history. Secondly, it is hardly to be expected that the world's historians, should confess the world's convictions in such a case. All nations might have watched the issue that was made up between Jesus and the Jews in respect to his title to their throne; and might have seen the decision with a shuddering conviction of the truth and righteousness of his claims; and yet the conviction might have been so repressed and concealed, that unbelief, like a returning wave, immediately rolled over the world's heart again, and swept from its memory and its history every trace of its momentary pang of faith. Thirdly, there is evidence in history, of some of the effects produced by the conviction which was wrought by the destruction of Jerusalem. Adam Clarke says,—'It is worth serious observation, that the Christian religion spread and prevailed mightily after this period; and nothing contributed more to the success of the gospel, than the destruction of Jerusalem happening in the very time and manner, and with the very circumstances so particularly foretold by our Lord.'—Clarke's Commentary on Matt. 24: 31.
to the theory of the second coming which we have presented. But it may
more properly be regarded as a decisive objection to the popular expectation
of a public personal advent, visible to the world. For as we have seen, his
nature was that of angels after his resurrection, and his ascension was in the
angelic world, as was shown by the presence of the angels who uttered the
above declaration. Moreover, he ascended, not in the view of assembled na-
tions, but in the presence of a few of his disciples. The event was of a very
private nature; and, according to the word of the angels, his subsequent
coming was to be equally private.

It must not be supposed, that in maintaining that the second coming took
place in the spiritual, and not in the natural world, we deny an actual per-
sonal appearing to believers on earth. We hold that together with that
spiritual presence, which was like the lightning, and that presence of power
by which he startled the nations, there was also a personal appearing on the
one hand to the whole spiritual world; and on the other, to the few believers
who remained on earth. As he ascended, so he descended. As he ascended
only in the presence of his friends, so he descended only in the presence of
his friends. As he ascended in the angelic world, so he descended in the
angelic world. As unbelievers knew nothing of his ascension, so unbelievers
knew nothing of his descent. He entered the house of this world ‘like a
thief,’ unseen by the world, and took the goods he sought, viz., the few be-
lievers that remained looking for him, and departed leaving the world asleep.
The abduction of a few despised individuals was not likely to excite much at-
tention in that time of turbulence and slaughter. The silence of history,
only proves that Christ came as he ascended, and as he predicted, ‘like a thief
in the night.’

The private nature of the second coming is clearly illustrated by the par-
able of the ten virgins. Matt. 25: 1—12. That parable occurs immediately
after the description of the second coming in the 24th chapter. ‘Then,’
says Christ, ‘shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins,’ &c.
We suppose the virgins to represent the primitive church, and the bridegroom’s
coming the second advent. And how did the bridegroom come? Not as
many seem to suppose, at mid-day; not even in the sight of all who went
forth to meet him; but ‘at midnight the cry was made,’ and not only the
world, but the foolish virgins, missed the sight of him. He appeared only
to them that were ready.

VI. PRACTICAL BEARINGS OF THE PRECEDING VIEWS.

A mere theory, however magnificent, is not to be accounted of much value
unless it is available for the increase of godliness, and the furtherance of sal-
vation; and it would be unworthy of a wise and benevolent man, to broach
and insist upon doctrines tending to unsettle the foundations of ancient opinions,
unless he is persuaded that those doctrines are not only true, but prac-
tically profitable and necessary. Under such a persuasion, the preceding views have been presented; and we are prepared to answer those who may
be disposed to ask concerning them, What good purpose will be effected by
entertaining and promulgating them?

1. Faith in the word of God will be increased. Many facts might be
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

presented, showing that the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, flatly contradicted, perverted and suppressed as it is, by the tradition of the elders, has made many infidels, and greatly embarrassed and weakened the faith of many believers. Common sense will see and murmur at the contradiction between popular belief and the plain declarations of Christ, concerning the time of his second coming, in spite of all the ingenuity of commentators; and such murmurings make way for infidelity. The views we have presented, harmonize those plain declarations with the facts of history; and so convert common sense from an enemy to an ally of faith. So far as the Bible is concerned, simplicity of interpretation is essential to that simplicity of heart, which is the 'good ground' for the 'good seed.' Faith withers and dies in the shade of artificial and labored explanations. The common belief concerning the second coming, makes such explanations absolutely necessary, not only in the twenty-fourth of Matthew, but throughout the New Testament. Three or four different 'second comings' must be conjured up, without a pretense of authority, to meet and dispose of the inconvenient texts which are constantly occurring in the Evangelists and the Epistles; and even then, some passages are found that are utterly unmanageable. Now all this trouble, with its evil tendencies and consequences, is saved by believing the testimony of God in its most simple and obvious sense—keeping both eyes on that testimony, instead of looking that way with one eye, and toward human history and tradition with the other.

2. A clear view will be obtained of our own true position. So long as the first and second judgments are confounded, and the second coming of Christ is regarded as future, all our calculations concerning things to come, are involved in inextricable confusion. Like the first discoverers of the new world, who imagined the land they had found was the coast of Asia, we are sailing towards things unknown, mistaking them for things well known. Or rather, like a misguided navigator, who in sailing from the old to the new world, should pass by Cape Horn, and continue his voyage toward Asia, thinking America still before him, we are fancying a judgment future, that is past, and approaching a judgment that we know nothing of. If true charts, and a correct knowledge of the earth, are practically valuable to the navigator, so a true interpretation of prophecies, at least in regard to the great subject of the day of judgment, is practically valuable to the believer. The first step toward an intelligent view of the last and now impending judgment, is a correct knowledge of the first judgment; and no man can rightly anticipate the nature of the 'dispensation of the fulness of times,' whose mind is embarrassed by confounding it with the dispensation of the primitive church.

3. A knowledge of our position will modify in many respects our views of duty, and our hopes. We will propose one or two examples. Of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper it is said, 'As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show [or preach] the Lord's death, till he come.' 1 Cor. 11: 26. Now since Christ in his first coming was a suffering victim, but Christ in his second coming was a conquering king, it is evident that an ordinance commemorating his humiliation may have been appropriate before
his second coming, and inappropriate afterwards. If we imagine Christ has not yet come, we shall judge, and that with Paul's authority, that the eucharist is still an appropriate, and an enjoined ordinance. But if we believe that Christ's humiliation ceased at the destruction of Jerusalem, that he was vindicated and proclaimed King of the world by that event, we may conceive that some other ordinance, more expressive of victory, would be more appropriate to the present time. At all events, Paul's injunction of the ordinance cannot be quoted as applicable to us; for the expression 'till he come,' limits that injunction to a time long ago past; and if we continue the observance of it, we must derive our warrant for the practice simply from its expediency, not from its authority. Again, 'the last enemy to be overcome is death;' and that enemy was to be overcome at Christ's coming. (See 1 Cor. 15: 26, 54.) Christ came 'to destroy him that had the power of death;' and he commenced the war by sacrificing himself. His followers entered the breach after him, and like him laid down their lives for the future victory. But the sure word of promise was, that within that generation, at his coming, the final triumph should be won; and they who remained alive till that time should not die—nay, should not 'sleep'—but should put on their immortal nature, by instantaneous change. Now if we believe that the second coming of Christ is yet future, in our minds the last enemy is not destroyed—death is yet an unconquered antagonist of the Son of God.—But if we believe the second coming is past, we see Jesus a perfect conqueror, with death under his feet; and our faith and hope, according to the grace given us, lay hold on his perfect victory. This last example may be taken as a specimen of a general revolution of mind—producing great enlargement of hope—which will take place in any one who intelligently exchanges the common views of the second coming, for those which we have presented. The progress of God's general war with Satan, is not to be measured by the progress of that war in individuals. Victories may have been won, which we as individuals have not entered into. A spiritual and vigorous believer will look for encouragement and strength more to the general victories that are already won in Christ, than to any particular victories that are won in himself. Hence, when he finds that the second coming of Christ, with all its train of promised triumphs, instead of being yet far in the future, is eighteen hundred years in the past, he will lift up his head with joyful hope, and gird himself for the battle that is yet before him as an individual, with the exulting faith of one who is fighting on the distant wing of an army which has already routed the enemy at the centre.

4. The views we have presented give important information of the present state of the primitive church, and of our relation to it. As the church of Jesus Christ is and forever will be one, every spiritual believer will refer his membership to that original church which was built on the 'foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone'—making little account of the carnal distinction between the 'church militant,' and the 'church triumphant,' and altogether disallowing the antichristian notion of a plurality of discordant, and yet accepted churches. 'Our citizenship' and our church membership 'are in heaven.' Our 'General Assembly'
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

holds its sessions on Mount Zion. It is therefore highly important that we should acquaint ourselves as far as possible, with the present condition of the 'church of the first-born.' If we believe that the second coming of Christ is yet future, we must regard that church as yet 'sleeping'—yet awaiting the trump of the resurrection—yet only expectants of their promised thrones. But believing the second coming past, we see that church advanced eighteen hundred years beyond the resurrection and the judgment. A hundred and forty-four thousand from the tribes of Israel, and an innumerable company out of all nations, have lived and reigned with Christ, through the 'dark ages' which this world has seen since the destruction of Jerusalem, without division or apostacy; and whether we regard their numbers or their glory, we have no occasion to join the mourning of those, who by 'looking on the outward appearance,' are almost ready to confess Christianity a failure. Our church—the oldest in Christendom—has been neither dead nor asleep; and is now neither few nor feeble. We may illustrate its present condition, and our relation to it, thus:—Suppose it to be a stream commencing with Christ in his first coming, enlarging as it runs on its troubled way through the apostolic age, and at the second coming reaching the tranquil level of eternity. Still it flows onward, deepening and widening as it goes, and at the distance of eighteen hundred years, it has become a broad and mighty river. Now shall we, as tributary streams seeking a junction with this river, take a long backward circuit, and try to enter somewhere before the second coming, or shall we make our way toward it by the shortest course, and enter where it is broadest and deepest? We leave the answer to common sense, and to the faith of God's elect.

5. These views afford the most effectual means for suppressing many forms of pernicious error. One strong hold of Universalists, in fact the most indispensable, is the denial of a future and eternal judgment. By demonstrating, as they easily can, to common sense, (not perhaps to traditional bigotry,) that the judgment most frequently predicted and alluded to in the New Testament, was to come within the lifetime of the generation contemporary with Christ, they stop the mouths of those who preach a future judgment; and then, following up their advantage, they virtually nullify the whole testimony of the Bible concerning the judgment, with its rewards and punishments, by referring it to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the subsequent temporal curses of the Jews, and blessings of the Gentiles. Our theory meets and answers them, on both these points. First, we concede the manifest truth of their primary position, viz: that the judgment expected by the primitive church, came to pass at the time appointed, within that generation. But then we prove to them that that was only a judgment of the subjects of the first gospel, the judgment of the Jews, terminating the Mosaic dispensation; and we point them to predictions of another and final judgment, to come after the times of the Gentiles. By developing the scriptural division of the judgment into two acts, we can grant all they claim, and yet prove a future judgment. Secondly, we show, in relation to the first judgment, that the outward events which they say fulfilled the predictions of that transaction, were only visible signs, bearing no greater propor-
tion of importance to the actual judgment of the second coming, which followed them in the invisible world, than the body bears to the soul.

Again, our doctrine strikes a fatal blow at all those forms of modern fanaticism which have for their basis a testimony, that Christ has lately come or is now coming the second time. Paul says, 'Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' Paul's gospel was that which Christ preached before him, and one main item of its tidings was, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand—this generation shall see the second coming of the Son of man, in the power and glory of eternal judgment.' Now Swedenborg preached that the second coming of Christ took place in 1757—(1680 years after the time appointed)—and that he was himself an eye-witness of the transaction. Ann Lee, the Mother of the Shakers, preached that the second coming took place in 1770, and that Christ made his appearance in her person.† Many similar proclamations have been made from time to time, along the whole period of Christian history, and especially since the Reformation. The latest follower of this fashion that has come to our notice, is Professor Andreas Bernardus Smolinkar, who teaches that Christ appeared in 1836, and appointed him 'Ambassador Extraordinary.'‡ Of all these we may say fearlessly, as Paul says, 'though they be angels from heaven, let them be accursed'—they have denied the word of God. Together with those, another class of visionaries and impostors, less presumptuous, but equally foolish, may be noticed. We refer to those who either by pretended revelation, or by interpretation, have undertaken from time to time within the last few centuries, to prophesy of the near approach of the second advent. The latest and most notable specimen of this class, is William Miller, who, at this time, is confidently proclaiming that 1843 is the appointed year of the second coming. The intelligent reader will not seek protection for himself, or for the church of God, from the subtleties and snares of these deceivers, in ignorance and contempt of their doctrines, but in correct and clear views of the great subject which they mystify and abuse. The protectors of the orthodoxy of the church will surely spend their strength for nought, in their labors to repel and quench heresies on the subject of the second coming, so long as they shrink from a manly and thorough investigation of that subject, and a bold confession of the truth to which such an investigation leads. We believe the views presented in this article, open a summary and sure way to an utter extinction of those heresies. As Christ declared that the day of his appearing should 'come as a snare upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth;' so we believe the true doctrine concerning that appearing, will finally be found a snare, in which nearly all the heresies of Christendom will be taken and destroyed.

6. These views throw much light on the history of what is commonly called the Christian church. They prove at the outset, that that church has had at the very heart of its system of faith, ever since the destruction of Jerusa

* See 'Compendium of the True Christian Religion,' p. 162.
† See 'Summary View of the Millennium Church,' p. 5.
‡ See 'Signs of the Times,' Vol. I. No. 12.
§ This article was written and published several years previous to the above date.
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST. 297

lem, an enormous error—nothing less than a palpable denial of the plainest word that Christ ever spoke—and that word relating to the greatest of all the subjects of faith, viz. the day of Judgment. It is commonly believed that the church of the first century after the apostles, was nearly as pure as the primitive church; and that its damnable degeneracy did not commence until the fourth or fifth century. But we see that a ‘strong delusion,’ to say the least, commenced its work in the very first successors of the primitive church; and we are led at once to draw a very broad line of distinction between the church that lived before, and that which lived after the destruction of Jerusalem. How broad that line ought to be, we shall best learn by appealing to the law and to the testimony. Let it be remembered that Christ and Paul repeatedly predicted a ‘great falling away,’ as one of the last signs of Christ’s coming—that the later writings of John record the fulfilment of those predictions—that Peter specially characterizes the apostates, as doubting and forsaking the promise of the second coming, (2 Pet. 3:4)—and on the other hand, the faithful in Christ are constantly characterized as ‘waiting for the Lord. In the last hour, then, of the apostolic age, there were co-existing, a true church and an apostate church; and the prime difference between them was, that one of them was ‘looking’ for the coming of Christ, and the other was not.” Now the promise was, that ‘to them that looked for him,’ he would appear and take them away. So then they that were left after his appearing, were the apostates who looked not for him; and they therefore evidently constitute the first link of the chain which connects the Christianity of subsequent ages, with the Christianity of the apostles. Indeed this might be inferred from the likeness of their faith to that of their successors. As they deferred, and practically forsook the promise of the coming of the Lord, so has the church, commonly called Christian, done in all ages since. We say then, that church is a successor, not of the true primitive church, but of that apostate moiety which forsook the promise of the second coming, and was rejected of the Lord; and its pretense of authority inherited from Christ and his apostles, is proved to be an imposition. Thus, instead of impotently attempting to hew away such branches as Popery, Episcopacy, &c., we lay the ax at the root of that accursed tree of spurious Christianity, which has overshadowed and blasted the earth through these eighteen hundred years;—thus too, we break the arrows of the infidels, who have ever sought to pierce Christ by shooting at the church of the first centuries. Christ is in no way responsible for the church that has assumed his name since his second

* The reader will observe that this is the very distinction between true believers and apostates, which Christ predicted in Matt. 24: 45-51. That parable was framed for the very purpose of forewarning the disciples of the danger of unbelief in relation to his second coming. The faithful servant is represented as watching and ready, while the evil servant says, ‘My Lord delayeth his coming.’ The moral consequences of ‘looking’ for the coming of the Lord on the one hand, and of forsaking the promise on the other—might easily be traced out, and shown to be such as would make the wide difference between the faithful and reprobates. Gibbon, in the note on our 282d page, suggests an idea that is undoubtedly true; and not the less valuable, for the sneering sarcasm with which it is accompanied. The great secret of the vigorous faith and daring enterprises of the primitive church, unquestionably is to be found in their expectation of a speedy judgment.

87
coming. The primitive and now heavenly church, has never laid aside or transferred its authority; and it never has had and never will have a successor.

7. These views hold up in the sight of all nations, the ensign of the kingdom of God; and pointing to the destruction of Jerusalem as an index of the power and the policy of that kingdom, suggest a tremendous warning of the consequences of resisting the Lord's anointed. Instead of looking into the dim and distant future for the commencement of that dynasty which shall ultimately supersede all national combinations, we look backward, and behold the standard of the world's appointed Sovereign, already planted on the territory to be conquered, and wavering in triumph over its first and bloodiest field of battle. The 'coming of the Son of man in his kingdom,' like the gospel, was 'to the Jew first,' but it will be 'also to the Gentile.' The same issue which, eighteen hundred years ago, was made between Jesus Christ and the Jews, on his title to the throne, and which was decided by the destruction of their capital city, and the extinction of their national existence, will, in due time, be made between him and every other nation under heaven. As the period appointed for the trial of that issue hastens onward, it will be well for the potentates and politicians of the world to look into the history of the trial that is already past, and 'count the cost' of a war with the kingdom of God. The destruction of Jerusalem, viewed as the sign of the coming of the Son of man to assume the government of the world, gives an awful emphasis to the admonition—'Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye

*In these remarks we would not be understood as denying that there have been genuine believers in the world since the destruction of Jerusalem. But we bear in mind that 'the two witnesses' of Christ have been 'clothed in sackcloth,' not in priestly robes; and we look for the 'remnant of the seed' of the primitive church, not among those who claim authority inherited from the apostles, but among the heretics whom they have persecuted. Our ax is laid only at the root of that ostensible organized Christianness which pretends to be the lineal descendant of the primitive church, which in the sixth century took the name of Popery, and since the Reformation has branched off into Episcopacy, Methodism, &c. This kind of Christianity claims inheritance from the apostles, under a will which is said to be recorded in Church History. We dispute the will, first, on the ground that the party which is supposed to have made the will, is not alive, and fully competent to manage its own property; and secondly, on the ground that even if it were dead, we find on the only record that is admissible in the case, viz., the Bible, another will, excluding the claimants in question from all inheritance. We might moreover deny the existence even of the will said to be recorded in Church History; for the only warrant we find for the common belief that the first generation of the Fathers were the commissioned or the commended successors of the apostles, is the conjecture of interested historians, founded on very obscure and insignificant traditions. Our conjecture, founded on the testimony of scripture, is that these men had 'no oil in their lamps' when the bridegroom came; and being left in outer darkness, became blind leaders of the blind. We find no trace of their commissions in the Bible. On the contrary, it is manifest, that all the provisions of Christ and of the apostles, for the earthly organization of the church, and appointment of its officers, terminated in the second coming. Christ's commission of his disciples, with the attendant promise, 'Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the [age,'] in consequence of a mistranslation of the last word, has come to be regarded as a general commission for all who choose to preach, even to the end of the world. But it evidently extends no farther than the second coming.
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they who put their trust in him.'

SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY.

For the convenience of those who may wish to investigate the subject of the preceding article, we have collected and arranged under several heads, references to most of the passages relating to it in the New Testament. A careful examination of them, we believe, will satisfy every candid mind—1, that the expressions, 'the coming of the kingdom of God,' of 'the kingdom of heaven,' 'the coming of the Lord,' of 'Christ,' 'the coming of the great day,' of 'the day of God,' of 'that day,' &c., all refer to one event; 2, that the invisible spiritual world was the sphere of the manifestation of that event; 3, that it occurred within the lifetime of some who were contemporaries with Christ in his first appearance; 4, that the precise time of its occurrence was not revealed in the predictions concerning it; 5, that it was preceded by a wide-spread announcement of its approach; 6, that it was preceded, and its near approach betokened, by the appearance of many antichrists, false prophets, apostasies and delusions; 7, that it introduced a new dispensation, far surpassing in grace and glory that which preceded it.

I. The nature of the kingdom introduced by the second coming of Christ.

Luke 20: 34—36; comp. Matt. 22: 80, Mark 12: 25, 1 Cor. 7: 29,
John 3: 8; comp. 1 Cor. 15: 50,
1 Cor. 2: 9—14; comp. 1 Cor. 15: 44, &c. 1 Cor. 15: 50—53.

II. The limitation of the time of the second coming of Christ.

Mark 1: 15; comp. Daniel 9: 24—27, Matt. 3: 2, 4: 17, 10: 7, &c,
Matt. 16: 27, 28; comp. Mal. 3: 1—3, 17, 18, 4: 1—6, 2 Tim. 4: 1, 2,

John 21: 22; comp. Rev. 1: 10—18,
Acts 17: 30—31; comp. Matt. 3: 2, &c,
Rom. 18: 11—13; comp. Luke 1: 77—79, 21: 34, 1 Thess. 5: 4—8,
2 Pet. 1: 19, 1 John 2: 8, &c.
Rom. 16: 20; comp. Gen. 3: 15, 1 Pet. 1: 18, Rev. 12: 7—11,
1 Pet. 4: 4, 5, 7, 17, Rev. 1: 1; comp. Rev. 1: 3, 7, 2: 5, 16,
2 Thess. 2: 8.
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

Note. In Rev. 1: 1, 8, we are expressly informed that the apocalypse is a prophetic record of events then nigh at hand. Bearing in mind this intimation, the character of the whole book, as a description of the events preceding, accompanying and following the second coming of Christ, will easily be discovered. The first and most frequently repeated prediction of the book is thus recorded in the 7th verse of the first chapter: 'Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.' See Rev. 2: 5, 16, 25, 3: 8—11, 22: 7, 12, 20.

III. The uncertainty of the time.

2 Pet. 3: 10, Rev. 3: 3.

IV. The previous announcement of the kingdom.

Matt. 28: 19, 20; comp. Mark 16: 15.
Mark 16: 19, 20, Acts 1: 8, Rom. 15: 19, Col. 1: 5, 6, 23; comp. Mark 16: 16.

V. Antichrists, false prophets, apostasies, delusions, &c.

Luke 18: 8, Acts 20: 28—30, 2 Thess. 2: 3—10, 1 Tim. 4: 1, 2,
2 Tim. 3: 1—5, 2 Tim. 4: 3—4, Titus 1: 10, 11, 16.
2 Pet. 2: 1—3; comp. 2 Thess. 2: 8.
2 Pet. 3: 8, 4, 1 John 2: 18, 26, 4: 1—3, 2 John, 7, 8, Jude 4,
17—19, Rev. 2: 2—4, 20, 3: 1, 15.

VI. Intimations concerning the accompaniments, privileges, and glory of the new dispensation, anticipated by primitive believers, and introduced by the second coming of Christ.

Matt. 19: 28; comp. Luke 22: 29, 30, 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3, Rev. 2: 26, 27,
3: 21, &c.
Matt. 25: 31, 32; comp. Matt. 3: 10—12, Mal. 3: 18, 4: 1—6, 1 Cor. 3:
18—15, &c.
10—25, 3: 11, &c.
Phil. 1: 6—10; comp. 1 Thess. 3: 13.
Phil. 3: 20, 21; comp. 1 Cor. 15: 51, &c.
Col. 3: 4; comp. 1 Thess. 2: 19, 20.
1 Thess. 1: 9, 10, 4: 13—18, 5: 23, 2 Thess. 1: 6—10, 1 Tim. 6:
18—15, 2 Tim. 1: 12, 4: 1, 2, 8, Titus 2: 11—13, Heb. 9: 28, 1 Pet. 1:
§ 41. STUART ON ROMANS 13: 11.

"It is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Rom. 13: 11.

What is the salvation, which is nearer than when Christians at Rome first believed? Tholuck, and most of the late commentators in Germany, suppose that the apostle expected the speedy advent of Christ upon earth a second time, when the day of glory to the church would commence. Accordingly, they represent him, here and elsewhere, as exhorting Christians to be on the alert, constantly expecting the approach of such a day. In support of this view, Tholuck appeals to Phil. 4: 5, 1 Thess. 5: 2, 6, Rev. 22: 12. Such views, and such a mode of representation, seem at present to be widely diffused in Germany, and to be held even by those who are strenuous defenders of the inspiration of the apostles. But how the words of the apostles, when thus construed, can be made consistent with themselves, (not to speak of other difficulties arising from the consideration that they were inspired,) is more than I am able to see. The very passage referred to, in the first epistle to the church at Thessalonica, was understood by the Thessalonians in the same manner as Tholuck and others understand it; but this interpretation was formally and strenuously corrected in 2 Thess. ii. Is it not enough that Paul has explained his own words? Who can safely venture to give them a meaning different from what he gives? Then as to Rev. 22: 13; how is it possible, that the writer, who had just made an end of predicting a long series of events, that should happen before the day of glory, one of which is to occupy a thousand years, can be supposed to have believed that all this was to take place during that very generation in which he lived?

I only add here, (for this is not the place to enter into a long discussion,) that it is incredible that the apostles, if enlightened by supernatural influence, should not have been taught better than to lead the whole Christian church to a vain and false hope about the appearance of Christ; which, when frustrated by time and experience, would lead of course to general distrust in all their declarations and hopes. As the unus loquendi does not demand such an exegesis; as the nature of the apostle's knowledge and mission does not allow it; and as Paul has expressly contradicted it in in 2 Thess. ii.; so I cannot admit it here, without obtaining different views from those which I am now constrained to entertain.

I must, therefore, refer soteria [salvation] to the spiritual salvation which believers were to experience when transferred to the world of everlasting light and glory. And so construed, the exhortation of Paul amounts to this:—Christian brethren, we have been brought out of darkness into marvelous light; let us act in a manner that corresponds with our condition. We are hastening to our retribution; every day brings us nearer to it; and in prospect of the reward which now appears in sight, as we approach the goal of human life, let us act with renewed effort as duty requires." Stuart's Commentary, p. 487.

REMARKS.

It is interesting to learn that the truth on the subject of the second coming, is forcing its way to general acknowledgment in Germany. That is the land where we might expect, that common sense and sound criticism would first triumph over tradition. There the Reformation broke forth; and there biblical research has been pursued to an extent altogether unparalleled in
any other nation. Biblical critics in this country and England, are obliged
to sit at the feet of the German commentators, notwithstanding the rationalism
and mysticism with which they are charged. We apprehend that the free
and even skeptical atmosphere of the German schools, is more favorable to
sound interpretation, so far as mere verbal criticism is concerned, than the
pressure of New England orthodoxy. We must not forget however, that the
German commentators, when they leave philology, and begin to speculate on
the subject of the second coming, directly fall into the old errors. Their
doctrine is, that the apostles expected the second coming within their own
lifetime, but that they were in a mistake!

Stuart’s way of disposing of the passages appealed to by Tholuck, deserves a
few remarks. He says that 1 Thess. 5: 2, 6, ‘was understood by the Thes-
salonians in the same manner as Tholuck and others understand it; [i.e. as
indicating the apostle’s expectation of a speedy second coming;] but this in-
terpretation was formally and strenuously corrected in 2 Thess. 2.’ Let us
see if this is true. The correction referred to reads thus:—‘We beseech you,
brethren, . . . that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by
spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at
hand.’ Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come,
extcept there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the
son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called
God,’ &c. 2 Thess. 2: 1—4. It appears from this passage that the Thessalonians were in danger of being led by some deceiver, to believe that the day
of Christ was immediately impending. They were ‘shaken in mind and
troubled,’ as thousands at the present time are shaken and troubled by the
alarming imagination that Christ is to come within a few months. In correct-
ing this impression the apostle simply assured the Thessalonians that the ex-
pected event could not take place immediately, because its most important
precursor had not appeared. He said nothing affirmatively about the time
of it, but only negatived the imagination of an immediate coming. His lan-
guage comports as well with the supposition that the event was but ten years
distant, as with the common theory that it is yet future, if we only suppose
that within ten years the man of sin might have been revealed. If he wrote
to the Thessalonians in A. D. 54, as is commonly supposed, at least sixteen
years of the period designated in Matt. 24: 34, remained to be fulfilled. At
that distance from the event, he might properly caution believers in the lan-
guage of 2 Thess. 2, against premature expectations. The day of Christ was
not ‘at hand’ in such a sense as to make any just occasion for excitement and
alarm. Stuart, then, has no right to assume, because Paul said in A. D. 54,
the day of Christ should not come until after certain other events, that there-
fore it did not come in A. D. 70; or that Paul and the other apostles did not
expect and teach that it would come within their own lifetime.

To justify this assumption, he would probably appeal to the fact that the

* It is worthy of notice that the Greek word, here translated—‘is at hand’—is not the
same as that used in Matt. 3: 3, 4: 17, &c., but a word of more intense significa-
ton. It might properly be rendered—‘is immediately coming;’ while Matt. 3: 3, should be
translated thus—‘The kingdom of heaven approaches.’
precursors of which Paul speaks—the falling away, and the revelation of the man of sin—did not take place until long after the apostolic age. But this is only another assumption. The popular theory that Popery is 'the man of sin' predicted in 2 Thess. 2, is by no means so sacred or self-evident, that we must suffer it to pass for truth without questioning. Which of the Popes has ever exalted himself above God? The height of their pretensions is, that they are God's vicegerents, not his rivals or superiors. In opposition to Protestant conjectures, we can produce positive evidence from the Bible itself, that the apostasy and manifestation of antichrist, predicted by Paul, did actually take place within the lifetime of one of the apostles. 'Little children, (says John, writing as late at least as A. D. 69,) it is the last hour: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last hour.' 1 John 2: 18. Let the reader observe how exactly this harmonizes with 2 Thess. 2: 3. Paul, writing to persons who prematurely imagined that 'the last hour' had come, assures them that this could not be the case, because antichrist had not come. John, writing fifteen or twenty years later, says, 'It is the last hour, because antichrist has come.' Both make the revelation of antichrist the last precursor of the second coming. John evidently refers to the prediction of Paul when he says, 'As ye have heard that antichrist shall come,' while Paul prepares us to anticipate the testimony of John by saying, 'The mystery of iniquity doth already work;' ver. 7. Moreover, John records specifically the fulfilment of Paul's prediction of the 'falling away.' He says immediately after the verse above quoted, 'They [i. e. the antichrists] went out from us.' With such testimony before us from such a witness, what need or right have we to 'travel out of the record' into conjectures about uninspired history to find the fulfilment of Paul's prophecy.

The premature excitement of the Thessalonians, and Paul's correction of them, instead of militating with the theory that the apostles expected the second advent within their own lifetime, actually confirms it. The Thessalonians were indeed deluded in suffering themselves to be shaken in mind and troubled by soothsayings, which, like Millerism, represented the terrors of the judgment as hanging over their heads, just ready to fall upon them. But the very fact that they were liable to such a delusion, indicates that the teaching of Christ and the apostles had placed the second advent near. Delusion is generally an imitation or an abuse of the truth. If the apostles taught that Christ would come again within the period of a generation from the time of his personal ministry, how easily might their doctrine be made the occasion of false alarms, especially toward the close of the period designated. And on the other hand, how unnatural such excitments appear, if we suppose that Paul taught the churches that Christ would not come until after the revelation of Papal antichrist.

The German hypothesis that the primitive church expected the coming of Christ within their own lifetime, but were in a great mistake about it, involves worse consequences than the mere denial of the inspiration of the apostles. If Christ did not come as they expected, not only their teachings were falsified, but the facts, which he himself had predicted as the signs and imme-
diate precursors of his advent, were found false witnesses; for we have seen that the last of those signs—the revelation of antichrist—appeared while John was living. He legitimately inferred from it that the 'last hour' had come. If he was deceived, it was because he believed the words of Christ, confirmed by facts before his eyes.

Stuart ought to know that the true way to save the inspiration of the apostles from the contempt of German skepticism, is, to keep pace with the skeptics in common sense, by admitting that the primitive church expected the second coming within the period of that generation, and then go beyond them in faith, by believing and testifying that he actually did come in accordance with those expectations.

§ 42. "THE MAN OF SIN."

Several different explanations of Paul's prophecy concerning 'the man of sin,' (2 Thess. 2: 1—12,) have been proposed by different expositors.—Many insist that the apostle refers to Popery: others that by the man of sin is intended an individual person, that is yet to appear in the world. We are not sure but that there may be some who think that the 'heresies' and 'ultrasmas' which at the present time are turning the world upside down, are manifestations of that wicked one, whose coming Paul makes the immediate precursor of the coming of Christ. These, and all similar theories, are built on the assumption that the second advent is yet future. When this assumption fails, (as fail it will ere long,) these theories will pass away of course. Leaving them, therefore, to be overthrown by the natural and sure progress of truth that is already in the field, we will proceed to set forth a new theory, based on the assumption that Christ came the second time at the end of the Mosaic dispensation. First, we will state as concisely as possible, the substance of what we believe about the man of sin; and then we will give some of our reasons for so believing.

Our belief is, that Judas Iscariot was the man of sin referred to in 2 Thess. 2: 1—12; that he, being originally a greedy lover of money, and having taken on him the garb of sanctity and apostleship, became the most perfect representative of the sin of the world, and especially of the spiritual wickedness of the Jewish church; that Satan, finding him thus prepared, 'entered into him,' and so took upon himself human nature, in imitation of the incarnation of Christ; that Judas being thus constituted the 'son of perdition,' as Jesus was the Son of God, was thenceforward the chief antagonist of Christ, i. e., antichrist; that he commenced his diabolical ministry by betraying the Lord of glory to death; that by his own death he went 'to his own place,' in the spiritual world, where he became the perfect personal representative of Satan; and as such, having made himself head of the invis-
ible carnal church, he exalted himself above all that is called God, and claimed divine worship; that the false apostles, false prophets, antichrists, and lying wonder-workers that troubled the primitive church, were his members and emissaries; that Paul, being his successor in the apostleship, and his reverse in character, was the person that held him in check till the latter days of the apostolic age; that after Paul was 'taken out of the way,' the spirit of Judas found an effectual entrance into the visible church; that the consequence was a flood of unrighteousness and damnable delusions; that the second coming of Christ followed shortly after; by which, judgment and swift destruction came upon Judas personally as the head of the resurrection of damnation in the spiritual world, and upon all his emissaries and spiritual representatives in this world.

The following are our principal reasons for entertaining this singular theory:

I. It is certain that antichrist (whoever or whatever he was) did actually appear within the lifetime of John. 'It is the last [hour,'] said that apostle, 'and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last [hour.]' 1 Jno. 2: 18. And again, 'Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.' 1 Jno. 4: 3.

II. It is also certain that this antichrist whose manifestation John records, was not in his individual person a visible being, but a spirit residing in the invisible world. In the first of the above passages, the apostle represents that the predictions concerning the one antichrist, were fulfilled by the appearance of 'many antichrists;' which is intelligible only on the supposition that the one antichrist was a spirit, and the many antichrists were his visible manifestations. And in the last of those passages, the predicted wicked one is expressly called 'that spirit of antichrist.' So in Paul's prediction, 2 Thess. 2: 1—12, a single person is first spoken of as the root of 'the mystery of iniquity,' and as already existing; but when his 'working' or manifestation in this world is described, the apostle runs into the plural number. So also Christ, in the 24th of Matthew, speaks of 'false Christs' and 'false prophets,' using only the plural form, because he is there foretelling only the visible signs of the second coming. As Elijah, residing in the world of spirits, was revealed in John the Baptist,—as Christ, after his death and ascension, was 'revealed' in Paul, (see Gal. 1: 16,) and in all the sons of God—so we understand that a certain man so pre-eminent in wickedness as to deserve the name of 'the man of sin,' having previously by death entered the spiritual world, was revealed in many false prophets and false Christs, in the latter days of the primitive church. This is the only view of the matter that places antichrist where he ought to be, as the antithesis of Christ; for Christ had 'passed into the heavens,' and his second coming was in the spiritual world.

III. That Judas Iscariot was the man, whose manifestation was predicted by Paul, and was recorded by John, is evident from the following considerations: 1. In view of his general character as a thief in the garb of an apostle, and of his special criminality in the murder of his Master, we may safely
affirm that he was the wickedest man that ever lived; of course he best
deserved the name of 'the man of sin.' 2. The distinguishing title which Paul
gives the man of sin—viz. 'the son of perdition'—points us directly to Judas;
for this is the very title with which Christ branded him; (see John 17: 12;)
and it is given to no other man in the Bible. 3. Judas is distinguished in
scripture above all men, as a vessel of Satan. It is not said of any other
man that 'the devil [o diabolos] entered into him.'* Judas evidently became
an incarnation of Satan—a combination of the diabolical and human natures, in
some sense corresponding to the combination of the human and divine natures
in Jesus Christ. In accordance with this idea, Paul says of the man of sin,
that his 'coming is after the working of Satan,' or as the original may more
properly be rendered, 'according to the energy [or inward working] of Sa-
tan.' 4. Judas as an arch hypocrite was exactly fitted to pour forth what
Paul in his description of the work of the man of sin calls 'all deceivableness
of unrighteousness.' 5. As a false apostle, one that had participated at the
beginning in the miraculous gifts of Jesus Christ, he was the very man,
through whom we should expect Satan would manifest his 'power and signs
and lying wonders.' 6. As a traitor to Jesus Christ, he was a fit instrument
to effect the 'great falling away.' Thus far we clearly trace the lineaments
of the man of sin in the character of Judas.

IV. The principal objection to our theory which will occur to most minds,
is this: Paul describes the man of sin, first of all, as 'exalting himself above
all that is called God, and as sitting in the temple of God, showing himself
that he is God.' How can this characteristic be referred to Judas Iscariot?
We answer, it can be referred to no man except one, viz., that man (whoev-
er he is) who is Satan's representative or incarnation. For it is not suppos-
able that a mere man should set up himself as a rival of God; and it is very
certain that the Pope (whose pretensions have been as exorbitant as any in
this world) never went this length. Whereas we know that Satan, led on
doubtless by imaginations growing out of the fact that he is an uncreated
being, has sought, from the beginning of the world to turn men from the
worship of God to the worship of himself, and it is expressly recorded that

* The Greek word diabolos, translated devil, is found in the plural but three times in
the N. Testament. The following are the instances:—'Their wives must be grave, not
slanderers, [diaboloi,] sober, faithful in all things.' 1 Tim. 3: 11. 'Men shall be lovers
of their own selves, ... truce-breakers, false accusers, [diaboloi,] incontinent,' &c. 2 Tim.
3: 3. 'Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be so-
ber, grave. . . . The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh ho-
lines, not false accusers, [diaboloi,] not given to much wine,' &c. Tit. 2: 3. It will be
noticed, that in each of these cases the word is applied figuratively to mankind. On one
or two other occasions it is applied in the same way, in the singular number; e. g.,
'Jesus, [speaking of Judas,] answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one
of you is a devil?' [diaboloi.] John 6: 70. But whenever the word is used literally, de-
noting an evil spirit—and it is so used in at least thirty-three instances—it is in the
singular number. A plurality of diaboloi is never spoken of. The word translated devil
in such expressions as, 'doctrines of devils,' 'possessed of devils,' 'the devils believe
and tremble,' &c., is not diabolos, but daimon and daimonion: and would be more prop-
erly rendered demons or evil spirits.

It will be seen that these facts concerning the word diabolos, have an important bear-
ing on our views of the origin of evil. They show that Satan is a being by himself;
distinguished from his angels;—that there is but one spirit in the universe that is prop-
erly denominated THE DEVIL.
he attempted to hire the Son of God to fall down and worship him. If then
Judas was as we maintain, at the time of his death and afterwards, Satan
‘manifest in the flesh,’ we may be sure that the ambition of Satan for divine
worship was fully developed in him. As the fulness of God dwelt in Christ,
so that he justly claimed divine honor, so we believe the fulness of Satan
dwelt in Judas, causing him to ‘oppose himself,’ i.e. to set up himself as a
rival of Christ, and seek to overreach him in his pretensions of divinity.
It is evident that both Satan and Judas, after the death and resurrection
of Christ, found themselves in a desperate case, and this doubtless helped to set
them on the desperate attempt to supplant their great enemy, the Son of God,
by counterfeiting his pretensions and intruding into his church.

V. The special antagonism which existed between Jesus Christ and Judas
while they were in the flesh, is very distinctly marked in the Evangelists.
The motto of the one was, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ The
other was a sordid thief. The affair which finally provoked Judas to sell
Jesus Christ to his murderers, was one in which the liberality of the one was
arrayed against the covetousness of the other. (See Matt. 26: 6—16, com-
pared with John 12: 6.) This same struggle of liberality against covetous-
ness is very manifest in the history of the church after the death of Jesus
and Judas. For example, the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost
caused all hearts to flow together, and the lines of exclusiveness in regard to
property were obliterated. Thus was Jesus manifested. But directly An-
anias and Sapphira appeared on the field, in the full power of artful covet-
ousness. Why shall we not say, thus Judas was manifested? Those liars
were certainly vessels of the same Satan that incarnated himself in Judas;
and if the Spirit of God that prostrated selfishness on the day of Pentecost,
was poured through the human nature of Jesus, why was not the spirit of
Satan, that moved Ananias and Sapphira, poured through the human nature
of Judas?

VI. Many circumstances conspire to prove that the Judas-spirit was in a
great measure excluded from the church till the last days of the apostolic
age. The transactions of the day of Pentecost, seconded by the awful judg-
ment of Ananias and Sapphira, made an impression which could not be im-
mediately effaced. Peter’s withering rebuke of Simon Magus, also, was well
fitted to put a check on Satan’s attempts to amalgamate Christianity with
Mammonism. At length Paul entered the field as the successor of Judas.
Having at first betrayed the cause of Satan, as effectually as Judas betrayed
that of Christ, he was soon found in Judas’s peculiar office, ‘carrying the bag’
of the churches. But instead of embezzling the funds committed to him, he
refused even to be supported by the churches, though it was his acknowledged
right to ‘live by the gospel,’ but maintained himself and relieved others by
the labor of his own hands. His self-sacrificing example, his labors and ap-
peals for the poor, and his loud repeated warnings against ‘the love of money,’
as being the ‘root of all evil,’ were agencies of mighty influence to keep back
the revelation of the man of sin. As Judas was an anti-Christ, so Paul was
an anti-Judas; and while he remained, there is every reason to believe that
the church was comparatively pure from covetousness. We infer this from
such predictions as the following: ‘This know also, that in the last days,
perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, &c.; (2Tim. 3: 1, 2;)—as though hitherto selfishness and covetousness had been almost unknown among the saints. Again, 'There shall be false teachers among you, . . . and through covetousness, shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.' 2 Pet. 2: 1—8. Thus it would seem that simony and greedy priestcraft were yet, in Peter's time, to a great extent, matters of prophecy.*

VII. We judge that Paul referred to himself, when he said—'Ye know what withholdeth, that he [the man of sin] might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now [hindereth] will [hinder] till he be taken out of the way.' 2 Thess. 2: 6, 7. 'That Paul hindered the invasion of the Judas-spirit, we have already seen. The following account of his interview with the elders of Ephesus, shows that he expected that spirit would break forth and ravage the church, when he himself should be taken out of the way.'—'When they were come to him, he said to them, ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons: serving the Lord with all humility of mind: . . . and now behold I know that ye all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more: . . . Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to the flock: . . . for I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. . . . Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one. . . . I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel—yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me; I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive. And when he had thus spoken he kneeled down and prayed with them all.' Acts 20: 18—36. Now let it be supposed that Paul had said these same things to the Thessalonians, (and there is no reason to doubt that he did,) how readily and rightly would they understand him, as speaking of himself when he modestly writes—'He that now hindereth will hinder, till he be taken out of the way;' and how easily would they perceive that his glorious freedom from covetousness, was that by which he 'hindered' the spirit of Judas from desecrating the church. In a like strain he exhorts Timothy to

* We find no account in the New Testament of any system of taxation in the primitive church. All contributions were voluntary. It is nowhere appears that the ministers had stated salaries. The oft-quoted saying, 'The laborer is worthy of his hire,' certainly was not uttered by Jesus Christ or Paul with a view to countenance the modern practice of paying ministers regular wages; for no such practice existed in the times of the apostles. 'The ox that trod the corn' was not muzzled, but neither did he have his neck of corn measured out to him at stated intervals. The contributions which Paul labored so zealously to gather, and which are often referred to as examples for modern imitation, were not made for the support of ministers, or missionaries, but for the relief of poor saints. The church charged itself with the support of its widows and other needy persons, much systematically than with the support of its ministers; for some of the ministers, as for instance Paul, were able and willing to support themselves. Though there is no doubt that they who labored in spiritual things were generally and justly maintained in carnal things by the churches, yet the relief of the poor in each church, and of poor churches, especially in time of famine, was a far more prominent matter of finance, than the raising of wages for individual laborers.
strenuous diligence in his ministry, and warns him of impending apostasies in view of his own approaching departure. 2 Tim. 4: 1—6.

VIII. In order that we may understand the closing scene of the drama which we are investigating, we must keep in mind Judas’s relation to the whole carnal Jewish church, as well as to the spiritual church of Christ. While on the one hand, he was the head of the false apostles, and greedy worldlings that were let loose on the church of Christ after Paul’s departure, and so caused that “great falling away,” whereby the Son of God was denied, and his impending second coming was scoffed at; and while on this portion of Judas’s spiritual kingdom, God sent “strong delusions, that they all might be damned”—delusions, which have darkened all Christendom for eighteen hundred years;—on the other hand, Judas was also the leader of the murderers of Christ, the spiritual head of the chief priests and Pharisees, those sanctimonious mammonites who constituted the Jewish hierarchy, and whose ripe iniquities purchased the destruction of Jerusalem, and the long desolations of Israel. On this part of Judas’s spiritual body, God poured utter and literal destruction. Viewing the horrors of the siege and overthrow of Jerusalem, as a visible index of the judgment which came on Judas in the invisible world at the second coming of Christ, we may well believe that Paul’s prediction concerning the man of sin, that the Lord should “consume him with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming,” was fulfilled to the uttermost. The following words of the prophet Micah, plainly point out the sin for which God poured his judgments on the Jewish nation; and of that sin Judas was the very personification. We may therefore reasonably infer his judgment and damnation, as one of the invisible concomitants of the destruction of Jerusalem:—“Truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and

* Dr. Adam Clarke, in his Commentary on the first chapter of Acts, goes into a long and labored argument to prove the possibility and even probability of Judas’s salvation, on the hypothesis that he sincerely repented, and instead of hanging himself, died of grief. It is a most curious instance of a divine’s playing the lawyer for Satan; and it is so gross that it would be utterly unaccountable, were we not apprised by the whole tenor of the Doctor’s Commentary, of his sleepless zeal against the doctrine of reprobation, which he so glibly describes in his case. 1. He boldly maintained the innocences of Christ against its accusers, and did all he could to procure his release, short of a forcible resistance to the demands of the Jewish mob. 2. Christ expressly palliated his guilt, thus:—‘Pilate said unto him, Knowest thou not that I have power to enmify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power against me except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.’ John 19: 10, 11. Clarke makes Judas’s knowledge of Christ’s power, a palliation of his guilt, as though he expected Christ would exert it and so escape. Whereas Christ intimates that this was the very thing that made him a greater sinner than Pilate. 3. This distinction between Judas and Pilate, in regard to knowledge, would lead us to include Pilate in Christ’s prayer—‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do’—and exclude Judas. 4. Pilate exercised no extra-legal cruelty toward Jesus, whereas ‘Hered and his men of war set him at nought,’ clothed him in purple, crowned him with thorns, spit on him, &c. &c. These considerations, however, are to be regarded only as plausible grounds of argument, not sound proofs; for the tradition is, (what credit is due to it we know not,) that Pilate, like Judas, finally killed himself. But we hold that Dr. Clarke’s conceit about Judas, is far less probable than ours about Pilate. Even Fletcher (whose authority is great among anti-Calvinists) gives up Judas to perdition. See ‘Fletcher’s Cheeks,’ Vol. I. p. 404.
to Israel his sin. Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us. Therefore, shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest."


"The Coming of Christ; as announced in Matt. 24: 29-31."

The above is the title of a learned article in the third number of the Bibliotheca Sacra, (Dec. 1843,) by the editor, Edward Robinson, D. D. We will review it, for the sake of exhibiting to our readers the position of the learned world in relation to the predictions of the second coming.

Dr. Robinson first gives his views of the meaning of the disciples' question in the 3d verse of Matthew 24, notices the predictions in the former part of the chapter, introduces the whole of the 29th, 30th and 31st verses, with the parallel passages in Mark and Luke, closing with a sketch of the parable of the fig-tree, and the emphatic designation of time in the 34th verse, and then says:

"The subject is now before the reader; and the question to be considered is: Whether the language of Matthew in the passage above quoted, is to be referred to the judgment of the last great day; or, rather to the then impending destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation? It is a question on which good men have ever differed; and on which, perhaps, entire unity of feeling is not to be expected, until the night of darkness and ignorance in which we are here enveloped, shall be chased away by the morn of pure light and perfect knowledge.

It is conceded by all, I believe, that the representation as far as to the end of the 39th verse of Matthew, and in the parallel verses of the other evangelists, applies solely to the overthrow of Jerusalem. Or, if there be still those who would refer any portion of these preceding verses to the judgment day, it seems to me that they must first show that the 'abomination of desolation' spoken of by Matthew and Luke has nothing to do with the 'compassing of Jerusalem with armies,' mentioned in the same connexion by Luke: and then, further, that all these things could have no connexion with the 'treading down' of Jerusalem by the Gentiles, which Luke goes on to speak of as the result of all these antecedent circumstances. This, however, cannot well be shown, without disregarding every rule of interpretation, and without violating the very first principles of language.

But with the 29th verse a new specification of time is introduced: 'Immediately after the affliction of those days' shall appear the harbingers of our Lord's coming: and these are depicted in language which elsewhere, it is said, is employed only to describe his coming to the final judgment. The 'coming' here meant,
ROBINSON ON MATT. 24: 29—31.

then to be subsequent to the downfall of Jerusalem; and can therefore only mean the coming of the Messiah in his kingdom at the judgment day. This opinion is perhaps, at the present time, the most prevalent one among commentators, and even with those whose views in other respects have little in common; as in the case of Olshausen and De Wette, [eminent German commentators.]

But on the other hand, it is replied, that the phrase ‘immediately after’ indicates a very close connexion of this ‘coming’ of our Lord with the preceding events; and the Savior himself goes on to declare, that ‘this generation shall not pass away, till all these things be fulfilled.’ We must then assume, it is said, that the prediction had its fulfilment within a period not long subsequent to our Lord’s ministry; or, if it is to be referred to the day of judgment, then we must admit that our Lord was in error, inasmuch as he here foretold that it would take place immediately after the downfall of Jerusalem. For these reasons many commentators have understood the language as applicable only to the destruction of the Holy City: forgetting, apparently, that the very expression which they urge against a remote future application, is equally stringent against an exclusive reference to the latter catastrophe” [i.e., the expression ‘immediately after,’ while it precludes reference to events far distant from the destruction of Jerusalem, at the same time necessarily goes beyond that event.] p. 538.

In his examination of the language of the passage, preliminary to a presentation of his own views, Dr. Robinson says:

“The word euthesos means literally straightway, and implies a succession more or less direct and immediate; so that there can be no doubt, as DeWette justly remarks, that the coming of the Messiah, as here described by Matthew, was straightway to follow the destruction of Jerusalem. Indeed no meaning can possibly be assigned to euthesos, which will admit of any great delay; much less of an interval so enormous as that between the destruction of the Holy City and the end of the world, as understood by us. From this it is manifest, that ‘the coming’ of Christ here spoken of, as occurring after the downfall of Jerusalem, could not be meant to refer solely to that event.

Our Lord himself limits the interval within which Jerusalem shall be destroyed and his ‘coming’ take place, to that same generation: Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. The language is here plain, definite, and express; it cannot be misunderstood, nor perverted. It follows, in all the evangelists, the annunciation of our Lord’s ‘coming,’ and applies to it in them all, just as much as it applies to the antecedent declarations respecting Jerusalem; and more directly, indeed, inasmuch as it stands here in a closer connexion.” p. 540.

The writer then descants upon the word generation, and expresses the opinion that it is to be taken in the largest sense, and in accordance with popular Hebrew usage, as implying a hundred years,” or thereabouts. He then proceeds:

“The question now arises, Whether, under these limitations of time, a reference of our Lord’s language to the day of judgment and the end of the world, in our sense of these terms, is possible? Those who maintain this view attempt to dispose of the difficulties arising from these limitations in different ways. Some assign to euthesos the meaning suddenly, as it is employed by the Seventy in Job 5: 3, for the Hebrew pitom. But even in this passage, the purpose of the writer is simply to mark an immediate sequence—to intimate that another and consequent event happened forthwith. Nor would any thing be gained, even could
the word eutheo be thus disposed of, so long as the subsequent limitation to "this generation" remained. And in this, again, others have tried to refer genos to the race of the Jesus or to the disciples of Christ; not only without the slightest ground, but contrary to all usage and all analogy. All these attempts to apply force to the meaning of the language, are in vain; and are now abandoned by most commentators of note. Two or three general views, however, are current on the subject, which demand some further remark.

One is that of De Wette and others, who do not hesitate to regard our Lord as here announcing, that the coming of the Messiah to the judgment of the last day would take place immediately after the fall of Jerusalem. This idea, according to De Wette, is clearly expressed by our Lord, both here and elsewhere; and was likewise held by Paul. But as the day of judgment has not yet come, it follows, either that our Lord, if correctly reported, was himself mistaken, and spoke here of things which he knew not; or else, that the sacred writers have not truly related his discourse. The latter horn of this dilemma is preferred by De Wette. According to him the disciples entertained the idea of their Lord's return with such vividness of faith and hope, that they overlooked the relations of time, which Jesus himself had left indefinite; and they thus connected his final coming immediately with his coming to destroy Jerusalem. They give here, therefore, their own conception of our Lord's language, rather than the language itself as it fell from his lips. They mistook his meaning; they acted upon this mistake in their own belief and preaching; and in their writings have perpetuated it to the world throughout all time.

This view is, of course, incompatible with any and every idea of inspiration on the part of the sacred writers; the very essence of which is, that they were commissioned and aided by the Spirit to impart truth to the world, and not error. To a believer in this fundamental doctrine, no argument can here be necessary, nor in place, to counteract the view above presented. To state it in its naked contrast with the divine authority of God's word, is enough." p. 541.

In his next paragraph, Dr. Robinson criticises the preceding views of the German commentators, very much in the way Prof. Stuart criticises Tholuck and others in his commentary on Rom. 13: 11. (See p. 301.) The Doctor proceeds:

"Another form of the same general view is that presented by Olshausen. He too refers the verses of Matthew under consideration directly to the final coming of Christ; but seeks to avoid the difficulty above stated, by an explanation derived from the alleged nature of prophecy. He adopts the theory broached by Honigstengel, that inasmuch as the vision of future things was presented solely to the mental or spiritual eye of the prophet, he thus saw them all at once glance as present realities, with equal vividness and without any distinction of order or time,—like the figures of a great painting without perspective or other marks of distance or relative position. The facts and realities are distinctly perceived; but not their distance from the period, nor the intervals by which they are separated from each other. Hence our Lord, in submitting himself to the laws of prophetic vision, was led to speak of his last coming in immediate connexion with his coming for the destruction of Jerusalem: because in vision the two were presented together to his spiritual eye, without note of any interval of time. Not to dwell here upon the fact, that this whole theory of prophecy is fanciful hypothesis, and appears to have been since abandoned by its author; it is enough to remark, that this explanation admits, after all, the same fundamental error, viz. that our Lord did mistakenly announce his final coming as immediately to
follow the overthrow of the Holy City. Indeed, the difficulty is even greater here, if possible, than before; because, according to the former view, the error may be charged upon the report of the evangelists; while here it can only be referred to our Lord himself.” p. 544.

The writer next proceeds to show by examples from the Old Testament, (such as Isa. 13: 9, 34: 4, &c.,) that the language of Matt. 24: 29—31, may be only a figurative description of civil and political commotions and revolutions. His conclusion from these examples is thus stated:

“We come then to the general result, that the language of the three verses under consideration does not necessarily in itself apply to the general judgment; while the nature of the context shows that such an application is inadmissible. On the other hand, there is nothing in the language itself to hinder our referring it to the downfall of Judaism and the Jewish people; but rather both the context and the attendant circumstances require it to be understood of these events.” p. 549.

Finally, the writer actually applies the tremendous announcement of the coming of the Son of man in Matt. 24: 29—31, to a second Jewish war—the final catastrophe of the nation, which took place some time after the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70. The following paragraph presents the concluding epitome of his theory:

“After these illustrations, I may sum up here in a few words the views suggested to my own mind in respect to the discourse of our Lord under consideration. In reply to the question of the four disciples: ‘When shall these things be?’ Jesus first points out what was to happen after his departure—the trials and dangers to which his followers would be exposed. Then comes the ‘abomination of desolation’; Jerusalem is ‘compassed by armies,’ and is ‘trodden down by the Gentiles’;—all this referring to its desolation by Titus in A. D. 70. Immediately afterward the Lord would come and establish more fully his spiritual kingdom, by crushing in terrible destruction the last remnants of the power and name of Judaism; and this within the general limit of a generation of a hundred years from the time when he was speaking. There might, therefore, literally have been some then standing there, who did not taste of death till they saw the Son of man [thus] coming in his kingdom. Then it was, when this first great foe of the gospel dispensation should have been thus trampled down, that Christians were to look up. ‘Then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh!’ The chains of religious despotism and the terrore of Jewish persecution would then be at an end forever; and the disciples of Christ, thus far disenthralled and triumphant, might rejoice in the prevalence of the gospel of peace and love,—the coming of Christ’s spiritual kingdom upon earth!” p. 552.

One of the laws of interpretation which Prof. Stuart and the Germans most earnestly insist upon, is, that a ‘frigid and inept meaning can be no true meaning.’ It seems to us that this law alone decisively condemns Dr. Robinson’s interpretation. What can be more ‘frigid and inept’ than to refer a description of the coming of Christ to blast his enemies and gather his elect, to an obscure Jewish war, and the consequent prevalence of the gospel? This is the old theory of the Universalists in a new form. They refer the whole of Matt. 24: 15—31 to the well known destruction of Jerusalem, and the resulting enlargement of Christianity; while Dr. Robinson refers the first
part of the passage (as far as verse 28) to that catastrophe, and the remainder to a subsequent and certainly less distinguished series of transactions. He has the advantage of them in that he gives a plausible meaning to the words ‘immediately after.’ But we think they have the advantage of him, in that they apply the most sublime part of the passage to the most sublime transaction, which he does not. Both parties rob the passage of all reference to the invisible world and eternal judgment.

But waiving this general objection, we would ask Dr. Robinson, how according to his theory are we to understand verse 27—‘As the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be’? Does not this describe an instantaneous and omnipresent manifestation of Christ? What plausible fulfilment of these words can be found in the history of the second Jewish war, or of the first, or in the history of the external world? The Doctor says nothing about this passage.

Again, how will he dispose of Rev. 6: 12—17, and the chapter that follows? This is a repetition, almost verbatim, of Matt. 24: 29—31. No candid man can doubt that the two refer to the same coming of Christ. But in Rev. 6: 15—17, we have as strong a description of the judgment—‘the great day of the wrath of the Lamb’—as can be found in the Bible. If no eternal judgment, but only civil commotions and temporal disasters are to be recognized here, we might safely engage to expurgate, by plausible exegesis, the whole Bible of all allusions to a day of judgment, or even to an invisible world. In the 7th chapter, immediately following this description of Christ’s coming, we have an extended account of the sealing and gathering of the hosts of the redeemed. This obviously corresponds to Matt. 24: 31,—‘He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, (see Rev. 7: 1,) from one end of heaven to the other.’ Now of these ‘elect’ thus gathered, it is said (verse 14—17)—

‘These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.’

Can this be conjured into a description of any deliverances of the saints that have ever taken place in this world? Nay, verily; here is language that ‘entereth into that within the veil;’ and as surely as it does, so surely it demonstrates that the coming of Christ described in Matt. 24: 30, came to pass within the veil, and was to ‘many’ the harbinger of eternal judgment.

Our author concludes his article with some remarks on the remainder of Christ’s discourse in the 24th and 25th of Matthew. He thinks the latter part of the 25th chapter certainly refers to the final judgment; and finds the point of transition from that part of the discourse which relates to the catastrophe of Judaism, to that which relates to the judgment, at the 48d verse
of the 24th chapter. Now let the reader take his Testament and examine this transition point. The 42d verse, which the Doctor admits belongs to the former division of the discourse, enjoins upon the disciples to watch, because they knew not what hour their Lord would come. The 43d verse illustrates the necessity of watching, by the example of the good man of the house and the thief. Here certainly is no change of discourse. Watching is the key note still. The 44th verse is almost a literal repetition of the 42d. 'Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.' What conceivable reason is there for supposing that the coming of the Son of man here alluded to, is not the same as that mentioned in the 42d verse—as also in the 39th, 37th, 30th, and 27th verses? If there is a change of meaning here, the discourse is an egregious imposition; for there is no change of language, and no hint of any change of meaning. From the 45th verse the remainder of the chapter stands in undeniable connection with what goes before, i.e., as we have seen, with the coming of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem. The 25th chapter commences with—'Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins.' This points directly back to the great event of the preceding chapter. The whole parable of the ten virgins therefore belongs to the discourse on the advent connected with the destruction of Jerusalem. This brings us to the 12th verse. The 18th verse is another repetition, almost word for word, of the 44th and 42d verses of the preceding chapter. There is not a shadow of authority for referring it to any event but that announced in Matt. 24: 27, 30, &c. The parable of the talents that follows, from the 14th to the 30th verses, is confessedly a sequel to the parable of the ten virgins, and belongs to the same train of thought. We are sure, then, that all that goes before the 31st verse of the 25th chapter, is part of the discourse relating to the coming of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem. But it is manifest that the 31st verse introduces a new train of thought. 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, &c., [this is the same coming as that which is the subject of the whole preceding discourse,] then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.' Here is a new action. Coming was the previous theme. Now sitting on the throne—a continuous administration of government, is the subject of discourse. 'And before him shall be gathered all nations.' It is not stated how long a period this gathering will occupy. It may, for aught that appears in the text, have been the work of the past eighteen hundred years. In order that he may thus gather all nations, he must first 'put down all rule and all authority and power;' and this is represented by Paul as the business of his whole mediatorial reign. (See 1 Cor. 15: 24.) The separation and the award of destinies described in the remainder of the 25th chapter, is the proper judgment; and this, in our view, is yet future. We recognize in the predictions of the 24th and 25th of Matthew, two judgments—one at the beginning, and the other at the end of Christ's mediatorial reign. With this theory, we find plain sailing through those chapters, as well as through many other regions of scripture which have long been famous for perils and shipwrecks.

We confess we cannot but be astonished at the pertinacity with which the churches and their great men keep themselves away from the marrow of the
truth in relation to the second coming of Christ. The simple idea that he actually came according to his promise, and commenced the judgment in the world of souls, immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, seems to be avoided, as though it were forbidden fruit. The commentators of Germany and this country go around and around it, and seem to be ever drawing nearer to it. How they keep from biting it, we cannot tell. But somehow they never touch it. The old ways of managing the 24th of Matthew are all abandoned. The double-sense scheme is snouted at Andover. Twisting the word generation is given up. Still the learned come to no conclusion that is satisfactory to themselves or to one another. In Germany, where skepticism is licensed, one wise man thinks the evangelists misreported Christ. Another thinks Christ mistook the purport of his own visions, and misreported the Holy Ghost. In this country, Robinson finds a dubious history of Jewish wars subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem, and forthwith applies to them the splendid prophecy of the second coming. And Bush thinks that 'the grand nodus of this remarkable prophecy remains yet unsolved.' Where will all this end? Is not the long delusion of Christendom on this subject, 'a veil on the heart,' which mere learning and critical sagacity cannot rend?

§ 44. THE 'MISTAKE' OF THE APOSTLES.

It is becoming generally known and conceded, that the apostles expected and taught that Christ would come the second time and judge the quick and dead within their own lifetime. If he did not come, as the popular theologians teach, it is manifest that the apostles entertained and promulgated a monstrous error, and are to be classed with the Millerites as the dupes and disseminators of a false prophecy. The inevitable alternative before the religious world is this: either it must be admitted that the second advent did take place at the close of the Jewish dispensation, or the credit of the apostles for inspiration, and even common discretion and honesty, must be given to the winds. An attempt will doubtless be made to evade this alternative by softening and apologizing for the alleged mistake of the first followers of Christ. But no apology can possibly be framed for them, which would not be equally good for such false prophets as Miller; and no thinking person could trust any part of their testimony as inspired, after finding them guilty of false witness in relation to a matter so important as the second advent. — Their testimony on this subject is inextricably interwoven with the whole web of the New Testament; and if they spoke at random here, nobody can tell where they spoke by inspiration.

That our readers may see the best and the worst of the case which is made for the apostles by those who are beginning to teach that they were in a mistake about the second advent, we will present an extract from Mr. Bush's
work on the Resurrection, in which, after unequivocally charging the error upon them, he undertakes to ‘trammel up the consequence.’ In his remarks on the language of Paul in 1 Cor. 15: 50—58, ‘We shall not all sleep,’ &c., he assumes that the apostle erroneously imagined that the resurrection was very near, cites with apparent approbation a sarcastic paragraph from Gibbon relating to this mistake, (which may be found in a note to the article on the Second Coming, p. 288,) and adduces the testimony of Dr. Watts to the fact that ‘the Christians of the first age did generally expect the second coming of Christ to judgment, and the resurrection of the dead, in that very age wherein it was foretold.’ He then proceeds as follows:

“To all this we are aware it may be objected, that it impugns the inspiration and infallibility of the sacred writers. If they labored under a mistake on this point, how can they be said to have been prompted by the unerring guidance of the Holy Spirit? And if they have mistaken the mind of the Spirit in regard to the doctrine of the second advent, why may they not have mistaken it on other doctrines, and thus the church be left without an infallible standard of truth?

“To the objection thus urged we reply, in the first place, that it does not present a fair issue. The question is not whether the apostles have erroneously represented any doctrine which they were inspired to deliver, but how far their inspiration extended. The sacred writers were made the subjects, or rather the organs, of special revelations—revelations lying entirely without the compass of their own unassisted faculties. These revelations they must be admitted to have correctly and infallibly reported. In the nature of the case it could not be otherwise. The revelations were not their own—were not the product of their own intelligence, nor required, in fact, their own cognizance. They were the instruments through which the Spirit of God spake, and we know not how to conceive the possibility of a mistake unless the Spirit himself were mistaken, which it is blasphemy to suppose. So far then as the revelations were concerned, the apostles must of course be considered as having spoken with absolute inerrancy. But these revelations, as made to the sacred writers, did not include every thing: they did not even include every thing connected with them, as for instance the attribute of time. There are cases, indeed, where the time of certain events forms the special subject-matter of the revelation and the record; but in numerous instances the event was revealed without any intimation of the time. So also of the precise manner of the accomplishment. This did not always enter into the materiel of the announcements which they were prompted to utter. Accordingly, we learn that the prophets ‘inquired and searched diligently what or what manner of time, the spirit which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.’ Now it is easy to understand that they may have infallibly reported all that was actually revealed to them or through them, and yet they may not have been infallible in the construction which they may have put upon the concomitant circumstances of the matters that they were to make known. Otherwise, what occasion was there for the ‘diligent search’ which their spirits were prompted to accomplish? Acting as the organs of certain divine communications, it would be natural that they should exercise their thoughts upon the themes that thus expressed themselves through them. But the judgments which they personally formed on these disclosures, being distinct from the truths themselves, may not have been free from error, simply for the reason, that they did not come really within the scope of their inspiration. The mind of the
Spirit is one thing, and their personal view of its meaning is another; and it is very conceivable that we, from having more ample data, may be better able to judge of this meaning than they were. Who can doubt that John the Baptist was better able to understand Isaiah's or David's language respecting the first coming of Christ than were Isaiah or David themselves? We contend therefore, that it does not truly detract from Paul's claim to inspiration that he should not have understood what was not revealed, or that he should have so stated what was revealed as to evince that he had in some respects mistaken its true purport—that he should have put upon it a sense which we now know to be erroneous. This he may have done, and still leave the main announcement in its full integrity.

"In this view we are happy to be confirmed by the authority of Mr. Barnes, in his remarks on the very passage we are now considering.

"I do not know that the proper doctrine of inspiration suffers, if we admit that the apostles were ignorant of the exact time when the world would close; or even that in regard to the precise period when that would take place, they might be in error. The following considerations may be suggested on this subject, showing that the claim to inspiration did not extend to the knowledge of this fact. (1.) They were not omniscient: and there is no more absurdity in supposing that they were ignorant on this subject than in regard to any other. Inspiration extended to the order of future events, and not to the times. There is in the scriptures no statement of the time when the world would close. (2.) Future events were made to pass before the mind of the prophets, as in a landscape. The order of the images may be distinctly marked, but the times may not be designated. And even events which may occur in fact at different periods, may in vision appear to be near each other; as in a landscape, objects which are in fact separated by distant intervals, like the ridges of a mountain, may appear to lie close to each other. (3.) The Savior expressly said, that it was not designed that they should know when future events would occur. Thus, after his resurrection, in answer to an inquiry whether he then would restore the kingdom to Israel, he said, (Acts 1: 7,) 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in his own power.' The Savior said that even he himself, as man, was ignorant in regard to the exact time in which future events would occur. 'But of that day and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.' Mark 13: 32. (4.) The apostles were in fact ignorant and mistaken in regard to, at least, the time of the occurrence of one future event, the death of John. Jno. 21: 23. There is, therefore, no departure from the proper doctrine of inspiration, in supposing that the apostles were not inspired on these subjects, and that they might be ignorant like others. The proper order of events they state truly and exactly; the exact time, God did not, for wise reasons, intend to make known.'

"We remark, in the second place, that the present case is peculiar. Our Lord's second coming and its associated events are described in highly symbolic and prophetic terms, taken mostly from the language of the Old Testament prophets, and so framed as to be intrinsically obscure and capable of being erroneously apprehended. Nor does it appear that Christ himself distinctly laid open to his disciples the nature of that event. Consequently, as the predictions respecting the first coming were so worded as to be liable to misunderstanding before he came, even by the very prophets themselves who recorded them, so the idea seems entirely reasonable, that the predictions respecting his second coming may not have been perfectly understood in all respects even by the apostles and the primitive Christians. And why does their ignorance on this single point—
the time and manner of the second advent—any more invalidate their inspiration than a like ignorance in the Old Testament writers invalidates theirs? The apostle in the present instance discloses the grand fundamental fact, that at the time to which the Holy Ghost refers there should be a translation of the living saints. This he has stated infallibly, because he spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost; and how could he make any other than an infallible suggestion? But we have no evidence that the precise time of this event was any where made known, and therefore it was to be expected that Paul should assign it to that epoch which he supposed to be intended when our Savior said that 'this generation shall not pass away till all these things shall be fulfilled.' Is it affirmed that this was misleading his readers? Then we would ask whether our Lord is not equally to be charged, in the above words, with misleading his readers? We well know by what criticisms upon the word 'generation,' it is attempted to rebut the force of the natural construction, and make it harmonize with an accomplishment that should first ensue hundreds or thousands of years after the lifetime of the disciples. But after all it is impossible to explain away the native and genuine import of the phrase. It is only by the most downright violence that we can elicit from the words any thing but the declaration that the event predicted should occur, or rather should begin to occur, in the term of the natural lives of the then existing generation of men, and consequently that the event, whatever it were, did thus occur within the period specified; that is, that there was, in some sense, a glorious coming of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem, and the abrogation of the Jewish state. But it does not follow from this that the purport of the entire series of prophecies contained in the 24th and 25th of Matthew was exhausted in that event; for he says in the same connection, in the parallel prediction of Luke, that Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; and this carries us over a long tract of centuries before we reach the period of the full accomplishment."

REMARKS.

This is an argument on a false issue. The true point of difficulty in the case is entirely evaded, both by Mr. Bush and by Mr. Barnes. The question is not simply 'how far the inspiration of the apostles extended,' or whether they might not have been ignorant in regard to such a point as the time of the second advent, consistently with the integrity of their authority as inspired teachers. We freely admit that they were not omniscient; that their inspiration was limited; that they were ignorant on many points. But the true questions are these: Did they go beyond the limits of their inspiration in their testimony? Did they speak of things which they understood not, and record their random testimony as the word of God? Did they bequeath to the church a New Testament tainted with falsehood? If they did, how are we to discriminate between the true and the false parts of their testimony, and how can we trust them as honest and safe guides of faith? It is quite admissible that they were ignorant on any given point; but it is not admissible that, being ignorant, they should dogmatize and utter falsehood as the word of God on that point, and still be regarded as oracles of inspiration, or even good men. 'A fool, when he holdeth his peace is counted wise.' If the apostles had no revelation in regard to the time of the second coming, as discreet and honest men they would have held their peace on that subject, and their testimony on other subjects, in respect to which they had revelations,
would not have been discredited. It is not necessary that a witness in court should be omniscient, in order that his affirmations may be received as truth. But it is necessary that he should confine his testimony to what he knows. If he ventures beyond his knowledge, into conjectures, and utters, under oath, as truth, statements about matters of which he is ignorant, the discovery of the falsehood of those statements vitiates his whole testimony and exposes him to the penalties of perjury. This is the very position in which Mr. Bush places the apostles. The 'mistake' which he charges upon them is not mere innocent ignorance or private misapprehension, but presumptuous public affirmation on a point about which they knew nothing—conjectural and false testimony before the highest court in the universe, and under circumstances which imposed stronger obligations of cautious veracity, than those of any oath required by human tribunals. Standing before men and angels as the accredited witnesses of God, they had not honesty and discretion enough, according to Mr. Bush's account, to hold their peace where they were ignorant, but like the Millerites, incontinently proclaimed—'The Lord is at hand'—'The Judge standeth at the door,' when in fact the second advent was thousands of years distant, and left on record in the midst of their testimony to all generations, a monstrous falsehood, fitted to nullify, by its ultimate detection, their whole claim of inspiration.

The case is not relieved by appealing to the fact that the 'prophets [of the Old Testament] inquired and searched diligently what or what manner of time the spirit which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.' This fact indicates nothing like the presumption which Mr. B. imputes to the apostles, but the contrary—a cautious, pains-taking veracity. It is not hinted, and it is not true, that those prophets, in the excess of their curiosity and self-confidence, pitched upon some random theory about the time of Christ's advent, and proclaimed it in connection with their revelations, as God's verity. They 'inquired and searched diligently;' and if the apostles had done no more than this, their credit would not have suffered, even though their search had been fruitless. But, according to Mr. B's doctrine, they went farther, or rather took an opposite course. Instead of contenting themselves with inquiring and searching diligently for the time of the second advent, they fell to dogmatizing and prophesying about it, and printed their foolish mistake of two thousand years on the front of the New Testament.

Nor does Mr. Barnes' suggestion that 'the apostles were in fact ignorant and mistaken in regard to the death of John,' relieve the case at all. In the first place, it is not asserted in John 21: 23, and it is not certain from any other evidence, that they were mistaken in supposing that John would never die. We have never found any reason for placing confidence in the church-traditions about his death. They contradict each other. The fact that he lived certainly till very near the time appointed for the second advent, indicates to us that he did not sleep, but was changed. But, secondly, admitting that he did die, the mistake of the apostles in regard to the matter, is not at all parallel to their alleged false testimony concerning the time of the second coming; for it occurred before they received the Spirit of truth—before they
were sent on their missions as the representatives of Christ—long before they undertook to add their writings to the scriptures. That mistake is not an important doctrine, incorporated with their ultimate apostolic testimony, but a fact in the history of their spiritual minority. The record of it no more loosens the foundations of their subsequent authority as inspired and infallible writers, than does the record of their strife who should be greatest, or of their abandonment of Christ at the cross. But their supposed mistake about the time of the second coming, is part and parcel of their final, deliberate, official testimony, and cannot be separated from their doctrinal system without destroying its whole texture. If they were deluded on this point, they were deluded, not as raw disciples, but as mature apostles; and the delusion clung to them to the last. At the very close of John’s earthly career, when ‘the darkness was past and the true light shines’ upon him; when he saw and testified that ‘God is light, and in him is no darkness at all,’ and that ‘whosoever says he has fellowship with him and walketh in darkness, is a liar;’ when he distinctly professed to declare to believers only that which he ‘had seen and heard;’—even then he announced in the most positive and solemn manner, the near approach of the second advent. ‘Little children,’ said he, ‘it is the last hour;’ and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are they many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour.’ 1 John 2:18. Messrs. Bush and Barnes would have us place this announcement on a par with the ‘last warnings’ issued by Himes and Storr just before ‘the tenth day of the seventh month;’ and yet they profess not to impugn the inspiration of the apostles!

Indeed the case would be no better, but rather worse, if genuine examples of false doctrine could be found in the New Testament, to render the mistake about the second coming probable. Such discoveries would be no apology for that mistake, but would simply go to discredit the whole book. If it is true, as Mr. Bush holds, that the doctrine of the New Testament is a mixture of divine revelation with fallible human judgments, then until some method shall be proposed by which we can distinguish with certainty between the true and the counterfeit bills, the whole mixture ought to be distrusted. If we are to judge by the ‘mistake’ now before us, we must conclude that the pack of true and false doctrines is completely shuffled, so that it is impossible for any human understanding to discern between them. When the apostles say, ‘The Lord is at hand’—‘The Judge standeth at the door’—‘Little children it is the last hour,’—they give us no signal, by which we may know that these announcements are personal judgments. If we feel at liberty to pronounce them such, we may just as well place their doctrines of the incarnation and the atonement under the same sentence. And then the Bible becomes, what the neologists would have it, a mere plaything for critics. This is the gulf into which the churches, with Messrs. Bush and Barnes at their head, must soon plunge, if they persist in denying that the second advent took place at the destruction of Jerusalem.

We repeat, that the mischief in the case is not the alleged ignorance of the apostles, but the incontinence—the presumption—the confounding mixture of personal judgments with revelations, which is imputed to them. This
is the head and front of the offense of the Millerites. It has been fashionable with some who have not been carried away by the Advent-mania, to apologise nevertheless for the dupes and even the leaders in that monstrous imposture. The plea that has been urged in their favor has been that 'they are honest in their delusion.' We are very willing to admit this plea in extenuation of the folly and guilt of the masses who have occupied the secondary position of followers in the movement. But we are more and more convinced that it is a foolish and cruel sort of charity that extends the apology to the leaders. It is now manifest that the men who took upon them the responsibility of sounding an alarm which has driven multitudes to insanity and suicide, and has spiritually debauched and ruined still greater multitudes, arrogantly pretended to know what they did not know, and presumptuously promulgated by argument and pretenses of revelation, a foolish falsehood. We complain not that they were ignorant in regard to the time of the second advent, (though we can hardly conceive that any one can deliberately study the 24th of Matthew and remain innocently ignorant on the subject,) but, that being ignorant, they professed to be wise, and stood forth on the witness-stand before heaven and earth, under a virtual oath of veracity, with a random testimony in their mouths, pledging the word of God for a lie. For this we have called them, and still call them, impostors. And if Mr. Bush’s imputation of false testimony to the apostles were proved true, we should be obliged for the same reason to call them impostors.

We demand, on behalf of the apostles, the benefit of the good rule of law that 'every man shall be held innocent till he is proved guilty.' Before consenting to turn them in with the perjured Millerites, we claim the right to inspect the grounds on which they are charged with the mistake which renders the lame apologies of Messrs. Bush and Barnes necessary. How is it made certain that Christ did not come the second time, and accomplish the first resurrection and judgment, within the lifetime of the primitive church? 'We have more ample data,' says Mr. Bush, 'and are better able to judge of the meaning of the prophecies than the apostles were.'—What are these 'more ample data'? Have we any new revelation? None at all. But 'we learn from the event,' says Mr. Bush in another passage, 'that the prophecies which the apostles referred to a period within their own lifetime, included a vast extent of time.' Here is the foundation, and the only foundation, of the charge of mistake. It is 'the event' that has proved the apostles liars. No external second advent, no visible resurrection and judgment, is recorded in the writings of worldly historians, as having occurred at the close of the Jewish dispensation; 'therefore (say the wise men) no advent, resurrection or judgment took place at that time, and the apostles are convicted of false prophecy.' So says the Infidel Gibbon; and so say the devout Bush and Barnes. Now if we look narrowly at the nature of the advent, resurrection and judgment which were predicted and expected by the apostles, we shall see that this is a very small foundation for the heavy charge which rests upon it. Christ’s resurrection was a sample of the resurrection expected by his followers. He was the 'first-fruits,' and they were to be gathered as the general harvest at his coming. Was Christ’s
resurrection visible to the world? Was it recorded by worldly historians? Mr. Bush himself argues in the very work before us, at great length, that Christ arose in his spiritual body and only appeared to his disciples—not to the world—as angels are seen, i.e. in vision. If the fact that there was no visible, notorious resurrection at the destruction of Jerusalem, is 'the event' which proves the expectations of the apostles false, then 'the event' in the case of Christ proved his prediction of his own resurrection false. The world saw him no more; and the Jews, among whom he died, believe him dead to this day. The promised second advent was to be kindred in its nature to the resurrection. Christ was to come 'in like manner as he ascended.' Did he ascend in a material body? Was the event public? Did worldly historians record it? So the judgment was to be of course like the resurrection and the advent—a transaction in the spiritual world. With such evidence concerning the nature of the events expected by the apostles, what presumption it is to accuse them of false prophecy, because there was no such physical parade at the period of the destruction of Jerusalem as human traditions have connected with the second coming and the judgment! What folly to make the silence of man a ground for impeaching the testimony of God! Will Mr. Bush or Mr. Barnes venture to assert that Christ did not come as he ascended?—that there was not a resurrection like his own?—that there was not a judgment in the resurrection world, at the close of the Jewish dispensation? Do they know anything about the matter? Can they know anything about it, except by either believing the predictions of the Bible, or by obtaining a new revelation? The charge which they have brought against the apostles, recoils upon them. They are the men that have allowed their speech to go beyond their knowledge.
§ 45. DATE OF THE APOCALYPSE.

There is a very simple way of determining when the book of Revelations was written. We need not consult the dubious and discordant testimonies of the Fathers and church historians. The book itself contains a decisive index of its own date.

Christ said to John, in the commencement of his vision—'Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.' Chap. 1: 19. The things which John had 'seen' are recorded in the first chapter. The events then in progress—'the things which are'—are recorded in the second and third chapters, which describe the state of the seven churches. The things which were then future, are introduced in the fourth chapter. 'Come up hither,' said the voice to John, 'and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.' 4: 1. John saw his visions, then, before the events predicted in the fourth chapter and onward took place. And it is evident that he wrote his book at the time he saw the visions, from a circumstance recorded in the tenth chapter, verse 4. 'When the seven thunders had uttered their voices,' says he, 'I was about to write.' This shows that he noted down the things he saw as soon as they had passed. He wrote the Apocalypse then while the events introduced in the fourth chapter and described in the rest of the book were yet future. Now if we can ascertain when some of the first of those events which were then future, actually transpired, we shall have a fixed date, before which the Apocalypse must have been written. Let us then look into the 'things which must be hereafter.'

The fourth chapter describes the magnificence of the divine presence. In the fifth chapter the book with seven seals is introduced, and the Lamb, who only is found worthy, receives it, and prepares to open the seals. All this is only the introduction to the subsequent disclosures. The predictions of the Apocalypse properly begin at the sixth chapter. The series of events which follow the successive openings of the seven seals are those which are

* As our views of the second coming involve the conclusion that the book of Revelations was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, this was very generally denied by our opponents when we first broached our theory. We apprehend a change is coming over public opinion on this point. Prof. Stuart, in a late article on the Apocalypse, says:—

'As our views of the second coming involve the conclusion that the book of Revelations was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, this was very generally denied by our opponents when we first broached our theory. We apprehend a change is coming over public opinion on this point. Prof. Stuart, in a late article on the Apocalypse, says:—

'That it was written under the bloody reign of Nero, or shortly after, is now a matter agreed upon by nearly all recent critics who have studied the literature of this book. The exemption of Christian Jews, who are sealed in their foreheads as the servants of God, as related in chap. 7; the measurement of the inner sanctuary of the temple, to be preserved from impending destruction, ch. 11: 1, 2; the express naming of the city to be destroyed, as 'the place where our Lord was crucified,' ch. 11: 8; these and other concurrent circumstances put it beyond a reasonable doubt, that the Apocalypse was written before the destruction of Jerusalem. And if all this were not sufficient, the passage in ch. 17: 10, which declares that 'kings or emperors of Rome had already fallen, while the sixth is reigning when the writer is composing the book, marks the period too definitely to be called in question. It might easily be shown, moreover, that the tenor of the book renders it necessary for us to suppose that the persecution was actually raging when it was written; and consequently, it must have been written during Nero’s life, for persecution ceased immediately after his death.'—Bibliotheca Sacra, No. II. p. 349.
to be examined for the purpose of fixing our first boundary. At the opening of the sixth seal (ver. 12—17) we find a description of the advent of Christ in language identical with that in Matt. 24: 29, 30. There can be no doubt that John quoted the words of Christ, and that both referred to the same transaction. But we find it declared in Matt. 24: 29, that the advent there described was to be 'immediately after' the awful tribulation which ended with the destruction of Jerusalem. The events, then, which followed the opening of the sixth seal, took place immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem. But the opening, not only of the sixth seal, but of all the seals, was future when John wrote the Apocalypse. He must have written, therefore, some considerable time before an event which happened immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem. This creates a strong presumption at least, that he wrote before the destruction of Jerusalem.

But let us examine the events of the first five seals, which occupied the period between the time of John's writing, and the second advent. As those events came 'immediately' before that advent, we may fairly anticipate that they are the very tribulations which in Matthew are placed immediately before it. Accordingly we find that the first five seals actually usher in a train of awful tribulations, closely corresponding in order and kind to those described in Matt. 24: 6—22. The meaning of the symbol of the first seal is not very clear. But the second seal (ver. 4) introduces the war spirit, corresponding to the prediction in Matthew of 'wars and rumors of wars'—'nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.' The third seal introduces the famine spirit: and in Matthew 'famines in divers places' follow the wars. It must be borne in mind too that famine was one of the principal elements of misery in Jerusalem at the time of its downfall. The fourth seal ushers in the spirit of universal destruction—a combination, of war, famine, pestilence, and every other agent of death. Nothing could more vividly picture the tribulation which Christ declared should be 'such as never was since the beginning of the world.' Matt. 24: 21. At the opening of the fifth seal the souls of the martyrs are discovered, calling on God to avenge them. These are evidently they who suffered death in the dreadful persecutions which in Matthew are described as following or attending the wars, famines, and pestilences of that awful time. Ver. 9. In our view there is evidence, amounting to demonstration, that Christ's prediction in Matt. 24, extending from the 6th to the 31st verse, is in all substantial particulars identical with John's vision in the sixth and seventh chapters of the Apocalypse. Since, then, it is certain that John wrote before the events of the sixth chapter, it is clear that he wrote before the awful tribulations which are described in Matt. 24: 6—22, i.e. before the final agonies of Judaism, and the destruction of the Holy City.

This fixes the chronological boundary on one side. We know that the date of the Apocalypse is earlier than A. D. 70. The only element of calculation which we have for the boundary on the other side, is contained in the introduction to the book, (chap. 1: 1—3,) which announces that the things revealed in it 'must shortly come to pass.' If it is considered that the events of the sixth chapter are the first of those which the book reveals as
future, and therefore are nearest in order to the time when John wrote, it will be seen that the above annunciation attaches first and most emphatically to them. We may conclude therefore that the Apocalypse was written 'shortly' before the destruction of Jerusalem, i. e., at a time when the unprecedented tribulations of the final scene were the future events next in order. It certainly was not written after A. D. 70, and it certainly was not written long before.

This result is confirmed by many passages in the addresses to the seven churches. Among the precursors of the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ predicted a great declension among Christians. 'Because iniquity shall abound,' said he, 'the love of many shall wax cold.' Matt. 24: 12. Accordingly John's record of 'the things that are,' exhibits the churches of Asia in a state that exactly corresponds to this prediction. The Ephesian church had 'left its first love.' The church of Sardis had 'a name to live, and was dead.' The Laodiceans were 'neither cold nor hot.' Again, those addresses abound with allusions to Christ's coming, and represent it as very near. 'I come quickly'—is the oft-repeated warning. (See chap. 2: 5, 16, 25, 8: 3, 11.) All this exactly harmonizes with the idea that John wrote in that predicted dark period of the church which immediately preceded the destruction of Jerusalem and the second advent of Christ.

---

§ 46. SCOPE OF THE APOCALYPSE.

The book of Revelations, as a whole, is simply a vision of the entire judgment of mankind, including the first judgment at the second advent, the intermediate reign of Christ, and the second judgment at the end of the times of the Gentiles. In other words, it is the filling up of the outline sketched in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew. The great facts announced in those chapters are—1, the destruction of Judaism; 2, the coming of Christ to destroy his enemies, and gather his elect; 3, his reign, and the gathering and separation of all nations; 4, the final judgment. These also are the great facts of the Apocalypse. The sixth and seventh chapters of that book (which are the beginning of its prophecies) announce the destruction of Judaism, the coming of Christ to destroy his enemies, and the gathering of the elect. At the eighth chapter commences a series of movements among the nations, introduced by the successive soundings of the seven trumpets. These movements are to be referred to the agency of Christ, whose accession to the throne is announced in the previous chapters. These are the transactions of his intermediate reign—the gathering and arrangement of the nations. At the end of the eleventh chapter the sounding of the seventh trumpet introduces the final and universal judgment. This is the plot of the book. All the other visions are bounded by this outline, and
either exhibit the same events in different aspects, or collateral trains of events occupying the same period. The first and last judgments, with the events between them, are the sum and substance of the whole.

In calculating the chronology of this great outline, we take, for our first element, the period of the first judgment. This is an ascertained date—a fixed point on the chart of time. We know, by the explicit testimony of Christ in the twenty-fourth of Matthew, as well as by the concurrent allusions of the whole New Testament, and indeed by the announcements of the sixth chapter of the Apocalypse itself, that the first judgment immediately succeeded the destruction of Jerusalem, in A. D. 70.

The next question is,—How far is it from this fixed point to the second judgment? In the twentieth chapter of Revelations we have an undoubted account of the second judgment, and in connection with it a statement of the events which precede it, with a general measurement of the time between the first and second judgments. We are there informed that the primitive church "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" after their complete victory over Satan by the first judgment, and before the second judgment. This makes it certain that Christ's intermediate reign occupies at least a thousand years.

There is no good reason to doubt that the language in this case is to be taken literally. Prophetic statements of time are certainly never less than literal. If there were any doubt in the case, it would be whether we ought not to reckon days for years, and so expand the prophetic period of a thousand years into 360,000 years. This is the view of some interpreters. But there is certainly no authority or occasion for such an expansion. It is in vain to say that the announcement of the thousand years occurs in a symbolical vision, and is therefore to be understood symbolically; for, however the rules of scholastic rhetoric may condemn the mixture of symbols with literal objects, it is a fact which can be proved by numberless examples, that in the Apocalypse symbols and literal objects are mingled without scruple. In the very passage in question, while the dragon, the chain, the key, the bottomless pit, &c., are evidently symbolical, the martyrs, the Christ, the living and reigning, &c., are as evidently literal. And the announcement of the thousand years is immediately connected with these literal persons and events. There is therefore no necessity of understanding the thousand years as meaning 360,000; and, without a necessity, the very magnitude of the latter number is sufficient to exclude it.

It is further to be observed that the statement of the thousand years is not to be taken as an exact measurement of the time between the first and second judgments. The number itself in the first place indicates that it was chosen as a convenient general estimate. The martyrs lived and reigned with Christ in round numbers a thousand years, more or less. In the next place, the vision leaves a considerable margin of events before the thousand years begin, and another after they end, which are to be reckoned in making up the sum of the time between the first and second judgments. It is not stated how long it was after the second coming of Christ, before Satan was bound and the complete triumph of the primitive church commenced; nor how long is
was before the second judgment that Satan was loosed again and went forth
to gather the nations to battle. These points must be ascertained by other
calculations. All we can fairly gather from this vision is the general conclu-
sion that more than a thousand years intervene between the first and second
judgments.

We may make a further approximation toward exactness in this calcula-
tion, by examining the account of the second judgment with its antecedents,
in the eleventh chapter. The reader will observe that the latter part of this
chapter is a continuation of the vision of the trumpets, which commences in
the seventh chapter. The final judgment is ushered in by the sounding of
the seventh trumpet. It is evident that the account of the two witnesses in
the former part of the chapter is a sort of episode interposed between the
sixth and seventh trumpets, for the sake of bringing down a separate train
of events, to the point of junction with the train introduced by the trumpets.
The earthquake and slaughter following the resurrection of the witnesses, is
incidental with the events of the second woe trumpet, and immediately pre-
cedes the third woe, which is the final scene of wrath and recompense.—

While the period covered by this episode thus manifestly comes down nearly
to the second judgment, on the other hand it certainly reaches back to the
first judgment. The two witnesses commence their testimony when the
Gentiles begin to ‘tread the holy city under foot,’ i. e. at the destruction of
Jerusalem. The duration of their testimony is stated to be ‘forty and two
months,’ or 1260 days. At the end of that period they are killed, and af-
ter three days and a half they rise, ascend to heaven, and then follows in
quick succession the destruction of their enemies and the final judgment.

So that the ‘forty and two months’ extend from the destruction of Jerusa-
lem, to the neighborhood of the second judgment. Now we know by our
previous calculations that more than a thousand years intervene between the
destruction of Jerusalem and the second judgment. Since therefore the
‘forty and two months’ occupy substantially the same space with the thou-
sand years, the conclusion is inevitable that these are not literal but sym-
bolical months, i. e., that the days in them stand for years.

We have not in this case the same reasons for adhering to the literal mean-
ing, as we had in the case of the thousand years. The persons who stand
connected with the period specified in this case are symbolical, as they were
not in the other. And the length of the time given by the expansion of 1260
days into 1260 years is more reasonable than that given by the expansion of
1000 into 360,000 years. It is in vain to insist that symbolical designations
of time are inadmissible. The latitude of the Apocalypse in the use of mys-
tical representations in relation to other subjects, is as proper, and equally
to be expected, in relation to time. The necessity of the case, as above ex-
thibited, satisfies us that the writer of the Apocalypse put days for years in
this instance, and in several others, and that he left the designation of time
in the twentieth chapter in literal language for the very purpose of giving a
cue to the meaning of those which are symbolical.

In the place then of a thousand years with an indefinite margin of time before
and after it, which was the result of our former calculation, we have now 1260
years, commencing at the destruction of Jerusalem and extending to the neighborhood of the second judgment. An indefinite margin is still left between the end of this period and the final scene. All we can fairly say, is, that at the end of 1260 years from the destruction of Jerusalem, i.e. about A.D. 1330, the dispensation of the two witnesses (who commenced their testimony among the Gentiles after the termination of Judaism) came to an end, and a new series of events directly preparatory to the final judgment, commenced. How long a period these preparatory movements are to occupy, we have thus far no means of determining. We only know that the final judgment has not taken place yet, and that we are living at a late period in the preparatory era which immediately precedes it.

If external historical tokens of the truth of our conclusions are demanded, we may mention that Popery came to its height and began to decline soon after the commencement of the 14th century; that Wiclif, the acknowledged father of the Reformation, was born in 1324, and that during his life of 60 years the Bible was first translated, and the seeds of the religious revolutions which have since changed the face of all Christendom, were sown. It is true (whether it has any thing to do with our prophecy or not) that the dispensation of the Reformation properly dates from the period between A.D. 1330 and 1400. Since that time the religious world has been in a state of transition. We believe that it will prove to be a transition from the Gentile dispensation of legality, to the final judgment.

It must be borne in mind, however, that as we find the main fulfilment of the prophecies of the second coming, in the spiritual world, so we must look for the principal events foreshadowed in the Apocalypse, beyond the veil. Let carnal unbelief pervert predictions in order to make them match external events, or reject them because their fulfilment is not to be seen. We have learned, by the lesson of the second coming, to allow prophecy a wider field of fulfilment than this world.

41
§ 47. THE DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF TIMES.

"He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him: in whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." Eph. 1: 8—12.

It is evident that Paul refers, in the above passage, to a dispensation of the grace of Christ which was then future, from the following circumstances. 1. There was not in the dispensation committed to him, i. e., in the first and then present dispensation of the grace of Christ, any such universal gathering as he describes in these words, 'that he might gather &c. all things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth.' When Paul says in Heb. 2: 8—'In that he hath put all in subjection under him [Christ,] he left nothing that is not put under him—he speaks manifestly of the same purpose of God, as that referred to in the preceding passage, and immediately adds, 'but now we see not yet all things put under him.' As he plainly predicts the full subjection of this world to Christ, and as plainly connects it with the dispensation of the fulness of times, we conclude with certainty that he had in his mind in using this expression, a dispensation which was not only then, but is now future. 2. His language concerning believers at that time, is obviously designed to distinguish them from those who should be gathered in the dispensation of the fulness of times.' In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, &c., that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.' The intimation here contained, that a special glory belongs to the subjects of the first dispensation, implies the expectation of a second future gathering. Similar intimations, tending in like manner to set a distinction between the primitive church and the subjects of the last dispensation, may be found in Rev. 14: 4, and 20: 6. 3. The single expression, 'fulness of times,' will be found by comparing scripture with scripture, to contain evidence that Paul spoke of a dispensation distinct from that of the primitive church, which is yet to come. Christ says in Luke 21: 24—'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.' The words 'fulness' and 'fulfilled' in these passages, are more nearly identical in the original, than in our version. Using a noun instead of a verb, Christ would have said, 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the fulness of the Gentile times.' The two expressions then differ only in that one of them is general and the other particular. Paul speaks of the fulness or completion of all the times marked out in the purposes and predictions of God; Christ of the completion of the times appointed for the Gentiles. Now as that which is general must include that which is particular, it is evident that the fulness of times' cannot come till 'the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;' and as the times of the Gentiles are not
fulfilled, it follows that the dispensation of the fulness of times has not yet come.

The words of the angel, (Rev. 10: 5—7,) well define the meaning of Paul’s expression—‘And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there shall be time no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.’ In this passage we find that the fulness of times is the period when the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. Now as the gathering of all things in heaven and earth into Christ, was declared to the prophets to be the final purpose of God, it is evident that the dispensation of the fulness of times in which this was to be accomplished, is the very same as the finishing of the mystery of God. When the angel swears that time shall be no longer, he declares that the fulness of times is come; and immediately connects with this era of consummation of God’s purposes which Paul describes, appointing its fulfilment at the beginning of the voice of the seventh angel. From all this we ascertain, 1. That the manifestation of Christ to mankind, is divided into two parts, separated from each other by a long interval of time, and called, the dispensation of the primitive church, and the dispensation of the fulness of times. 2. That the dispensation of the fulness of times, is the appointed period of Christ’s final and complete triumph over this world, the consummation of prophecy, the denouement of the drama commenced at the creation. 3. That it is subsequent to the times of the Gentiles. 4. That it is to come when the seventh angel shall begin to sound. All of these particulars which we have thus gathered from scattered evidences, are presented, in a summary and consecutive form, in the eleventh chapter of Revelations. John was commanded to measure the temple; ‘but,’ said the angel, ‘the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.’ During this period, the two witnesses prophesy. Their death, resurrection, ascension, the defeat and conversion of their enemies, follow. Then comes the dispensation of the fulness of times. ‘The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.’ Rev, 11: 15—18. If the temple of God is the church, which Paul declares, (1 Tim. 3: 15,) we are here informed that the inner portion of the church,
was complete, previous to the forty-two months of the times of the Gentiles; that the outer portion of it remained unfinished during that period; and that after that period the seventh angel sounds, ushering in the subject of this world to Christ, the final fulfilment of prophecy—in other words, the dispensation of the fulness of times, in which “all things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth,” the outer as well as the inner court of the temple, are subjected to Christ. Let it be borne in mind that we have identified the dispensation of the fulness of times, with the finishing of the mystery of God—that the finishing of the mystery of God comes in connection with the voice of the seventh angel—and that the voice of the seventh angel, according to Rev. 11:18, introduces the final judgment. We take then for our landmark in pursuing our investigations of prophecy, the following proposition:—The dispensation of the fulness of times, in which this world is to be subjected to Christ, is the day of final judgment. By this guide-board we are directed at once to that most notable description of the day of judgment in Rev. 20:11, &c., and by a glance at the context which precedes it, we are assured that the direction is correct. That context, (ver. 4, &c.,) describes a primary judgment, separated from the final one by an interval of a thousand years and more; it marks the peculiar glory of the subjects of this first dispensation, and describes the introductory conflict of God with the nations, previous to the universal subject of mankind to Christ, which is then described. Comparing these things with those we have before seen, we find an accumulating confirmation of the theory suggested by the passage at the head of this article. The partakers of the first resurrection, are evidently they “who first trusted in Christ,” of whom Paul speaks, coupling himself with them, viz. the primitive, or as it may be called, the Jewish church; and whom John’s vision characterizes as the inner portion of the temple—first finished. Between the first and second resurrection, a period of more than a thousand years is introduced, corresponding to the forty-two months, the times of the Gentiles. After this a throne of universal dominion is set—heaven and earth fleeing before it; which also corresponds to the gathering “of all things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth,” into Christ; and to the shout which follows the voice of the seventh angel—“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.”

A further confirmation of the same theory, should be noticed in Rev. 12. Whatever we understand by the woman of this vision, whether it be simply Judaism, or the church of the transition period, it matters not. It is sufficient that we know she was the mother of “the child that was to rule all nations with a rod of iron.” This child cannot be simply the man Christ Jesus, because, in that case, his mother would have been simply the virgin Mary. If we regard the mother as a spiritual corporation, we must give her child the same character, or we mingle things literal and spiritual in the same vision. As the promises concerning Christ as an individual, are also given to Christ as a corporation, i.e. to the church, (see Rev. 2:26, &c.,) we may safely regard “the child that was to rule all nations with a rod of iron,” as the primitive church, the partakers of the first resurrection, they who “first
trusted in Christ,’ to whom, as we have before seen, a special glory is given. Now as the inner part of the temple was first finished, and the outer part given to the Gentiles for forty-two months, so the ‘child that was to rule all nations,’ was at his birth caught up unto God and his throne, and his mother fled into the wilderness for forty-two months. The times of the testimony of the two witnesses, which are the times of the Gentiles, intervening between the first and last dispensations, are identical with the times of the woman’s abode in the wilderness. That which precedes these times, viz., the redemption of the woman’s child—the finishing of the inner part of the temple—the first resurrection—are therefore likewise identical. The woman’s persecution by the serpent, and residence in the wilderness, clearly correspond to the testimony of the two witnesses among the Gentiles, and the persecutions they suffered. As they cover the same period, they are evidently only varied symbols of the same things; viz., the continuation of divine testimony in this world, during the interval between the first and last dispensations.

Lastly, if we look at the vision of the seven seals, and the seven trumpets, we shall find unanswerable evidence of the truth of the foregoing theory. When the sixth seal was opened, the ‘great day of the wrath of the Lamb’ came, and with it the sealing of the Jewish church. An attentive comparison of the description of these events, with the 24th of Matthew, will make it certain that they came to pass in the generation cotemporary with Christ. When the seventh seal opens, the seven trumpets are introduced. A description of a great variety of events, accompanying the successive sounding of six trumpets, follows; events which evidently occupy the period between the first and second judgment. The seventh and last trumpet ushers in the day of final judgment—the subjection of this world to Christ—i.e. the ‘dispensation of the fulness of times.’

The object of this article is to fix the attention of believers on the truth, that the Bible describes two dispensations of Christ, two resurrections, two judgments, one of which is past, the other future. These two dispensations, are the two foci of all prophecy, and should stand in the mind as central points of interest. By confounding them together, men have fallen into error in two ways. Believers of the common doctrines of Christendom, see but one focus of prophecy, and that future. Hence the prophecies that separately pertain to the second coming of Christ, and the redemption of the Jewish church, are to them incomprehensible perplexities. On the other hand, many Perfectionists seem to see nothing but the second coming. The focus of all prophecy with them is past. Hence arises much misinterpretation of scripture, and many moral and intellectual errors. In the ninth chapter of Romans, Paul suggests the comprehensive idea of God’s dispensations, which should always be borne in mind. Speaking to the Gentiles, he says, ‘I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in:’ and again, ‘As ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.’ Comparing these things with the foregoing discussion, we
perceive that the two dispensations which we have considered, correspond to
the two grand divisions of the human race, viz. Jews and Gentiles. The
gospel of Christ is given ‘to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.’ Rom.
2: 10. As the Jews had an introductory, carnal dispensation, from Moses
to Christ, which terminated in the revelation of the gospel, and the first res-
urrection and judgment; so the Gentiles have had a similar carnal dispensa-
tion from the destruction of Jerusalem to the present time; and when their
‘times are fulfilled,’ their dispensation will likewise terminate in a second
revelation of the gospel—a second resurrection and judgment. As the first
redeemed church was chiefly Jewish, (the apostles and prophets, its founda-
tions, and Jesus Christ its chief corner-stone, being Jews,) so Paul intimates
that the second redeemed church will be chiefly Gentile—that the Jews may
obtain mercy through the Gentiles, as the Gentiles have obtained mercy
through the Jews.

§ 48. THE MILLENNIUM.

Paul divides the resurrection of the human race into three distinct acts.
‘As in Adam,’ says he, ‘all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.’
But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they
that are Christ’s at his coming. Then cometh the end, [or finishing of the
resurrection,] when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even
the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.
For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last en-
emy that shall be destroyed is death.’ 1 Cor. 15: 22—26. Paul manifestly
intended to separate the resurrection which was to take place at Christ’s
coming, from the final resurrection. This distinction—though generally over-
looked—we shall see is imperatively required by other passages. But

* It is manifest from the whole tenor of the chapter of which this is a part, that Paul
is speaking simply of a physical resurrection, not of salvation from spiritual death. He
simply affirms that all will be raised. Other passages inform us that some will come
forth to the resurrection of life, and some to the resurrection of damnation.
1 Prof. Stuart, in his late commentary on the Apocalypse, distinguishes between the
resurrection ‘at Christ’s coming,’ and ‘the end’ or final resurrection, just as we have
done. This view leads inevitably to the conclusion that the second coming takes place
long before the final judgment, i. e. at the first resurrection, before the Millennium.—
He has thus opened a breach in the walls of the old doctrine that the resurrection and
judgment of mankind is to be a single transaction at the end of the world. His position
is the same as ours on the following points, viz.: that two resurrections and two judg-
ments are predicted in scripture; that the two resurrections are alike in nature, i. e.
both alike resurrections in the spiritual body, that they differ only in that the first precedes
the second as to time, and is confined to a small part of the human race instead of being
universal. It is true that he entirely mislocates the first resurrection, if our theory is
correct: for he regards it as yet future, instead of dating it from the time pointed out by
the predictions of Christ and the expectations of the apostles, viz., the end of the Mo-
saic age. He adheres to the old theory of a future millennium, or thousand years of
‘utter day glory,’ and supposes that the martyr church of the early days of Christianity
reference to the resurrection of the whole race, Christ is called the ‘first-fruits,’ [aparche, in the Greek.] But with reference to the final resurrection, the primitive church, or ‘they that are Christ’s’ and were raised at his coming, are called the ‘first-fruits’ [aparche] in Revelations 14: 4.* They are also obviously referred to and spoken of in similar terms in Rev. 20: 4—6. The ‘first resurrection’ is the resurrection of the ‘first-fruits.’ This last passage reveals to us a very wide separation between the second and third acts of Paul’s three-fold resurrection. More than a thousand years intervene between the rising of ‘them that are Christ’s,’ and the final, universal resurrection, when death and hell are destroyed. (See verses 7, 12, 14.)

The mark of the final resurrection, according to 1 Cor. 15: 24, is the putting all things under Christ. ‘The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son;’—and so long as the judgment of the world is unfinished, the intermediate regency of the Son must continue. But all things were not put under Christ at the second coming. The judgment of the world was not finished. Death, the last enemy, was not cast into the lake of fire. We know there is a sense, and a very important one, too, in which Christ triumphed over all enemies and death was swallowed up in victory, at the second coming. The saints that lived till that event did not sleep, but were changed; and so the promise of victory over death was fulfilled in regard to a limited number. But in a similar sense, it is true that the last enemy was conquered when Christ himself arose; and he expressly said at that time, ‘All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me.’ The truth is, in both of these events—viz., the resurrection of Christ, and his second coming—the great last victory over the powers of death and hell, was achieved in the seed, if we may use the expression. Christ’s resurrection was the seed of the resurrection of the second coming, and that was the seed of the final resurrection. But Paul’s description of the ‘putting down of all rule and all authority and power,’ certainly does not refer to any seminal victory. Nothing less than an actual subjugation of all visible as well as invisible thrones and dominions, can answer to his language. And the destruction of death, which he had in his mind, was not that which was effected by the resurrection of Christ, nor that which took place when the primitive saints were translated; but that which is to come, after the thousand years of the first resurrection, and after the battle of the great day of God Almighty, when all the dead both small and great shall be raised, and death shall be finally and utterly destroyed in the lake of fire. Then the concerns of the world in its probationary state—over which the Son presides—will be brought to an end, and the kingdom will be delivered up to the Father. The vision which

will be raised at the beginning of that period. This displacement is at variance not only with the natural probabilities of the case, (for why should the martyrs lay under the altar so long?) but with his own oft-repeated canon that the obvious design of the Apocalypse, viz. the encouragement of the believers of the apostle’s own time, should enter into all our views of the book, and that we should therefore look for immediate rather than remote fulfilments of its predictions. But it is not our design at present to argue the matter. Setting aside the difference as to time, Stuart’s doctrine agrees with ours in all important respects, far more nearly than we expected.

* The hundred and forty-four thousand mentioned in this passage, may be certainly identified with those who were raised at Christ’s coming, by comparing Rev. 6 and 7.
immediately succeeds the description of the final judgment in Rev. 20, is that of ‘the new heavens and the new earth;’ and a great voice out of heaven proclaims, ‘Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.’ Is not this the kingdom of the Father?

The same distinction which we have made between the resurrection at Christ’s coming, and the ‘end’ described in 1 Cor. 15: 24, should also be made between the judgment described in the 24th of Matthew, and that in the latter part of the 25th. The gathering of the elect mentioned in the 24th, was to take place within the period of the then living generation. This is manifestly the resurrection of ‘them that are Christ’s at his coming,’ spoken of in 1 Cor. 15: 23—the sealing of the hundred and forty-four thousand spoken of in Rev. 6—the gathering of the ‘first-fruits’ spoken of in Rev. 14—and the ‘first resurrection’ spoken of in Rev. 20. But in Matthew 25: 31, 32, we have a description of events subsequent to the second coming—nay, of events that have not yet taken place,—such as the gathering of all nations before Christ. ‘When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, [this is the second advent, which took place in that generation, and ushered in the first resurrection,] then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: [this is the subsequent regency of the Son, continued till all enemies are put under his feet—occupying the period between the destruction of Jerusalem and the present time:] and before him shall be gathered all nations,’ &c. [This is the assembling of the dead small and great before the great white throne, the second and final judgment.] In this case, as in that of 1 Cor. 15: 24, the long interval of the kingdom of the Son, between the second advent and the final judgment, when the kingdom is to be delivered up to the Father, has been generally overlooked, and thus two widely separate judgments have been confused. The consequence has been that the second coming has been thrown forward by one party into the future, in defiance of the plainest testimony of scripture,—and the final judgment has been thrown back by another party into the past, in defiance of all the instincts of morality and common sense.

Our theory then is, that the judgment and resurrection of mankind took place in the seed, when Christ died and rose; that this seed brought forth its first harvest in the resurrection of the Jewish church, and in the judgment of antichrist at the period of the destruction of Jerusalem; that it will bring forth its second and final harvest, in the resurrection of the whole human race, and in the destruction of death and hell, with all who adhere to them,—at the end of the regency of the Son, when the kingdoms of this world shall be fully put under him. According to this theory, the second advent is past; the first resurrection is past; the Millennium is past; and the things that are to come are the final resurrection and judgment. The principal objection to this view is, the difficulty of reconciling with it the prediction of the binding of Satan, during the Millennium. We will now proceed to an examination of this subject.

The 20th chapter of Revelations, in which the binding of Satan, the Millennium, the battle of the great day, and the final resurrection and judgment,
are described, is commonly supposed to be a continuation of the vision of the preceding chapter, which closes with a great battle, in which the beast and false prophet are taken and cast into the lake of fire. If this supposition were correct, it would place the events of the 20th chapter after the destruction of the beast and false prophet, and we should be obliged to conclude (since the beast and the false prophet certainly are not yet destroyed) that the binding of Satan, and the Millenium, are yet future. But it is well known that the book of Revelations is not a single continuous vision, representing a consecutive series of transactions; but a collection of visions, in which distinct trains of events that occupy the same period of time, and frequently the same events under different aspects, are presented to view as it were in pictures, which should be placed side by side. For example, in the 11th chapter, it is said that ‘the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit,’ shall make war upon the two witnesses, and kill them. Verse 7. On examining the preceding chapters we find nothing said of any such beast, though he is introduced here as if he were already known to the reader. But in the 17th chapter this beast is brought to view, (verse 8,) and in such a manner as to identify him with the beast described in the 13th chapter; and there we find him making war with the saints and overcoming them, (ver. 7,) as he is represented in the 11th chapter. Thus the attentive reader will perceive that the same beast is introduced three times, and in such a way as makes it necessary that we should set the three visions, not in a consecutive order, but side by side, and explain one by the other. Again, in the 16th chapter, (ver. 19,) a summary view of the destruction of Babylon is introduced, among other events; and then in the 17th and 18th chapters we have a distinct vision devoted to the entire history of Babylon from the period when she sat upon the ten-horned beast in the glory of her power, till her awful overthrow. In this case, it cannot be doubted that the writer of the Apocalypse, after carrying the history of a general train of events down to a certain point, goes back and takes up a particular thread of the same history, and traces it over the same period again. The principle of interpretation which is thus ascertained, must be applied to the 19th and 20th chapters. The visions which they contain are not consecutive, but collateral. To prove this, it is only necessary to recur to a single circumstance. If the beast and the false prophet were cast into the lake of fire before the binding of Satan, and the Millenium, they could have no agency in the gathering of the nations to the battle of the great day, which takes place after those events. But they certainly have a joint agency with the dragon in that gathering; for in the 16th chapter (ver. 13, 14) it is written—‘I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.’ The beast and the false prophet, then, are to be still on the stage when Satan is loosed and goes forth to gather Gog and Magog. We must therefore regard the 19th chapter as a separate history of the beast and false prophet down to the period of their destruction; and the 20th, as a col-
lateral special history of the dragon down to the same period. Both histories terminate in the same great overthrow of the powers of hell; only the beast and the false prophet are first taken, and cast into the lake of fire, and the dragon afterward.

It seems to be generally assumed that the dragon is the great and exclusive representative of all evil, and of course, that, during the period when he was bound, (i.e. the Millennium,) righteousness and peace must have reigned supreme. But this assumption leaves the beast and false prophet out of view. We must remember that there are three great evil powers in the drama of the Apocalypse; and that while one of them was bound, the other two may have had possession of the nations. Holiness and happiness, during the Millennium, is attributed in Revelations 20: 4—6, only to the martyrs of Jesus, not to the nations of the world. 'The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished;' so that death, with its train of evils, was not destroyed in reference to mankind generally. In the 12th and 13th chapters we have an account which fully authorizes the supposition that at the time the dragon was bound, the beast took his place. The great dragon introduced in chap. 12: 3, is clearly the same as the dragon of the 20th chapter, for he is characterized by the same names, viz., 'the old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan.' Ver. 9. After the account of his expulsion from heaven, he is represented as wasting the earth in great wrath, 'because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.' Ver. 9—17. The reason why he knew he had but a short time, evidently was, that he foresaw that the victory which had been gained over him in heaven, would be followed up, and the angel of the key and chain would be sent after him to cast him out of the earth into the bottomless pit. Accordingly, immediately following his persecution of the woman and her seed, we have an account of the rise of the beast; (chap. 13: 1;) and we are expressly told that 'the dragon gave him his power and his seat and great authority.' Ver. 2. It is not to be supposed that the dragon would give up his power and seat, if he could retain them. But what happened to him at this time, that he should be obliged to make over his possessions to a successor? We have no account of his temporary dethronement in the 13th chapter, nor any where else previous to the 20th; and we therefore regard the account in the 20th, of his being bound and cast into the bottomless pit, as a specific statement of the transaction which compelled him to give up his power and seat to the beast. This accords with the fact that he knew he had 'but a short time.' The interval between his ejection from heaven, and the rise of the beast, was short; and during the reign of the beast he was confined in the bottomless pit. The Millennium, then, was the period of the supremacy of the beast; and instead of being a day of glory to the inhabitants of the earth, was a period of blasphemy, war, and bondage. (See chap. 13: 5—8.)

But what was that evil power which was restrained during the reign of the beast? In order to answer this question, we must ascertain the distinctive character of the dragon.

The primary duty of all creatures is to worship God. Hence it is the primary object of the 'old serpent which is the Devil, and Satan,' in his native
THE MILLENNIUM.

character, as the uncreated rival and antagonist of God, to draw men away
to the worship of himself. Idolatry is virtually the worship of the devil,—
and is therefore the form of sin over which he specially presides. As the
patron of idolatry, it may truly be said in respect to the ages before Christi-
anity, that he ‘ deceived the whole world.’ Not only the Gentiles, but even
Israel, God’s peculiar people, for ages gave themselves up to the worship of
idols with unaccountable fatuity. It was to the subversion of this first-born
sin that God directed all his efforts, in his dealings with his people, until the
Babylonish captivity,—when he succeeded, at least externally, in regard to
them. Thenceforward his object was to carry the victory which he had gained
in a single nation, into the heart of the whole world. This we shall see he
accomplished when Christianity triumphed over Rome.

To show more fully that the devil, in his distinctive character as a rival of
God, is an aspirant after divine worship, we may cite the last temptation
which he offered to Christ. ‘ All these [kingdoms of the world] will I give
thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.’ Mat. 4: 7. And again, the
man of sin, ‘ whose coming was after the working of Satan’—who was, in fact,
the incarnation of Satan himself,—is represented as ‘ exalting himself above
all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in
the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.’ 2 Thess. 2: 4.

Regarding the devil, then, in distinction from the beast and the false
prophet, as the representative of idolatry, let us trace his history in the
Apocalypse. He is first introduced, as a great red dragon in heaven, stand-
ing before the woman crowned with twelve stars, ready to devour the child
she was about to bring forth. Rev. 12: 3. When Judaism brought forth
Christianity, what was it but Paganism (so far as the visible world is con-
cerned) that stood ready to destroy it? Paganism, as well as Judaism and
Christianity, had its spiritual seat in ‘ heavenly places,’ up to that time; and
we regard the dragon, the woman, and her child, as symbols of those three
powers. Next we find the devil, after fighting for his place in heaven, de-
feated and cast out. Ver. 9. Recurring to the account of the man of sin, we
see that self-exalting monster whose place was ‘ in the temple of God,’ de-
stroyed by the brightness of Christ’s coming. This took place in the spiritual
world, and immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, which was the
travail of the woman that brought forth the man-child. The great spirit of
idolatry was then first ejected from the ‘ heavenly places.’ The devil next
is represented as wreaking his vengeance on the inhabitants of the earth, by
persecuting the woman and ‘ the remnant of her seed.’ Ver. 13—17. This
clearly represents the bloody rage of Paganism against the ‘ martyr church’
during the first ages after the destruction of Jerusalem. But Satan’s time
was short. ‘ I saw,’ says John, ‘ an angel come down from heaven, having
the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid
hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and
bound him a thousand years; and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut
him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more
till the thousand years should be fulfilled.’ Rev. 20: 1—3. Without at-
ttempting a precise explanation of this passage, it is sufficient for our present
purpose to say, that we regard it as a representation of the suppression of idolatry, and the restraint of Pagan influences throughout the territory commonly called Christendom, during the middle ages. It is a fact, whether we rightly interpret and apply it, or not, that Paganism was suppressed in the Roman Empire shortly after the 'martyr age.' The accession of Constantine to the throne gave Christianity the ascendency in A. D. 328; and though idolatry was afterwards, to some extent, tolerated, in the course of a few centuries it was utterly banished and barred out, by the edicts of other emperors; by the triumph of Christianity over the barbarous nations that overran the Roman Empire, and settled the west of Europe; and finally, by the rise of Mahomedanism in the East, which maintained by fire and sword the unity of God, and stood for ages as a bulwark against idolatry, separating Europe from the territories of Paganism. We may safely say, in round numbers, that for a thousand years the influences of Paganism were excluded from Christendom. Yet, during this period the beast, that represents false Christianity, reigned in Satan's stead; and the Millennium, instead of being a day of glory to the nations of the world, was a period that is well characterized as the 'dark ages.' In fact, the very darkness and imbecility of those ages, by limiting the intercourse of nations, and, as it were, secluding Christendom in monastic solitude, helped to exclude Paganism from its ancient seat.

But Satan was cast into the 'bottomless pit.' How is this to be understood? What is the 'bottomless pit?' This question is easily answered by recurring to the original. The word translated 'bottomless pit' is that from which the English word abyss is derived, and should have been translated the abyss or the deep. It does not refer, as is commonly supposed, to hell, or to a place of punishment, but is equivalent to the word sea. This may be seen by comparing Rev. 17: 8, with 13: 1. The same beast is the subject of discourse in both of these passages: and in one of them he is described as ascending out of the 'bottomless pit,' or the abyss; and in the other, as rising out of the sea.' Now we have a definition of 'many waters,' in Rev. 17: 15, which may also be taken for a definition of 'the sea;' or the abyss, out of which the beast (as also the locusts of the fifth trumpet, ch. 9: 1) ascended, and into which Satan was cast. 'The waters which thou sawest are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.' According to this definition, we understand, that as the locusts, (chap. 9: 3,) which evidently represent the Mohammedans, poured forth from the chaotic regions of the eastern world, as the beast whose body was formed chiefly of the barbarians that overran the Roman Empire, also came out of the same eastern abyss; so Satan, or the spirit of idolatry, when expelled from Christendom, was cast into the same abyss, and there confined a thousand years.

The most difficult matter still remains to be explained; and that is, the release of Satan at the expiration of the Millennium. Our theory leads to the conclusion that the spirit of Paganism has been let loose again upon Christendom, since the end of the 'dark ages.' What evidence is there of this in history? We will simply mention four facts which we regard as tokens of the loosening of Satan. 1. Mohammedanism, which was an important part of the
chain with which Paganism was bound, has within the last few centuries fallen into decay. 2. During the same period the Russian Empire, which, as to a great part of its territory, is Pagan, and in fact, is part of the great Asiatic abyss out of which the locusts and the beast arose, has become a leading power in Europe. 3. The channels of communication between Europe and the East—which during the dark ages were closed—have been opened by the improvements of navigation, and the revival of commercial enterprise; and in all communications between good and evil, where fallen human nature alone is concerned, evil has the advantage. Instead of imagining that England by her eastern enterprises has civilized Asia, we apprehend that Asia has well nigh *paganized* the spirit of England. 4. The concomitant, and in fact one principal element of the Reformation, was what is called the 'revival of letters;' which was nothing more than a re-enthronement of Greek and Latin [i. e. Pagan] intellect. The spirit of heathen Rome and Greece, in the 16th century, spread itself over all Christendom; and at this day it reigns supreme in the colleges and schools of Europe and this country. Such facts as these satisfy us that at the very time (whenever it was) that God began to move the world by the spirit of Reform, Satan also was loosed, and went forth to gather the nations to battle.*

Thus we have shown that the account of the binding and loosing of Satan, in the 20th of Revelations, is consistent with our first position that the second advent, the first resurrection, and the Millennium, are past. We may add in conclusion, that the views presented in this article, lead us to believe that the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, are now engaged in their work of gathering the nations; and that the battle of the great day, which precedes the final resurrection and judgment, is the scene next to come.

---

* It appears by the following extract from Le Bas's life of Wicel—The father of the Reformation—that our theory, in some of its general features, is not of very recent or heretical origin. At the very time of Satan's irruption, Christendom seems to have had an instinctive or an inspired discernment of his presence:—

"In the days of Wicel, there wandered about Christendom a persuasion, that the world had seen an end of the Apocalyptic period of a thousand years, during which Satan was to be bound, and that he was then actually loosed from that confinement, and was in the full exercise of his remaining privilege of mischief. It appears, from a passage in Fox's Book of Martyrs, that some reckoned the thousand years from the birth of Christ; others, as he conceives, more correctly, from the cessation of the church's sufferings in the days of Constantine. According to either supposition, the period had expired previously to the birth of Wicel. To this opinion there are repeated allusions in the writings of Wicel. He seems to speak of it as a thing beyond all controversy; and to consider the Christian community as once more exposed to the desperate malice of its invisible persecutor and adversary."
§ 49. THE ‘TWO WITNESSES.’

The history of the two witnesses occupies the whole space between the first and second judgments. Commencing at the destruction of Jerusalem, (see Rev. 11: 2, 3,) it extends to the completion of the second woe, which immediately precedes the trumpet of the last judgment. Verses 12—18. Forty and two months, or (dropping the symbol) 1260 years, reaching to A. D. 1380, is the period of their appointed testimony; but their death, resurrection, ascension to heaven, and the earthquake and slaughter which constitute the second woe, are posterior to their testimony, and occupy an indefinite period subsequent to the 1260 years. These are evidently the events which have taken place since 1380, when the dispensation immediately preparatory to the second judgment commenced. We may divide the whole period covered by the Apocalypse into four parts, viz.: 1, the period of the first judgment; 2, the period of the testimony of the two witnesses; 3, the period of the ascension of the two witnesses; 4, the period of the second judgment. The first and second of these periods are clearly defined; but the boundaries of the other two are yet to be ascertained.

Since the two witnesses, then, are evidently the representatives of the intermediate dispensation between the first and second judgments—i.e., of the dispensation which has existed over Christendom since the destruction of Jerusalem—it is a matter of some importance to determine who they are, or what they signify. We are not prepared to solve all the enigmas of their history; but we have a general theory about them, which, to our own mind, is satisfactorily established, and sufficient for the purpose of determining the character of the dispensation which succeeded the apostolic age and is now approaching its end. This theory we will proceed to expound.

In the first place, the two witnesses are declared to be ‘the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.’ Ver. 4.—This refers us to the 4th chapter of Zechariah, where the prophet records his vision of a candlestick with its lamps, supplied with oil by two olive trees. ‘These,’ said the angel, referring to the olive trees, ‘are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.’ Ver. 14. The two witnesses, then, are the ‘two anointed ones’ who stood by the Lord of the earth, in Zechariah’s time. From this we infer clearly two things: 1, That the two witnesses were literal persons, and not symbols; for if they were symbols, then the olive trees would be symbols of symbols, and the angel’s professed explanation when he said, ‘These are the two anointed ones,’ &c., would be no explanation at all, but only a transmutation of one set of symbols into another: 2, That the two witnesses were not inhabitants of the visible world, but of some inner mansion; for at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, when they were to commence their testimony among the Gentiles, they must have been four or five hundred years old, since they existed as the two anointed ones of God at the time of the building of the second temple by Zerubbabel.
THE TWO WITNESSES.

By an attentive perusal of Zech. 4, the reader will perceive that the object of the vision was to teach the prophet, that Zerubbabel was sustained in his arduous enterprise of rebuilding the temple, not by his own strength, but by the spirit of the Lord; (see ver. 6;) just as the light of a lamp is sustained by the oil in its bowl. And then the view of the seer is carried back into the invisible world, where he is shown the channel through which the spirit of God was ministered to Zerubbabel. The oil poured itself into the lamp from two olive trees. These olive trees were two anointed persons, who stood before the God of the earth, deriving their power from him. The links in the chain of agency by which the temple was being built were, 1, the God of the earth; 2, the two anointed ones who stood before him; and 3, Zerubbabel and the visible laborers.

It appears, then, that in Zechariah’s time there were two anointed ones who stood as spiritual mediators between God and the visible Jewish church, and superintended the building of the temple. Who were they? The two principal agents of God under the Jewish dispensation were certainly Moses and Elijah. If the two anointed ones were men, it is to be presumed that they were the two men who had the most agency and took the most interest in the affairs of the Jewish dispensation. Moses was in some sense a spiritual mediator while on earth; (see Numb. 11: 25;) and Elijah, five hundred years after his ascension, was revealed spiritually according to the prediction of Malachi, (4: 5,) and the declaration of Christ, (Matt. 11: 14,) in John the Baptist. There is reason therefore to suspect, especially from the last mentioned fact, that Moses and Elijah, after their departure from this world, continued to exercise a spiritual supervision and mediation in relation to the Jewish economy, and were the two anointed ones through whom God endowed Zerubbabel with power. And as the two anointed ones of Zechariah and the two witnesses of the Apocalypse are expressly declared to be identical, there is the same reason to suspect that the two witnesses also were Moses and Elijah.

Again, Christ (who evidently spoke through his angel in Rev. 11: 3) called the two anointed ones ‘my two witnesses,’ as though John, to whom he spoke, knew that he had two witnesses, and would readily understand to whom he referred. Who then would be likely to occur to John’s mind as being the two witnesses of Christ? Most obviously Moses and Elijah, whom John (with Peter and James) had seen with Christ in the cloud of glory on the mount. Matt. 17: 3. The manifest purport of the transfiguration-scene was to show the disciples, among other things, that Moses and Elijah were yet living and acting in the affairs of God’s kingdom, and that they were the two prime ministers of Christ—the anointed ones that stood before him as the sovereign of the world. John had seen Christ’s two witnesses under circumstances never to be forgotten; and he would readily understand that they were the same as the two anointed ones who gave power to Zerubbabel.

Further, the power which is ascribed to the two witnesses, (ver. 5, 6,) of destroying their enemies by miraculous fire, of shutting up the rain of heaven, of turning waters into blood, and of smiting the earth with all plagues, is precisely the kind of power which was given peculiarly to Moses and Elijah.
while on earth. Moses turned waters into blood, (Ex. 7: 20,) and smote Egypt with all manner of plagues. Elijah destroyed two companies of fifty by miraculous fire, (2 Kings 1: 9, &c.,) and shut heaven so that it rained not for three years and six months. 1 Kings 17: 1. We do not undertake to say specifically what manifestation of these powers is announced in the apocalyptic vision under consideration; but we affirm that the language of the announcement is exactly fitted to suggest the idea that the two witnesses were Moses and Elijah.

The threefold combination of coincidences which we have sketched, convinces us that when Christ said, 'I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy [in the outer court] a thousand two hundred and three-score days,' he meant, 'I will give power to Moses and Elijah, who have been my witnesses and agents in the Jewish dispensation, and they shall continue their official work among the Gentiles for another period of 1260 years.'

We are not prepared to propose any theory in regard to the manner in which it is to be understood that the two witnesses were slain by the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit, and afterward were raised and taken up to heaven. These are details, the explanation of which requires a fuller knowledge of the nature and transactions of the spiritual world than we at present possess. Nor is the explanation of them necessary to our present purpose. It is sufficient that we can gather from them that after 1260 years, i.e. in 1830, the two witnesses finished their testimony among the Gentiles, by a transaction resembling the sacrifice of their master, and have since triumphed over their enemies, and prepared the way of the last judgment.

What we wish to bring distinctly to view as the result of our theory, is, that the dispensation which commenced from the destruction of Jerusalem, was not properly speaking the Christian dispensation, i.e. a continuation of the dispensation introduced by Christ and his apostles, but a second edition of the Jewish dispensation, or a continuation of the dispensation committed to Moses and Elijah. The spiritual life of what has been called the Christian church since the apostolic age has been not a revelation of Christ himself, but of the two witnesses who went before him. John the Baptist was a manifestation of Elijah; so that it was in fact Elijah that was sent as 'a voice in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord.' This was his office, and the same was the office of Moses, and of the whole Jewish dispensation. All that is said of the inferiority of John the Baptist to Christ, may properly be taken as an index of the inferiority of the two witnesses to their Master, and of their entire dispensation, to the Christian.

The witnesses were two, because the preparatory dispensation was twofold, legal and prophetic. Moses was the representative of the law. Elijah was the representative of the prophetic spirit, which was intermediate between the law and the gospel, resting in the former, but looking forward to the latter. Christ was the representative of the gospel. As Moses and Elijah are called Christ's two witnesses, so Paul says with a remarkable coincidence of language that the gospel was 'witnessed by the law and the prophets.' Rom. 8: 21. The dispensation which succeeded the apostolic age, has plainly borne the marks of its secondary origin. We can readily trace in it the footsteps
of the two witnesses, but not of Christ. It has dealt largely in the righteousness of the law, and it has nourished within itself the hopes of the prophets. But the righteousness of God revealed by the gospel, has been wanting. As Christ said, 'the prophets and the law prophesied until John,' so we may now say, with the Apocalypse for our voucher, that, with the exception of the brief parenthesis of the primitive church, the prophets and the law prophesied at least till A. D. 1880.

§ 50. THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

The nature, subjects and period of the 'First Resurrection,' described by John in Rev. 20, may be determined with entire certainty by the following process.

I. We compare 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52, and 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17, with Matt. 24: 29—34.

1 Cor. and 1 Thess.  

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Matt. 24: 29—34.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days [A. D. 70] shall the sun be darkened; . . . and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds,—from one end of heaven to the other. . . . Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

The parallelism of these passages is manifest in the following particulars.

1. Both columns announce the second advent of Christ. 2. Both predict the sounding of the angelic trumpet. 3. Both make that sounding the signal of the gathering of the saints. In Matthew the gathering is simply announced, without explanation of its nature. In the passages from 1 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians the gathering is described as a resurrection of the dead, a change of the living from mortality to immortality, and a translation of all to the immediate presence of Christ. 4. Both columns set the time of this great transaction very near to the period of Christ's personal ministry. In the first, language is used which plainly indicates that Paul expected that he and others cotemporary with him would be alive at the time of the second advent; and in the second, it is expressly affirmed that Christ would come
and gather his elect immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, within
the lifetime of the generation then present. On the whole, there can be no
doubt that both refer to the same events. Of course it is demonstrated that
Matt. 24: 31 announces a literal resurrection—a gathering of the saints, liv-
ing and dead, from Hades and Mortality.

II. We compare Matt. 24: 29—31, with Rev. 6 and 7.


"Immediately after the tribulation of
those days shall the sun be darkened,
and the moon shall not give her light,
and the stars shall fall from heaven, and
the powers of the heavens shall be sha-
ken. Then shall appear the sign of
the Son of man in heaven; and then
shall all the tribes of the earth mourn.
And they shall see the Son of man com-
ing in the clouds of heaven, with power
and great glory. And he shall send his
angels with a great sound of a trumpet,
and they shall gather his elect from the
four winds, from one end of heaven to
the other."

Rev. 6 and 7.

Ver. 12. "I beheld when he had opened
the sixth seal, and lo, there was a
great earthquake; and the sun became
black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon
became as blood; and the stars of heav-
en fell unto the earth, and the heaven
departed as a scroll, &c. And the kings
of the earth, &c., hid themselves in the
dens and in the rocks of the mountains;
and said to the mountains and rocks,
Fall on us, and hide us from the face of
him that sitteth on the throne, and from
the wrath of the Lamb; for the great
day of his wrath is come; and who shall
be able to stand? And after these things
I saw four angels . . . holding the four
winds, . . . and I saw another angel
having the seal of the living God, and he
cried with a loud voice, . . . saying, . .
Hurt not the earth . . . till we have
sealed the servants of our God in their
foreheads, . . . And there were sealed
an hundred and forty and four thousand
of all the tribes of Israel; of the tribe of
Juda twelve thousand; of the tribe of
Reuben twelve thousand, &c. And lo
a great multitude . . . of all nations . .
stood before the throne and before the
Lamb, clothed with white robes. . .
They shall hunger no more, neither
thirst any more," &c.

The general identity of these passages is too evident to need much comment.
In the last paragraphs of the parallel, the following points of unity may be
noticed. 1. Both passages announce a gathering of the saints to Christ. 2.
Both represent it as a gathering from the four winds. 3. Both ascribe the
gathering to the instrumentality of angels. 4. As we have proved that the
first announces in general language, a literal resurrection, so in the second
we find a variety of terms that plainly point to the same fact: e. g., the saints
are sealed with the 'seal of the living God'; they are clothed with 'white
robes'; they have 'come up out of great tribulation'; they stand before God;
they are beyond the reach of hunger and thirst.
THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

It should be noticed also that the chronological indices in the two passages exactly agree. In Matthew, the time fixed for the advent of Christ and the gathering of the saints, was within the lifetime of the generation living when the prophecy was uttered; in other words, 'immediately after the tribulation' of the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70. In Rev. 6 and 7, the advent and gathering take place at the opening of the sixth seal, previous to the sounding of any of the trumpets of the Gentile dispensation, and immediately after a series of tribulations, exactly corresponding to those of A. D. 70, ushered in by the opening of the first five seals.

It is thus made certain that the 7th chapter of Revelations describes the same gathering as that announced in Matt. 24: 31, and of course the same resurrection of the saints from Hades and Mortality, as that announced in 1 Cor. 15: 52, and 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17. Thus also the time of this resurrection is fastened with a 'threefold cord' to the period immediately subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem, before the commencement of the times of the Gentiles.

We must here glance at some of the details which are presented in Rev. 7. It will be perceived that while Matt. 24: 31 predicts the gathering of the saints, and the passages in 1 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians give us a clue to the mode of the gathering, we have in Rev. 7 a sort of statistical account of the number and national origin of the persons gathered. Twelve thousand from each of the tribes of Israel—in all 144,000 Jews—occupy the foreground of the resurrection-scene, and the picture is filled up with an innumerable multitude 'of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues.' This is just such a gathering as might be anticipated, on the supposition that it was the general harvest of the saints of preceding ages. The vision cannot be referred with the least plausibility to any such transactions in the visible world as the conversion of Jews and Gentiles to Christianity; for, in the first place, the number of Jews that embraced Christianity in the times to which the prophecy refers, never approached the sum of 144,000; and, secondly, their classification by tribes, was then obsolete. It is as evident that the assignment of the 144,000 to the original twelve tribes of Israel is to be understood literally, as it is that the innumerable multitude which was gathered with them came literally from 'every nation and kindred and people and tongue.' If it is considered that for two thousand years the religion of the true God had made its abode with the Jews, it is easily conceivable that twelve thousand of each of the twelve tribes should have 'died in faith,' and have been kept in store for the resurrection at Christ's advent. And it is equally rational to suppose that they who 'feared God and worked righteousness' among the Gentiles, few and far between as they were in individual nations and times, would amount, when reckoned for the whole world, and for all preceding ages, to an 'innumerable multitude.'

On the whole it is sufficiently evident that we have in the 7th of Revelations a specific account of the resurrection of the 'Old Testament saints,' (including of course the saints of the apostolic age.) As the Gentile multitude was evidently only a secondary accompaniment of the 144,000 from the tribes of Israel, the resurrection under consideration may properly be termed
by way of distinction, the resurrection of the Jewish church. The appropriate time for this resurrection was at the close of the Jewish dispensation.

III. We next compare Rev. 7: 2—4, with Rev. 14: 1—4.

Rev. 7: 2—4.

"I saw another angel . . . having the seal of the living God; and he cried, saying, Hurt not the earth . . . till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. . . . And there were sealed an hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of Israel."—And the Lamb.

Rev. 14: 1—4.

"I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. . . . These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb."

It is obvious that both of these passages refer to the same ransomed assembly. The number in each is the same. In each, the saints are sealed in their foreheads with the name of the living God.

Now as we have proved that the first passage announces a literal resurrection of the Jewish church, which took place immediately after the close of the Jewish dispensation, we transfer this information to the second passage, and by means of it determine the meaning of the concluding verse—"These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb." Under the Jewish dispensation, the first ripe fruits were offered to God before the general harvest was gathered. In some sense, therefore, the passage before us represents the church of 144,000 as being presented to God before the general gathering of mankind. Our previous demonstrations show in what sense this was true. That Jewish church was first presented to God in the resurrection. The term 'first-fruits' is here applied to the 144,000 in the same way as it is applied to Christ in 1 Cor. 15: 23. With reference to the whole race of man, Christ was the 'first-fruits' of the resurrection harvest. With reference to the great mass, to be raised after the times of the Gentiles, the Jewish church was the 'first-fruits.' It is proved then by the explicit testimony of inspiration, as well as by every consideration of reason, that the resurrection of the Jewish church immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, was the 'first resurrection.'

IV. We turn now to Rev. 20: 4—13, and apply to its interpretation the results of our preceding investigations. The portions of the passage which are essential to our present purpose are the following:—

'I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. . . . But the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. . . . They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. When the thousand years are expired, [Gog and Magog are gathered and brought up to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Fire from heaven consumes them, and the devil that deceived them is cast into the lake of fire.] And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; . . . and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works.'
THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

Here we have a description of two resurrections, separated from each other by an interval of many ages. One of them is called the 'first resurrection' with manifest reference to the other as the second. Both therefore are of the same kind. If one is a literal resurrection, the other must also be literal. It is admitted on all hands that the second is a literal resurrection. Of course the same is true of the first. Now as we have proved that a literal resurrection of the Jewish church took place immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, and that this was the first resurrection; and as it is evident that there can be but one first resurrection, it is fairly demonstrated that the resurrection denominated 'the first' in the above passage, is identical with that of the Jewish church. This conclusion will be confirmed by comparing the specific characteristics of the persons described as the subjects of the resurrection in question, with the characteristics of the church that was raised at the close of the Jewish dispensation.


CHAP. 14.

"They sung a new song, . . . and no man could learn that song but the 144,000 which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled. . . . In their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault."

CHAP. 20.

"They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."

One of these passages is manifestly the echo of the other. The peculiar blessedness and holiness attributed to the subjects of the first resurrection in the second of them, is more minutely described in the first, and is there expressly assigned to the 144,000, or, as we have before proved, to the Jewish church which was raised from the dead after the destruction of Jerusalem.


CHAP. 6.

"When he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth. And white robes were given to them; and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

CHAP. 20.

"I saw thrones, and they sat upon them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God; . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."

The same company of the martyred dead are the subjects of discourse in both of these passages. In the first passage they are represented as awaiting the redemption of the judgment. In the second their judgment is past, and they are described as standing with Christ in the blessedness and holiness of
the resurrection. The scene of the first passage occurs at the opening of the fifth seal, just after the awful tribulations that follow the opening of the former seals, (i.e. the tribulations of A.D. 70,) and just before the second advent and the resurrection-gathering which follow the opening of the sixth seal. It is manifest that these same martyrs who cried for deliverance at the opening of the fifth seal, were the subjects of the gathering under the sixth. And thus it is evident that they who are described in Rev. 20 as partakers in the first resurrection, are also identical with those who were gathered under the sixth seal.

In view of all these coinciding tokens, we cannot doubt that the true interpretation of the vision in Rev. 20: 4—6, is as follows: 1. The resurrection there described, was, as to its nature, a rising from Hades and Mortality—that very resurrection which the apostles and primitive believers constantly represented as very near, and which Paul in 1 Cor. 15: 52 and 1 Thess. 4: 16, specifically defined as a literal resurrection. 2. Its subjects were the saints of all previous ages—in three classes, viz. martyrs, Jews, and Gentiles. 3. Its time was immediately after the tribulations of A.D. 70, between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals, and more than a thousand years previous to the time appointed for the general resurrection.

We subjoin the following corollaries of this conclusion.

1. The millennium, properly so called, being the period between the first and second resurrection, is past. It was the millennium, not of saints in this world, but of the saints of the Jewish dispensation, in the resurrection.

2. We are now in a position to see why the New Testament constantly places the commencement of the kingdom of heaven at the destruction of Jerusalem. The kingdom of heaven is properly the kingdom of the resurrection. Christ entered the resurrection himself soon after his death; and, so far as the king was concerned, the kingdom of heaven began from his ascension. But his destined subjects in Hades and Mortality, did not enter the resurrection till his coming at the end of the Jewish dispensation. That therefore was more properly the era of the commencement of his kingdom.

3. We understand now what Christ meant, when he promised his apostles that at his ascension of the throne, they also should "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Probably most persons would find it difficult to tell where "the twelve tribes of Israel" over whom the apostles

*It should be noticed that while the church of the first resurrection is described in Rev. 7, as a complex body, consisting on the one hand of 144,000 from the tribes of Israel, and on the other of a vast multitude from other nations, the same church is designated in Rev. 14: 1—4, simply by the number of the Jewish portion of it, i.e. 144,000; and in Rev. 20: 4—6 it is designated by the still narrower expression—'the souls of them that were beheaded,' &c. This variation indicates that there were three distinct grades in that church. As the 144,000 Jews were distinguished as the nucleus of the Gentile multitude, so within this nucleus there appears to have been a still more distinguished body, consisting of those who in all ages had suffered death for the word of God. This being the constitution of the church, it is obvious that it might properly and naturally be designated by reference either to the whole of its complex body, or to the Jewish portion of it, as being its soul, or to the company of the martyrs, as being its heart.—We do not understand from the language of Rev. 20: 4, that none but those who literally suffered martyrdom, had part in the first resurrection, but that the martyrs of the Jewish dispensation and of the apostolic age, were the prominent persons of the drama.
were to reign, could be found. In this world the original distinction of the tribes has long been obliterated, and, according to the common apprehension, no such distinction has any place in heaven. But we have found a very explicit disclosure of the fact that the central body of the 'church of the first-born' consists of a hundred and forty-four thousand Jews, divided into twelve tribes of twelve thousand each. Thus we find a place for the twelve thrones of the apostles.

§ 51. BUSH ON THE RESURRECTION.

_Anastasis: or the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body, rationally and scripturally considered._ By George Bush, Professor of Hebrew, New York City University. New York: Wiley and Putnam. 1845.

On reading this work, we find ourselves obliged to confess that our favorable anticipations of it have not been realized. The novelty of its theories evinces a mental bravery which we cannot but admire, and to some of its conclusions we cordially assent; but we are convinced that, as a whole, it presents a false view of the great subject which it undertakes to expound. We shall vindicate this opinion of its merits, not by sweeping, declamatory censures, but by 'sternly interrogating' its specific doctrines.

The negative part of the main position which is assumed and defended throughout the book, is, that 'the resurrection of the body is not a doctrine of revelation.' Mr. Bush gives no quarter to such rhapsodies as the following from Young's 'Last Day':

"Now monuments prove faithful to their trust,  
And render back their long committed dust;  
Now charnel rattle; scattered limbs, and all  
The various bones, obsequious to the call,  
Self-moved advance; the neck perhaps to meet  
The distant head; the distant head the feet,  
Dreadful to view, see, through the dusky sky,  
Fragments of bodies in confusion fly;  
To distant regions journeying, there to claim  
Deserted members and complete the frame."

We borrow the following sketch of Mr. B's _philosophical_ argument against the popular doctrine of the resurrection of the body, from a notice of his work in 'The New World':—"Assuming this to be, in some sense or other, the positive creed of Christendom, Prof. B. enters upon the consideration of it first upon physiological grounds, and aims to show that the admitted fact of the constant flux of particles in our present bodies throws an insuperable bar in the way of the resurrection of the same bodies, inasmuch as the very idea of _sameness_ is precluded by the evanescent nature of the subject. The conceded fact, moreover, that the constituent elements of our bodies are inces-
santly passing into new and multifarious combinations, animal and vegetable, presents another objection which, he affirms, though often urged, has never been answered. The difficulty lies in establishing a conceivable relation between the body that dies and the body that is raised. This, he maintains, on the common view is impossible, without the actual re-gathering and re-construction of the dispersed relics of the original structure; and this, if it were effected, would constitute a material and not a spiritual body, which revelation affirms to be the body of the resurrection. This point is argued with the greatest acuteness and ingenuity.”

In the following extracts we present the strongest point of Mr. B’s scriptural argument on the same subject. In his comments on Paul’s comparison of the resurrection to the growth of plants, in 1 Cor. 15: 35—37, he says:

“We have here and in the sequel the most full, explicit, and systematic discussion of the general subject of the resurrection, any where to be found in the scriptures; and whatever else may be taught by it, we think nothing can be more unequivocally asserted, than that man does not rise again with the same body which he had in this world.

“The grand inquiry evidently is, to ascertain the precise point of the analogy in the two cases, [i.e. of vegetation and the resurrection.] There is, in the first place, a coincidence in the fact of dying. In both cases there is that process of decay and dissolution which we denominate death. In the grain the mass of the farinaceous parts, except so much as may be necessary to the sustentation of the future plant in its earlier stages, dies. And so the human body undergoes a similar process of dissolution. Yet here we must aim at precision of ideas, and note the points of difference as well as of similitude. The ‘dying,’ which the apostle predicates of the seed, takes place subsequently to the sowing. But the human body does not die after it is deposited in the dust. It is previously dead—‘for the body without the spirit is dead,’—and therefore cannot die again. That which is absolutely dead cannot be more dead. Still there are items of agreement sufficient to form a basis for the comparison, which will appear as we proceed. As there is something in the plant which dies, so there is also something which does not die. There is an enfolded germ, in which the essential vitality of the seed is concentrated, and if this dies, it does not germinate, and of course no plant springs up. We cannot, of course, suppose that the apostle intended to say that this embryo died, although this is the very point of Thomas Paine’s railing accusation against the scripture doctrine of the resurrection, and on the ground of which he calls St. Paul a fool; contending that, if the seed really and literally died, no plant would grow, which is indeed true. But this evidently is not the apostle’s meaning; and if the sceptic had ever put his hand into a hill of young potatoes, he might have found to his discomfort, that there was such a thing as vegetable life and death going on together; and such a penance or penalty, would not perhaps have been very inappropriate to such paltry and contemptible cavilling.

“We see, then, very clearly, the law of vegetable reproduction. The new plant arises from the development of a germ in the old one. The vitality of the seed adheres to the germ, and passes with it into the new organization which succeeds; and with the vitality coexists the identity of the plant. So it is that we sow not the body which shall be. We sow a grain of wheat, and what is it that comes up? Not the grain of wheat, but a blade of grass. It eventuates, indeed, in a head of wheat similar to that which is sown. But this is not the
point of the apostle's argument. His reasoning, so to speak, does not rise above the surface of the ground. He designs to show that that product which springs out of the earth, and appears on its bosom, is something different from that which is put into the soil. If we call this the resurrection of the seed, it is perfectly obvious that the term resurrection, in this connection, does not imply the reappearance of the same material mass, the same aggregation of particles, which was deposited in the earth; for the mass, with the exception of the germ, dies—that is, is resolved into dust and its various constituent elements.

"Now, if this process is made use of by the apostle to illustrate the resurrection of the human body, we do not see but we must be forced to the admission of some kind of germ which is developed from the one that is the nucleus—the essential vital principle—of the other. It will soon appear, indeed, that it is a germ of a very peculiar nature, but still that there is something to be developed from the dead body. If not, how does the illustration apply? What is the point of comparison? But if there be this embryo principle, is it material?—is it of the same nature with the gross fabric from which it is developed? This, it will be perceived, is the grand question. The ancient Jews held that it was. They contended that there was an immortal bone in the human body (called by them Lec—aos, Lec) which is the germ of the resurrection-body. This bone, they held, one might burn, boil, bake, pound, bruise, or attempt to bruise, by putting it on the anvil and submitting it to the strokes of the sledge hammer, but all in vain. No effect would be produced upon it. It was indestructible—incorruptible—immortal. This bone was the seed of the future body. And this is, in fact, though not in terms, the theory embraced by Drew in his work on the resurrection. But as the most accurate researches of physiologists have failed to discover any such bone in the system, and as the process of burning leaves no such residuum of the corporeal structure, we are doubtless at liberty to set it down among the thousand and one idle dreams of Rabbinical fiction, and put it on the same shelf with the silly tradition of the Talmudical doctors, that at the resurrection, the bodies of the Jews, in whatever part of the world they died, will be rolled or transported under ground, through secret passages, and all emerge to the light in the land of Canaan, with those of Abraham, and Isaac, and the other patriarchs.

"Still there is undoubtedly a strong disposition among many good men to adhere to this idea of a corporeal or material germ to be in some way developed from the old body, and constituting the nucleus of the new one. But if this be so, what and where is it? What becomes of it when the body is burnt to ashes, and these ashes dissipated to the four winds? Is there any evidence that can satisfy an intelligent mind of the fact of such a latent material germ in the human body, answering to the enfolded embryo of the future plant? And if there is no evidence of this, on what grounds do we hold it?"

"But it will be said, if the apostle's analogy does not teach this, what does it teach? If the fair construction of his language does not imply that there is something developed out of the dead body which forms the link of connexion between it and the resurrection-body, then it would be hard to show that it teaches anything on the subject, an alternative to which, with the qualifications and explanations that follow, we readily subscribe. We cannot understand the apostle's reasoning, unless he means to affirm that there is something of the nature of a germ which emanates from the defunct body, and forms either the substance or the nucleus of the future resurrection-body. But this principle we contend to be what the apostle calls spiritual, that is, invisible, impalpable, refined, etherial—"
something that is essentially connected with vital operations—something that is exhaled with the dying breath, or, in other words, that goes forth from the body before it is consigned to the dust—for, after the body has mouldered away in the grave, we perceive not how any germ or embryo is ever to emanate from it. It is a something, of the interior nature of which all the philosophers in the world know just as much as our readers, and no more. At the same time this ignorance does not stand in the way of the fact. And if this alleged fact be not admitted, what is it? What will any man affirm to be the real point of the apostle’s comparison? If there is some gross material link of connexion between the soul’s present and future tenement, what is it? Let it be pointed out, and let it be shown too that a vitalizing power is connected with it. For ourselves, we confess it completely baffles our comprehension, and if any one can enlighten our darkness on the subject—if he will show us that there is any other than a spiritual germ evolved from the defunct body—we will sit at his feet with the glad docility of a learner who hungered and thirsted for instruction more than for his necessary food. With our present light we must believe that the only germ in the human body answering to the germ in the plant, and upon which the apostle’s comparison is built, is the spiritual body itself.” p. 174–179.

We hardly need say that we agree with Mr. B. thus far most heartily. We have long argued as he does, from reason and from scripture, (at least so far as the 15th of Corinthians is concerned,) against the notion of a resurrection of that body which dies. And we are not sure but that his doctrine in relation to the nature of the body which is raised, is identical with ours. We see nothing in the above extracts at variance with the following view which we presented in the Perfectionist, Vol. III. No. 2:

“Let us suppose that our mortal bodies are compounded of two substances, one of them visible, and the other invisible. The visible is but the shell or garment of the invisible, like the outside case of an English watch. We must not confound the inner substance with the soul, but consider it a real body corresponding in shape and function to the visible body, and in fact visible itself to spiritual eyes. We know that sensation does not pertain to mere dead matter; and yet the susceptibility to sensation exists in every part of our body. Now let the reader conceive of that substance which feels physical impressions, as separate from the visible matter with which it is interwoven, and he will have our idea of what we call the inner body. Adopting this supposition, what difficulty is there in conceiving that while the visible part of the body, at death, dissolves and is scattered, never to be re-organized, the invisible, and in fact the only vital and essential part of the body retains its organization and identity.”

We suppose that Mr. B’s ‘spiritual germ’ is the same thing as that which we call the ‘inner body.’ So far then we agree with him, viz. that there is to be no resurrection of the body which sees corruption; and that the body which is to be raised is a spiritual body, which, though invisible, exists in the visible body before death.

The next question is, What is the nature of that change which places this body in the resurrection state? We confess we have had much difficulty in ascertaining Mr. B’s answer to this question, not because his language in the several passages relating to it is obscure, but because some of those passages
seem to contradict others. We are safe however in saying that his prevailing doctrine is that the change which constitutes the resurrection of the spiritual body takes place at the death of the material body, and is the natural and necessary result of the disengagement of the immortal germ from its earthly tenement. Our readers will judge whether this is not a true representation of his views, from the following extracts:

"It will have been seen, from the tenor of the preceding pages, that the argument from reason leads by fair and unforced inference to the conclusion that the true doctrine of the resurrection is the doctrine of the development of a spiritual body at death from the bodies which we now inhabit. p. 34.

"On this view the resurrection takes place when the spiritual body leaves the material, which, as before remarked, we believe to be the true doctrine. p. 109.

"The position is impregnable, that the prevailing sense of resurrection in the New Testament is simply that of future existence, the future state or immortality. The person—the sentient intelligent being—who now yields to the universal sentence, and appears to become extinct, shall again be restored to life by entering upon another sphere of existence. p. 145.

"Is the resurrection body assumed at once, or does a long interval of time elapse before that event occurs? If the theory of a gross material germ were to be assumed as the true one, we can perceive that there would be nothing in the nature of the case to forbid the idea of a long interval intervening before it should be quickened into its ultimate formation. The vital power of seeds often remains dormant for an immensely long period; and so it might be in regard to the germ of a human body, provided we could have evidence that any such germ existed, and that a vital energy was associated with it. But here is the precise point of the difficulty. We see no adequate grounds for believing that such a staminal principle, material in its qualities, exists; and till this is shown, we are relieved of the necessity of any other reference to the theory, than to demand of those who hold it to answer this fair interrogatory: If the resurrection of the body, which is deposited in the earth, depends on the development of a corporeal germ, which no process of reasoning or experiment can show to exist, and the body itself is resolved back to its original elements, then on what basis rests the doctrine of the resurrection of that body—the tabernacle which we have inhabited on earth? It will not do to say that God can rebuild the original fabric, for this contradicts and makes useless the doctrine of the material germ.

"We are inevitably thrown back, then, as far as we can see, on the theory, so to term it, of the immediate development and assumption of the spiritual body, and its entrance at once upon the resurrection state. We know not how to conceive of a pause—a long suspension—in the essential activity of the vital principle with which thought and consciousness are connected. We are not, we presume, addressing those who believe in the sleep of the soul after death, but those who expect to retain their conscious existence in the world of spirits. And if our intelligent principle goes with the vital, which depends upon various hidden ethereal agencies constantly operating around us, why shall we not infer that our spiritual mode of being commences at once upon the abandonment of our gross corruptible tenements? p. 180.

"Are we not justified in maintaining, that the only resurrection of the dead ever to be experienced by man, is that of which these patriarchs [spoken of in Matt. 22: 31, 32] have long since been the subjects? Is there more than one kind of resurrection? Does not our Lord's language establish this as the gen.

"So far as we are competent to form a judgment, the evidence from reason preponderates in favor of the idea of the immediate entrance at death upon the resurrection-state. p. 237.

"The resurrection and the judgment actually resolve themselves into a law of our nature; our physical, psychical and moral constitution is such that we really and necessarily rise at death into the true resurrection." p. 345.

We will now show that Mr. B. himself contradicts and subverts the doctrine of the above extracts.

1. The reader will perceive that, in one case at least, he represents the New Testament doctrine of the resurrection as simply that of a future existence. It is not therefore without some inconsistency, that in other cases he brings into his definition the accessory idea of the development of the spiritual body, unless he assumes that the existence of the person is inseparable from the spiritual body. But leaving this difficulty, and admitting his compound definition of the resurrection, viz., that it is a future existence in a spiritual body, it is evident that the wicked, as well as the righteous, enter upon a resurrection in this sense at death. He admits the future existence of the wicked, and their existence in spiritual bodies, i.e. their resurrection according to the above definition. And yet he teaches throughout his book that the resurrection is not predicated of the wicked at all!—and in his zeal for the establishment of this position, he explains away, by means which none but those who are deeply versed in the art of special pleading can conceive of, all such texts as the following: 'Many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.'—'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.'—'There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.' Now if he adheres to this part of his doctrine, viz. the denial of a resurrection to the wicked, then his previous doctrine, viz. that the idea of a resurrection is simply that of a future existence in a spiritual body, is subverted. Another ingredient must be added to the compound by which he defines the resurrection. He must say that it is the future existence of the righteous in spiritual bodies. Since existence after death, and the development of spiritual bodies are equally predicatable of the righteous and the wicked, if the wicked, as Mr. B. holds, are not subjects of the resurrection, then the essence of the resurrection lies not in a future existence, nor in the development of spiritual bodies, as the above extracts teach, but in that spiritual life which distinguishes the righteous and the wicked.

Much of this confusion results from the theory which Mr. B. assumes and attempts to establish at the outset of his biblical argument, that there is but one kind of anastasis or resurrection spoken of in the New Testament, and that that is the resurrection which is simply opposed to the Sadducean notion of future non-existence. He begins with deducing his definition of anastasis from those passages in which that word is manifestly used in its lowest and
most general sense, as a resurrection or a standing up from annihilation, such as Matt. 22: 61, 32, (where Christ proves that there is a resurrection, from the fact that the patriarchs were alive,) and 1Cor. 15: 12, &c., (where Paul is manifestly arguing against those who think that the dead cease to exist,) and then assumes that this is the only sense of the word, so far at least that he altogether neglects to recognize any other. Indeed he asks in one of the preceding extracts, as triumphantly as though a negative answer were out of the question, "Are we not justified in maintaining, that the only resurrection of the dead ever to be experienced by man, is that of which these patriarchs have long since been the subjects? Is there more than one kind of resurrection?" We answer, Most certainly there is more than one or two kinds of resurrection spoken of in the New Testament. As an unquestionable instance of the use of the word anastasis in two senses in the same passage, we may cite Heb. 11: 35. "Women received their dead raised to life again, [ex anastaseos] and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." [anastaseos.] In the first case anastasis means a resurrection from the disembodied state to animal life, and in the second it refers to the resurrection of the righteous after death to a state of happiness. This instance alone clears the field of Mr. B's assumption, and we may now take the liberty to propose a different view of the word in question. Anastasis, as Mr. B. says, properly means a standing up. Of course it may be used in as many different senses, as there are states which men may be said to stand up from. It is used in the New Testament in at least the six following ways. 1. It is a standing up from non-existence, as in Matt. 22: 31, 32, and 1 Cor. 15: 12. In this sense the wicked, as well as the righteous, stand up after death; and if Matt. 22: 31, 32 proves that the patriarchs were in the ultimate resurrection when Moses wrote, then according to Mr. B's own theory the wicked also were in the same resurrection, for they were in existence, and that is all he professes to infer from the language of Moses concerning the patriarchs. 2. Anastasis is a standing up from Hades, i.e. a return from the world of spirits into the animal body. It is used in this sense whenever it occurs in connexion with cases of visible resurrection, such as those of the widow's son, Lazarus, the damsel that was raised, &c. Anastasis (or some equivalent word) is used in a variety of instances as it is used in Heb. 11: 35. This is certainly a very different standing up from that of the patriarchs. 3. Anastasis is a standing up from both Hades and the mortal state. It is used in this sense whenever it is applied to Christ's resurrection. He arose out of Hades and in this respect his resurrection was like that of Lazarus, and others that were raised previously. But he did not continue in his animal body as they did; he assumed the immortal body, and ascended to the presence of God. This, so far as objective changes are concerned, is the model of the universal resurrection. The just and the unjust must come up from Hades, and from the mortal state, in immortal bodies, and appear before God. (See Rev. 20: 12, 13.) 4. Anastasis is sometimes used with exclusive reference to the resurrection of the just, as in Luke 20: 35, and then, in addition to the idea of ascension from Hades and the mortal state, in the immortal body to the presence of God, which belongs to the general resurrection, it has the accessory
idea of a permanent happy existence in the presence of God—i. e. it is a standing up from Hades, mortality, and the second death. 5. Anastasis is sometimes used with particular reference to the resurrection of the wicked, as in John 5: 29, and then, it is a standing up from Hades and mortality into condemnation and the final lake of fire. 6. Believers in this world are represented as being in a kind of anastasis—'risen with Christ.' (See Rom. 6: 5, Col. 3: 1.) This is a standing up from sin and spiritual death—an incipient operation of the power which shall ultimately raise them out of Hades, mortality, and final condemnation.

Now it is not to be wondered that Mr. Bush, after crushing all these kinds of resurrection into one, and that the lowest in importance, viz. the anastasis of the patriarchs, and after discoursing about this as 'the resurrection,' 'the true doctrine of resurrection,' &c., should find himself involved at last in many and great absurdities. We expect to show before we have done, that the self-contradiction noticed above is among the least of these absurdities.

2. If the true doctrine of the resurrection is simply that of a future existence in spiritual bodies, as Mr. Bush again and again affirms or intimates, then it is obvious that the resurrection necessarily takes place in all cases at death, and no room is left for the doctrine of an intermediate state either before or since the resurrection of Christ. This is the prevailing doctrine of the book before us. That the reader may be sure we do not misrepresent it, we call attention again to the last of the foregoing citations:

"The resurrection and the judgment actually resolve themselves into a law of our nature; our physical, psychical, and moral constitution is such, that we really and necessarily rise at death into the true resurrection." p. 345.

If the resurrection is a 'law of our nature,' it is a law of human nature, and took effect as well in Adam's day as in ours. If we 'really and necessarily rise at death into the true resurrection,' the Old Testament saints certainly did the same. Now let the reader compare the following concession (which occurs in a note on the 220th page of Mr. B's book) with the above doctrine, and see if there is any possibility of keeping them from flatly contradicting each other:

"It seems capable of proof, that the state from which the expectant souls of the Old Testament saints were delivered by Christ, is the state of which the term Paradise is more properly to be understood, as a state of real but imperfect happiness. Accordingly, we see in this the ground of our Savior's assurance to the dying thief, that he should that day be with him in paradise; not in heaven, to which it does not appear that he ascended till after his resurrection. This would bring the dying thief into the train of the ascending Savior; and it does not seem probable that he would promise him an entrance into heaven before he entered there himself.

"On the view here exhibited, the doctrine of an intermediate state, subsequent to the resurrection of Christ, must be considered to vanish quite away. The sentiments of the primitive Christian fathers on that subject, appear to have been based upon scriptural intimations which have respect only to those who lived under the former dispensation. To them there was indeed an intermediate state between death and the resurrection, i. e. the resurrection of Christ; but we are unable to perceive upon what grounds such a state can be maintained in reference to the saints of the New Testament era."
The first sentence of the second paragraph in this passage is really curious, if it is considered that the whole drift of Mr. B's argument, rational and exegetical, in the rest of his book, is opposed to the doctrine of an intermediate state altogether. We would substitute for that sentence, the following: 'On the view here exhibited, the doctrine of an intermediate state, previous to the resurrection of Christ, must be considered to be fully admitted.' We are taught by Mr. B. himself, that the Old Testament saints (including of course Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whose resurrection is elsewhere constantly assumed, and is in fact the basis of a great part of his doctrine,) were, till the resurrection of Christ, in an 'expectant state,' a state of 'imperfect happiness,' 'not in heaven,' but in that 'paradise' where the thief went on the day of his death, and where Christ was in the interval between his death and his resurrection. In other words, we are taught by the same man who insists that the true resurrection is a 'law of nature,' and necessarily takes place in all cases at death, that there was no true resurrection of the Old Testament saints till the advent of Christ! If it had been necessary we should have answered Mr. Bush's general theory, by proving this very doctrine of an intermediate state. He has saved us the trouble. The confusions and contradictions which crowd upon the mind in view of the clashing doctrines which Mr. B. teaches, are so stupendous that we shrink from meddling with their details, and gladly leave them to the ponderings of our readers.

Mr. Bush's concession allows us to assume that the Old Testament saints remained in Hades, and of course that there was no resurrection in the most important sense of that word, till after the resurrection of Christ. This assumption leads directly to the inquiry—At what time did the resurrection of those expectant souls take place? Mr. B's prevailing doctrine is, that the true and only resurrection takes place at the death of each individual. Of course he has little to say about any particular crisis of simultaneous resurrection, except to show that he thinks the idea is unfounded. But, as we adopt his incidental doctrine of an intermediate state, and not his prevailing theory, we account it a matter of importance to ascertain definitely when the intermediate state of the Old Testament saints ended.

The passage which first claims our attention in this inquiry is Dan. 12: 2, etc. Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' It will be recollected by those who have read our criticism of Mr. Bush's interpretation of this passage, in The Perfectionist, Vol. IV., No. 6, that his doctrine was that it does not refer to a literal resurrection, but to a 'symbolical reviviscence;' i.e., the future conversion, of the Jews. In reply to this, we pointed to the fact that the resurrection in question manifestly stands in close connection with 'a time of trouble such as never was,' (see ver. 1,) and insisted that, as the period of the destruction of Jerusalem is expressly characterized by Christ in Matt. 24: 21 as such a time,—and as two such times are impossible,—the resurrection of 'many' must have taken place in connection with that catastrophe. Mr. Bush in his present work concedes all this, and of course abandons his former special application of the text to the future conversion of the Jews. He also admits that it refers primarily to a literal
resurrection. So far he has advanced. But now he teaches that it refers to the resurrection of those saints that ‘came out of their graves and appeared to many’ immediately after Christ’s resurrection. See Matt. 27: 52. He thinks this event stands near enough to the destruction of Jerusalem, to have been regarded as synchronical from the prophet’s point of view. This interpretation is a little more plausible than the former, but still is liable to fatal objections. In the first place it is improbable, on the face of the case, that an inspired oracle, after speaking of ‘a time of trouble,’ should affirm that a resurrection should occur ‘at that time’ (see ver. 1) which, in fact, was to take place forty years before. The reader will observe that the order of the announcements in Dan. 12: 1, 2, indicates that the deliverance and resurrection was to come after, rather than before the ‘time of trouble.’ ‘Michael shall stand up, . . . there shall be a time of trouble such as never was, . . . and [as an accompaniment or an immediate sequel] at that time thy people shall be delivered, . . . and many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.’ Any interpretation that places the resurrection before the time of trouble, makes this language very unnatural; and an interpretation that interposes forty years between the two events, makes it totally false.

Again, the resurrection immediately connected with the rising of Christ, was a resurrection of saints only; whereas it is predicted in Daniel that at the time specified some should awake ‘to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.’ Mr. B. still insists on changing the construction of the language, by substituting ‘these’ and ‘those’ for ‘some’ and ‘some,’ so as to make the awakening refer only to the saints, leaving the wicked to sleep to everlasting shame and contempt, without any awakening. We still insist that the change of words which he proposes, cannot properly make any change of the sense. However this may be, we find in Mr. B’s present work a concession which places the authority of Christ himself on the side of the common view of the passage, viz. that view which attaches the awakening to the wicked as well as the righteous. In his remarks on John 5: 28, 29, where Christ announces that the righteous shall come forth ‘to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation,’ Mr. B. says—‘It is to us unquestionable that the Savior had in his eye [in this announcement] the oft-quoted passage of Daniel 12: 2, ‘And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.’ The phraseology is somewhat varied, but the general identity of import is obvious.” p. 289. What more do we need than this admission, to prove beyond all question the falsehood of Mr. B’s criticism, and establish the point that the awakening in Dan. 12: 2 pertains to the wicked as well as the righteous? The coming forth to resurrection in Christ’s announcement, corresponds to the awaking in Daniel’s; and Christ expressly says that they that have done evil shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation; i.e. he interprets Daniel’s language as meaning that some shall awake to everlasting shame and contempt.” Will Mr. B. take the ground that Christ, as well as the rest of the world, misunderstood the passage, and in re-echoing it, gave it a wrong import? If we understand his remarks on John 5: 28, 29, he does take the ground that Christ’s language is to be im-
interpreted by reference to Dan. 12: 2; and then assuming that his criticism
has ejected from the latter passage all reference to a resurrection of the wicked,
he proceeds to cut the former by the measure he has thus prepared, i. e. he
shaves off 'the resurrection of damnation' as an illegitimate excrescence! Here
are two confessedly parallel texts; one is from the mouth of Christ, is per-
fectly lucid in its language, and taken by itself, unquestionably teaches the
doctrine of the resurrection of the wicked; the other is from the mouth of
Daniel, and its language, though so plain as to have been generally understood
as teaching the same doctrine, may be conceded to be doubtful. In this state
of the case, Mr. Bush attaches his own peculiar construction to the doubtful
text, and then argues from that construction against the manifest meaning of
the other! He reverses the laws of hermeneutics, and reasons from things
uncertain against things certain! Instead of allowing Christ to interpret
Daniel, he first interprets Daniel himself, and then makes Daniel correct the
language of Christ! The true method of reasoning in the case is this: It is
certain that Christ, in John 5: 28, 29, teaches the doctrine of the resurrec-
tion of the wicked; and, inasmuch as he evidently re-echoes, and interprets
the prediction in Dan. 12: 2, it is therefore certain that that prediction also
teaches the doctrine of the resurrection of the wicked. We see not how this
can be regarded by a candid mind as any thing less than an absolute demon-
stration.

This point being established, it is manifest that the resurrection immediate-
ly connected with the rising of Christ, did not correspond to the terms of the
prediction in Dan. 12: 2, inasmuch as it was a resurrection only of saints.
The text therefore is set free from all the incumbrances of Mr. Bush's criti-
cisms, and stands forth again in its natural shape, pointing directly to the time
of the destruction of Jerusalem, as the period when many of the dead came
forth, some to the resurrection of life, and some to the resurrection of damna-
tion.

We proceed now to show that the witnesses of the New Testament confirm
this testimony of Daniel. The first passage to which we call attention, is
1 Cor. 15: 20—23. 'But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become
the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man
came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in
Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the
first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.' On this Mr.
B. remarks:

"As the first-fruits of the harvest are a sample of the whole, and being pre-

sent in the temple denominate the remainder pure and holy, so Christ, who,
after his resurrection, was presented in the heavenly temple, may justify be re-
garded as an exemplary and type of the state of those who fall asleep in him, and
an argument that they are not, as dead bodies were, among the polluted things
of the world, but holy to the Lord, and admitted to his presence. The idea is
not so much that Christ was the first, in the order of time, who rose from the
death—as we are expressly taught, both in the Old Testament and the New, that
prior cases of resurrection had repeatedly occurred—but the first in rank, the
author, the procuring cause, of the resurrection of the saints. But the whole har-
vest began to be gathered in immediately after the presentation of the first-fruits,
and it would be a very violent construction of the analogy to suppose it to imply that hundreds or thousands of years might elapse between the resurrection of the grand Precursor and that of the mass of his followers. The true view of the matter is clearly indicated by the sequel, in which we are taught, that this resurrection of the dead, this investiture of the disciples of Christ with immortality, proceeds in a manner analogous with the successive generations of the animal and mortal family, who derive their first life from Adam. As this first family is not formed at once, nor dissolved at once; as the members of it have risen into existence in succession; so neither will the other family be completed at once. Every man of this family is to be quickened in his own order; or as he dies, from Christ the first-fruits down through the lapse of ages to the last generation of believers who shall be found alive at his coming."

The reader will perceive by this specimen, how freely Mr. B., in the car of his theory, rides over and tramples down all obstructing texts. The only reason which he suggests for setting aside the natural meaning of the term "first-fruits," is, that "we are expressly taught both in the Old Testament and the New that prior cases of resurrection had repeatedly occurred." It is true that prior cases of return from Hades to Mortality are recorded in the Old and New Testaments; but it is not true that any such resurrection as that of Christ, viz., a rising out of both Hades and Mortality, had occurred before his resurrection. This is indirectly admitted by Mr. B. himself, inasmuch as he concedes that the Old Testament saints were in an intermediate state below the resurrection, till the rising of Christ. The only reason therefore on which the criticism in question can possibly be founded, is taken away, and the criticism of course falls to the ground.

The word translated "first-fruits," occurs six times in the New Testament, (besides the instances in the passage under consideration,) viz., in Rom. 8: 28, 11: 16, 16: 5, 1 Cor. 16: 15, James 1: 18, Rev. 14: 4; and in every instance designates something that is first in order of time. Mr. B. says, "The whole harvest began to be gathered immediately after the presentation of the first-fruits, and it would be a very violent construction of the analogy to suppose it to imply, that hundreds or thousands of years might elapse between the resurrection of the grand Precursor and that of the mass of his followers." Let the reader consider how much greater violence is done to the analogy, by supposing, as Mr. B. does, that a part of the resurrection-harvest had been gathered thousands of years before the presentation of the first-fruits! Even if a long period should elapse between the resurrection of the precursor and that of the mass of his followers, it would leave the truth of the expression—the first-fruits—untouched. But if some had been raised long before the precursor,(!) they would have been the "first-fruits," and the application of that term to him would be false.

The natural import of the expression "first-fruits," in this passage, is further shown to be the true one, by the following collateral testimonies. In Rev. 1: 5, John calls Christ "the first-begotten from the dead;" in Colossians 1: 18, Paul calls him "the first-born from the dead;" and in Acts 26: 23, Paul declares that his testimony to small and great was that Christ "should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead."

Christ being then the "first-fruits," and the Old Testament saints of course
being in Hades up to the time of his resurrection, it is evident that the assembly described by the phrase—'they that are Christ's'—in the 23d verse, included those saints. Paul declares that the resurrection of that assembly was to take place 'Christ's coming.' We cannot persuade ourselves that it is necessary to undertake a serious refutation of Mr. B's comment on the words—'every man in his own order.' The idea that this signifies that every man rises 'as he dies,' is stultified by what immediately follows. Paul proceeds to state explicitly what he means by 'every man's own order.' 'Christ, the first fruits,'—this is Christ's order; 'afterward they that are Christ's at his coming;' this is their order. The meaning plainly is, that Christ rises first, and afterward, at the period of the second advent, the dead in Christ rise simultaneously. In order then that we may ascertain when the first great simultaneous resurrection, including that of the Old Testament saints, took place, we have only to ascertain the time of Christ's second coming.

Mr. Bush's theory of the second coming, is akin to the Universalist and German theories. He admits that the language in which that event is predicted, is so framed as to appear to teach that the advent would take place within the lifetime of the generation living at the first coming. He admits that the apostles and primitive disciples so understood it, and in all their allusions to the second advent, spoke of it as very near. But he thinks they were in a mistake, and that we, having better data, are qualified to judge and correct them. He admits that the second advent began to take place at least as soon as the destruction of Jerusalem, but insists that it was not a definite, limited event, but an extended coming, stretching forward from the destruction of Jerusalem to the end of prophecy. Of course he denies that any personal coming was promised, and, like the Universalists, resolves the second advent into a spiritual and providential coming.

With this theory, it is easy to see how Mr. Bush can carry along his doctrine that the resurrection of every man takes place as he dies. He leaves out of account the generations of the Jewish dispensation, whose resurrection he has provided for in two ways, viz: 1, by supposing according to his prevailing theory that they rose as they died; and, 2, by supposing that if they did not rise thus, they were released from limbo at the period of Christ's resurrection. Then in regard to the generations of the Christian dispensation, his doctrine is, that as the second advent was a continuous event, so the resurrection is continuous, occurring at each person's death. On this scheme we submit the following remarks.

1. It appears from a statement in the latter part of the chapter containing the passage under consideration, (viz. 1 Cor. 15: 20—23,) and also from a similar passage in 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17, that at the very time when the resurrection of the dead at the coming of Christ, takes place, the change and translation of the living also takes place. If then the second coming began as early as the destruction of Jerusalem, and has extended from that time to this; and if the resurrection of the dead has been a continuous process, corresponding to this second coming, then the change and translation of the living has likewise been going on during the ages since the destruction of Jerusalem. This, we presume, Mr. B. will shrink from maintaining.
2. The plausibility of the theory before us depends entirely on the denial of a personal second coming. For if a personal coming is admitted, then some definite time must be assigned to it, and the theory of an extended coming is at an end. If Paul, in saying that ‘they that are Christ’s shall rise at his coming,’ refers to a spiritual or providential coming which may extend over a tract of ages, then Mr. B’s doctrine of a successive resurrection of individuals, (which in fact resolves the doctrine of the second coming into the old notion that death is the coming of the Son of man,) may stand. But if Paul refers to a personal coming, which has a definite, limited space on the map of time, then the resurrection is simultaneous, and Mr. Bush’s theory is subverted. Now it is a singular fact, that on this important point, he offers exegetical proof, and enters into no discussion. He asserts his belief that a second personal advent was never promised,’ (p. 360,) and there leaves the matter. He comments largely on 1 Thess. 4: 13—18, and gives his views of every part of the passage, except the first part of the 16th verse—‘The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.’ This he leaves untouched. He professes to notice every text in the Old Testament and the New, that has any important bearing on this subject, and yet never alludes to Acts 1: 11,—‘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.’ Both of these passages distinctly predict a personal coming. If the former may be disposed of, as Mr. B. disposes of many other inconvenient texts, by attributing it to the erroneous views of the apostles, this cannot be done with the latter; for it is the word of two angels. As Mr. Bush, in avoiding all notice of these texts, has in fact left the case to go against him by default, we are at liberty to assume that a personal second advent was promised, and was legitimately expected by the primitive disciples. The doctrine then of a continuous second coming, and of course of a continuous resurrection, vanishes away. The question returns, When did Christ come again, as he ascended? This is the true coming (parousia) and appearing (epiphaneia) of the New Testament. This could not occupy a long period of time, and with this definite event the resurrection was immediately connected.

3. If Mr. Bush were compelled (as we think he will be) to admit the doctrine of a personal second coming, we see not how he could avoid the conclusion that it took place in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem; since he teaches already that the second coming began at the period of that event. But we judge from some of his remarks, that he might prefer to assign the second advent to the period of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when ‘the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.’ Rev. 11: 15. This would carry it forward far beyond the destruction of Jerusalem, to the time to which we assign the second judgment. He does in fact carry forward the predicted change of the living saints to that time; and as the resurrection of the dead, and indeed the second coming of Christ are represented as synchronical with the change of the living, we see no reason why all these events should not be carried forward together. But we will allow Mr. B. to state his doctrine in his own words:


“Paul undoubtedly supposed that this change [spoken of in 1 Cor. 15: 52,] was to occur simultaneously with that promised advent of the Savior that was to be ushered in during the lifetime of that generation—a supposition built upon the letter of numerous predictions, but which the event has shown to be, in this respect, erroneous. The fact that forms the burden of the announcement has not yet taken place, but is of still future occurrence. It is to come to pass at the period so frequently alluded to in the prophets, as to be distinguished by something that is here termed the ‘sounding of the last trumpet’; and this is doubtless identical with the last in the series of the seven apocalyptical trumpets, Rev. 11: 15, which announces the downfall of earthly dominion, and the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ.” p. 200.

The only reason here assigned for imputing error to the apostle, and for carrying forward the change of the living saints to the end of the kingdoms of this world, is the assumption that the ‘last trump’ in 1 Cor. 15: 52, ‘is doubtless identical with the last in the series of the seven apocalyptical trumpets, Rev. 11: 15.’ Now let the reader observe, first, that in 1 Cor. 15: 52, the resurrection of the dead is quite as closely connected with the ‘last trump’ as the change of the living; and secondly, that the personal descent of Christ from heaven is also connected with the same ‘last trump’ in 1 Thess. 4: 16. ‘The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.’ There is no possibility of separating either of these three events, viz. the change, the resurrection, and the personal advent, from the ‘last trump’; and if the ‘last trump’ is identical with the seventh trumpet of the Apocalypse, then the sounding of that trumpet is the signal of all those events. This view alone involves Mr B’s theory in inextricable confusion, as he places the beginning of the second coming and the resurrection back as far as the destruction of Jerusalem. But the very foundation of this hypothesis, confused as it is, is false. The ‘last trump’ in 1 Cor. 15: 52, is not identical with the seventh trumpet of the Apocalypse. This will we proceed to show.

The Apocalypse was not written till many years after Paul wrote to the Corinthians. There is no evidence that he had any knowledge of the seven trumpets of John’s vision. In the expression, ‘the last trump,’ he manifestly alluded, not to a trumpet of a subsequent revelation, but to the trumpet of which Christ spoke in Matt. 24: 31. After predicting the coming of the Son of man immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, the prophecy proceeds—‘And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds,’ &c. Here is the coming of Christ in the same juxtaposition with the sounding of the trumpet as in 1 Thess. 4: 16. Moreover, as the gathering of the elect is manifestly only another expression for the raising them from the dead, i.e. gathering them out of Hades and Mortality, it is evident that the resurrection of the dead and the change of the living is also immediately connected with the sounding of the trumpet in Matt. 24: 31, just as it is in 1 Cor. 15: 52, and 1 Thess. 4: 16. Now if we can prove that Christ, in Matt. 24: 31, did not refer to the seventh trumpet of the Apocalypse, then it will be proved that Paul in 1 Cor. 15: 52, and 1 Thess. 4: 16, did not refer to that trumpet. This point
might be settled by simply appealing to the fact that the trumpet of which Christ speaks was to sound immediately after the tribulation of the destruction of Jerusalem, and within the lifetime of the generation living when the prophecy was uttered; (see ver. 29 & 34;) whereas the seventh trumpet of the Apocalypse is confessedly to be referred to a far later period. But Mr. Bush, like many others, has a way of evading the force of the declaration—'This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.' Because a long tract of time is incidentally alluded to in the parallel passage in Luke 21: 24, (viz. 'the times of the Gentiles,' during which the holy city is to be trodden down,) he feels at liberty to except from the above declaration any of the items going before it, which he chooses to place beyond the time of a generation from the period of Christ's ministry. We will therefore adopt another method of proof. In the 6th and 7th chapters of Revelation we have a description of Christ's second coming entirely parallel to the prediction in Matt. 24. It concludes, as the latter does, with an announcement of the ingathering of the elect from the four winds, occupying the whole of the 7th chapter. Of course the trumpet, which Christ makes the signal of the gathering, is included, though it is not mentioned, in the transactions of John's vision. Its place is at the beginning of the 7th chapter. Now the whole of the transactions of the two chapters in question, take place at the successive opening of the first six seals. The appearing of the Son of man, and the gathering of the elect belong to the sixth seal. The trumpet therefore of which Christ speaks in Matt. 24: 31, sounded in the interval between the sixth and seventh seals. This was before the sounding of any of the seven trumpets of John's vision. It was not till the opening of the seventh seal, that the angels having the seven trumpets 'prepared themselves to sound.' See chap. 8: 1, 2. Thus it is proved that Paul's 'last trump' was separated from the seventh trumpet of Rev. 11: 15, by the whole interval between the sixth seal and the final period of judgment, i. e. by more than the whole time occupied by all the trumpets. This demonstration must hold good till it is shown that Matt. 24, and Rev. 6 and 7, do not refer to the same events and the same period of time. This can never be done.

Why then does Paul call the signal of the gathering of the elect, the 'last trump'? Simply because it was the last trump of the Jewish dispensation. On the same principle, the times immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem were called the 'last days;' not as being the last days of the world's existence, for the 'times of the Gentiles' were to follow; but as being the last days of the Jewish aion. The trumpet which gathered the elect after the destruction of Jerusalem, was the 'last trump' of Judaism, and immediately preceded a resurrection and judgment, i. e. a consummation of destiny to 'many.' Afterwards, during the times of the Gentiles, another series of trumpets were to sound; and the last of these is the signal of another and final resurrection and judgment.

Having thus found that the 'last trump' was to sound immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, it is made plain that Paul's statement of the order of the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15: 23, places the rising of 'them that are Christ's,' at the very time where Daniel places the 'awaking of many.'
§ 52. THE KEYS OF HELL AND OF DEATH.

Christ says, 'I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.' Rev. 1: 18. One who has the key of an enclosure, has the command of it, and can release those who are held captive in it. The evident import of the above words, is, that Christ, by his death and resurrection, has obtained the command of the two enclosures denominated hell and death, so that he has power to release their prisoners. The word translated hell, is hades in the original, and simply signifies the abode of the dead. In 1 Cor. 15: 55 it is translated grave, which, if it is understood as referring to spirits instead of bodies, is a better rendering than hell. Hades is not necessarily a place of punishment, as hell is usually understood to be.

Paul says, 'Christ both died and rose and revived that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living.' Rom. 14: 9. We regard this as entirely parallel to the former text. It declares the effect of Christ’s death and resurrection. That effect is the acquisition of the command of the two great departments of humanity, the living and the dead. To be the Lord of the living and the dead, is the same thing as to have the keys of hades and of death. Hades is the enclosure of the dead; and by having its key, Christ is Lord of the dead. It follows then that death is the enclosure of the living. This will not seem incongruous if we substitute for death, the word mortality. This world is properly the world of mortality. ‘Through fear of death men are all their lifetime subject to bondage.’ They are always exposed to death. Their life is in fact a protracted death. When they are dead they pass out of the enclosure of mortality into a state that is not exposed to death. The ‘king of terrors’ reigns over this world only—not over hades.

This interpretation of the words death and hell will be confirmed by reference to another parallel passage, viz. 1 Cor. 15: 51—55. Paul says, ‘We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.’ Here we have a predicted manifestation of the fact that Christ is Lord of both the living and the dead—that he has the keys of hades and mortality. In raising the dead, he would prove that he had the key of hades; in changing the living from a mortal to an immortal state, he would prove that he had the key of mortality, and could release its prisoners. Accordingly Paul, in view of this twofold manifestation of Christ’s Lordship, breaks forth in exultation thus: ‘O death, where is thy sting? O hades, where is thy victory?’ The designations here given to the two great enclosures which Christ was to open at his coming, are the very same with those in the passage first cited, Rev. 1: 18. As Christ says he has the key of death, so Paul exclaims ‘O death where is thy sting?’ with manifest reference to the predicted defeat of death by the change of the living saints. As Christ says he has the key of hades, so Paul exclaims, ‘O hades, where is thy victory?’ with manifest reference to the release of the dead.
It is plainly implied in the fact that Christ obtained the keys of mortality and hades by his death and resurrection, that these enclosures, or rather the one great enclosure in which they are subdivisions, had never before been opened. If any of the human race ever came out of the death-and-hades prison, before Christ obtained its key,—if there was any other way than through the door which his death and resurrection opened, by which men might 'climb up' into heaven, what need was there of his obtaining the key at such a cost?

Men had indeed passed and repassed from one of the great apartments to the other, in various ways, before the advent of Christ. By natural death, the mass of mankind had been from the beginning of the world successively passing from mortality into hades. In two instances at least—those of Enoch and Elijah—this transit had taken place by a miraculous process without natural death. There is no evidence that these persons passed into any other abode than that which is common to the dead. The only peculiarity in their case was the extraordinary manner of the passage. On the other hand, in a few instances, such as that of Lazarus, the dead had returned from hades into mortality. They did not rise from the dead in any such sense as that in which the dead were to rise at the coming of Christ; for they resumed their mortal bodies, and therefore only re-entered the enclosure of mortality.

There is then no evidence, either from the cases of those who were translated, or of those who were raised to life, that the door of the death-and-hades prison was ever opened till Christ obtained the key. On the other hand, there is abundant evidence that all men, previous to the death and resurrection of Christ, were detained, either in mortality or in hades. We will rest the case for the present on two texts, viz., the words of Christ—'No man hath ascended up to heaven,' (John 3: 13,) and the words of Peter—'David is not ascended into the heavens.' Acts 2: 34. Mr. Bush rejects the natural meaning of these texts, and reduces them to mere denials 'of a public, official and glorious ascension, like that of Christ.' This gloss is wholly unauthorised. Indeed we see not why Mr. Bush should conceive that he has any occasion for it; for he himself teaches in one of the extracts which we have cited in the preceding article, that the Old Testament saints were detained in a state of 'imperfect happiness' called paradise, and were 'not in heaven' previous to the resurrection of Christ. So that whether these texts teach the doctrine or not, he admits, for aught that we can see, that no man had ascended to heaven at the time they were uttered.

But it can be shown that Peter, in saying that 'David had not ascended into the heavens,' meant that he was still in hades. The reader will observe that the leading promise which Peter is commenting upon in the passage in question, is that contained in the 27th verse—'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.' This, he insists, must be applied to Christ, because the facts in David's case do not admit of its application to him. What are the facts? Obviously these, viz: David is dead and buried, and has never risen from the dead and ascended into heaven. (See ver. 29.) This state of things in the case of David stands
opposed to both parts of the promise. His soul is left in hades, and his flesh has seen corruption. In another discourse, where Paul argues from this promise in the same way, (see Acts 13: 35—37,) he quotes only the last part of it, ‘Thou shalt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption,’ and then shows that it cannot be applied to David, by simply affirming that he ‘saw corruption.’ But Peter quotes the whole of it, and affirms by plain implication, not only that David’s body had seen corruption, but that his soul was left in hades, inasmuch as he had not ascended into the heavens. It is unquestionable that the Jews in Peter’s time did believe that all the dead were in hades, awaiting the resurrection of the last day; and in his argument on the promise in question, he manifestly assumed this, as well as the fact that David’s body saw corruption. (See Jahn’s Archaeology, §314, §318.)

In affirming that the Old Testament saints had not ascended to heaven, but were detained in hades till the resurrection of Christ, we are not to be understood as denying their ultimate salvation, or as teaching that they went to hell, in the English sense of that word. The paradise into which Christ and the thief went on the day of their death, is, as Mr. Bush suggests, in hades. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, we perceive that Abraham, though he was in the same world with the tormented sinner, was in a very different region of that world, and in a very different state.

The Bible almost uniformly characterizes the condition of the inhabitants of hades, as a state of sleep. (See Dan. 12: 2, 1 Cor. 15: 51, &c.) It is not to be inferred from this, that they are in a state of literal dormancy or unconsciousness, for we have positive evidence to the contrary. The meaning is, that as a person, in ordinary sleep, is withdrawn from the world of sense, and exercises his consciousness and activity, so far as he has any, in an inward subjective sphere, so the dead are withdrawn from the material world, and exercise their consciousness and activity in a sphere which, with reference to the material world, is inward and subjective. They are in the soul of the universe, instead of the body. Their operation on the surface ceases at death. Their sleep is opposed to the visible activity of this world, and opposed to the perfect activity of the final resurrection. Christ, as well as the rest of the dead, may be said to have been asleep while he was in hades. His activity in this world ceased. But when he arose out of hades and ascended to the Father, he assumed the government of heaven and earth, i. e., entered upon a career of activity in both an inward and an outward sphere. So the saints, while they are in hades, are asleep as being confined to an inward sphere; but when they come forth into the resurrection, they become active again in the outward as well as the inward world.

They are said to ‘sleep in the dust of the earth,’ because their abode, happy though it be, is not in heaven, but in hades, which is the inner region of the world of matter, and accordingly is called ‘the lower parts of the earth,’ (Eph. 4: 9,) and ‘the heart of the earth.’ Matt. 12: 40. It is in this sense also that they are said to be ‘in their graves.’ John 5: 28.

Now we hold with Mr. Bush, that the resurrection has nothing to do with corrupted material bodies, and that the dead enter into hades and exist there in those spiritual bodies which are to be raised. But is this the resurrection?
Is the mere possession of spiritual bodies, or the disengagement of those bodies from their earthly tenements, or the mere natural vitality of those bodies without reference to the quickening of God or to the sphere in which they exist, to be considered a rising from the dead? We say, No. The inner body, or what Mr. B. calls the 'spiritual germ,' may be conceived to enter a state at death, not a whit more favorable to its vitality than the atmosphere of this world. The quickening of the seed depends not upon its own capability of germinating, but on the soil and atmosphere into which it falls, on the sunshine and rain which are sent upon it. All the evidence we have on the subject goes to prove that hades is no more favorable to the quickening of spiritual bodies, than this world. Mortality and hades are classed together in the Bible as twin-states, equally remote from the world of resurrection-life. All the inhabitants of hades, the wicked as well as the righteous, are alive, have consciousness and activity, and in this sense are in an anastasis. They are not dead in the Sadducean sense of non-existence. The righteous in hades doubtless have a degree of spiritual life, corresponding to that of the saints in this world under the Jewish dispensation, and in their condition are raised far above the wicked. In this special sense they may be said to be in an anastasis, i.e., they stand up from the miserable state of those in Gehenna. We are inclined to think that Christ had this kind of anastasis in view when he proposed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to the Sadducees as instances of a resurrection. They might be said to be in a resurrection, just as believers in this world are, but not in the resurrection.

What then is the resurrection? We may find an answer to this question by tracing the process of Christ's rising. When he died, his spiritual body was disengaged from its material tenement, and he entered hades. He was in 'the heart of the earth' three days. Now, according to Mr. B's theory, he rose from the dead as soon as he died, and was in the true resurrection during those three days! Is this the Bible account? Not at all. After three days hades gave him up, 'because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.' Here commenced his resurrection. The first step of his ascent was a rising out of that world where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were—nay, out of paradise itself, for that is a part of hades! This was not a mere disengagement of his spiritual body from its earthly vehicle, but a change of worlds, a disengagement of his spiritual body and his soul from the place where men 'sleep in the dust of the earth.' The process did not end here. He had ascended out of hades and had got its key. But he had returned to his material body, and to the sphere in which it dwelt, i.e., to mortality. It remained for him to burst the barriers of this world and ascend to the Father. The life which hades could not hold, was strong enough to change his material body and assimilate it to the spiritual, as was proved by his assuming invisibility and entering apartments whose doors were shut, at will. Finally earth could not hold him, and he ascended to the bosom of God.

* We judge that this was the order in which he obtained the command of the two great enclosures, from the peculiar phraseology of Rom. 14: 9. 'Christ both died, and rose, and revived,' [i.e., lived again,] that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living. As it was his death that gave him the command of the dead, so it appears from this language, that it was his rising and living again, and not his life before death, that
KEYS OF HELL AND OF DEATH.

Now the reader will observe, that this stupendous transaction was not a mere subjective change, a development of Christ's individual vitality according to the ordinary laws of germination, as Mr. Bush's theory would make it. Here is a translation, first from hades to this world, and then from this world to the presence of God—a vast change of condition as well as of vitality. The scriptures constantly ascribe it not to any natural law, but to the 'mighty power of God.' This is a specimen of the universal resurrection which goes before the judgment. Hades and mortality gave up 'many' of their dead at the second coming of Christ; and shall give up all their dead at the voice of the seventh trumpet. See Rev. 20: 12, 13.

We may facilitate our conceptions of the resurrection which is to result from the resurrection of Christ, and of its distinction from all previous partial anastases, by an illustration. Suppose hades and mortality to be two apartments on the same floor of a house. Heaven, or the place of God's presence, is the story above. Now the resurrection is not a transit from one of the lower apartments to the other, even though that transit is made miraculously, as in the case of Enoch and Elijah: nor is it a return to one of these apartments, after having left it, as in the case of Lazarus: but it is an ascent from both of them to the upper story, which never took place till Christ—the first-born from the dead—led the way.

This ascent out of hades and mortality, so far as the change is objective, is the destiny of the wicked as well as the righteous. The same mighty power that brought again Christ from hades, will at last 'draw all men unto him.' John 12: 32. The dead small and great must stand before God; and for that purpose death and hell must give them up. The paradise of hades is not the final home of the righteous. They are to be brought up to judgment, and thence pass into the kingdom of the Father. So the geheenna of hades is not the final home of the wicked. They too are to be brought up to judgment, and thence pass into the lake of fire.

gave him the command of the living. The order of the words in Rev. 1: 18, favors the same view: 'I am he that liveth, and was dead, &c.; and have the keys of hades and of death.' Hades stands first. So in 1 Thess. 4: 16, the power of his resurrection takes effect first on the dead and then on the living.
§53. OBJECTIONS TO THE FOREGOING VIEWS OF THE RESURRECTION.

The position which we have assumed and maintained in our previous articles, is, that the first resurrection (after that of Christ) occurred at the second advent, immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem. Against this the following objections may be raised. 1. In Matt. 27: 52, there is an account of a resurrection of saints immediately following Christ’s resurrection. 2. Paul, in 2 Cor. 5: 6—8, and Phil. 1: 23, expresses his desire to leave the body, that he might be present with Christ; from which it is inferred that he looked for an immediate entrance into the resurrection at death. 3. Daniel predicts an awaking of the wicked as well as the righteous at the first resurrection; and yet no specific account of the resurrection of some to damnation appears in Matt. 24, Rev. 6 and 7, or in any other New Testament description of the second advent, while in Rev. 20 it is expressly said that “the rest of the dead [i.e. all except the saints that reigned with Christ] lived not again till the thousand years were finished.”

Our object in the present article is to lead the reader to a stand-point from which he will see that the passages on which the above objections are founded, are entirely consistent with those other passages on which our theory of the first resurrection rests. In order to do this we must try once more to penetrate the depths of the interior world, and take a comprehensive view of the ‘heavenly places’ (epourania) which were concerned in the changes effected by the resurrection.

It is known to all who are familiar with the Bible, that the word heaven is used in several different senses by the inspired writers. Paul speaks of the third heaven in 2 Cor. 12: 2; from which expression it is evident that a series of at least three distinct heavens was recognized in his theory of the celestial world. Without attempting at present a full investigation of the ouranology of the Bible, we ask the reader’s attention to some facts relating to the two heavens most immediately concerned in the transactions of the second advent.

1. The heaven in hades. We learn from the subsequent language of Paul that the ‘third heaven’ of which he speaks in 2 Cor. 12: 2, is paradise. (See ver. 4.) But paradise is the place where Christ went with the penitent thief, on the day of his death. (See Luke 23: 43.) His resurrection did not take place till three days afterward. Paradise therefore was not a resurrection-heaven, but an apartment in hades, occupied by the departed saints, who were waiting for the advent of Christ. This is admitted, as we have seen, by Mr. Bush.

This intermediate apartment was properly called heaven in a relative sense. It may be conceived of as bearing a similar relation to the worldly tabernacle, as that which the soul bears to the body. It was a state more purely spiritual, and therefore nearer to God than the world of flesh and blood. As the primary idea of heaven is that of the clear expanse above the earth, so, in a
OBJECTIONS.

spiritual view, any state which is more spiritual and nearer to God than that of mortality, is, with reference to mortality, a higher state, i. e. a heaven. But it is evident that paradise was not heaven in the absolute sense, (1) from the fact that it was in hades, i. e. in the grave—one of the apartments, the key of which Christ obtained by his death; (2) from the fact that Christ did not remain in it, but ascended from it to his final glory; (3) from the fact that Christ, though he had been in paradise, assured his disciples on the day of his resurrection that he had 'not ascended to his Father,' from which it is manifest that paradise was not the presence of the Father.

2. The angelic heaven. Christ, in his resurrection, passed first from paradise to an intermediate state, in which he was seen by the disciples for a season, and then ascended to the Father. As his resurrection was the 'first-fruits of the general resurrection of the saints, it is evident from that sample, that the presence of the Father is the upper terminus of the resurrection-ascent. Now the presence of the Father is the angelic heaven. Christ says of his little ones—'In heaven, their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.' Matt. 18: 10. Accordingly Paul, in his great summary of the facts in the history of 'God manifest in the flesh,' specifies that he was 'justified in the spirit, [i. e. at his resurrection,] and appeared to angels,' [i. e., took his place in the angelic heaven—the presence of the Father.] 1 Tim. 3: 16. In exact harmony with this view, Christ, in his description of the ultimate state of the saints, says,—'They who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.' Luke 20: 35, 36.

The angelic heaven, being the presence of God, is the highest apartment of the spiritual world, and is therefore heaven in the absolute sense. It is the central sanctuary of the universe—and was represented by the holy of holies in the Mosaic tabernacle. See Heb. 9: 3, 12, 24.

Now when we affirm, on the authority of Christ and Peter, that no man had ascended to heaven before the coming of Christ, we do not mean that no man had ascended to paradise—the heaven of hades. That was unquestionably the resting-place of all the saints of the Old Testament. It is expressly said that Elijah 'went up to heaven' in the sight of Elisha; (2 Kings 2: 11;) and whether this is to be regarded as a symbolical exhibition, or as the actual transit of Elijah to a region in the upper atmosphere, it is in either case accordant with the relative position which is assigned to paradise by the language of Paul in 2 Cor. 12: 4. The apostle was 'caught up' as was Elijah.

What we maintain, is, that no man had passed beyond the heaven of hades to the angelic heaven; that Christ was the first who ascended from paradise to the presence of the Father. And it is with reference to the presence of the Father, as the terminus of the resurrection and the ultimate destination of the saints, that we affirm that there was no resurrection before Christ's—that he was 'the first-born from the dead.' Our position is that which Paul explicitly maintains in the 9th chapter of Hebrews, and often incidentally assumes elsewhere in that book, viz. that 'the way into the holiest [i. e. the presence of
God or the angelic heaven] was not made manifest while the first tabernacle was standing—that Christ was the 'forerunner' of all saints in the transition to the true heaven which is to be their final abode. (See Heb. 6: 19, 20.)

As the purpose of the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ was the at-one-ment of man with God, so one great change involved in the execution of that purpose, was the union of the human heaven with the angelic heaven. The veil of the central sanctuary was to be removed. Man was to be brought up out of hades and mortality, into the presence of the Father and his holy angels. Christ assumed human nature, and by his life and death established spiritual connection with the inner and outer regions of humanity. Then he ascended to the presence of the Father, and thus completed the chain of communication between the two spiritual corporations which were to be brought together. The question now arises, At what time did the union of the human with the angelic heaven take place? We answer, At the time when Christ 'came in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels, to reward every man according to his works.' That was at the close of the Jewish dispensation. See Matt. 16: 27, 25: 31.

From the time of his resurrection till that coming, the power which brought him again from the dead was working both in this world and in hades. We know, by the testimony of the apostles, that the visible part of the church in the interval between Christ's rising and his second advent, were in a species of resurrection. That quickening of the Spirit, which they sometimes call regeneration or the second birth, they constantly ascribe to the power of Christ's resurrection. See Rom. 6: 4, Eph. 2: 1—6. As the living and the dead were to be perfected and 'caught up together' at the final scene, (see 1Cor. 15: 52, 1Thess. 4: 17,) so there can be no doubt that a parallel operation of the resurrection-power was in progress at the same time in the invisible part of the church. The saints in hades as well as those in this world, were receiving the long-promised new covenant—the power to become the sons of God. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews Paul says of the Old Testament saints, including even Enoch, and Moses, and Elijah,—'These all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.' Ver. 39: 40. This is positive testimony to the fact that the new covenant (which the apostle speaks of as 'the promise') was not given to the invisible church, till it was given to the apostles and their followers. The saints in both apartments of humanity received the power of the resurrection, and were ripened for the second advent, together. They that sowed and they that reaped, rejoiced together in the harvest. (See John 4: 36—38.)

The correspondence of state and progress which thus manifestly existed between the visible and the invisible part of the church, allows us to reason from the one to the other. On the one hand, as there was a partial resurrection of the saints in this world in the apostolic age, so there was a partial resurrection of the saints in hades. But on the other, as that resurrection, in the one case, was not complete till the second advent, so it was not in the other. And further, as the tares and the wheat remained together in the
visible field till the harvest, so it is not to be doubted that they remained together in the invisible field. Indeed we have apostolic authority for the assertion that ‘spiritual wickedness’ existed in the ‘heavenly places,’ (epouvania,) and that the man of sin was revealed, even in ‘the temple of God,’ (which of course stands on Mount Zion in the spiritual Jerusalem,) in the interval between the first and second coming of Christ. The time of judgment, when ‘all things that offend and them that do iniquity’ were to be gathered out of the kingdom, did not come to the saints, either in mortality or hades, till their resurrection was completed by the personal coming of Christ. Previous to that time, Christ, having attached the power of his resurrection to both departments of humanity, and being ‘exalted’ to the right hand of the Father, was ‘drawing men unto him.’ At that time, the approximation of the church, visible and invisible, having proceeded far enough for his purpose, he descended into it with the glory of the Father and the power of all the angels, judged and destroyed the man of sin, purged the spiritual Jerusalem of ‘the uncircumcised and the unclean,’ and ascending with it, presented it as his bride to the Father. Thus the human and angelic heavens became one.

With this outline before us, we are prepared for an examination of the three objections alluded to in the beginning of this article.

1. The resurrection of saints at the time of Christ’s rising. Matt. 27: 51—53. In order that the objection in this case may have any force, it must be averted that this was a complete and final resurrection. If it was, then some of the saints rose before the second coming, and Paul’s designation of the time of the rising of the living and the dead in 1 Cor. 15: 28—52, 1 Thess. 4: 16, &c., is falsified. But to this averment we reply—There is no evidence that the saints, whose resurrection is in question, ascended to the Father. It is only said that they ‘came out of their graves and went into the holy city and appeared unto many.’ So far they followed Christ in his ascent. He came out of his grave, went to Jerusalem, and appeared to many. But in his case, this was only half of the resurrection. He had not yet ascended to the Father and taken his place in the angelic heaven. If it were declared that, at the time when he was received up into glory, these saints were also received up with him, we should be obliged to admit that they entered the resurrection-sanctuary previous to the second advent. But in the absence of any such declaration, we are at liberty and are bound to adhere to the general testimony of the apostles, which assigns the final resurrection of the church, visible and invisible, to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem. If it is asked, What was the state of these saints from the time of their partial resurrection till the second coming, all we need to answer, is, that they were in a state intermediate between the repose of hades and the glory of the Father. That there was such an intermediate state, is proved by the facts in the case of Christ.

2. Paul’s desire to depart and be with Christ. Phil. 1: 21—23, 2 Cor. 5: 6—8. The objection is, that the apostle evidently expected to enter fully the resurrection state at once, on leaving the body. But the reader will perceive, on examining the passages on which this objection is founded, that there is no distinct declaration of any such expectation. The ‘gain’
which he looked for in dying, was not immediate admittance to the glory of
the Father and the holy angels, but the enjoyment of the presence of Christ.
Now if it is in any way supposeable that there was a more full enjoyment of
the presence of Christ in the intermediate abode of the disembodied saints
than there was in this world, (though neither of these apartments was the
resurrection-sanctuary,) we can allow a full meaning to Paul’s words, and
yet maintain that he did not expect the full resurrection till the second com-
ing. And we are bound to seek for such a method of conciliation; for
without it the apostle contradicts himself, inasmuch as he unequivocally and
repeatedly affirms elsewhere that the resurrection of the dead, as well as the
change of the living, was to take place at the personal coming of Christ, at
the close of the Jewish dispensation. The passages now in question are
doubtful, since they speak not distinctly of the resurrection, but only of the
presence of Christ. Whereas such passages as 1 Cor. 15: 23, are plain and
unmistakable declarations that the resurrection of the saints should take place
at the second advent—not sooner, nor later. The plain passages must gov-
ern our construction of the doubtful.

We have said that the paradise of hades was properly called heaven in a
relative sense, i. e., as compared with this world. It was a state more purely
spiritual, and nearer to God, than that of flesh and blood. This accounts for
the fact which is suggested in a variety of passages in the New Testament,
that ‘the dead in Christ rose first’ at the last trump. The resurrection-
power took effect first on those who were in a state nearest akin to it. The
church of the disembodied saints was the touching-point (so to speak) of the
attracting energy which drew men up from hades and mortality. As in the
individual, Christ’s spiritual presence is in the soul more than in the body;
so in the church of the first-born, his spiritual presence was in the invisible,
more than in the visible department. Paul’s wish then to depart and be with
Christ, may be understood as simply a wish to pass from the body to the soul
of the church, where the power of Christ was most manifested. Even if it is
insisted that his words refer to the personal presence of Christ, we may shaw
by help of the same theory of the disembodied state, that this is not inconsis-
tent with what he says elsewhere concerning the resurrection at the second
coming. Christ’s personal presence certainly was not confined to the angelic
heaven during the apostolic age. He appeared to Paul, in one instance at
least, at Jerusalem. Acts 22: 18. And if he thus revisited mortality, it is
not to be doubted that he also appeared personally in the abode of the disem-
bodied saints. Indeed it is natural to suppose that he was in frequent and
perhaps constant personal communication with paradise, as that was the most
spiritual department of the church, and the point of contact for his attraction.
In saying then that he desired to depart and be with Christ, Paul meant, at
the most, only that he desired to join the invisible church, with which Christ
was in personal communication. He did not mean to imply that that church
had ascended to the Father, or that he expected to enter the final resurrec-
tion before the second advent.

3. The silence of the New Testament in regard to the resurrection of the
wicked at the second coming. This objection will disappear, if we keep in
mind the leading idea of the resurrection which has been brought to view in our previous outline. The resurrection, in the general sense of the word, as pertaining to both the righteous and the wicked, is a transition from the recesses of Hades and mortality to the presence of the Father and his holy angels. In the case of the righteous, this presentation to the Father is followed by a judicial acquittal and an eternal residence in the angelic heaven. In the case of the wicked, it is followed by condemnation and eternal banishment 'from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.' But these diverse sequences belong to the judgment. The resurrection, i. e., introduction to the presence of God, in both cases is the same.

Now let us see if the New Testament descriptions of the second coming do not indicate that a portion of the wicked as well as the righteous, were ushered into the presence of God by that event. In Rev. 6: 12—17, (which is a description of the second coming, copied chiefly from Matt. 24: 29—31,) we are informed that, at the appearing of the Son of man, 'the kings of the earth, and the great men, &c., hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' Here is certainly an 'awaking to shame and contempt—a coming forth 'to the resurrection of damnation.' So in 2 Thess. 2: 1—12, (which relates to the period when the dead in Christ were to be raised and the living changed, as will be seen by comparing it with 1 Thess. 4: 15—17,) we learn that the man of sin was to be 'destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming,' and that they in whom he worked his delusions were to perish with him.

The truth is, that the resurrection of the wicked to damnation is involved in the resurrection of the righteous to salvation. The same attracting energy which, during the apostolic age, drew the church, visible and invisible, toward Christ, also necessarily drew with that church the evil spirits which were mixed with it. Until the tares and the wheat are separated, whatever is done to the wheat must also take effect on the tares. And in the case of the church of the first-born, the tares were not separated from the wheat, as we have seen, till both were brought up to the tribunal of the Father. The very object of the judgment, which is subsequent to the resurrection, is the separation of the righteous from the wicked. If Christ would give rest to his saints, he must purge out from among them 'all things that offend, and them that do iniquity;' and for this purpose, he must bring the mixed mass of spirits with which they are incorporated, into the blaze of his presence. The gold can be separated from the dross, only by subjecting both to the action of fire. This principle makes it as certain that a portion of the wicked entered the resurrection of damnation at the second coming, as that the true church then entered the resurrection of life.

But how are we to understand the statement in Rev. 20, that 'the rest of the dead [i. e., all except those who had part in the blessed resurrection] lived not again till the thousand years were finished.' To this we answer—The righteous only 'came forth to the resurrection of life.' The wicked were brought into the presence of God, and that was their resurrection. But
they did not enter into life. On the contrary, the fire which purged the righteous, destroyed them, and they were thenceforth twice dead. They did not remain in the presence of the Father, but were judged and cast into outer darkness. ‘The kingdom of heaven,’ says Christ, ‘is like unto a net that was cast into the sea [which represents the attracting power of Christ’s resurrection] and gathered of every kind; which when it was full they drew to the shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away, [probably back into the sea.] So shall it be at the end of the aion, [i.e. the Jewish age. See 1 Cor. 10: 11, Heb. 9: 26.] The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire.’ Matt. 13: 47—50. The resurrection to damnation is not taken into the account as a form of life, in Rev. 20. The assertion that ‘the rest of the dead lived not,’ simply means that there was no further awaking from the sleep of hades, till the thousand years were finished.

§ 54. REVIEW OF BALLOU ON THE RESURRECTION.

Having proved that the ‘first resurrection’ took place at the end of the Jewish dispensation, it is now time to inquire whether there has been any resurrection since, and when the final resurrection may be expected. Prof. Bush, and Adin Ballou, have both taken the position that since the destruction of Jerusalem the resurrection has been a continuous process, taking effect on each individual at death. Indeed Mr. Bush, with much detriment to his consistency, maintains, on the whole, that the resurrection has been a continuous process from the beginning of the world. With these theories we join issue, and aver, 1, that there was no resurrection till the end of the Jewish dispensation; 2, that there was then a simultaneous resurrection of ‘many;’ 3, that there has been no resurrection since; and 4, that a simultaneous general resurrection of the human race is yet to come. The first two of these propositions we have already sufficiently discussed. The following remarks on a pamphlet published by Adin Ballou in 1843, in which the doctrine of a continuous resurrection was propounded, present the principal Bible evidence bearing on the 3d and 4th of the above averments.

When we have ascertained that the second advent of Christ, with a resurrection and judgment, did certainly take place immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, if we have not been accustomed to conceive of the judgment in two acts, and have not in our minds the evidence of a second judgment, we very naturally hasten to the conclusion that those who have lived and died since the period of the second advent, have been raised and judged successively, as they entered the invisible world. They must have part in the resurrection and judgment, and we naturally ask—If the court of heaven commenced its session at the end of the Jewish dispensation, how can they be raised and judged otherwise than in succession as they die?

One formidable objection faces this theory at the outset, viz. there is
not a particle of direct evidence for it in scripture. It is simply an inference; and though its advocates may say it is a reasonable inference, yet in a matter so important, Bible reasoners will not be satisfied so far as to foreclose further investigation, without direct testimony. We have searched through the Bible, and through Mr. Ballou’s pamphlet, for texts directly asserting or plainly intimating the continuation of the resurrection and judgment through successive ages, and we have found none. In fact, though Mr. Ballou gives great prominence to this doctrine in his initial statement, he nowhere presents the proof of it under a distinct head. The nearest approach which we find in the pamphlet to the citation of proof texts on this point, is in the following instances, which occur incidentally:

“The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we [who shall be alive at that time, with all who shall live afterwards in the flesh] shall be changed” [instantly at death and enter the immortal state.] 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52. . . . . “This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [preceed or go before] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven [in the invisible world] with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then [from and after that time] we who are alive and remain [on the earth] shall [at the moment of our death, without sleeping at all, or descending like the dead of all past ages into hades] be caught up together with them in the clouds; [the immortal state;] and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

This is evidently an adaptation of texts to a theory previously assumed,—not fair proof of that theory. We cannot at all admit the legitimacy of the interpolations.

Having proved that Christ came and commenced the judgment at the destruction of Jerusalem, Mr. Ballou’s inference is, that with reference to subsequent generations that judgment was continuous. But there is room for two other inferences. We may suppose first that the subsequent generations have no part in the resurrection and judgment; or secondly, that there is to be another distinct judgment for those generations, at the end of the ‘times of the Gentiles.’ Even the first of these suppositions, improbable as it is, has as much scripture proof in its favor as the theory we are considering,—that is, none at all. But the second supposition—that of a second judgment—we may confidently assert, before entering the field of Bible proof, is at least as probable, in itself considered, as the supposition of a continuous judgment. If we had nothing before us but the history of the Jewish and Gentile dispensations, with the fact proved that Christ came to judgment at the destruction of Jerusalem, we should infer with strong confidence that there would be a second distinct judgment. Our reasoning would run thus: The judgment is like a harvest,—the speedy gathering of fruits that have been long growing. The Jewish nation was the field which God cultivated for two thousand years. At the judgment of the second advent that field was reaped. Then the Gentiles came under a similar process of cultivation. Now which is most rational, to suppose that the reapers would be kept at work on this second field through seedtime and summer, till harvest,—or that the reaping would be deferred, as in the former case, for two thousand years, (or there-
about,) till the grain should be ripe, and then be done all at once? Or if we compare the judgment to a reckoning, and settlement of accounts, there is a manifest propriety that there should be two distinct judgments, one for the Jews and the other for the Gentiles; since the accounts of these two parties are very different, and one of them only commenced special dealings with God at the time when the other was called to settlement. We admit, all this is no proof, but it is ground of presumpt, which in our view gives the theory of two judgments the advantage over that of one protracted judgment, even if the former were, like the latter, unsustained by direct scripture testimony.

But let us go to the Bible. And first, we have a few remarks to make on the book of Revelations. Mr. Ballou, on the authority of Dr. Lardner, regards that book as of doubtful authority. Of course, he admits that it may be a part of the true word of God. Yet he sets up a theory which is confessedly at variance with that book, as appears from the following passage in his pamphlet:

"Objection.—Your doctrine sets aside the 'first resurrection,' and the millennium, predicted in the 20th chapter of Revelations. Answer.—It does; but it holds forth a 'resurrection of the just,' and an ultimate reign of righteousness, far more excellent and glorious than any described in that chapter."

Now our theory exactly harmonizes with the book of Revelations. Of course, whatever weight of evidence there is in favor of the canonicity of that book, is in favor of our theory, and directly opposed to Mr. Ballou's. The doctrine of two judgments is certainly true, if the Apocalypse is an inspired book; and it may be true—as we shall soon show—if that book is a forgery. While on the other hand, if that book should be proved to be the word of God, Mr. Ballou's doctrine must be false. This view of the matter at least strengthens the presumption and advantage we have before gained for our doctrine. We have a very important may be on our side.

But Mr. Ballou thinks we build too exclusively on this doubtful book, and insists that the current of the other inspired writings is against us. After the remark above quoted, he proceeds as follows:

"It must be considered that this is the only chapter in all the Bible which even intimates that a part of the dead are to rise one thousand years before the rest; or that there is to be a thousand years reign of the saints with Christ; or that Satan is to be shut up in prison a thousand years, and afterwards loosed for a season before the general resurrection. The ancient prophets say no such thing—Christ hints no such thing. The other New Testament writers do not insist. But it is contrary to their uniform representations of the resurrection and final judgment."

If we understand the purport of this, it places the book of Revelations in positive antagonism to the rest of the Bible; of course, it makes it worse than a doubtful book. But let us see if we cannot redeem its character. We take issue with Mr. Ballou on the ground he has chosen, and rest our case on the testimony of the Bible without the Apocalypse.

1. Jesus Christ, in the 24th and 25th of Matthew, describes two distinct judgments. The first judgment is represented as taking place in immediate connection with the second advent. "Immediately after the tribulation of
those days shall the sun be darkened, . . . and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man; . . . and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heaven to the other.' Matt. 24: 29–31. This cannot be a continuous gathering, extending thro' the ages of the Son's regency, because Christ says immediately after—'This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.' The fact that it was a temporary, and not a continuous gathering, is also manifest from the parable of the ten virgins, in the beginning of the next chapter. Then [i. e. at the second advent] shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. . . . And while they [the foolish virgins] went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut.' Matt. 25: 1, 10. This plainly teaches that the glorious presence of Christ in his second advent, would be accessible only for a short season. They that were then ready, went in unto the privileges of the resurrection, and the rest were excluded. 'The door was shut.' Here manifestly was the end of the first judgment. In the 31st verse following, Christ introduces a second judgment. 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, . . . [having gathered in the elect] he shall sit upon the throne of his glory; [and the twelve apostles, with those that were ready at the first gathering, shall sit with him, see Matt. 19: 28, 1 Cor. 6: 2;] and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another. . . . Then [after these great preparatory transactions, which necessarily occupy the whole period of the Son's regency,] shall he say, Come, ye blessed, . . . and . . . depart, ye cursed.' Matt. 25: 31–46. Here at last the door of the marriage supper is again opened to them that are ready, and against the foolish virgins. Taking into account the fact that in this same discourse Christ pointed his disciples forward to the long period of 'the times of the Gentiles,' (Luke 21: 24,) which must necessarily precede the gathering of all nations before his throne, we think he at least 'hints' at a series of events corresponding to those described in the 20th of Revelations—viz., a primary resurrection of 'the elect, a long interval in which 'the rest of the dead lived not,' (the door was shut,) and a final gathering, resurrection and judgment of all nations.

2. Paul describes the resurrection in exact accordance with the testimony of Christ. 'Every man [shall be raised] in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's [the elect' spoken of in Matt. 24: 31] at his coming; then [i. e. next] cometh the end [of the resurrection, i. e. the final resurrection,] when he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father;' [i. e. after his mediatorial reign.] 1 Cor. 15: 22–28. Here are three items. The particle which separates the third from the second, has the same force as that which separates the second from the first.* Now it is

---

*The word translated then, in eis, and that translated afterward, in the 23d verse, is εἰκότα. Eις is the word translated them in 1 Tim. 2: 13. 'Adam was first formed, then Eve.' So it occurs twice in Mark 4: 28. 'First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.' In 1 Cor. 12: 28, both of the words which designate the succession in 1 Cor. 15: 24, occur in exactly the same order. 'God hath set in the church, first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; afterward (speical) miracles; then (eis) gifts of healing,' &c. Compare with this the passage in question:—'Christ the first-
undeniable that the resurrection of Christ was a transaction perfectly distinct from the resurrection of the saints at the second advent, and separated from it by a considerable interval of time. With equal reason, the language of Paul requires us to distinguish between the resurrection of the second advent and the final resurrection; and to place the long interval of the mediatorial reign between them. We will not dwell on this point, as we have already discussed it at some length. (See the article on 'The Millennium,' p. 334.) We think it safe to say that Paul at least 'isps' something about two resurrections: and when we consider that he also foresaw and predicted the 'times of the Gentiles,' (Rom. 11: 25,) we are constrained to believe that, in his own mind, he placed the two resurrections in an order and relation somewhat similar to that described in the 20th of Revelations.

Here let it be noticed that the two representations we have examined, (Matt. 24 & 25, and 1 Cor. 15,) are the only instances in which any of the New Testament writers (excepting, of course, the revelator,) undertake to give a complete prophetic detail of the resurrection and judgment. All the evidence, therefore, in the New Testament, that bears on the point, confirms Revelations 20th.

3. Several of the prophets describe two judgments. (1) In the 12th chapter of Daniel, we have an account of a resurrection of 'many,' (not of all mankind,) which was to take place at the time of the great tribulation—not continuously through many ages. According to Mr. Ballou's own principles of interpretation, this resurrection was to be 'finished' within three and a half literal years from the period of the destruction of Jerusalem. See ver. 7. It should be observed that Daniel's language plainly characterizes this as distinctively a Jewish resurrection. 'At that time, thy people shall be delivered,' &c. Ver. 1. In two previous instances (Dan. 2: 44, & 7: 26) he describes another judgment, which comes after the division of the Roman Empire, and which manifestly pertains to all nations. (2) Joel, in the latter part of his second chapter cursorily describes the judgment of the second advent and the deliverance of 'the elect.' In the third chapter, he predicts specifically the gathering of all nations and the final judgment, after the 'times of the Gentiles.' (3) Zachariah, in his 13th chapter, and the beginning of the 14th, predicts the events of Christ's ministry and the apostolic age, terminating in the first resurrection and judgment, at the destruction of Jerusalem. Then he goes on to describe a subsequent war with the Gentiles, terminating in another judgment; after which 'the Lord shall be king over all the earth.' Ver. 3—9.

We trust the foregoing suggestions will be sufficient to convince those who fairly masticate and digest them, that the doctrine of the 20th chapter of Revelations is in full harmony with the 'uniform representations' of the Old and New Testaments.

fruits; afterward [epeita] they that are Christ's, at his coming: then [cita] the end.—The word cometh is interpolated in the translation. That perhaps contributes to raise a false distinction between the third item and the other two. It is clear from the above examples, and from all the circumstances of the case, that cita has the same force as epeita, and marks off 'the end' from the resurrection of Christ's coming, exactly as epeita marks off the latter from Christ's resurrection. Prof. Stuart has endorsed this view, in his late Commentary on the Apocalypse; and he is deep enough in Greek to be good authority in such a matter.
§ 55. THE CONNECTION OF REGENERATION WITH THE RESURRECTION.

To those who are familiar with our writings, it will be unnecessary for us to prove that the New Testament constantly ascribes regeneration to the power of Christ’s resurrection. If any need proof on this point, they may be referred to Rom. 6: 5—10, 2 Cor. 5: 14—17, Eph. 1: 19, 20, Col. 2: 12, 13. From these and many other passages it is evident that regeneration is, properly speaking, the resurrection of the spirit, and is effected by the same power that finally raises the body to immortal glory. In the primitive church the resurrection of the spirit was the antecedent condition of the complete resurrection at the coming of the Lord. After his own resurrection, and after the commencement of the operation of the resurrection-power on the church, Christ delayed his personal advent forty years, manifestly because, in right order, the spirit should first be quickened, and afterward the body: and the resurrection-power could best take effect on the spirit through the truth, in the absence of Christ, while its complete effect on the body required his personal presence. Thus the resurrection at the second advent was ‘but the completed issue’ of the spiritual quickening which preceded it during the apostolic age.

Assuming then that a ministration of regeneration is the inseparable antecedent of a resurrection, it is obvious that, in order to find the points on the chart of time where resurrections have occurred or shall occur, we have only to ascertain where there has been or is to be a ministration of regeneration going before. Wherever we see the fig-tree of spiritual life budding, we may be sure that the summer of the resurrection is near. With this rule for our guidance, we may safely say at once that there was no resurrection before the coming of Christ. Regeneration, as a doctrine, or as a fact, was not developed in the times of the Old Testament. This we have fully shown in the article on the Second Birth, p. 223. The simple truth that regeneration is effected by the power of Christ’s resurrection, is sufficient to preclude the idea that any were ever born of God till Christ arose from the dead, unless we commit the absurdity of supposing that an effect may precede its cause. As there was no regeneration under the first covenant, so, according to our rule, there was no resurrection.

During the apostolic age the doctrine of regeneration was developed, and men were born of God. Accordingly the first resurrection occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem. So far we advance, in the history of the world with reference to regeneration and the resurrection, under the safe guidance of the Bible.

We are now to try the question whether there has been any resurrection since the destruction of Jerusalem, by inquiring whether there has been a ministration of regeneration since that event. In this inquiry, from the nature of the case we cannot appeal to the Bible for direct evidence, unless it be to its prophecies; and these, though we find them coincident with our
view of the subject, may be thought too doubtful to be relied on as primary proof. Our only course is to compare the doctrine and history of 'Christian experience' in the Gentile church, as recorded by that church itself, with the Bible definition of the second birth. We take for granted that the doctrines of the present leading churches of Christendom, at least on the subject of spiritual experience, are, in substance, the doctrines which have been taught and believed in the Gentile church as a whole since the apostolic age. What then is the popular view of the subject of the second birth? We answer, 1, Regeneration is thought to be nothing more than such a partial change from irreligion to the fear of the Lord as was experienced by pious Jews in all ages before the coming of Christ. This betrays the fact that regeneration, in its essential, Bible character, as a spiritual quickening, 

**affected by the resurrection of Christ**, and of course peculiar to the Christian, in distinction from the Jewish dispensation, is not, and has not been recognized in the creed of Gentile Christendom. 2. It is taught and believed in the leading churches, that regeneration is consistent with much and even continual sin. But the Bible definition of the second birth is this: 'He that is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' Thus it is evident that the regeneration of the apostolic age, is not the regeneration of Gentile Christendom. This second feature of the popular doctrine of regeneration, necessarily attends the first. If regeneration was experienced in the times of the Old Testament, then it must be consistent with sin; for all the Old Testament saints sinned. But on the other hand, if regeneration is, as the Bible affirms, a sin-eradicating operation, then the history of its development in the past ages of the world is confined to the times subsequent to the resurrection of Christ. To those who adopt the Bible view of regeneration, it will be evident that the Gentile church, so far as doctrine is concerned, has not been conversant with the real second birth, but only with an inferior kind of conversion, which belonged to Judaism. And as experience follows believing the truth, and cannot go beyond the truth received, it will also be evident that the experience which has gone by the name of regeneration in the Gentile churches, has not been the Christian second birth, but only an inferior, Jewish, spiritual change.

It follows then, according to our rule, that there has been no resurrection since the destruction of Jerusalem. The grain has not been ripened. Therefore there has been no harvest. If it can be proved that since the apostolic age there has been a continuous ministration of regeneration in Christendom, we will accept the doctrine of Bush and Ballou, that there has been a continuous resurrection. But all the evidence that is accessible to us, leads us to the conclusion that Bible-regeneration ceased at the end of the apostolic age, and of course that there was the end of the first resurrection.

The final inquiry is, When may the second resurrection be expected? If we may legitimately reason from the past harvest to the future, our answer must be,—The second resurrection will take place within the lifetime of a generation from the period of the second ministration of true Christian regeneration. In our view, the re-development of the gospel of salvation from all
SECOND ADVENT TO THE SOUL.

sin by the resurrection of Christ, is the re-commencement of the process which in the apostolic age ended in the second advent and the first resurrection. If this is true, we are now in the 'beginning of the end.'

§ 56. THE SECOND ADVENT TO THE SOUL.

It has been held by some that the second coming of Christ is so entirely a spiritual transaction that it belongs altogether to the sphere of internal experience, and takes place in each individual when 'old things pass away and all things become new.' This is doubtless a false theory; for nothing is more certain than that Christ came personally and visibly to the expectant church at the close of the Jewish dispensation; and it was this coming, and not any manifestation of Christ in private experience, which was constantly held up to the hopes of believers by the apostles and New Testament writers. Nevertheless, there is a moiety of truth in this false theory. There is a second coming of Christ to the soul, distinct from his coming to judgment, as we will proceed to show, from the testimony of the Bible.

Christ said to his disciples, on the eve of his departure from them,—'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.' John 14: 18. Here is a plain promise of a second coming. But did Christ, in this promise, allude to the second coming which was to be the great sequel of the end of Judaism? Surely not; for we have a subsequent explanation which clearly determines that the second coming here promised was to be a matter of individual internal experience—a coming of Christ, not in visible person, but by the Holy Ghost. He goes on to say—'Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.' He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. [Here the promise of coming to them is repeated in another form.] Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him; and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.' Ver. 19—23. If the reader will turn to his Bible, he will perceive that this passage is immediately connected and evidently identified with promises of the Holy Ghost going before and after it; (see verses 16, 17, and 26;) and the language of it, as well as its context, indicates that Christ was not speaking of his ultimate personal coming, after a period of forty years, but of a spiritual manifestation which was much nearer—a coming, not of 'the Son of man in the clouds of heaven with his holy angels,' but of the Father and the Son in the Holy Ghost, to the hearts of believers.
SECOND ADVENT TO THE SOUL.

On turning to the epistles, we find language corresponding to this promise of a spiritual advent, and testifying that it had already taken place in the experience of the saints. The following are examples of such language:

1. Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess. 1: 1. (See also 2 Thess. 1: 1.)—"Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." 1 John 1: 3.—"If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father." 1 John 2: 24.—"He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." 2 John 9. The exact correspondence of this last passage with Christ’s promise, is worthy of notice. We will place them side by side:

John 14: 23.
"If any man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." 2 John 9.
"He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

It is clear, then, that between Christ’s personal ministry and his second coming to judgment, there was a spiritual manifestation of him to the souls of believers which may properly be called his "second appearing." This manifestation was in fact the essential act of salvation—a transaction which completed the reconciliation of believers with the Father and the Son. By this manifestation they became partakers of the divine nature, and thenceforth dwelt in God, and God in them. It was by this that they received the "spirit of the Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. 4: 6. In a word, the second appearing of Christ was the second birth.

We ought, therefore, to recognize three, instead of two, appearances of Christ. He came, first, in the likeness of sinful flesh, to the visible world; secondly, in the Holy Ghost, to the souls of the saints; thirdly, in his glorified body, to that part of the spiritual world which, at the end of the Jewish dispensation, was ready for judgment. The second of these advents, though it has been altogether eclipsed in the minds of men by the other two, and has hardly been recognized as a distinct advent, was, nevertheless, in many respects the most important of the three. So far as the saints were concerned, it was the advent by which "old things passed away and all things became new." It made them "new creatures," and introduced them to a "new heavens and a new earth." At the first advent, they communed with Christ externally, and saw his works. The third advent introduced their bodies to the inner mansion of his glorious personal presence. But the second advent ushered their souls into the holy of holies, and gave them everlasting spiritual fellowship with the Father and the Son. The proportions between the three may be stated thus: As the soul is to the natural body, so was the second advent to the first; and as the soul is to the glorified body, so was the second advent to the third.

If we prefer, however, to think and speak only of two comings, the first and second, then we ought to include in the second, the spiritual advent under consideration. In fact, the coming, in the Holy Ghost, to the souls
THRONES OF DAVID.

of believers during the apostolic age, and the personal coming to their bodies at the end of the Jewish world, were only different parts of one great transaction. That transaction was the resurrection. Christ came to them that kept his words and looked for his appearing, first, to raise their souls from the grave of sin, and afterward to raise their bodies from the bonds of death. The one advent ran into the other; and the whole may properly be called the second appearing of Christ.

§ 57. "THE THRONE OF DAVID."

An article with the above title was published by Prof. Bush, in the 'Hierophant,' in Dec. 1843, which we here copy.

"By those who have followed the train of our exposition of the 7th of Daniel, it will have been seen that we have dwelt largely on the position, that the kingdom of the Son of man, instead of being properly a future expectancy, did in fact commence ages ago, at his ascension in the clouds of heaven to the Father's right hand. Although there is indeed abundant evidence that his kingly power is yet to be more illustriously demonstrated, and more universally acknowledged, in the ages of coming time, when the kingdoms of this world shall recognize in him their predestined and lawful Sovereign, yet that his actual investiture with the regal dignity has long since taken place, we are fully persuaded. The providential delay in assuming to the full extent his promised dominion, does not militate with the fact of his having received, at his ascension, the plenary title to it. The case is strikingly illustrated by that of his lineal and typical predecessor, David. He, as we learn from the inspired history, was anointed by Samuel several years before he actually entered upon the exercise of his royal authority. The jealous hostility of Saul availed to banish him for a long season from public view, and compelled him to wander in the wilderness as a roe that would escape the hands of the hunter. It was only by pressing onwards through a formidable array of obstacles and enemies, that he found a way to his own throne, and made good the divine designation which had chosen him from the sheepfolds to rule over Israel. In like manner, although the Saviour was anointed King of Zion at his exaltation from the grave, and the second Psalm recites the decree of recognition, on the part of Jehovah himself, of his title to this august character, yet the course of Providence, for wise reasons, has been such as to prevent, as in the case of David, his more open, visible, and acknowledged supremacy being thus far entered upon. Still, it cannot be doubted that every thing is in the meantime tending, in the councils of God, to the ultimate assertion of that paramount dignity and dominion, which is secured to him by the unerring word of prophecy; and it would be a very erroneous reading of the oracles of scripture, that should fail to recognize him as even now really sustaining all the characters which the Old Testament prophets announce in respect to him. Thus it was clearly predicted that he should be a Son and successor of David, and should sit upon his throne. This prediction announces a form of the Savior's empire, which we are prone to regard as yet future. We image to ourselves in a vague and