THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND,

AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."

EZEKIEL XII. 23.

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THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL XII. 23.

No. 1.] GUERNSEY, MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1848. [Vol. I.

TO THE READERS OF *THE PROSPECT.*

It cannot be denied that, of late years, the doctrine of the Lord's coming again, with collateral truths, has been strikingly and extensively revived among the children of God. Long and wide-spread had been the slumber, but a cry was made, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." In the movement of our day, as in the parable, wise and foolish virgins alike arose and trimmed their lamps. The call was responded to, not only by those who had an unction from the Holy One, but by many who lacked oil in their vessels. Thus the enemy found it as easy, as for him it was and is important, to discredit a hope so blessed and purifying. An excess of literalism was a natural reaction on the part of those who saw the vicious consequences of the allegorizing school that had prevailed since the days of Origen. Others, again, who mourned that the Church had been misled to view prophecy almost exclusively as bearing upon the past, or as affording present warnings against Popery, easily fell into the snare of making all converge upon the great personal Anti-Christ: a narrowness of view which had the tendency and the effect of blinding souls to the Romish evil, as well as of shutting out of the prophetic field the other important actors in the portentous scenes of the latter day. But even these were not the most solemn warnings: abroad and at home, we have witnessed how subtly the recognition of the Lord's advent has been interwoven into systems the most withering to vital truth.

But was the state of the Church, outside the range of prophetic research, such as to rebuke these grievous failures? Certainly not. Just then the professing Church was boasting of her onward progress, her increasing light, her numerous societies, her circulation of the Scriptures, her missionary triumphs, the ascendancy of Protestantism, and the declension of Popery. But soon after, through the mercy of God, His servants began to herald the coming of the Lord Jesus; the eyes of those who received it were opened to see the degradation and the self-complacency withal of the Church of God. The same Scriptures which foretold His coming, proved to their minds clearly, that He should be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: that the mystery of lawlessness which was working even in apostolic days should continue to work until, all hindrance being taken out of the way, it should issue at last in the open revelation of the lawless one, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, (cf. Is. xi. 4; xxx. 33,) and shall destroy with the brightness (or manifestation) of His coming." This led many to the painful trying of the present condition of the Church by that word which effectually worketh in them that believe, and the result was, that their hearts were smitten down in sorrow and humiliation because of our common sin and shame. O what a liar against the Lord's grace and truth was the Church found to be! Where was the outward testimony to the world, that there was "one body and one Spirit?" Where the manifestation that she was dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world? Where that she was risen with Christ, and therefore setting her affections on things above, and mortifying her members that are upon the earth? How was it shown that she walked under the unseen guidance of the divine Comforter? Where the evidence to man that she sought nothing, valued nothing on an earth stained with the blood of Jesus? Where that lonely, heavenly separatedness of her, whose joy should be to know herself even now united to the risen Christ—one spirit with the Lord—whose brightest hope is the marriage of the Lamb, whose present privilege, therefore, it is to suffer for His sake, unloved, unknown by a world which knew Him not, but crucified Him? And what thanks can we render unto God for the sweet fruits of the Spirit, which sprang from the re-awakened assurance that the Lord, gone to prepare a place in the Father's house, would in very deed come again and receive us unto Himself? A sense of sin, a spirit of confession and prayer, of self-judgment and of departure from known evil, a freshened desire to search the Scriptures, to honour the Holy Ghost in the unity of the body, and to wait for God's Son from heaven—these were the consequences of a return to the prophetic testimony. It led to a better understanding of the difference of the work of Christ for us, and that of the Spirit in us, and hence to a simpler, fuller, bolder preaching of the Gospel of the grace of God, as well as to a clearer apprehension of the heavenly calling and the mystery which involved at once the most important results as to the walk and worship of the Church.

If sudden and little-looked-for events have occurred in the world—if thereby many, hitherto slumbering, have been roused to inquiry—if a host of publications has appeared, which, while containing more or less elements of truth, tend to direct the mind from the certain thoughts which God has revealed to a balance of human probabilities about the time to come—is it not, brethren, the time for us, who are of the day, to be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation? Hardly anything more disturbs serenity of judgment than frequent and exciting allusions to the events of the times; and the rather, if instead of viewing them as pilgrims and strangers, who look for a city which hath foundations, we have a direct interest in what passes around us, because of its bearing upon ourselves. But is not this only a more imperative demand upon all them that love His appearing, to sound forth needed, countervailing truth? Peradventure some sheep of the Lord's pasture may thus be delivered from anxieties within, from prevailing dangers without, to await His coming in peace. Is not this our place? Blessed place, where the sense we have of the love of Jesus will be fully tried, but where the Father has purposely set us, that, apart from—even while in—this present evil world, may be shown how far (alas! how little) our hearts are true, as espoused to one husband. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come." While in all things desiring to show forth His praise who has called us into His marvellous light, let this be the thing most felt, most prominent, that, as the Bride, we watch and long for Him, who, if He seems to tarry long, will soon be here, the bright, the morning star.

Assuredly, the messages to the church in Philadelphia and to the church in Laodicea (Rev. iii.) are of the most practical, present value to our sonls. The first is a word which supposes saints in a special way to know and expect the coming of the Lord. "Because thou hast kept the *word of my patience*," *i.e.*, patient waiting for me, (cf. 2 Thess. iii. 5, in the Greek,) "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, *I come quickly:* hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Most grave it is, on the other hand, to think that, in the second, the condition is the natural result of that blessed hope perverted or despised. For, what so keeps us on our faces, in the sense of the present ruin-state, as the Spirit leading us habitually to wait for Jesus? So, again, when the heart, nominally holding the doctrine, has ceased to beat for the return of Christ, or when it has learnt to treat His coming as an indifferent, secondary question—is it not the state which is ripe for saying: "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing?"

The need of brotherly forbearance is manifest; else, far

from helping united progress, the search into prophecy will inevitably lead to fresh differences. It is not meant that the door should be otherwise than open to all who love our Lord Jesus; but that, in conveying thoughts, we should abstain as much as possible from direct comments upon the views of others. Love will readily find a way to supply deficiencies, and to correct mistakes, without assuming the shape of a rejoinder. Seasons there are, no doubt, when we are bound to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; but the happy place all will admit to be that of communicating truth, rather than of combating error.

Is it not desirable, too, that it should be plain, from our papers as from everything else, that rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, instead of obscuring, leads us to apprehend and enjoy better the grace wherein we stand? For indeed, it is the salvation-bearing grace of God which teaches us to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, not only denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, but looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. These blessed truths—the salvation, the walk, and the hope of the Christian—reciprocally cast light each upon the other; so much so, that he who rejects one will be found in the long run to be wanting in the just proportions of the rest. Let us not, therefore, be afraid of reiterating the simplest foundation-truths of the Gospel. Thus will the flesh, with its pride and curiosity, be best rebuked, as, with worshipping spirit, we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Dear brethren, may we be enabled to avoid that which is the best wisdom of this world, conjecture gathered from the past or the present! God has given to His Church a ground infinitely higher and more stable; opened to us our own portion for ever with the Lord; but withal, made us know, ere it come to pass, the secret of His judgments in the approaching crisis of rebellion and apostasy in the world. Meanwhile, He would have us to read and understand the more sure word of prophecy, in order that, judging present circumstances in the clear light of their disastrous closure, our ways may be purged from earthly principles, our consciences kept in healthy exercise, and our hearts drawn out toward Him who loved the Church and gave Himself for it. Such is the high object we propose—not to descend to the mere level of sight and intellect, where the events of to-day are made the foundation of guessing the contingencies of to-morrow, but—to hold the truth of the Lord's return far above, and aloof from, all questions of time and circumstance—questions, no doubt, most weighty, when the Jews come into the sphere of view; but for us, for the Church, it is a heavenly hope, that knows not of any such indices. We look not for them, but for Christ.

Another thing I may be permitted to press—the necessity of a jealous godly watchfulness, lest this journal should sink into a mere depository of the opinions and interests of a party. And now, begging the prayers of all, I commend the work to His blessing whose the Church is and who loves her, that He may be pleased to use it to the praise of the name of the Beloved! W. K.

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER I.

THE first eight verses serve as an introduction to the whole book.

It is profitable, and throws light on the Apocalypse itself, to examine the peculiar character of the book, and the manner in which Jesus reveals Himself in it.

There is a special blessing attached to the reading of this book, i. 3, and xxii. 7. It is a practical thing. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein."

Nothing is of more importance. The prophecies of the Old Testament strengthened the Jews in their relationship with God, and attached them to His government. Although God permits men to go their own way, led by their own passions, yet He never did, nor ever will, entirely give up the reins of government as to this world. This is what the Apocalypse shows us. All things work together for the glory of Jesus. We see in Heb. xi. 7, the effects of prophecy on faith. The faith of Abel recognizes the sacrifice; Enoch's walks with God. The faith of Noah condemns the world; it was not limited to the recognition of the efficacy of the sacrifice and walking with God; but Noah was warned of God of things not seen as yet, and, separated in walk from the world by this warning, became heir of the righteousness which is by faith, and condemned the world. The world put to death Jesus the heir. The Church, warned of God of what is about to come to pass, knows that man in rebellion against God has no title to the inheritance of the world. The Church in its suffering state does not possess it.

Christ is presented to us in the Apocalypse as the heir of the world. The Church, like Noah, condemns the world of which she is co-heir with Christ.

God is not presented as Father in the Apocalypse: this gives the character of the book. When the glory of the inheritance in the Saints (Eph. i. 17, 18) is treated of, Christ is presented as man; and God, as *the God* of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Eph. iii. 14, where the communion of the Father and of the Son is in question, He is presented as *the Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the Apocalypse, God is presented as the God who governs the world; whereas, when it is the Church that is in question, He is called *Father*. Moreover, in the Apocalypse, the subject is (not what relates to His connection with the Church, but) the world; and its connection with God, as Governor of the world.

In this first chapter, Christ is presented as *man*, but *in glory*. The communication is by an angel,—not by the Spirit of revelation and of communion, making the Church to enjoy the glory and fellowship with the Father and with the Son. There is a great difference between what is communicated to the Church and what has the Church for its subject. When the Church is addressed as to what concerns herself, she is addressed according to the presence of the Spirit which puts her in communion with the Father and the Son as the Church, as the family. God communicated to Abraham what concerned Sodom, so to the Church what concerns the world.

1st verse.—A revelation is made to Jesus, and He communicates it to John by an angel.* It is prophecy, the testimony of Jesus, *i.e.*, that which He gives Himself, and the word of God.

The difference between the testimony of Jesus and a testimony to Jesus, is of some importance in this book. It is often said that the Spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus; so that those who should receive that alone and have nothing more, have the testimony of Jesus and the word of God. In this verse the learned agree to read, not the testimony of Jesus Christ, "*and of* all things that he saw," but "the testimony of Jesus Christ, (viz.) all things that he saw;" that is to say, the visions in the Apocalypse themselves form the testimony.

This prophecy is, 1st, the word of God; 2nd, the testimony of Jesus Christ; 3rd, a vision. "All things he *saw*."

3rd verse.—"For the time is at hand." Those things are not fulfilled. The thought of the return of Jesus was so present, that the disciples thought John would not die before *His* coming. John closed revelation.

Malachi closed the Old Testament by the promise of Elijah. From that time all was apocryphal. There is no new revelation or communications made that would constitute the proof of a recognised relationship. So the Apocalypse, which closes the New Testament revelation, announces the coming of Jesus, and all is apocryphal until the Lord comes to receive the Church.†

* I speak only as to the *mode* of communication; the whole is of course inspired.

† Nevertheless, although God the Father makes no more communication to the Church, according to the relation of the head of the body with the members of that body in its unity,—yet He leaves here communications of the judgments He forms of the state of things which have the name of the Church in the world, whatever its position or state may be. The seven churches are taken as a sample of the various states on which He bears this judgment, and thus of warning to all.

God does not, in the interval, *give up* His people; but He makes no more revelations. Therefore He says: "the time is at hand." Thus the apostles speak of their time, as being the last days. All the interval until the return of Jesus is the long suffering of God towards the world. The Church is to walk by faith, and by the revelation already given.

4th verse.—John addresses directly the seven churches.

The salutation agrees with the character of the book. God presents Himself as the Eternal, as the One who reigns and rules. The Spirit is presented in a manner exterior to the relations of God with the Church, as a spirit of wisdom and of light. It is the Spirit in His attributes of power and of perfection, the accomplisher of the divine will in the world. Moreover, Jesus is not presented here as the head of the Church in heaven, but as the *faithful witness*, as *risen*, and as *prince* of the kings of the earth.

6th verse.—It is the Church who receives the revelation and who answers: "To Him who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us to God and His Father kings and priests, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.—*Amen.*"

The Church cannot forget the love of which she has been the object; and she expresses her own relation to God in the scene which is about to be disclosed. Jesus is placed last, (4, 5,) because He is the One who communicates with the earth and whose of right it all is.

God is on the throne; the Spirit is before the throne, and Jesus is in connection with the earth. This is the object of the book. It is not the Church which is here in the thoughts of God; she receives the communication of them. Jesus has, spite of Satan, title to the inheritance of the world; and He lets the Church into the knowledge of *His* counsels before the thing takes place. God communicates to Abraham what He is going to do to Sodom; and here, to the Church, what He is going to do to the world, in order that the Church may remain apart from all that system which leads to judgment.

7th verse.—"Behold He cometh with clouds." This verse passeth on to that which establishes His relation with the world,—the Jews included. That is the principal thought, the great subject of revelation here. The present dispensation is a dispensation of faith. The Church has not seen Jesus risen; she has only seen the witnesses of His resurrection, and she must believe it on their testimony. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." —John xx. 29. Such is the principle on which the believer walks in the present dispensation. "Every eye shall see Him;" (not those only who believe;) that is the character of the coming dispensation.

8th verse.—God introduces Himself after the manifestation of Jesus to every eye, to close the testimony by the revelation of Himself. The same that He had been in the beginning and the Almighty God; which was, and is, and which is to come; unchanged through all the changes that had taken place. But the title of Alpha and Omega, and of the Eternal, which God takes here, is the same that is given to Jesus, (xxi. 6,) where the prophecy is closed. He is always the image of the invisible God, always God himself manifested in the flesh; the One who *is*, who *was*, and who *is to come;* the Almighty. Also in comparing 1 Tim. vi. 14, 16, with Apoc. xix. 16, we see the titles of King of kings, and Lord of lords, which, in the first of these passages, are applied to Him "who dwelleth in the light to which no one can approach," and who shall show Jesus, applied to Jesus in the second; and when Jesus is "shown," He comes with the same titles which He bears who shows *Him*. The name of *Almighty* is that by which God revealed Himself to Abraham. Exod. vi. 3. At the end of the verse He reveals himself as the one who will fulfil to the Jews the promises made to Abraham. The *Almighty* who had made these promises is the Eternal, that is to say, Jehovah, the God of Israel.

9th verse.—It is well to notice the position of John which is connected with the character of the book. He does not exactly present himself as a member of the body, though he is so of course; but in his actual position, viz., where the delay of the coming of the Master places the faithful, that is, *in tribulation*. His actual position was like that of others in the tribulation of Christ, as member of His kingdom, and like Him waiting the moment when the accomplishment of the promises of the glory should take place—"in the tribulation, the kingdom, and the patience of Christ." Such is the position of the Church, which becomes her while the king is hidden in God.—John xxi. 22. The word of God and the testimony of Jesus had placed him there, and the testimony of Jesus was peculiarly that of the kingdom. Again, observe here that the Lord's-day is Sunday: the meaning is not the day of the Lord. Nor is there any doubt that the greater part of the visions apply to what precedes that coming day.

The rest of the chapter shows us already the glory of Christ. Affliction is inseparable from testimony to the glory of Jesus.

12th and 13th verses.—When he turns to look at the Almighty, the Alpha and the Omega, he sees Jesus. He sees what characterised *the Ancient of days*.—Daniel vii. 9, 13. In Daniel, the Son of Man is led to the Ancient of days, and receives the dominion. In Apoc. i. 14, Jesus, the Son of Man, has the character of the Ancient of days.

Jesus cannot present Himself as a man without the Church and the Holy Ghost recognising Him as God, eternal, almighty, as the one who has dominion over the world. God gives us to understand *His* purposes concerning the world, and shows to us Jesus, who suffered, supremely exalted as man. We see when the Son of Man is manifested in the glory, (and so it was when sojourning here below), God Himself, the eternal God, as well as the man to whom all title to glory belongs. Jesus has the reward of having humbled and made Himself of no reputation for us. In Ps. cii. he says: "He weakened my strength in the way; He shortened my days." The answer is, "But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." John sees also the seven churches, (things that are,) and Christ in the midst of these churches, not as serving them; His garments descend to His feet; His girdle of gold is divine glory in judgment, not spiritually on oneself, but to be executed on others,—judicial firmness. His head reveals the Ancient of days. His eyes were piercing like fire in judgment. Glory and majesty were discovered in Him, and He held the representatives of the seven churches in the right hand of His power.

16th verse.—He judges by the word of His mouth, a two-edged sword. Glory supreme shines in His face.

17th verse.—We do not find the spirit of adoption and confidence. It is man standing in the presence of the glory of Him who rules. Speaking in this character, He communicates the revelation of God to His servant John, the prophet of the Church.

18th verse.—Jesus, the man once dead, but now alive again—conqueror of hell and of death—takes away fear from him who finds death in the presence of His divine glory.

19th verse.—We see here the division of the Apocalypse into three parts:—

1st.—*The things seen*, that is to say, the glory of Jesus such as we have seen it described.

2d.—*The things that are*, or the seven churches.

3d.—*The things to come after them*, or the prophecy.—iv. 1.

The order of the book presents thus, the person of Jesus, Son of Man in glory; the Eternal God; the Churches, and Jesus as a judge in the midst of them; and then revelations concerning the world. Jesus is revealed here, not as the head of the Church, but as judge and ruler in the Church; not as the olive-tree which gives the oil, or as the head that distributes gifts, but as the head who makes use only of threatenings and rewards; not as servant or advocate, or shepherd of the sheep; but in a long robe, in the dignity of a judge, and like one who comes to see what light the candlestick gives.

It is important to apprehend that *the general object of this book is the revelation* of the relations of God, as ruler, with the world, viewed as introducing into it Jesus as heir. It will be seen how much of difficulty this removes.

The understanding of the book supposes a soul established in its relations with the Father and with the Son, to whom God will reveal His purposes towards the world as God.

It would be grievous and shameful for us not to be sufficiently of the family of God so as to feel interested in all *His* glory.

ADDENDA.—CHAPTERS II. III.

I AVOIDED in my lectures saying anything on the seven churches as not being strictly part of the *prophecy*. For the satisfaction of my readers I shall add only a few thoughts thereon. There were doubtless seven churches thus named; but they were selected in order to present the thoughts of God to the whole church. The number seven is expressive of something spiritually complete. The seven churches are "the things which are," and "the things which are" end with the history of the seven churches. "What was to happen after these" (i. 19,) cannot be considered as belonging to the present time in the sense in which this expression refers to the position in which John found himself. The prophetic details were outside of that period. They were the things which were to happen after it; that is to say, the prophetic details of this book were not comprised in "the things which are" considered morally as the time present of the churches. But the seven churches may be viewed under a twofold aspect. First, there were seven churches existing at that very time. But, then, the glory of Christ, judging in the midst of the churches, was certainly not confined to do this, and the number seven guides our thoughts towards something which is *complete*. Are we then to think of all the churches at that time, or of the general history of the Church on the earth? In the first place, it is the moral condition of the Church, wherein that is to be found, which is spoken of; and the judgment pronounced is pronounced upon such a condition, and is addressed to "*all* that have ears to hear," and would thus morally extend to all the churches existing at that time. But, inasmuch as it describes states distinct, differing one from the other, it is difficult to apply it to the whole Church at any given period; and the thoughts are very naturally directed to periods in which the condition of the professing Church may have been characterised by what is said concerning the churches placed in succession before us.

The expression "the things which are," very naturally adapts itself to this; for, as we have seen, it is difficult to apply, at any given time, seven very different states to the general condition of the Church, and it is evident that the expression "the things which are" comprises more than what is understood by the seven churches in Asia. Now the state of the professing Church, until it is rejected as a witness on the earth, is naturally described by "the things which are," as contrasted with the intentions of God in bringing in a new dispensation by the exercise of His power into the world. And this it is which distinguishes these two chapters from those which follow. The Church is seen in a state of declension until she is spued out of the mouth of the Lord. Then comes the history of the throne. We may distinguish the seven churches of that time as presented to us historically (which do not perfectly set forth all God's thoughts) from the history of the Church in general until the end: each of these things presents to us "the things which are."

There is here, with regard to the form of prophecy, an important observation to be made. When the people of God are more or less still recognised by Him, the prophecy is addressed to the people. When they are no more recognised of God, then the ways of God are communicated to the prophet who declares His counsels concerning the world. Thus the prophets of the Old Testament speak to the people, while the people are recognised of God. Daniel, a captive in Babylon, receives visions concerning their relations with the nations, and the history of those nations; but the prophecy is not addressed to the people. Thus also the Apocalypse no longer recognises the Church upon earth in the prophetic part of the book, and is not an address to the Church itself. "The things which are," and what John saw of the glory of Christ, judging in the midst of the churches, no doubt, is addressed to these churches. In the prophetic part, the testimony is given in their midst, is deposited with them, so to speak, but the word is not addressed to them. The Lord had said, speaking of John, "If I will that he tarry till I come." John, the last of the Apostles, bears personally to the churches the last testimony of Christ's relationship with them (according to their present state—a state it may be said of transition, and where the churches are seen quite in a new light): as a symbolical person, his testimony lasts until the Church is no more recognised at all, and prophecy takes the place of communication made direct to the Church, and announces the introduction of the First-born in judgment, (judgment of the apostasy and of the world,) and the events which proceed from the throne and precede His introduction. It was necessary that the Church should be put aside, in order to speak of those things. Otherwise everything would have been done with a view to the Church herself. The Lord is seen as the Lamb in the throne at the very beginning of the prophecy, as the one who has suffered in His own person on the earth, and not as judging in the churches on the earth.

It would be impossible here to enter in detail upon the seven churches; it would be to write a book. The varied promises, descriptive of the heavenly portion that is to come, would deserve protracted study, as well as the peculiar insignia by which Christ is designated, and the relation between the two; and also the connection of the latter with the state of the church in which they are severally found. I shall only endeavour to give a general outline, according to what we have seen. It is a state of transition. Christ is represented as a judge in this book, judging either the churches or the world. He is no longer as the head of the Church communicating, in grace, blessings, and precepts, or exhorting by the chosen members of the body, or girded with a towel washing the feet. He is judging the state of things and threatening them. At one time He threatens to remove the candlestick, when a church is not faithful to that which has been entrusted to her, as bearing testimony before the world. There is another remark to be made here—God's candlestick, as regards His government in the world, was no longer at Jerusalem. God will govern the world by His First-born, and will prepare the way for Him by these judgments. But judgment begins at the house of God. The light, the candlestick of God was there, and His name was upon them in the sight of the world. And whatever be its unfaithfulness, and however God may act in raising a testimony elsewhere before the world, until such a system be judged, as a system established of God, it bears its responsibility, and God acts in judgment towards it. Jerusalem was the seat of God's testimony. His candlestick had been there. I need not insist amongst Christians that the light and the presence of God were spiritually dwelling in the midst of Christians. Nevertheless, Jerusalem's responsibility and her position before the world only ceased in her destruction by the judgment of God. After this, God's candlestick, in a terrestrial sense, was in the professing Church. Till then, Christians had been, to the eye of the world, a sect of the Jews. Thus we see Aquila and Priscilla at a distance from Rome, because Claudius had commanded that every Jew should depart from it. At Antioch, in the midst of the Gentiles, which was the starting point of the labours of Paul, apostle of the Gentiles, the believers begin to have a peculiar name. They were first called Christians at Antioch—χρηματίσαι. Acts xi. 26. Thus God was preparing little by little, and especially by the mission of Paul, another candlestick before the world. Jerusalem labouring under the weight of her sins and the guilt of the blood of the Just One, by the judgments of God upon her disappears entirely from the scene, and the professing Church is the only witness for God remaining before the world. The judgment of God upon the earth consequently connects itself with the professing Church. The position of the Church was perhaps more happy before, when she had only to seek her blessings from house to house (κατ'οἶκον,) and while the temple remained the public place of the testimony of God; yet God is always faithful to His own, and wise in His ways. It is, however, under this new character that the Church is considered in the Apocalypse. Christ is there judging in the midst of the candlesticks. In the prophetical part, the Church is no more seen on earth. The judgments concern the world, and the events proceed from the throne on high, not from Christ walking on earth in the midst of the candlesticks which shone very little perhaps, but which still were there.

Thus the addresses to the seven churches, while applying to the seven churches in Asia, and severally to any one, are applicable to the professing Church so long as she retains this place manifestly on the earth. In detail it may be removed from one place and carried to another, as has been the case. We must remember also that the characteristic condition of one church may begin, and that of another still continue. Alas! the state of the church at Ephesus has continued to the end, and the candlestick will be removed. Many more sorrows have occurred in the meantime. One thing more is to be remarked. The characters according to which Christ acts in the midst of the churches until Thyatira are those found in the revelation of His glory in what preceded. (ch. i.) This is no longer the case from Sardis, save the fact that He retains in His hand the authority over the churches; the seven stars are still there. But the names He takes, that is to say, the character according to which He acts, and which is the object of intelligent faith in the Church, must always be looked for further off in the knowledge of Christ. They are beyond that revelation of Himself which constitutes the basis of His relationship with the churches in the normal position which He takes toward them here.

In the church at Sardis then the testimony to the churches, in a certain sense, begins as it were anew, while still remaining part of the whole. The Spirit repeats this characteristic trait; He holds the seven stars in His right hand. But the position is less ecclesiastical, and has more of what is essential in the nature of His relation with the churches. There is an exception to be made to what has been said in the case of Thyatira. "Son of God" is not part of the revelation of Christ in the preceding chapter. But it seems to me that the apostasy in principle which characterises the church in Thyatira (association with idols, and this being tolerated)—this trait had its place when a well-known ecclesiastical relation was coming to an end. Christ is the Son of God; it is under this essential title of the glory of His person that He laid the basis of the Church, and was the object of her faith. Thus the claims of the Church, as being associated as coheir with Him, in contrast with the nations, come in entirely in their place, when the professing church was abandoning her only faith, and the hope which was hers as set apart to God. The morning-star, the dawn of a new day, shone in the heart of him that overcame under such circumstances (compare xxii. 16).

These seven churches, considered as a continued series of the history of the Church, would then present to us the following epochs. Her first declension already in the time of John.—The time of persecution.—The professing church established in the empire, or in the world, and the germ of the ecclesiastical apostasy.—The time of this ecclesiastical apostasy when Jezebel is seducing and tolerated.—Sardis, the time of Protestantism as a system established in the earth. —The time when, deprived of strength, faithfulness to the word of the patience of Christ characterises those who know it.—The time of saying we are rich when, in true riches, everything is wanting; that is the final state, the lukewarmness which Christ spues out of his mouth.

Observe that we must not look for the energy producing effects, but for the effect produced by that energy. This is what God judges. He acts in energy. Thus the reformation was the energy of the Holy Ghost; the state of Protestantism is a thing which He judges.

The churches characterise the state, the position of the Christian testimony which attracts the attention of the world, —the candlestick which is there to give light. If this is the case, it is evident that the study of the speciality of these churches is of the utmost interest to my reader. I earnestly entreat him to make it his study; so much the more because the most precious traits of the heavenly joy are found therein.

I shall only add a few words more in general on the whole. The promises made to the two first churches relate to the general recompense, and are of course, so to speak, for every Christian. The promise made to the third relates to a personal and individual knowledge of Jesus, which supposes that strength for faithfulness of walk is already found more in the faith and in the faithfulness of the individual. Jesus is known alone, and also enjoyed alone. There is, in the church of Thyatira, amidst the general iniquity a remarkable faithfulness and devotedness, and the Spirit of God, while leaving to the body the character of the candlestick, that is to say, the responsibility of witnessing before the world, distinguishes entirely those who had not taken part in this iniquity. Observe ii. 24, where the lesson is still stronger or at least more clear in all the critical editions.

As to the three last churches, we may observe that that of Sardis is threatened with the judgment of the world.—(Compare 1 Thess v.) That of Philadelphia becomes of an inestimable price for the faithful of this time. The coming of Jesus is declared therein to sustain faith in a peculiar manner. And, finally, (showing at the same time His perfect patience, if any of His abode there still,) we see in the case of Laodicea the professing church spued out of the Lord's mouth.

TRANSLATIONS FROM "*L'ATTENTE ACTUELLE DE L'EGLISE.*

I.—PROPHECY: "A LIGHT THAT SHINETH IN A DARK PLACE."

THE Christian should seek to know not only the salvation that is in Christ, but also all the fruits of that salvation. He ought not only to be assured that he is in the house of his Father, but moreover to enjoy the privileges of the house.

"God has called us by glory and by virtue." (2 Peter i. 3).

In the glory of Christ and of the Church, God gives us a futurity filled with His counsels. The study of that precious truth engages our thoughts in the most useful way; and certainly it is one of the objects He has proposed to Himself in dispensing to us prophecy which reveals His intentions, and makes us, as friends, to share the thoughts which occupy him. He could not give us a more tender pledge of His love and of His confidence (Gen. xviii. 17,) nor anything having a more sanctifying influence upon our souls. In fact, if men are characterised by the object they pursue, our conduct in the present will be formed by the future of our hope—it will necessarily have its reflection and colour. Those who seek after dignities only; those who dream not save of riches; those who do not expect happiness but from the pleasures of the world, act each according to what is in their heart; their life respectively is ruled by the object of their affections. It is the same with the Church. If the faithful understood their calling, which is to participate in a future, all heavenly glory, what would be the effect? That they would live here below as strangers and pilgrims. By a knowledge of the prophecies that concern the earth, they would understand better the nature of the terrestrial promises made to the Jews; they would distinguish them from those that concern us Gentiles; they would judge the spirit of the age and be emancipated from human prepossessions, and from anxieties always baneful to the Christian life; they would learn to lean upon Him, who has regulated all, who knows the end of things from the beginning, and be wholly devoted to the hope which has been given them, and to the observance of the duties which flow from it.

It is pretended that the true use of the prophecies is to prove the divinity of the Bible by what is already accomplished. It is, indeed, one use which may be made; but it is not the special aim for which they have been delivered. They are given, not to the world, but to the Church, with the view of communicating to it the thoughts of God, and of serving as a guide and torch before the arrival of the events that they announce, and during the course of these events. What should one say of a man who employed all the confidence of a tender friend only to convince himself at length that he spoke the truth? Alas! where are we? Have we so far lost the feeling of our privileges and of God's goodness? Is there nothing for the Church in all these holy revelations? for, surely, the Church is not to question whether God, its heavenly friend, has spoken the truth!

But more: the greater part of the prophecies, and in a certain sense, one can say all the prophecies, will be accomplished at the termination of the economy that concerns us.

Now at that epoch it will be too late to be convinced of their truth, or to employ them to the conviction of others. The terrible judgment which will fall upon those who doubt them, will be their too evident demonstration. I single one instance of this in the predictions of our Lord. What was the value of His warning to the disciples to flee in such and such circumstances, if they had not understood what He said, and believed beforehand the truth of His word? It was precisely this knowledge and faith which distinguished them from all their unbelieving fellow countrymen. Thus it is with the Church. The judgments of God are to strike the nations. The Church is warned of them, and, thanks to the teaching of the Holy Ghost, believes, understands, and escapes the woes which are coming.

But the objection is, that they are purely speculative notions. O wile of Satan! If, rising above the present—above the feeling of selfish need and momentary circumstances; if, emancipated from the domain of material beings, I launch into the future, into the field given up to human intelligence, all there will be uncertain and uninfluential, or I shall fill it either with my thoughts or with the thoughts of God. *My* thoughts are just speculation. Whereas, it is prophecy which unfolds and develops the thoughts *of God*: for prophecy is the revelation of *His* thoughts and counsels as to the future. What Christian does not rejoice in the prospect that "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea?" Well, it is a prophecy. Do we ask, how will it be accomplished? It is not from man's mouth that the answer should come forth: the same prophecy instructs us here also, and silences the imaginations and the vain glory of our haughty hearts.

In fact, while communion with God comforts and sanctifies us, while that communion which is to last for ever is already given us, God has been pleased to act on our hearts by positive hopes, and therefore He must needs communicate them to us, in order that they should be influential, and that our faith should be neither vague nor filled with cunningly-devised fables. The God of grace and goodness be praised! neither is our case. "For," says the Apostle, when he would maintain piety, virtue, brotherly kindness, love in the souls of the faithful, and would have them remember these things continually, "we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory: This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with Him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy: whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter i. 16, 21).

In studying the more general features of prophecy, we will examine these three great subjects: the Church, the nations, and the Jews.

In the pursuit of this study, we shall find, according to the measure of light given to us, a very sweet result,—to wit, the full development of the perfections of God according to the two names or characters under which He has revealed Himself in His relations with us. To the Jews, it is as Jehovah (the Eternal) that He is revealed (Exod. vi. 3); to the Church, as Father. Consequently, Jesus is presented to the Jews as Messiah, the centre of Jehovah's promises and blessings to their nation; to the Church He appears as Son of God, gathering to Himself His "many brethren," by sharing with us His title and privileges—of "children of God," members of "His household," and joint heirs "with the First-born," who is the expression of all the glory of His Father. In the fulness of times, when God will gather together all things in Christ, then will be also realized the full meaning of the name under which He revealed Himself to Abraham, father of the faithful—of that name under which He has been celebrated by Melchisedec (the type of that royal priest, who will be at once the centre and pledge of the blessing of the earth and heavens united)—"the most High God, possessor of Heaven and earth."

II.—THE CHURCH AND ITS GLORY.—EPH. I.

OF the three objects which have been mentioned in the first lecture, as about to form the subject of our study, that of the Church and its glory is to have the first place. It introduces us to the name of Father, the character in which God has revealed himself to us, and whence flow, to the Church, the fruits of grace, and all the circumstances of its state in glory, as every thing flowed to Israel from the name of Jehovah. To this name of Father, however, is to be added another relationship, distinctly marked in the Epistle to the Ephesians, and closely allied to the principal one, namely, that the Father has given the Church to Christ, as his bride, so that it will fully participate in all His glory. In adopting us for His children, the Father has associated us with the rights and glory of the Son, first-born among among many brethren. As the bride of Jesus, we enjoy, in virtue of his incomparable love, all the privileges that belong to him.

"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. (John iii. 35.) This is the first great truth we desire to establish. And as the Son has glorified the Father, so the Father will glorify the Son.

Our second point is—we shall participate in the glory of the Son; as it is said in John xvii. 22, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them;" and it is in order that the world may know that the Father loves us as He loves Jesus himself. In seeing us in the same glory, the world will be convinced that we are the objects of the same love; and the glory which we shall have at the last day will be but the manifestation of this precious and astonishing truth.

Thus the hope of the Church is not alone to be saved, to escape the wrath of God, but to have the glory of the Son Himself.

That in which the perfection of its joys consists, is, the being loved by the Father, and by Jesus; and, in consequence of this love, the being glorified: but more than this, the Father would have us enter into the full intelligence of these riches, and has even given us the first fruits by the presence of the Holy Ghost in all those who are saved.

Before we follow up these thoughts by other testimonies from the word of God, let us look into the chapter before us.

In the very first lines, God presents Himself as Father, and in the relationships already indicated. He is "*our* Father." (ver. 2,) and "the Father of our *Lord Jesus Christ*." (ver. 3.) From this until the 8th verse, the Apostle expounds salvation, God "has *adopted* us to the praise of the glory of his *grace*."

From verse 8 to 10, we see that this grace of salvation introduces us by its actual power, by the Holy Spirit, into the knowledge of the proposed purpose or decree of God as to the glory of Christ; a touching proof, as we have before remarked, of the love of God, who treats us as his friends, and tranquillizes our souls, in an ineffable manner, in making us see the termination of all the efforts and all the agitation of the men of this world. The decreed purpose of God is this, "God will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth." Until the 8th verse, we have seen our predestination to the state of children of the Father, and the actual accomplishment of salvation. "*We have redemption* through his blood." In that which follows, we have the purpose of God, as to the glory of Christ, in relation with all things; afterwards, from verse 11, our participation, yet future, in the glory thus designated; but more, the sealing of the Holy Spirit whilst we are waiting in expectation of this glory. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance . . . . . that we should be to the praise of his glory." Previous to verse 8, it had been "to the praise of the glory of his grace." Now it is, "to the praise of his glory;" and then, "after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our *inheritance until the redemption* of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

The remainder of the chapter is a prayer of the Apostle, that the faithful may understand their hope, and that the power of the resurrection, and of the exaltation of Christ, to whom the Church is united, may be accomplished in them.

This position of the Church, which enjoys its own redemption and which waits for the redemption of the inheritance, has its perfect type in Israel. This people, redeemed from Egypt, did not enter at once into Canaan, but into the wilderness, whilst the land itself remained still in the possession of the Canaanites. The redemption of Israel was finished; the redemption of the inheritance was not. The heirs were redeemed, but the inheritance was not yet delivered out of the hands of the enemy. "Now all these things," says the Apostle, (1 Cor. x. 11,) "happened unto them (the Israelites) for types: and they are written for our admonition (the Church), upon whom the ends of the world (ages) are come."

Christ waits for the resurrection of the Church, in order that everything may be subjected to him—subjected not of right only, but in fact. He is waiting for that solemn moment, when Jehovah will make all his enemies as a footstool under his feet. (Ps. cx. 1.) Until that moment arrives, kept as a secret in the depth of the divine counsels, He sits on the "right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. i. 3.)

Christ will take the inheritance of all things as a man, in order that the Church, bought with his blood, may inherit all things with him,—purified heir of an inheritance which will be itself purified.

Let us keep in mind, then, these two fundamental points.

I.—Christ, in the counsels of God, possesses all things.

II.—In virtue of being the bride of Christ, the Church participates in all that he has, and in all that he is, except his eternal Divinity, although, in a sense, we do participate in the Divine nature.

Let us look through the passages, which develop the thoughts we have been giving out.

All things, we say, are for Christ.

"He is appointed heir of all things." (Heb. i. 2.) They belong to him of right, because he is their Creator. (Col. i. 16, 18.) Observe in this passage two headships of Christ: first of all he is called "first born (or chief) of every creature," then, "first born from the dead, the head of the body, the Church;" a distinction which throws much light on our subject. "All things were created by him and for him." Moreover he will possess them as man, as second Adam, to whom God has intended, in his counsels, to subject them.

It is thus that we read in Ps. viii., which is applied to Christ by St. Paul, (Heb. ii. 6,) and is in fact, the corner stone of the doctrine of the apostle upon this subject. He cites the psalm three times in his Epistles,—in passages, the leading thoughts of which are the subjection of all things to the man Christ under three different aspects, every one of which is important for us.

According to Heb. ii. 6, the prophecy is not yet accomplished, but the Church has, in the partial accomplishment of that which is yet to come, the pledge of its final consummation. All things are not yet put in subjection to Jesus, but, in the mean time, Jesus is already crowned with glory and honour, —certain proof that what remains will have its fulfilment in due time. Under the present dispensation, the object of which is the gathering together of the co-heirs, all things are not subjected to him, but he is glorified, and his followers acknowledge his rights. In Heb. ii., then, we have the application of Ps. viii. 5, 7, and we are informed, that the subjection of all things to the Second Adam has not yet taken place.

In Eph. i. 20, 23, we equally see Jesus exalted, highly exalted, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, and the putting of all things under his feet is also offered to our attention; but as the effect of this is the introduction of the Church into the same glory, Jesus is presented to us, in this glory, as the Head of the Church, his body, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all,"—the other truth upon which we have been insisting.

Again, in 1 Cor. xv., this same fact, the glorification of Jesus, and the subjection of all things to him, is shown to us, but still in another point of view, that is, as about to take place at the resurrection, according to the power of which, Jesus has been declared the last Adam, and withal head of a kingdom which he will possess as man, and which He will eventually deliver up to God the Father, whilst he himself as the last Adam, is to be "subject to him that put all things under him," instead of reigning as man, as he had been doing,—over all things, we say, except over him who will have subjected them to him.

It is a question, then, of a subjection yet to come of all things to Christ,—of a reign which he will share with the Church, inasmuch as this is his body, and which will take place at the resurrection of this same body;—and of a power which he will afterwards resign to God the Father, at some decreed time, in order that God may be all in all.

Christ, glorified in his person, now, and whilst the Church is gathering, is sitting upon the throne of God, waiting until it be complete, until, in short, the time be come for his being invested with his royal power, and that Jehovah shall have put his enemies as a footstool under his feet. An important distinction results from the passages we have been citing; it is this, that besides the reconciliation of the Church, there is the reconciliation of all things. You may have perceived this in the chapter, with the reading of which the lecture began: we saw that the proposed intention of God was to gather together all things in Christ; that the reconciliation of the Church is represented in the verses which precede the 8th as a thing accomplished, and the glory as a thing future, of which we have as yet but the earnest, in the presence of the Holy Spirit in us after having believed. But we see in Rom, viii. 19, 23, that the deliverance of creation will take place at the time of the manifestation of the sons of God. As to the present, that is, the time during which Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, everything is in a state of misery, the whole creation remains in the bondage of corruption: it is true that we are redeemed, and that even the price for the redemption of creation has been given; and more than this, we have received the first fruits of the Spirit as earnest of the glory; but all this is but our expecting state until the most High enters upon the exercise of his power, until he reigns, and becomes possessor in fact, as he is by right, of the heavens, and the earth. Inhabiting in our bodies a fallen creation, whilst indeed by the Spirit we are united to Christ, we have on the one hand the assurance of being children, "accepted in the beloved," and the joy of the hope of the inheritance, by the Spirit which is the earnest of it; but upon the other hand, by the same Spirit, we give utterance, inasmuch as we are in the body, to the sighs and groanings of the creation, being participators therein owing to this body of death. All is in disorder, but we know him who has redeemed us, and made us heirs of all things, and who has initiated us into the love of the Father; we enjoy these privileges; but understanding also the blessings which will be shed upon the inheritance when Christ shall take it and we shall appear with him in glory, perceiving likewise the miserable state in which the scene of his future dominion actually is, we serve, by the Spirit, as a channel to those sighs which go up to the throne of the God of mercy.

The passage already in part cited from the Epistle to the Colossians clearly establishes this distinction. It is said, verse 20: "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you....(the saints) now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death." The Church is already reconciled. The things of earth and heaven will be reconciled later, by the efficacy of his blood already shed.* The order of the ceremonies on the great day of atonement explained this reconciliation typically, though in special reference, as to details, to the part which the Jews will have in these blessings.

In Colossians i. 16, we clearly see what are the things which are comprehended in this reconciliation, "all things were created by him and for him," all that he has created as God, he will inherit, as the restorer of all things. Was there,

* It must be carefully attended to, that it is a question here of things, and in no way of sinners remaining in their unbelief.

for example, a blade of grass that was not subjected to his power in blessing, Satan would have got an advantage over Christ, over his rights and over his inheritance. Now it is the judgment which will vindicate all the righteous title of Christ.

Besides, Christ when he comes will be the source of joy to all created intelligence, joy reflected and elevated by the blessing which will be spread over the whole creation; for the joy of witnessing the happiness of others, and also that which flows down in the freedom of creation from the bondage of corruption, is a divine part of our enjoyments; we partake of it with the God of all goodness.

For us, it is in "the heavenly places," that we shall find our abode. The spiritual blessings in heavenly places which we enjoy even now in hope, and hindered in many ways, will be for us in that day things *natural*, our physical and normal state, so to speak; but the earth will not fail to feel the effects of it. "Wicked spirits in heavenly places" (Eph. vi. 12), whose place will be then filled by Christ and his Church, will cease to be the continual and prolific causes of the misery of a world subjected to their power by sin. The Church, on the contrary, with Christ, reflecting the glory in which she participates, and enjoying the presence of Him who is at once to her its source and fulness, will beam upon the earth in blessing; and the nations of those who are saved will walk in her light. "Help meet for him" in his glory, full of thoughts of her Beloved, and enjoying his love, she will be the worthy and happy instrument of his blessings; whilst in her condition, she will be the living demonstration of their success. For God has done these things, "that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." (Eph. ii. 7). The earth will enjoy the fruits of the victory and of the faithfulness of the second Adam, and will be the magnificent testimony of it in the sight of principalities and powers, as it is at present, in the chaos made by sin, of the ruin and of the iniquity of the first Adam. Without doubt the crowning joy, the joy of joys, will be the communion of the Father and of the Bridegroom; but to be witness of his goodness, to have part in it, and to be an instrument of it towards a fallen world, will certainly be to taste of Divine joys, for "God is love."

Dear friends, it is this earth that we inhabit that God has taken to make the scene for the manifestation of his character and his works of grace. This earth is the place where sin has entered and fixed its residence; it is here that Satan has displayed his energy for evil; it is here that the Son of God has been humbled, has died, and has risen; it is upon this earth, that sin and grace have both done their wonders; it is upon this earth that sin has abounded, if, notwithstanding, grace has much more abounded; if now Christ is hid in the heavens, it is upon this earth that He will be revealed; it is here that the angels have best penetrated the depths of the love of God; it is here also that they will comprehend its results, manifested in glory; upon this earth, where the Son of Man has been in humiliation, the Son of Man shall be glorified. If this earth in itself is but a small thing, that which God has done upon it, and will do, is not a small thing for Him. For us (the Church), the heavenly places are the city of our habitation, for we are co-heirs (not the inheritance), we are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; but the inheritance is necessary for the glory of Christ, as the co-heirs are the object of his most tender love, his brethren, his bride.

We have then detailed to you, dear friends, briefly and feebly as we are well aware, what is the destiny of the Church; the Spirit can alone make us feel all the sweetness of the communion of the love of God, and the excellence of the glory which is given us. But at least we have pointed passages enough in the Word, to make you understand, with the help of the Holy Spirit, which we implore for you all, the thoughts which we had on our heart to tell you to-night. It results clearly enough that we live under the dispensation during which the heirs are gathered together, and that there is another which will take its place at the coming of the Saviour—that in which the heirs shall have the enjoyment of the inheritance of all things—that in which all things shall be subjected to Christ, and to His Church as united to Him and manifested with Him. What is to follow ulterior to that, is not our business now, I mean that last period when God will be all in all, and when Christ himself as man, will be subject to God, and chief, as man, of a family eternally blessed, in the communion of God, who has loved that family, and whose tabernacle will be in the midst of it, God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, eternally blessed. Amen.

It is in occupying herself with these subjects full of hope by the Spirit, that the Church will be detached from the world, and will clothe herself with the character which becomes her as the affianced bride of Christ, to whom she owes all her heart and all her thoughts.

DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

Death is called the last enemy which shall be destroyed. Now I do not find that Christians are strengthened in their present pilgrimage by looking to their enemies, but by steadily looking to the Captain of their salvation, and his victory over all their enemies. The ministers of the Gospel, as captains of the Lord's host, do not present unto the people, or seek to keep continually before them, the terrors of Satan, the weakness of the flesh, the powerfulness of the world; but keep before them Christ the victorious, the Spirit the quickener, the Father Almighty, their election unto salvation, their adoption unto the communion of the blessed Trinity, their fellowship with all the saints who have endured and overcome. How, then, be so foolish as to present before them death, or think to encourage them thereby! You should have showed them death conquered; that is, the resurrection first of Christ, and then of all Christ's people at His coming. You may make the Christian soldier quake and tremble, and misgive, by presenting him the frequent aspect of bare and ghastly death; but you will never make him cheerful and bold but by preaching to him the victory over death, which is the resurrection of the just, which is the coming of the Lord. I say not but that as in all the trials and combats of the warfare it is most necessary and profitable to set forth the enemy's force and his wiles, and his violent rage, so also ought death, the strength of his right hand, to be presented oft-times to the soul, for the same end of teaching her to have all her armour and weapons in use. But if you do not present the resurrection from the dead at Christ's coming, you do not give her the weapon with which that strongest assault of the enemy is to be met and overcome. You teach the enemy's force, but are silent concerning our force to meet him, which, to say the least of it, is the part of a very unskilful officer. And let me tell the Church, that because the resurrection of the saints at Christ's coming, and their reign with Him, are so seldom set forth before the Church, it cometh to pass that we have such shrinking from posts of danger, such fencing and fitting out of our missionaries, such shrieking out if any evil befal them, instead of that carelessness to answer the matter, that utter indifference to the fire, that rushing to martyrdom, and committing ourselves to all moral wilds and savage wildernesses, which characterised the first ages of the Church.

So much for the very article of death, which I assert every one will shrink from till, by the doctrine of the second advent and the first resurrection, he has been taught to triumph over it . . . . I desire for myself some object and event so glorious as shall carry my eye clean over and beyond this chasm and abyss of being: some joyful and powerful, some majestic and glorious act, to which I can look, and to which another saint can look, and to which every saint from every quarter of the earth can look, and to which the saints of all generations can look, which may join us in one hope and desire, make time and place and change wholly indifferent to us, our death but a change, and the state beyond death unthought of and uncared for in an anxiety and assurance of this grand re-union with the Lord.—*Preliminary Discourse to Ben Ezra.*

[In this new edition, some expressions of the foregoing extract are omitted, as they seem to disparage one blessed truth in order to exalt another.—Ed.]

THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL XII. 23.

No. 2. GUERNSEY, MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1848. VOL I.

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTERS IV. V.

THESE two chapters together form a whole, a sort of preface, which introduces us into the scene where the prophet was introduced; that is to say, *heaven*. The prophecy, properly so called, begins only with the sixth chapter, at the opening of the seals.

The fourth chapter begins with *the things which must be hereafter;** that is to say, after the seven churches. *The things that he saw* are the glory of Christ in the midst of the churches. *The things which are*, are the seven churches.

The things which must be hereafter begin when the churches are set aside. (Apocalypse, iii. 16; comp. iv. and i. 19.) The seven churches are a moral prophecy, containing promises and threatenings, founded on a certain conduct. The Church, being judged as it were, is put aside. These letters may be applied to the Church in every state thus described. They are the voice of Jesus judging the state of the churches.

In the fourth chapter we see *the things which are to come afterwards*. It is no more the things which are: these last as long as the Church remains. It is from that term "*which are*" that the double interpretation of the Apocalypse proceeds. If the seven churches are taken as a sketch of the history of the Church, Laodicea, the last one, receives this sentence: "*I will spue thee out of my mouth.*" Consequently, the Church is then no more recognised on earth; and what follows in the Revelation is the history of the government of God, and the chastisements sent on the earth from that time, until Christ comes to establish His kingdom. If the churches are taken in a literal sense, the types of the prophecy must be applied to events which have in a greater part already taken place; but in any case the church in the Revelation is neither recognised nor presented on earth from the fourth chapter, from the time that the scene changes, and that John, leaving the things which are, is introduced in heaven to see the things which are to come.

The things which are being then put aside, the fourth chapter begins. As long as those things are, nothing in the fourth chapter has yet taken place. In this chapter the Church is always looked at as being in Heaven, although she is not as yet manifested; this only takes place in chapters xix. and xx.

The subject of the fourth chapter is creation, and *the right of God over creation.*

The subject of the fifth chapter is *the rights of the Lamb as Redeemer*, Jesus's right of redemption. The Holy Ghost is no more presented in God's relations with His children; it is the relationship of God and of the world. Since Jesus has rights over the world, He is presented here in the throne, and God likewise is seen sitting on it.

Right of God's throne in creation,
Right of the Lamb in redemption,

which is, as a summary, the subject of these two chapters.

CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1: *Come up hither.* The earth is done with [as his place,] he leaves the earth. The time will come when there shall be a throne on the earth. In the passage before us, God's throne is in heaven.

* The word "hereafter" misleads in the English translation. In the French there is no difficulty. The meaning is simply: after the things related in the account of the seven churches. It is simply "after these things." The whole phrase is this: "The things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which are about to take place after these."

The throne of God was once on the earth at Jerusalem. This will take place once more, as it is said in Jeremiah, xxv. 17. The shekinah of glory was in the temple; but from the time that Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar it entirely ceased. Then began *the times of the Gentiles*, and God gave the kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar.

At the beginning of Ezekiel, the same cherubims are seen leaving the temple and the city. (Ezek. x. 18 and xi. 23.*) Jehovah stands on the threshold of the house. (ix. 3.) At last He forsakes the house and the city—the earthly power was given to the Gentiles. (Dan. ii. 37.) The people having been unfaithful, God forsook His people, and from that time He has not taken again His place in the earth. The only thing God did was to present His Son as *King* and as having right to reign over the Jews; but the Son was rejected. From that time God is gathering the Church, the co-heir with Christ. Christ is sitting on the throne with the Father, where He is interceding for us. When the Church, viewed as a dispensation on earth, has come to an end, the throne of God, becomes again the centre of relation with the earth, and God begins to intervene again directly in the world, without having yet replaced His Son on the earth.

If we examine the throne, verses 2, 5, 6, we find everything ordered there according to the pattern of the temple; but the subject is here government.

We find here all the characters of God, save that of *Father*. The rainbow, verse 3, is God's alliance with creation. There was no government before Noah. After the deluge, God makes a promise to bless the earth, and he sets man in power with the sword to rule and to repress evil. When the Jews were rejected, God transmitted the government to the Gentiles, who retain it until this day.

Verse 4: *The twenty-four Elders*, correspond with the twenty-four classes of High Priests, in 1 Chron. xxiv.; but they are crowned. The number twenty-four represents twice twelve. One might perhaps see here the twelve patriarchs and the twelve apostles, the saints in the two dispensations.

Verse 5: *the lightnings, the thunderings, the voices*, are God's power in judgment, and in ruling, as in Sinai.

The seven lamps of fire are the manifestation of God in leading, enlightening, and blessing; it is the guiding power of the Holy Ghost with the elements of strength and wisdom. He discerns with a power which acts amidst what He discerns.

The sea of glass† corresponds with the brazen sea of the tabernacle and of the temple, where however no veil is here seen. The sea of glass is a purity that has become solid, having taken the character of a permanent state; it is no more water, that is to say, a mere way of cleansing, as on the earth in the brazen sea.

The four *living creatures full of eyes* are the supporters of the throne. They have significative attributes. The *lion* is expressive of *strength, royal power*. Jesus is the *lion of Juda*.

The resemblance to a *calf* recalls firmness, the solidity peculiar to the foot of the ox.

The resemblance to a *man's face* sets forth intelligence.

The flying eagle designates rapidity in judgments. It is always God in the creation. It is an allusion to the first chapter of Ezekiel; but in Ezekiel every *living creature*

* In the main, this is true; but it seems to me that the ordinary interpretation (that God was seen as seated there at Jerusalem,) is not quite correct. God sitting on the cherubims comes to judge the city. The glory of God comes from the north, it is the judgment executed by the Chaldeans. Ezek. i. 4. This glory stood in the plain, iii. 23. Ezekiel carried to Jerusalem finds again the glory there, viii.

† The glass clear as water presents holiness itself settled in an unchangeable manner. The water purified that which was defiled according to this same holiness.

had four faces, showing the power of Providence which sees all and acts on earth.

But here we see the stability and the firmness of God's throne in heaven. We see here God's power and His claims over creation, not the *agents* of this power. It has not been sufficiently observed that *principles of action* are here spoken of, and not *agents*. That is the reason why the four *living creatures* have not been well understood.

Verse 8: We have here still all the names of God, save the one in which the Church is concerned, that of *Father*. He is *Lord God Almighty, Eternal*. These are the names by which God has revealed Himself in every dispensation.* With the redeemed now He takes the name of Father. We have all that God has been on *the earth* with His people, and nothing else. These living creatures acknowledge God as the Holy One in all He does on earth, and they give Him glory.

Verse 9: The twenty-four Elders prostrate themselves, (it is positive worship,) and do not, like the four living creatures, give glory merely. The Church, (it might perhaps be well to say the saints above; we must understand it as the twenty-four Elders including probably the faithful in the Old Testament,) joins in the praises of the four living creatures, and worships God as the Creator, verse 11. It is not according to the relation between God and the Church. The Church here sees God as the Creator. It is important to apprehend this character of government of the things of this world. It is from this throne, as the centre of government, that everything in the Revelation comes. This throne is about to intervene in the government of the earth, and it is precisely because Christ comes to claim His rights to the government of the earth, that Antichrist is preparing to make war with Christ.

CHAPTER V.

We find in this chapter another truth of great moment: it is the right of *the Lamb put to death* to open the book and to set all these things in motion.

Verse 5: We have here the counsels of God in giving the inheritance to His Son. This book, sealed with seven seals, is the book of the inheritance: (that is, of the investiture:) the description of the means used by God in order to put Jesus in possession; of his ways in judgment full of patience to the end, of which the right of redemption which devolves on Jesus forms the basis. (See Isaiah xxvi. 5—11.) Jeremiah, in chap. xxxii., tells us that the purchase of an inheritance was subscribed on two books, one sealed, and the other open. The sealed book is the contract of the inheritance that is to be given to the Son. Who can unroll the events which will invest Christ with the inheritance of the earth? No one but Christ Himself. Who has a right to do it? He alone, the Redeemer, who has purchased it; who by His blood and by His power can claim and deliver everything as His own. (Comp. Eph. i.) Alas! there is no weeping now, because no one is found worthy to read the book; because one does not understand how the inheritance shall be given to the Son of Man. However, the "Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Adam had a right to the inheritance, but he lost it. Christ had to redeem this right from Satan's hands. He had to pay the price; and this price was His own death, which He gave for it. He has redeemed everything for Himself. All was created by Him and for Him; but through Adam this lower creation fell into Satan's hands, who uses it to corrupt men and to keep them at a distance from God.

Verses 6 and 10: In the midst of the throne and of the Elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain. The Lamb had seven horns. The horns are the emblem of power; *seven* is the symbol of perfection. The seven horns are expressive of perfection in power; the seven eyes are the perfection of the Spirit who sees all. It is the active power of the perfect wisdom of the Lamb who acts on the earth.

The Lamb is always seen as if it had been slain, and not as yet manifested in glory. Boaz had to redeem Elimelech's land, and Ruth is a type of the redeemed. Jesus, the true Boaz, the alone mighty one, redeems Ruth, his own people, and the land of Elimelech, *the earth*.

That which gives to the Lamb the right to exercise all power is that he has paid the ransom to God. God had, as it were, lost the inheritance. But the Lamb has redeemed it to God.

Verse 10: The joy of those whom he has redeemed.* They rejoice because they know they shall reign on earth, according to the right of Jesus which they can claim. They see the Lamb having taken the book, and God beginning to intervene, in order to give Christ the government of the earth, and they see that they shall reign.

Verses 11-14: The angels do not say that He has redeemed them. He only preserved them. Creation has again her voice to bless Him who redeemed her. God liveth for ever and ever. Man having killed the heir, it would seem for a while that the inheritance is his. But God liveth for ever and ever. The patience of God and His goodness in the midst of evil, will have been manifested. If there had been no evil, the goodness of God would never have been thus manifested. But God has overcome evil with good.

The Church's place is to be in the intimacy of God and to understand Christ's intentions and God's thoughts. These things have been revealed unto us by His Spirit. It is, in this sense, *knowledge* which distinguishes the Church. Hereafter, the Church will enjoy all that Christ possesses in power.

These two chapters are very important for the understanding the glory of Christ and the Revelation. The glory of Christ is that which is particularly brought out by the Revelation. If the reading of this book makes the glory of Christ precious to us, our enjoyment of it will be much greater.

May God shed abroad that love in our hearts and give us to delight in the love of Jesus.

CHAPTER VI.

We have seen the character under which God is presented to us in this book. The Revelation presents God as the Most High God; we see therein the throne of God Almighty in the world. The things connected with Providence are under this government.

We have seen, besides, that the Lamb has a right to the inheritance; the great object of the book of the Revelation is the Son of Man invested with the inheritance which He has redeemed, and of which He has taken away the defilement. All the creation of God has been defiled. The day of atonement furnishes us with a type of its redemption by Jesus. We see in that type; first, the blood on the mercy-seat, by which alone God could enter in relation with any one; secondly, the blood on the tabernacle defiled by the sins of the people; thirdly, the confession by the High Priest of the sins of the people on the head of the scape goat.

The creation is redeemed as well as the Church; the Church to be *co-heir* with Christ; the creation to be the *inheritance*.

The inheritance is given to the Son of Man; such is the grand subject here presented to us. He alone has the right to open the book. Redemption has given Him this right.

The Lamb begins the opening of the seals. He does not yet appear to take possession of the inheritance and to execute the judgment. He is still the Lamb in the midst of the throne,—in heaven, during the interval in which God takes the government, without having yet given the throne to the Son. We see what passes before Jesus takes possession of the inheritance.

One of the four living creatures: (beasts:) it is still Providence which is in action here. These symbols are a surely

* The Church is not, properly so called, a dispensation. It is the assembling together the co-heirs in unity, whilst the kingdom is in mystery. When the law ends as a dispensation, the kingdom is not yet established in power, and all is in transition. Here the saints are seen above, and the throne of God is in relation with the earth.

* Most of the modern editions read here after the authority of the best MSS., "has redeemed us and they shall reign:" in that case it would be the song of those that are already above, who rejoice that their brethren, who are still here in the persecution, shall be delivered and shall reign.

defined language, as well as any other, when you have once apprehended the proper meaning of each of them according to the Word of God. One has often mistaken the application of a symbol for its meaning. Thus, Christ is called the Sun of Righteousness; but *Sun* does not mean *Christ*. The sun is merely a symbol of glory and supreme government. God made the sun to rule the day. (Gen. i. 16.) One would err in leaving out the abstract idea and in taking the Sun for Christ.

A *horse* represents that action of Providence which manifests itself in the government of the earth under different forms, and more accurately the imperial power considered as the effect of the work of God, or of the agents He makes use of. It is a symbol which may be figurative of Christ, or of an emperor, or of some one else. An allusion is here made to Zechariah i., where the horses represent empires which have exercised dominion over the Jews.

The white horse is victory and triumph. I do not see Christ here. Christ is still the Lamb in the midst of the throne. We do not yet see Christ here going forth to the victory and the destruction of His enemies, which is symbolized by the white horse in the nineteenth chapter. Here we have Christ, the Lamb, still hidden in God, who begins to act. We have here the providential preparations of the divine government for the coming of Jesus.

Verse 2: The first thing manifested is a great conqueror.

Verses 3, 4: The second step, in what precedes the coming of Christ, is peace taken from the earth.

Verses 5, 6: Famine.

Verses 7, 8: The four judgments of God on earth. (Ezek. xiv. 21.) They are the four deadly plagues which God sends to exercise His judgments. Here, it is something which stamps God's character on the state of things in the prophetic earth, and shows that He is intervening. Men should give heed to this. (Matt. xxiv. 5-8.)

These calamities are the beginning of sorrows. It is in Judea that the closing scene is to take place. These plagues are in the same order here as in Matt. xxiv. Peace is taken from the earth; famine; pestilence; and then come earthquakes, as we shall see. In Matt. xxiv., the Lord is applying this to the duty of His disciples in Judea. Although there has been a partial fulfilling of this at the time when Jerusalem was taken by Titus, yet it would be impossible to apply the things which are said there to that ruin. These things evidently relate to a future event. According to Daniel, at the end of 1290 days, after setting up the abomination that maketh desolate, happiness will come again on the earth. (Dan. xii. 11.) But this is not yet fulfilled, nor has anything like it followed the ruin of Jerusalem. Indeed, nothing concerning the ruin of Jerusalem by Titus is certain, answering to the details given in this part of Scripture.

The four deadly plagues, which God sends, fall on the earth, and precede the manifestation of the Son of man.

Verses 9-11: The fifth seal brings us to an important point. All the scene passes as in the temple. There are, under the altar, the souls of those that were slain like burnt offerings.* They are dead as to this world, but not as to God. God sees them and shows them alive. There will be those who will be put to death, even from amongst those who believe and bear witness that the earth belongs to God. Our testimony at present is, that heaven and every thing belongs to God, and that our portion is with Jesus there. There will be quite a different testimony at the end, namely, that the earth belongs to God, and has been redeemed by Jesus. The two witnesses in the eleventh chapter stand in the presence of the *Lord of the earth*. Their testimony would be quite as complete if there was no heaven, save that the rightful heir is there. The question will then be this: Does the earth belong to God? This is what Anti-Christ and the men of the earth will not admit. The testimony is that of Elias and Moses, (xi. 6,) as to the circumstances and signs which confirm it. In the time of Elias, the people were in apostacy, and, in the time of Moses, they were in captivity. Such will be the state of the earthly people then. There will be a testimony rendered to God's claims on the earth.

* It appears to me that they are those who suffered before the last tyranny of Anti-Christ.

Our testimony is the testimony of salvation and of the Church; it is not connected with earth, although we understand what the Word of God says concerning it.

The souls cry for vengeance: it is the character of the Spirit of prophecy; it is not that of the Church. She does not say: "How long dost thou not avenge our blood?" This characterises the Psalms also. Deliverance is expected from the destruction of her enemies, whilst the Church's rest is by her removal from among them. The Spirit of Christ, as the King and Judge of the earth, cries for vengeance to God on the evil. (Isa. xxvi. 1, 9.) The wicked has not the upper hand with me now; if he kill me, death is mine, and he only sends me where I desire to be.

Those that dwell on the earth, is a particular expression in the book of Revelation. There are those who dwell in the heavens—it is the Church.* The same is true of those who are put to death during the reign of Anti-Christ, or who shall have been beheaded for their testimony. "We have no abiding city here." We are like the Levites and priests, without inheritance in Israel. *The inhabitants of the earth* are the enemies of God, the race of Cain driven from the presence of God, who settled in the earth. The world was judged from the moment Christ was rejected. All those who will settle in the earth share in the curse of Cain. Man sinned against God, and the earth was cursed. But when Cain had killed his brother, he was cursed from the earth, and, driven out of God's presence, he went and built a city and settled in the earth. This is what the world does after having put Jesus to death. They that *dwell on the earth* are those on whom the judgment shall fall.

The souls under the altar do not doubt their possession of heaven. The expression, "How long?" is a technical one, signifying either that God is chastening, or that one is enduring some evil, but also, inasmuch as it is on His own, expressing confidence that this chastisement will come to an end. It is faith in the midst of chastisement or of suffering, which is looking to God for his intervention. (Is. vi. 11.) It is those who are in heaven that cry for vengeance on the *inhabitants of the earth*.† It is altogether another position from that of the Church. The current of our thoughts is altogether changed, because the government of God and His taking possession of the earth is the whole matter in question here.

Verse 11: Although the time is near when all must be closed, nevertheless, there are still witnesses.

Verses 12-17: There is still here an important preliminary, the sixth seal. All these things are to precede the day of Christ. But the terror of men is already so great, that they believe the day has arrived.

The earthquakes indicate the breaking up of the arrangement of things on earth, an overthrow of every thing. The sun, that is to say, the glory and the supreme government, loses its brightness. Every thing gives way and sinks under the hand of God; even authorities established above the earth. In the fourteenth verse, it is said that every mountain was moved out of its place; and in the fifteenth verse, that they hid themselves in the mountains. One sees here that the symbols are not to be taken literally.

In Joel ii. 30, we learn that these things take place before the day of the Lord, before the execution of judgment. There are many things which precede that day, which are not even events on earth, but preliminaries in the government of God. (Ps. ii. 8, 12.) Christ does not as yet ask of God the world for *His* own; His requests now only apply to the Church. When he claims the earth, it is for judgment; but (verse 12) there are warnings for the kings of the earth. The question is not, there, that of recognising the Son

* We must add here the saints of the Old Testament, and, to meet the full force of the expression, even others also. (Dan. xi.) But at that time all will not be in heaven. (verse 11.) There are those who *dwell* on the earth. The Church is a stranger and pilgrim there, as well as all the saints who lived before the coming of Jesus. (See Heb. xi.)

† I do not think that it is the Church, properly so called, as a whole; but those who have lost their lives for their testimony, and, as it seems to me, more particularly during the time when, as a church recognised on earth, she is no more there. Indeed, the Church, as a church, is not found again till the marriage of the Lamb.

as the Saviour, but as the King who has a right to possess the earth.

All who belong to Christ shall be with Him, and shall have power over the nations. (Apoc. ii. 26, 27.) This power, then, is not the assembling of the Church together, but the exercise of the power of him who is on the throne, and the warning in Ps. ii. is in order that the kings may be rendered attentive and submissive. Christ has not only the right of gathering souls for heaven, but also to be put in possession of the earth.

Nothing is more proper than prophecy to move the heart and to separate it from this present evil world. God lays his hand on every thing that is in this world. The scene of the world is nothing; it only draws away from God, and will be the object on which the judgment of the Son of God shall fall when he comes again.

CHAPTER VII.

We have seen the manifestation of the throne and of the power of God acting in government over the world; the right of the Lamb to intervene on earth, and to open the seals; then the plagues of God, preparatory to this intervention.

The seventh chapter forms a parenthesis between the sixth and the seventh seal, for God is going to intervene, in a more special and positive manner, at the centre of every thing, in Canaan; but He will not do anything before He has separated His Jewish people and set His seal upon them.

God does not any longer confine Himself now to a beginning of sorrows, and He seals His people on earth. We see at the same time those that are sealed on earth and those that are already in heaven. (Verse 2.) *From the east;* Christ is the dayspring. The angel is ascending from the east, from whence the Sun of Righteousness is to rise on earth. It is always *the day* for those who are in the light. *The day of the Lord* is the day of judgment for those who are on earth. *The day of the Lord* and *the coming of Jesus* are two very distinct things. When the Scripture speaks of *the coming of Jesus*, it not only applies that expression to the day of the Lord, but also to what precedes that day; that is, the rapture of the Church, which goes to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. iv. 15, 17.) The day for those who are of the day is the light, the blessing, when the day of Christ shall dawn on earth; we shall be like the rays of that Sun; but for the wicked, that day will be their confusion.

The living God is the God who has life, and not the God of judgment. The life of God is powerful, more powerful than death, which Satan holds in his hand.

Verse 5: We have here a principle which is very precious. In all the overthrowings, in all the preparations for the judgments of God, the power of the angel, who displays God's power in mercy, is greater than the power of the angels who execute the judgments of God. The good is more powerful than the evil. That angel who holds the seal can cry with a loud voice: Do not hurt. This may be seen also in the case of *Lot*, who is a type of the remnant that escapes at the coming of the Son of Man. The angels could do nothing to Sodom until he had left it. There is, therefore, a *precedence* in the attributes of God, and His mercy always goes before His justice. The first thing the Angel does is to mark the servants of the Lord on their forehead, that it may be manifested to the whole world. Those that are marked are the remnant of Israel on earth; they are not the children of God, (that is, in the ordinary acceptation of the word, the faithful in the present dispensation.) In one sense, we ought to have the seal on our forehead, that is to say, an open confession of the Name of the Lord Jesus; but as for the Christian, the seal of God is in himself, that he may have the enjoyment and the liberty of communion with the Son and with the Father. Having this seal, we are manifested in the sight of the powers in heavenly places. But here we have a seal and a manifestation on earth.

Verses 5-8: The number twelve is symbolical; it is the perfect number of those who escape of the remnant in Israel. God alone can know the number of those He seals. We have the *unction of the Holy Ghost* to understand all things; *the seal of the Holy Spirit*, in order to enjoy the communion of God, as knowing that we are His, and are assured of *His* favour; also the *earnest of the Holy Spirit*, in order to rejoice in the expectation of those things that we know. This privilege is far above what we find here. Our portion is to be blessed with Him that blesses. Israel's portion is to be blessed on the earth.

Verse 9-12: As to the great multitude of all tongues and kindred, and people, and nations, the language they hold in the tenth verse is not the expression of the enjoyment of the children with the Father.* They confine themselves to acknowledge God as the God who saves. One may be standing in the contemplation of the glory, or prostrate oneself in adoration. This is the variety seen in heaven. It is ever God and the Lamb that is spoken of here, not the enjoyment of the children with the Father. Those that are in the world do not see Him as He is. We see Him as He is, in the glory of the Father. Israel will see him in His own glory, and we shall be in that glory with Jesus, as Jesus is in the glory of the Father. The multitude here worship standing before the throne, ascribing their salvation unto God and unto the Lamb. The Elders prostrate themselves apart, celebrating the glory of God Himself. What we are considering is not the sweetest thought of our relations with God.

Verses 13, 14: It is one of the Elders that speaks, and not one of the four living beings: because it is the heavenly joy that is spoken of here, and not God's providence over the earth. It is important to observe the variety of classes and of blessings which are found at different times in the Revelations. Those who have come out of great tribulation are a distinct class; they are those, it seems to me, who will have gone through the events which follow, and especially who will have come out of the great tribulation foretold in chap iii. 10 of the Revelation.

The tribulation in Matt. xxiv. 21, is more particularly connected with what will take place in Judea, or rather at Jerusalem, under Antichrist, and is applied to the Jews. Those who have come out from *the* great tribulation, (some translate *of* great tribulation, or of *a* great tribulation,) are not the Church, properly so called; for, as is seen in Revelation iii. 10, she will be kept out of it. I do not mean neither, that they are the same persons as those spoken of in connection with the great tribulation mentioned in Matt. xxiv. 15, 22, for in Matthew those persons are evidently Jews: whereas, in the chapter before us, they that came out of great tribulation are Gentiles. "A great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." There is a certain vagueness, moreover, in the expressions; and this, it seems to me, according to the intention of the Holy Spirit. They are specially recognised of the four Elders; but they do not appear to be the Church, properly so called.

Verse 15: These are Jewish ideas; the presence of God in the midst of His people, serving God in His temple, contemplating the exquisite beauty of His temple and of His palace. We serve God, either in adoring Him, or in working for Him. "They serve Him day and night in His temple."

Verses 16, 17: God is a tabernacle *over* them,† as if to solace them. The Lamb feeds and leads them. God would dispel, in the souls of those that are His, the dread of His

* This description in the seventh chapter appears to me the least precise of any we have in the Revelation; but it is evident that what is said here does not amount to the normal position of the Church. The Elders speak of it as of a distinct class. The multitude ascribes its salvation to God, as he is revealed in the Revelation sitting on the throne. The whole chapter seems a preparation for what is going to take place, and presents to us beforehand the elect, who will be found in it, but whom God will keep through the tribulation of that hour, from which those who keep the word of the patience of Christ shall be kept. However, this multitude is connected with the Elders, but their joy is only that of consolation and of rest, and does not, beforehand, and for others, enter into the intelligence of God's ways like those in the fifth chapter. Neither do they sing.

† It is important to observe attentively this expression, as in fact this multitude is distinct from the twenty-four elders. No mention is made of heaven in a direct manner, save the expressions temple, and before His throne.

Majesty by the thoughts of His gentleness, His meekness. A soul that is unconverted has no idea of a God tender, gentle, who "wipes away tears." God will have us near Him, as children near their father. He loves His children enough to take notice of all their afflictions, to comfort them, and to wipe away their tears.

THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA.

We easily perceive different measures of attainment, both in knowledge and grace, in the churches of old. The elevation, for instance, of that at Ephesus was much above that at Corinth. At Corinth, the Apostle had to occupy himself with the corruption of various errors and abuses, and was thus hindered from bringing out to the disciples the strong and rich meat of the word. He kept from them that "hidden wisdom" which he had in store for the "perfect," because they were "carnal, babes in Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 3.) But at Ephesus his course was free; he had not to stop in order to correct abuses and errors, but could go on to feed the church with wisdom and knowledge, and reveal to them "the mystery" or "hidden wisdom," which he had to keep back from the saints at Corinth. (Eph. iii.) At Corinth, the Holy Ghost, by the Apostle, had to take care of their own things, and show them to them for correction; but at Ephesus he could do his more blessed work of taking of the things of Christ and showing them to them for edification and comfort. So that, in distinguishing the condition of these two churches, I might say that the Priest was *trimming* the lamp at Corinth, using the golden snuffers there for correction of evil; while at Ephesus he was *feeding* the lamp, pouring in fresh oil for the filling and brightening of it with increase of light and grace.

The other churches under the care of Paul occupied, as I judge, certain standings between Corinth and Ephesus; that is, they did not call for the same measure of rebuke as Corinth, nor did they stand so much beyond the necessity of all personal notice as Ephesus. But in the Epistles to them, we discern a mixed action of *feeding* and *trimming* the lamps. Indeed, I might class the churches in Galatia with that at Corinth, for there such error had entered, that the Apostle had little to do but to correct and rebuke it, and thus, as it might be, restore the minds of the disciples. But whether it be at Rome, Philippi, Colosse, or Thessalonica, we see the Apostle applying himself both to the evil and the good that was among the saints there; and I would shortly look at each of them.

Thus at *Rome*, he has in view to bind Jewish and Gentile believers together, as among the disciples in that city there appears to have been the retaining of their several prejudices, which were threatening to divide. A great deal of blessed truth, is brought out in the Epistle, but the present practical end of it all seems to be, to secure the union and forbearance of the saints one towards another. But there is not any great amount of evil or mischief recognised by him.

At *Philippi*, the church was beautiful for much grace, and for grace, too, that was peculiar to herself. Yet the Apostle, in his Epistle to that church, evidently alludes to symptoms of disunion which had appeared among them; but because of the other grace that was there, he alludes to this evil with marked tenderness and reserve, often expressing the comfort wherewith he was comforted in them. And this tender style of the Apostle, while noticing the evil among the Philippians, should tell us, when we see much of the grace of Christ in a brother, we should remember *that* when dealing with evil that may be in him also. It is not that the Apostle overlooked the evil at Philippi, but he remembered the grace that was there; and this imparted a chastened and affectionate tone while addressing himself to the evil.

At *Colosse*, the Apostle, it is true, feeds the saints with most precious knowledge, with the richest thoughts of Christ and His fulness. But this evidently was, because he feared the entrance of Judaizing principles among them, for which fear he gives us clearly to see that he had good reason; and the only divine corrective of that evil is, the knowledge of the sufficiency of Christ for all the necessity both of the *sinner* and of the *saint*.

At *Thessalonica*, the coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus had been especially received through the Apostle's ministry; and in the Epistles to the church there, he still feeds them with further light upon that great doctrine. But while he does that, he has also to correct a certain practical error which was peculiar to them.

Thus we clearly discern different conditions in the grace and knowledge of the different churches. And all these things happened unto them for ensamples, as much as the things that happened to Israel in the wilderness; and they are here in the same way written for our learning. (1 Cor. x.) And we may bless God that we have this His own inspired answer to so many anxieties and questions that might arise in our hearts while walking one with another.

In what I have said, I may not have altogether rightly discerned the standings of the several churches; but I have no doubt of the fact that they were different. I speak of the churches, as known by the Epistles addressed to them severally. Into some of these lamps of the sanctuary more oil had been poured than into others. The fact which I have already noticed so clearly shews us this—that the Apostle withheld from the *Corinthians* the revelation of the mystery which he so fully makes known to the *Ephesians*. And this at once shews how impotent and unwarranted the requisition is, that the minds of all the disciples should be found exactly according to one measure and standing, before the fellowship of the church can be allowed or administered. Nay, so far from this, I am free to believe, that if a member of the church at Ephesus had visited Corinth, he would have found them so concerned with questions and strifes which had never troubled him or his brethren at home, as might have left him in doubt respecting them. And so one going from Corinth to Ephesus would have found them so occupied with such truth which he had never heard of at home, that he might have suspected, in modern language, that they were all in the clouds at Ephesus. I can thus suppose, from their different measures of light and attainment in Christ, that they might not well have known what to do.

Now, I believe we see among the saints at present, what we thus might have seen among the churches of old; we have our Ephesian and Corinthian difficulties still. The truths received by some disciples are treated as mere speculation by others, and the condition of some is low and doubtful. The large and blessed mind of God, which filled the Apostle, could, of old, survey them all, and provide for them all, and feed them at Ephesus and trim them at Corinth. But we are weak and narrow-hearted; and the only result commonly is, to walk in mutual distance and suspicion. Thus we do not understand one another's speech, and we are scattered. But better is it to be scattered than to be brought together on the terms of any bond short of God's own bond in the Holy Ghost. Whereto we have already attained, *in that*, let us walk by the same rule, hoping for more. But let us not force beyond that, by any fleshly compacts. The fear of God must not be taught by the commandment of men.

And in connection with this, I would notice the state of Job and his three friends; for I believe that it illustrates the same thing which this state of the churches does. Job could not understand the truth which was in their thoughts, nor could they allow that which he had of God's mind in his; they were but partially in the light, and, through the remainder of darkness that was in them, they mistook the way and jostled each other. And the correction lay only in God, and in the end He applied it. They were all accepted—God proved Himself the adequate healer of all their divisions, as He will, by-and-bye, join the whole of the heavenly family in one body in the mansions on high, and unite the two sticks of Ephraim and Judah in the earth below. The largeness of the mind of God contains the remedy, but nothing else does. That mind may express itself forth from the whirlwind, or by the ministry of an Apostle; but however that be, it bears the remedy with it. The Lord who can with one hand separate the chaff from the wheat, with the other can gather up all the scattered grains that are now

strewing his field in shameful disorder, and find room in his garner for them all.

And this comforts, while it admonishes. It is not that we are to confound the chaff with the wheat. It is as much of the Spirit of God to say, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema," as to say, "Peace be on all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." It is as much of the testimony of God to say, "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life," as to say, "He that hath the Son hath life;"—"if any other man preach any other Gospel, let him be anathema." But still let us know that there have been different measures of attainments among the saints, and let our personal and individual care be, so to walk in light and grace ourselves, as not to give occasion either to the enemy to speak reproachfully, or to our brethren to speak doubtfully of us. And let us have our hearts and consciences in lively exercise before God, with a purpose to follow our light, lead us where it may, in the grace and fear of the Lord. But when these are the springs of the personal movement and course of each of us, we have, though in many things differently minded, the materials of both safe and blessed communion.

Among the several churches, of which we read in the New Testament, I have lately been led specially to meditate on the character and standing of that at Thessalonica. To understand it rightly, we must look first to the nature of St. Paul's *preaching* at Thessalonica, and then to the purpose and bearing of his *Epistles*.

He visited the place immediately after his sufferings at Philippi; but it was only to renew his sufferings. (Acts xvii.) However, a people were gathered out, and in this place gathered out not only to the knowledge of God's salvation, but eminently to the hope of His "Son from Heaven." (1 Thess. i. 10.)

On visiting the synagogue at Thessalonica, the Apostle sought to prove to the Jews that their promised Messiah was both to die and to rise again; and upon this he asserts, in the first place, that Jesus was the promised Messiah. And having thus claimed for Jesus identity with the Messiah, he asserts, in the second place, that this Jesus the Messiah was also King. This we gather from the challenge of his accusers. (Acts xvii. 7.) And the Scriptures of the Prophets had already testified this, as well as the former—"the *sufferings* of Christ, and the *glory* that should follow." But these things did not contain the full mystery of Christ. He left something lacking in their faith, which he desired to supply. (1 Thess. iii. 10.) For his ministry among them had been interrupted. The enmity of the Jews had forced him suddenly out. (Acts xvii. 10.) This, with many other reasons, gave him special concern for them. The grace that was among them was so abundant; they were so excellent for work of faith, for labour of love, and for patience of hope; the tone of their faith was so honest and decisive, and the purpose of heart with which they had come forth to own, as far as they had learnt it, the hope of the Gospel;—all this drew out his pastoral anxiety for them. And he had spent so much labour and care upon them, and they themselves were so exposed to such trial of faith, and to so much that might naturally tempt them to give up Christ, and yet withal they had made so fair a promise of being his joy and crown in the day of our Lord Jesus, that the Apostle was specially jealous over them; and under all this anxiety he had already sent Timothy to them, consenting to be left at Athens alone, desiring greatly to see them himself, and attributing the hindrance to Satan.

Now, out of all this care for them the Epistles flow. All this is not merely the Apostle's but the *Spirit's* care. The Spirit, who had wrought among them by the Apostle, now yearns over them in the Apostle.

In their present state of knowledge, their minds were tried and troubled. They had fallen, as I judge, under the power of two distinct apprehensions, which were very painful to them, one of which concerned the *sleeping* saints, and the other the *living* saints.

1.—They feared that their brethren who had died would come short of the kingdom, on the Lord's return to the earth. (1 Thess. iv.)

2.—They feared that those who were alive would meet the terror of the day, that was to accompany that return and usher in the kingdom. (2 Thess. ii.)

This I believe, was their present condition; and to comfort their hearts respecting these two fears and apprehensions appears to me to be the chief purpose of his two Epistles to them.

His first Epistle was soon after Timothy's return from Thesssalonica. Timothy had brought back (iii.) most comfortable intelligence about them; but it is likely that he had also told the Apostle of their anxiety touching their *sleeping* or dead brethren, and, to remove this, he at once writes to them, that they might be no longer ignorant of this, that the saints, whether sleeping or alive, should be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air at his coming. (iv. 13-18.)

His second Epistle was drawn from him on his hearing of their other anxiety touching the *living* saints. It matters not how that had arisen, whether from the false suggestions of others, or from an imperfect interpretation of his own first Epistle; but, to remove it, he writes to them, as I judge, his second Epistle, that they might know that "the day of the Lord," in which they feared the living saints would be involved, could not come till "the man of sin" was revealed, and that that man of sin, and all departed from the truth, with him would be the due object to meet the terror of that day, and that therefore they might put away their fear. (ii. 1-9.)

These I judge to be the occasion and the principal purpose of each of these Epistles; the Apostle by them meeting the apprehensions of the Thessalonian disciples, by teaching them, that by the power of Him who raised Jesus from the grave, the *sleeping* saints were as sure of the kingdom as the living ones, and by the gathering together of all to the Lord in the air, the *living* saints were as free of the terror of the day that was coming on the earth as the sleeping ones. Neither life nor death, things present nor things to come, could separate them, for that they were to ascend, with equal certainty, from the *grave* or from the *earth*, as the Lord should descend from heaven, and thus all of them meet Him before He reaches the earth, in the terror and judgment of *His day*.

This I receive as the Divine instruction of these Epistles: it is important to the standing and hope of the saints. I say not that I have surely discerned aright, but I have had this long in my thoughts, and heard nothing that leads to a questioning of it. But we know nothing but in part, and as the Lord may give to others, so may I, and each of us, beloved, receive either for confirmation or correcting. It is more as suggestion, and calling other souls into holy exercise, that I would now give forth this. But the Lord meeting his saints without any *necessary* cause of delay, without their being subject necessarily to wait for any of the troubles that usher in the glory, I do judge has been, from the beginning, the promise and hope of the dispensation, and to present that is my desire here.

The descent to saints is to be "with a shout," the voice of gladness; the descent to the earth, or world, is to be in "flaming fire," the minister of righteous wrath. (Comp. 1 Thess. iv. 16, and 2 Thess. i. 7.) There would thus be two stages in the Lord's descent, as there had been before, in His ascent; for as He went up from the grave to the highest heavens, He stopped on the earth by the way there, to meet His remnant and talk with them of the kingdom; (Acts i. 3;) so, as He comes down from heaven to the earth, He will stop in the air by the way, there to meet his Church, or heavenly household, fashioned like unto His own glorious body, to conduct them to the Father's house.

But this day, or descent *to the earth* in flaming fire, shall find out its object. This will be the spirit of the Lord's mouth consuming, the brightness of His coming destroying the wicked—the sword out of the mouth of Him whose name is called "The Word of God." The Lord shall then meet the lawless one. The brightness of Him who comes in the glory of God shall meet him that comes according to the lying working of Satan, and set him aside for ever. But those in whom the truth dwells shall shine from above in that day. They shall be to the glory and admiration of the Lord in that day. (2 Thess. i. 10.) They are to be brought with Jesus in that day. (1 Thess. iv. 14.) It is the day of the Lord, the

day that brings Him forth to the judgment of darkness. It will be as the surprise of daylight upon night. The place of the Lord will be the day then; the world, the place of night and of darkness;—and what communion can they have?

The contact must be in *judgment*, and not in *concord*. But the saints, who even now are *the spirit* of the day, must be then in *the place* of the day. They are "children of the day," (1 Thess. v. 5,) and will be in the sphere out of which the day is to rise, and not in the sphere upon which it is to fall. The full power of the day will not be poured down without their presence.

They belong already to the truth, having believed the testimony, (2 Thess. i. 10 and ii. 13,) and thus will appear in the train of Him who is called "Faithful and True," when He comes forth for the judgment of those who received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (Rev. xix.)

Thus the separation of the saints from the scene of judgment, or the place which the day of the Lord is to surprise, will be like that of Enoch's from the flood, and that was different from Noah's. Noah was carried through it, so that not a hair of his head was wet; but Enoch, before it came, had been translated to a place which the waters could not reach, or rather *out of which the waters came*. The Lord, accordingly, when speaking to the Jewish election, takes Noah for his text; (Matt. xxiv.;) for the remnant, like Noah, are to be carried through the judgment. But our Apostle, in addressing the Church, takes his language rather from the translation of Enoch. (1 Thess. iv. 17; 2 Thess. ii. 1.) And this was what the anxiety of the Thessalonian saints, touching themselves as the *living* saints, craved.

The Apostle after this proceeds to describe the object of the righteous wrath of the day. He speaks of "the man of sin," "the son of perdition,"—titles expressive of the *character* and the *doom* of the great enemy of God in the latter day; and I would shortly now consider that object.

This form of evil has been, in some sense, under the nurture of every age of corrupted Christendom; for, from the beginning, "the mystery of iniquity," as we here learn, has been at work. But he has not yet been manifested. Wickedness is in the ephah still, with the talent of lead upon it. (Zech. v. 8.) But ere the day of the Lord shall visit the earth, the wicked one shall be revealed in the full form of Satan's creature. (2 Thess. ii. 9, 10.) For Satan's beauty shall be upon him, his power in him, his seat given to him, and his captives serve him. He will thus, in a special and awful sense, be the workmanship of Satan, and he will exalt himself above every god, (Dan. xi. 36,) be like the Most High, (Is. xiv. 14,) set his heart as the heart of God, (Ezek. xxviii. 6,) and sit in the temple of God, as the Apostle describes him, shewing himself that he is God. He will say in his heart, "There is no God;" (Ps. xiv.) and being such an one as this, it remains for the spirit of independency of God to bring him forth to perfection. A mere dark and superstitious system could not do this; there must be more than that, for he is to be king of *all* the children of pride. And there is nothing that more signalizes this present day of ours, than this spirit in man which affects independency of God. There is abroad at present much that is like the getting ready of a temple wherein man may shew himself to be God. "See what manner of stones and what buildings are here," is the language of every day, as man is now displaying to his fellow the art and workmanship of this busy age, the report of which now rapidly flies all the world over, promising, as men hope, to form all into one great confederate body.

Indeed, I do believe that Satan has now many and many a hand employed in erecting a suitable temple for the man of sin. I speak, of course, only of the spirit of it, and one knows not how long the building may continue, or how long the infant, who in spirit is now preparing to sit in it, may be in attaining his manhood, or (to which the heart turns from all this sweet relief) how long the forbearance of God may wait on the repentance of sinners. For both the long-suffering of God is to have its blessed measure, and the tower which the children of men are building must again rise to its due elevation. The long-suffering of God, which is salvation, will lead all known to God to repentance, (2 Peter iii.) and the iniquity of the wicked be as a breach swelling out in a *high* wall. The triumph over the wicked must be displayed in the moment of his fullest pride. The invitation to the banquet was given, not only for the first day, but for the second also, ere Esther made her request, to let Haman's heart be filled with thoughts of his greatness, so that he should fall before the righteous in the height of it all. But when the building shall be completed, and Satan's creature seated in it; when Satan, after his own manner, shall have fulfilled his own promise, "Ye shall be as gods;" (Gen. iii. 5;) then, upon his consummation, this full-grown form of evil, this manhood of iniquity, the doom of God will come, and *the man of sin* shall become the *son of perdition*. It will be the due and righteous mark for God's vengeance, the creature that shall draw down the lightning from the throne, and call forth "the brightness of His coming," (2 Thess. ii. 8,) as the Apostle here speaks, raising up the Lord again out of His holy habitation, to see and to confound the tower which the children of men have builded.

But it is not our immediate concern to know how long all this will go on. We have to do immediately with the Lord's descent from heaven to the air. And St. Paul frequently presents His appearing as the immediate object before the hope of the saints; (Rom. viii. 23, 30; xiii. 12; xvi. 20. 1 Cor. i. 7; xi. 26; xv. 23. 58. Phil. i. 10; iii. 20; iv. 5. Col. iii. 4. 1 Tim. vi. 14. Tit. ii. 13. 1 Thess. i. 10;) and in like manner the other Apostles. (James v. 7. 1 Peter i. 5. 2 Peter iii. 12. Jude 21.) And so the Apostle speaks of himself and of those to whom he was writing, as remaining alive for the coming of the Lord; for we are drawn forth to that hope. We wait every moment, as it were, for redemption, having the earnest of it already. (Rom. viii. 23. Eph. i. 14; iv. 30.) We wait for the coming, as the coming waits for our fulness. But nothing but that fulness, which is God's salvation, (2 Peter iii. 15,) do the Apostles appear to me ever to contemplate as *necessarily* delaying it. Thus: 1. As to *sufferings* and *persecutions*. It is true they were to be, but they always address the saints as ever being more or less in them. 2. As to *death*. They speak of it as that through which the saints have already in some sense passed, (Col. iii. 3,) but never present it as the hope of the saint. 3. As to *corruptions* within the church. They certainly anticipate them, but still they guard that generation against them, speaking of corruptions even of the *last days* as having *already* appeared. 4. *As to revival of the Church*. They never, I believe, promise it, or offer it as the hope of the saints. And, 5. As to *revolutions* and *political changes* in the world. They never allude to them or instruct us about them. If in any sense St. Paul makes us acquainted with politics, it is with *millennial* politics; for, while he says nothing to us about the affairs of the present kingdoms of this world, he does tell us of the affairs of the kingdom of the Son of Man, how all things are to be subdued to it, and then how it is itself to be delivered up. (1 Cor. xv. 24-26.) But till that kingdom come, he gives us no place in, or dependence upon, the changes in the nations. He would have us be subject to the powers of them, and to pray for their peace; but our heavenly hopes he does not suspend on any such earthly circumstances. In the exhortations even to *patience*, there is still the *drawing nigh* of the Lord. (James v. 8. Heb. x. 37.) In the old dispensation, there was *necessarily* a delay, because they without us could not be made perfect. But now in our dispensation, that needed perfection is come. (Heb. x. 37; xi. 40.)

I therefore judge that our immediate hope, that of meeting the Lord in the air, does not *necessarily* wait for any thing. His coming to the earth, I surely know, must wait for much. But that is not our first prospect. I do not say when the rapture will be. It may be more distant than our hope would have it, and hope deferred *should* make the heart sick. But the delay is not for the purpose of sickening the hearts of saints, but for saving the souls of sinners. "The long-suffering of God is salvation." We should remember *that*, every moment of the delay, be it long or short. And our patience should be *unmurmuring*, as God's patience is *saving* and *gracious*. But I do not judge that the Apostles teach us that there is *a necessity* for some events taking place, be-

fore that patience ends in the rapture of the saints. There will be strange and awful events, trials and distress of nations, such as never have been. And how soon we know not. The saints, too, may be left here for much of all this; (I say not otherwise;) but their eye is not to be towards such things, as their due object. Revolutions in the earth may go on without further delay, and help to shew that the Lord is beginning to think of Israel, to pluck His hand out of His bosom, and to break His long silence towards His ancient people. But I do not judge that the saints *necessarily* wait on earth for any stage in that great and interesting action. Their rising into the air to meet their descending Lord is independent of it; an event, too, which is not, as I further judge, the subject of signs and tokens. The hour of it rests in the accomplishing of the number of the elect, and that is the Father's secret, of which no movements among the nations are the sign, or the harbinger. It waits for nothing *necessarily*, I believe, but the Father's pleasure touching his heavenly family, not even for the manifestation, much less for the destruction, of that last and full form of evil, which is to bring the Lord, as we have already seen, in judgment down to the earth. Something is to hinder this manifestation. (2 Thess. ii. 17.) It has been an inquiry among the saints what this let or hindrance is; and no doubt it belongs to such a department of the revelation of God, as must have us prepared to find a difference of judgment upon it. But such differences never touch, nor can they touch, "the unity of the Spirit." And it should be our desire, in the love of the Spirit, both to bear with one another in full peace, and to help one another's joy in the further knowledge of these, and all the ways of our blessed Lord.—*(To be continued).*

THE SEPARATE STATE AND THE RESURRECTION.

When we have learned a truth, even in power from God, such is the narrowness of the human mind, that we are in serious danger of making it a shut-door against other truths, and thus of stopping short of the largeness of God's thoughts. Indeed, the more important a truth, the greater is the peril of its becoming all-absorbing. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, (blessed, divine remedy!) whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you *all things*, and bring *all things* to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you *into all truth*."

Thus, when Jesus, after speaking of the many mansions in His Father's house, and of going there to prepare a place for His own, said: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there may ye be also," it is clear that He did not mean death, nor the end of the world, nor the destruction of Jerusalem. He who was going away promised to come again: if it was a real, personal departure of Jesus, it was to be as real and personal a return, not to reign over them in their place, but to take them to His place, that He and they might be there together. Right, therefore, it is, that our hearts should feel that *our* going to Him is a thing very distinct from *His* coming to receive us unto Himself in such sort as this.

Again, our souls may have drank somewhat into the triumphant strain of the Apostle, when he cries: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Hades is not our joy, but He who has won the victory—He that liveth and was dead, and behold He is alive for evermore, and hath its keys! It is true that the Christian can say that all is his, life or death; still, death is not, and ought not to be, the object of his affections. Christ is the Bridegroom; not Christ known after the flesh, for henceforth know we no man thus: we know Him the risen man, the Lord from heaven. And by the energy of the Holy Ghost, knowing Him risen, we long for that which will but speak His worth, His power, His glory—above all, His love. We long for His coming and for the resurrection—the resurrection of them that are Christ's, at His coming. Happiness, no doubt, it is to be rid of this clog and burden, this body of sin and death—happiness far deeper is the assurance that we depart to be with Christ; but, led of the Spirit, we long for *His* triumph, for *His* joy. Our death and consequent separate state, however to us "far better" through His grace, is far from being His triumph No! it is "*when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption*, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory."

Nevertheless, let none depreciate the blessed portion of those who, absent from the body, are present with the Lord. When the word of truth in its fulness and simplicity is respected, this may not be touched. To the dying thief, who prayed the Lord to remember him when He should come in His kingdom, Jesus said: "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" that is, He proffers something beyond and better than he asked, something which, to the renewed mind, is more prized than any outward governmental display, however glorious—the joy of being with Christ Himself, and that very day too, without waiting for His coming in His kingdom. I do not mean, nor believe, that, in the kingdom, the element of the presence and companionship of Christ will be wanting, nor can it be supposed that we shall be less able to appreciate this blessed association, when that which is perfect is come. Surely not. Yet, strictly, it is not what constitutes the character of the kingdom, for it existed, as we have seen, before the kingdom, and it will continue after the kingdom shall have been delivered up. But when one has felt even a little of the affections of Christ, it needs few words to shew that no conferred honour, no recompense, however bright, (and God forbid that we should disparage the recompense of such a Lord!) can approach the joy of being near Him, and with Him, and, blessed be God, for ever!

The saints, then, which sleep in Jesus, (or rather who were put to sleep by Jesus, τοὺς κοιμηθέντας διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ—1 Thess. iv. 14,*) death shall not be able to separate from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. So Stephen, stoned, calls and says, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" and Paul could say "to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." .... "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." There was not, and could not be, a doubt, whether to choose death or resurrection. The hesitation was about "living in the flesh," not about resurrection, which was incomparably more blessed than either to live or to die: "if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection from the dead." To abide in the flesh might be more needful for others; but as far as the servant of Christ, individually, is concerned, to depart and to be with Christ is far better. (Phil. i.) Nevertheless, the third chapter of this same epistle declares that we have another and sweeter hope. *We look for the Saviour from heaven*, the Lord Jesus Christ; who, instead of giving to our spirits only the joy of being with Him, shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. And the Apostle, in 2 Cor. v., speaking of Christian position and judgment as to these things, utters our confidence and willingness to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord, though, even here, he shows that there is another thing closer to the heart. "We groan, *earnestly desiring to be clothed upon* with our house which is *from heaven* .... For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed (*i. e.*, death and the separate state,) but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life:" the result and complement of the resurrection of Christ. "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken *your mortal bodies* because of His spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. viii. 11-23.) W. K.

* It cannot mean "who have slept *because of* Jesus," as some have supposed, thereby wrongly confining the first resurrection to martyrs. If so, the Greek must have been διὰ τὸν Ἰησοῦν, or ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, So in Rev. xx. 4, there are thrones and persons sitting on them, as well as the beheaded witnessing class, and those who had not worshipped the beast: that is, the text supposes and speaks of others besides those who suffer unto death.

THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL XII. 23.

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NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1: There is silence, repose.

Verse 2: God is announcing Himself. He is going to intervene in a more direct manner. He is announcing himself by the trumpets.

Verses 3-5: There were two altars in the temple. The temple was divided in two by the veil, which separated the holy place from the most holy. The altar of incense was in the holy place outside the veil, and outside this latter was the altar of burnt offering; that is to say, in the world. It is in the world that Christ suffered, and that the saints suffer also. The altar of incense was in the sanctuary, and the incense ascended up to the throne of God, in the holiest; the altar stood immediately before the throne. The saints are still in sorrow; their cries and their supplications ascend up before God, who begins to intervene. The cries of the saints cause God to intervene with judgments. Jesus is the angel here who presents the prayers of the saints. He does not present Himself as their advocate with the Father, which is what refers to our spiritual state, but as calling down the judgments of God on those who oppressed them.

Verses 6-13: We see God intervening in a positive manner, by His judgments.

First trumpet.—God's judgment falling on the prophetical earth; that is, on the four monarchies.

The trees figure that which is elevated, eminent, lofty; *the green herb* is prosperity.

Second Trumpet.—The sea, the people that are not in the prophetic earth, the mass of people.

Third trumpet.—The rivers: this symbolical emblem is difficult to understand easily. I have observed, I think, two things in the use that Scripture makes of it: 1, *the people, the rivers* have laid waste the land of Israel; 2, *the principles which govern those people.* The rivers represent the activity of the people under certain principles. (Is. viii. 5-8.) The waters of the river (7th verse) are the king of Assyria and all his glory. Thus, in Isaiah lix. 19, Psalm xciii. 3, 4, the rivers are the people over which the Eternal has triumphed, to establish *His kingdom*, which is recognised in this psalm.

"*And there fell a great star.*" It is a power in a state of fall; *the bitter waters* are the corruption of the principles of the people.

The fourth trumpet.—The sun is the supreme power and glory. *The moon* and *the stars* are subaltern glories, of an order inferior to that of the sun. The people of God are in misery, their prayers are ascending up. God intervenes and smites the *earth*, not yet *the inhabitants thereof;* but their circumstances, their riches, the things in which they delight. To day, on the contrary, while it is yet called the day of grace, God smites, in order to convert and to chastise His children, while we often see the wicked prospering greatly.

The three following trumpets concern the inhabitants of the earth; but until the fourth trumpet has sounded, the judgments are only outward judgments. Even before these outward woes can come, God is marking and sealing His elect ones; these judgments do not hurt them; they fall on those who afflict them.

The heavenly people suffer with Christ for the sake of Jesus. This is something higher than suffering for conscience sake. The kingdom of God is for those who suffer for righteousness' sake; but the reward of those who suffer for Jesus' sake shall be great in heaven. Abraham and Lot are a proof of this. Lot sees the plain of Jordan, and chooses the earth. He is in outward blessing; but he is in the land of Sodom. He draws nearer and nearer to Sodom, and at last we see him an inhabitant there. Abraham is far from it: God apprizes *him* of what He is going to do to Sodom.

The Church in peace, beloved of God, and separated from the world, converses with God on what is going to happen to the world. Israel would have the world. Israel said: Let us kill the heir, and the inheritance shall be ours. The Church says with Thomas, "Let us go also, that we may die with Him." (John xi. 16.) Israel, therefore, will be in affliction, as Lot was in Sodom; but will escape as through fire. The remnant of Israel will love righteousness; but, having loved the world, suffers the affliction and the anguish of a man who finds himself there where the judgments of God will fall on the world. Abraham saw afar off the smoke ascending up from the plain; but he was not there.

There are afflictions brought on through faithfulness; that is then *suffering with Christ.* There are others also which proceed from unfaithfulness. It is well to remark that there are blessings, through God's mercy, connected with faithfulness in a position which, by the weakness of our faith, we have been led into; but these are not the blessings attached to a simple faith. And they are accompanied with sufferings and sorrows which have more or less the character of chastisements.

What concerns the judgment of the world is interesting to the Church, because God communicates to her, as to a friend, what will happen to the world. Can a friend not feel interested in what his friend communicates to him? It is absolutely necessary that we should renounce every thing. We shall have to do so sooner or later; either *with joy* by the Spirit of Christ; or *with shame*, when the judgments of God shall break every tie that is still keeping us back. We must then leave everything, or else be burnt up in Sodom. Prophecy has a special power to separate us from this present evil world, which the patience of God can bear, because He is taking His own out of it, but which is judged already nevertheless.

CHAPTERS IX. X. XI.

These present chapters carry us down to the close of the book of Revelation in the general scope of the prophecy. The 18th verse of the eleventh chapter closes the general history. It is the closing of the history of the government and of the judgment of God on the earth.

There is something progressive in the action of the providential government of God over men. We see first things of ordinary occurrence, such as famines, pestilences. After this there are judgments more striking; powers falling. Then in the first four trumpets men judged in their circumstances.

In the three last trumpets, the judgments fall on men themselves.

After the 12th chapter we have the history of the Apostasy.

CHAPTER IX.

Fifth trumpet.—The star falling on earth is a heavenly power fallen. The key of the bottomless pit was given unto him. God permits Satan to act sometimes for the good of His children, sometimes to let his judgments fall on His enemies. Satan and his angels are rejoiced to lay hold of an opportunity to do evil. God is coming here to chastise the wickedness of men.

There are already on earth elect ones of the twelve tribes in Israel who have the seal of God marked on their foreheads. They were sealed of God before they knew it themselves. The progress of their knowledge is not our subject here; but

the two last chapters of Daniel, and the Psalms, may be consulted.

Verse 2: Here is a diabolical influence which obscures the government of the earth. The smoke darkens the air and the sun, that is, the ordinary state of the earth, with regard to its government and the general influences which act on men.

Verse 3: This diabolical power not only obscures that which gives light to men, but it torments them and exercises a deadly influence over them. Wholesome influences are poisoned by it, and this power which rises from the bottomless pit penetrates everywhere.

Verse 4: God's purpose is not yet to kill men. Satan, whatever his power and his malice, cannot do anything but what is in the purpose of God. It is a moral diabolical power over men who have not the mark of God on their forehead. This power has no influence on the grass, on the verdure, (on circumstances,) but only on those who are not recognized of God.*

Satan has power to torment the enemies of God with judgments, which affect them first in their circumstances, and then in their own persons, and torment them, because the first judgments had not produced their due effect.

Verses 5, 6: The anguish is such that men desire to die.

Verse 7: It is a people raised up to act in judgment over others. It is the form Satan's power takes. *Crowns like gold* have an *appearance* of royal justice, pretending perhaps to be divine.

Verse 8: Their power of destruction is seen.

Verse 9: Their power to hurt is in their tail. The tail is the image of the false prophets. Compare Isaiah ix. 14.

Verse 11: They have a king who rules the satanical darkness which can act upon the earth. He is the *destroyer*, Apollyon.

Thus God acts in a much more direct way on men, not now merely on their circumstances only. This is the first woe.

Sixth trumpet, verses 13-21: The angel sounds on the summons of Christ. The Lord is still hidden; but He is already occupied with the earth, where He has a people for whom He is interceding; compare Isaiah xxx. 18. A voice is heard from the four horns of the golden altar, or the altar of incense, (Exodus xl. 26, 27,) from the altar of intercession. The voice gives an order to the angel who sounded the sixth trumpet. The intercession does not apply to the moral condition or to the spiritual conflicts of those who profit by it, but to the manifestation of the judgments of God, which will in time operate the deliverance of an earthly people.

Verse 15: Men are not only tormented now, but their *life* is attacked.

Verse 17: Fire and sulphur are the power of judgment, of death and hell, in the hands of Satan applied to men.

Verse 19: There is further here the power of the prophet of lies; at the same time, as a special satanical power, that of the old serpent.

Verses 20, 21: All these previous judgments do not alter men, who are poisoned by the tails of the horses (which, like unto serpents, have power with their heads to hurt men). They have been given up to Satan, and strong delusion has been sent unto them that they should believe a lie. (2 Thess. ii. 11.) The same had happened to the Pagans, who were given up to a spirit of darkness and of unbelief, (Rom. i. 28,) and to the Jews also, whose heart was made fat. God did send to them the word of truth, but they preferred a lie, and God gave them up to their own desire, a lie, and a lie that works efficaciously. It is an awful judgment. Those who will not receive the word of truth may prosper in their outward circumstances; but this prosperity precedes their ruin. This is what the world has to expect.

CHAPTER X.

This chapter forms a parenthesis, an episode. There is a system of great moment, which is to develop itself, the *apostasy*. It is what we have the most minutely described in the Apocalypse. Before closing what is connected with the government of God on earth, it is necessary to introduce the subject of this apostasy. This is done here.

The scene passes in Judea. The nations have gathered round Jerusalem like unto sheafs ready for the judgments of God to pass on them. Till this time the immediate intervention of God had not yet taken place on the earth.

The first book had seals. Here, it is a book open, where every one may read, which, while applying to the earth, is also applicable to an open and public testimony to His name and the walk or profession which accompanies it, not to the hidden things of God in providence.

Verse 1: *The rainbow* designates God's covenant with creation, and His faithfulness towards creation; *the sun*, supreme power; *the pillars of fire*, firmness in judgment.

Verse 2: This revelation is given by Christ Himself, as having dominion over the earth, and as going to take possession of it in judgment. There is no more mystery, for the book is open. We do not see here Christ as the *Lion of Juda*, but the rights which belong to Christ.

He sets one foot on the *earth*, the other on the *sea*; that is to say, on the prophetic earth, and on things standing *outside*, particularly the world.

Verse 3: *The seven thunders*. All God's rights over the earth, and His voice, which makes those rights be heard. The manner in which this takes place is not revealed.

Verses 5-10: Judgment is still suspended until the seventh trumpet should have sounded. There would, however, no longer be delay, but the mystery of God would be accomplished, as he had announced to the prophets. There will be a special object of the last judgment, the beast which comes up from the bottomless pit. The object of that judgment must appear, before the judgment can take place. The revelation of God that was given to John was very sweet to him. But when he meditates on the contents of the prophecy for his people, his soul is filled with bitterness.

Verse 11: The nations and the kings must appear again at the end, to be the object of the last judgment. God has never lost sight of them. Those nations, those tongues, who are the result of the confusion of Babel, that is to say, all the nations spoken of in Genesis x. and xi., re-appear either in Daniel, or Ezekiel, or elsewhere, as in Psalm lxxxiii. (where two of them are wanting), in order to be the objects of judgment.—(*To be continued.*)

* It appears to me that this is more immediately connected with, and confined to, the Jews, (but they are identified with the Gentiles who are in the land—the same is seen in Isaiah lxvi.) to speak more exactly, to Palestine.

THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA.

(*Continued from page* 15.)

WERE I to speak particularly on this, I should say, that it appears to me that we have to judge of the nature of that which hinders, by the nature of that which is hindered. It was the presence of "the accursed thing" which in old time let or hindered the manifestation of the power of God, and, till it was removed, that holy power could not display itself. I refer to Achan in the camp of Israel. (Josh. viii.) So the presence of the traitor hindered the Lord's expression of his own glory; (John xiii.) but when "he had gone out," that glory was declared. Now, according to this, it must be the presence of something *good*, something that is *of God*, that is now hindering the manifestation of the full power of Satan, and, till that is "taken away," the wicked one cannot be displayed. It is not the way of evil to restrain evil, or of good to restrain good; each rather nourishes its own likeness, while it hinders the full operation of its opposite. It must, therefore, I judge, be something good, something that God can own, which is *τὸ κατέχον*, the letting thing here. But I say no more; for it may be more according to the mind of the Spirit to leave this alone as a secret. The Spirit of God leaves this letting thing, perhaps advisedly, undefined. But even that is enough to show us that the saints are not *necessarily* delayed here on earth. If that which hinders the revelation of the man of sin is not now to be known by the saints, they may know, even from that, that they do not

necessarily wait here for such revelation ; and that is all that I am pressing. It may be, I grant, that the letting thing is thus advisedly, in the wisdom of the Spirit, left as a secret.

But this I again say, (having slightly noticed it before,) that the heavenly people are a people not *left* like Noah, but *taken away* like Enoch—taken away, too, not *by* the day of the Lord or by judgment, as the antediluvian generation, but *before* that day or judgment, like that heavenly man who "walked with God." For Enoch was a heavenly man ; a man, I mean, of a heavenly destiny. And he was not on the earth when the judgment of the Lord visited it: he knew of it and prophesied of it, (Jude 14,) but he was not in it. Ere it came, he had gone to heaven. And all this, I believe, savours of *us* and of *our calling*. We are a people destined to be taken away from the earth at some undefined moment, though instructed in its subsequent judgment. And when that judgment comes, we shall be *in the train*, and not *before the face*, of Him who executes it.

Enoch, as one *taken away*, is surely our pattern, and not the sinners in the day of Noah. For Enoch was taken away to heaven, because "he pleased God," they were taken away by judgment, because "all flesh had corrupted his way" before Him.

Simple, happy, and yet serious lessons !

And surely we can have no doubt that the saints are not to wait on the earth for the coming of the Son of man. They wait for the "Son from heaven," (1 Thess. i.) i.e. for the Son of God's descent from heaven to the air, and not for the Son of man's descent to the earth. All this persuades me more and more of the saints being removed, *before the day of the Lord visits the earth at all*. It is not only that they shall be saved *out of* it or taken away *during* it; but taken away *before* it surprises *all* them that are on the earth in the day of the coming of the Son of man, who is then to come as a thief.

Such are the great matters taught, I believe, in these epistles, the fear of the Thessalonian saints, as I have noticed, calling for the special comfort of these truths. And as connected with these truths, they show us also the path of the saints into the kingdom. And in that path there is something that is truly blessed. But it is a wondrous and divine subject, and we should remember, as with unshod feet, on *whose paths* we are treading. May the Lord *ever* keep and guide our thoughts !

The first stage in the glorious journey is the ascent of the saints, as we have seen, whether dead or alive, in their bodies of glory, to meet the Lord as He reaches the air in his descent from heaven. (1 Thess. iv.) This is the coming which the saints now look for, and of which their Lord has said to them, "Behold I come quickly." It is at this meeting with Him "in the air" that we shall (1 Thess ii. 19) be presented to Himself, His own glorious and ransomed saints. This will be the redemption of the body. (Rom. viii.) The vile body will be fashioned like unto his own glorious body. (Phil. iii.) And this meeting will be in the gladness of a jubilee, for the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the Church shall ascend with a responsive song: "O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?" (1 Cor. xv.)

And after thus meeting the Lord, and being thus presented to Himself, the next stage in the blissful way will conduct us to the Father. (1 Thess. iii. 13.) The path of life will then be ours, beloved, as it has already been His, the path that leads to the Father, and thus to fulness of joy and everlasting pleasures. (Ps. xvi.) And this will be the full owning of the saints as *children*, as the next scene into which they are to pass, and which we will look at presently, will be the full owning of them as *heirs*. For the divine order is, "if children, then heirs." (Rom. viii.)

But, before I pass to the next stage in these paths of glory, I would observe that these stages in the way of Himself and the saints, the Lord in His own teaching had already presented to the faith of His disciples. For He had told them, that though they could not follow Him at that time, (and He was then going to the Father,) yet that they should follow Him afterwards, when He had prepared mansions in the same house of the Father for them. But before they should follow Him into that house, He told them also that He would "come again, and receive them unto Himself"—as the Apostle speaks, meet them alone in the air. (John xiii. 36; xiv. 3.) So that, in these words and promises, the Lord, in St. John's Gospel, had already opened these paths to the eye of faith, His own path to the Father, His coming back again to meet His saints, and then their all going together into the Father's house. They were to see Himself, before they went into the prepared mansions of the Father's house, as here our Apostle presents them meeting the Lord immediately on their ascent into the air, and then, when thus joined with Him, but not till then, going into the Father's presence. (1 Thess. iii. 13.) And I know not what language can more clearly express this than our Lord's own words, in the place I have referred to. Speaking of the Father's house, He says: "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you *unto myself*, that where I am *there* ye may be also." He would first receive them *to Himself*, or meet them *alone*, and *then* conduct them into the *Father's house*. And these are the ascending paths of the saints. We shall have to trace a descending one presently; but in either direction they are still glorious, and the Lord is with them for ever.

And it is now, after the saints are at home with the Lord in the Father's house, I believe, that, according to the language of the Jewish prophet, the Son of man comes to the Ancient of days and gets dominion; (Dan. vii.) or, according to the vision in the Apocalypse, the Lamb takes the book out of the right hand of Him that sits on the throne, and the Church rejoices at the prospect of their speedy reign on the earth. (Rev. v.)

Then, in due season, the third stage in the path of glory will be trodden. Jesus, thus in power, will come down, with His mighty angels, in flaming fire to put away the wicked from the presence of His glory, and to be glorified in His saints. This we have also in our epistles. (2 Thess. i. 7—10). This will be His coming in clouds—the clouds of heaven—not alone as when He met the Church in the air, nor yet with His saints in the character of the children of the Father, when He took them to their mansions, but with them as the "armies of heaven." He now comes with ten thousand of His saints, as the rider on the white horse, the heaven opening to let down the descending hosts of the Lord to execute judgment on the corrupters of the earth, and then to vindicate His title to the kingdoms of the world. (Matt. xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64. Jude 14. Rev. i. 7 ; xix. 14.) And this will be the redemption of the inheritance. For the glory of the Lord shall survive all the scene of judgment, and the lovers of the truth shall have their place in it, when the last lie and darkness of Satan and the world shall be set aside (2 Thess. ii. 14) for ever.

Then shall Jesus be seen as the king in his beauty. Every knee shall bow to Him. *He* shall sit on the throne of His glory, and His saints receive power with Him, according to their service. (Matt. xxv. 31 ; Luke xix. 17.) This shall be the promised appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, which He shall show, who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords. (1 Tim. vi.) And then shall one enemy after another be subdued to Him, till all close in the delivery up of the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. xv. 28.)

Thus, beloved, our happy feet will first tread the heavenward way to meet the Lord himself, and then by His own hand we shall be guided first to the home of love, and then to the throne of glory,—the house of the Father, and the kingdom of the Son of man. And like these, were the ways of Joseph and his brethren, after their reconciliation ; for Joseph first revealed *himself* to them in the secret of his own presence, commanding every one to go out from him but themselves ; then he brought them in and presented them as *his brethren* to *Pharaoh*, seated in the seat that was higher than his; and then he led them forth into *the scene of his power and glory*, and gave them the richest portion in the inheritance, above the people of the land. (See Gen. xlv.-xlvii.) And let me add, that nothing will be lost as we go onward. The joy of the Lord's own presence, and the fulness of the Father's house, will still be ours after we have entered upon the rule of the kingdom, and ours, beloved, for ever.

Surely we may say, in a deeper sense than even David, our God has spoken to us of our house for a great while to come, even for ever. And again, in a deeper sense than even he, may we not also say: What are we, that we should be brought hitherto? (2 Sam. vii. 18, 19.) For His word's sake, and according to His own heart, He has done all these things. (2 Sam. vii. 21.) His own love must account for it all; for nothing else can. The lowest are exalted the highest. Angels are passed by, and the seed of Abraham taken up. (Heb. ii.) The separated Jew is passed by, and sinners of the Gentiles taken up, the tattered prodigal gets the *best* robe, and he that ate swine's husks, the *fatted* calf; for grace, the riches and the glory of grace must be displayed, and these are its ways, its blissful ways. It is only for us, beloved, to tread softly here where all is defiled, till our feet travel these paths of joy and glory without fear of thorn or stain for ever.

These great things of God's counsels are thus noticed in these epistles to the Thessalonian saints. They had come forth from an idolatrous world to own the living God, in the midst of it, and to *wait* for His Son *from* heaven, and the Holy Ghost here feeds their enlarging desires.

But the Apostle had to notice also some evil that was among them. He had to admonish as well as comfort, and to pray not only that their hearts might be comforted, but established in every good word and work. (2 Thess. ii. 17.) For some of them had ceased "to labour with their hands." It may be that this had been the fruit of some corrupt view of their great distinguishing doctrine, the coming of the Lord. For it is Satan's way, if he cannot rob us of truth, to corrupt it, while it is still in our hand. The Thessalonians were zealous, they had come to meet the Lord with purpose of heart; but this had become connected with a desertion of their quiet industrious private walk. But he does not condemn this zeal, or seek to correct the evil by withdrawing the Lord's coming from their view. We have seen that it is rather his great subject; but he desires for them that they might be in *patient*, and not disorderly, waiting for it, and urges this duty upon them by reminding them of his example and his precepts while he was among them. For he had been a labourer for his own support at Thessalonica, this having been so ordered in the provisional wisdom of God, who now by His Spirit uses that fact for the admonition and guidance of the saints there.

Such, I judge, was the standing and character of the Church at Thessalonica, with their peculiar doctrines and anxieties, and the Apostle's teaching upon them. Eminent they were for simplicity of faith, brotherly love, and desire for the return of the Lord; but withal, as we have seen, needing further light on the ways of the Lord, and also rebuke and admonition for some of their own ways. But above all that, I would again, in closing, press on the thoughts of my brethren, as it was that which was the chief point of attraction to my own mind, this—that we have here the doctrine of the rapture of the saints, whether "sleeping" or "alive," to meet their Lord "in the air," before he touches the earth. This rapture into the air may be called resurrection, but it is ascension as well as resurrection, and the Church's history is included between the resurrection or ascension of the Lord, and this her own resurrection or ascension. The one gave her life and sent her on her wilderness journey, a stranger in the earth, the other will close her wilderness journey, and take her to her home in heaven. But these resurrections of the Lord and the Church are peculiar. They are resurrections *from* the dead. It was Sadducean pravity to deny resurrection of the dead, and that doctrine is numbered among Jewish principles, in Heb. vi. But a resurrection *from* the dead was something quite beyond a Jewish measure of faith. The disciples questioned what it could mean, when the Lord spake of it; (Mark ix. 10;) and an allusion to it quite crossed and passed by all Martha's thoughts, though she presented a fair standard of the nation's faith. (John xi. 24-26.) When she spoke of a resurrection at the last day, the Lord told her of a power of resurrection in Himself, which would not wait for the last day, but would act in a manner that should gloriously forestall all other resurrections, by a resurrection worthy of Him who is "the resurrection and the life." And this alone is a resurrection in the power of the presence of the Spirit of God. (Rom. viii. 11.) This was the resurrection of the Lord himself, a resurrection *from* the dead, and this will be the resurrection of those that are His, not "at the last day," as Martha or the Jew might once have spoken; but "at his coming," as the Spirit in the Church now speaks. (1 Cor. xv. 22.) The patriarchs of the Jewish family all put special value on their dead bodies; they were religiously laid up in Machpelah, and this care and zeal of theirs was the confession of their sure and certain hope of resurrection. But they connected resurrection with the land of Canaan. And, therefore, Jacob and Joseph, who died in Egypt, provided that their bones should be carried over and laid in Canaan, thus telling us that their hope of resurrection was the same as their hope of final possession of the promised land. All this, it is true, was perfect in those who had but *earthly* resurrection hopes.

But the Church has a higher hope. Heaven and ascension into the air are now before her; Canaan and resurrection from the grave of Machpelah were before the patriarchs. She has already, in spirit, gone on high with Christ, and is looking for the day when she shall ascend after Him to meet Him in a glorified body. And this alone is perfect in her, as the former hope was perfect in them; for each is in season with the enlarging mind and grace of God towards us. The patriarchs were to die, and they looked for resurrection and the land under God. (Gen. l. 24, 25.) The Church is risen, and looks for ascension and heaven with the glorified Lord. (Phil. iii. 20, 21.)

And this resurrection or ascension of the saints is, as I have already observed, that which is to close the dispensation of the Church, as the resurrection or ascension of the Lord opened it; like the two passages which opened and closed the wilderness to Israel.

And we stand, beloved, on the banks of Jordan. It is the wilderness still, and the Manna and the Rock are wanted still. But it is also the skirts of the glory; our salvation is nearer than when we believed. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." The Holy Ghost, sent down already from heaven, is in us, (1 Cor. vi. 19,) the harbinger of approaching daylight. He makes us already, "children of light and children of the day." (1 Thess. v. 5.) "It is high time to awake." Let us only rise and look out, and we may see the streaks of the morning. The spirit of the day is in us, the pledge that it will itself soon break in glory on our heads.

But there was, it is true, a lingering on the banks of the Jordan. The host of God waited till a certain mission into the defiled land of the Amorites was over. Certain spies went into the land of judgment. (Josh. ii.) The sin of the Amorites was then full, and Joshua's sword might have entered at once. But there was a moment of respite, and it proved salvation. It was a standing at the very door of the doomed house, and knocking, if haply any one would even then open the door. And so it was, a poor defiled sinner of the place arose at the bidding, and, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of her house. She was in the place of death and judgment; but mercy was made to rejoice there, and her house with the scarlet thread hanging from the window, became another blood-sprinkled lintel, and the angel of destruction again passed on. And so do we now wait. The glory has not yet broken, but waits for the appointed mission of grace to go and do its work. The long-suffering of God is salvation, He being not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter iii.) We wait till the body be completed in all its holy and appointed measure, till all have come in the knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man. Then the power of death shall give way before the feet of the priests again. (Josh. iii.) "For if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead *dwell in you*, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by *His Spirit that dwelleth in you*." (Rom. viii. 11.) If we thus, as sons and priests of God, carry the ark of the Lord, the waters shall not withstand our passage. We have the hidden life, and that is above the power of death.

These, and richer and better than these, or than heart can conceive, are the ways of Him who hath loved us. They are telling, and will still tell us, that God is love, and that in

blessing He is doing His work, and in manifesting grace to the unworthy, showing Himself. We now learn what grace is in all its varied resources, and our feet shall by and bye tread one path after another, that we may learn what glory is. Since Jesus rose we have found every path in the desert a path of grace; but glory is still before us. Its paths we do not yet tread, as Joshua said to the people on the banks of Jordan, anticipating their speedy passage through it: "Ye have not passed this way heretofore." (Josh. iii. 45.) But, surely, we need not fear the dazzling paths. The hand that divided the Red Sea will, with equal ease, divide the Jordan. He that raised up Christ from the dead, will also quicken our mortal bodies to the same glory. It is as yet an untrod way, it is true; but the hand of the Lord is the same. It is not the glory of Christ that is the great thing. It is the cross of Christ that is the great thing, and that is ours already. If God has given us His *suffering* Son, it will be found a small and easy thing (to speak after the manner of men,) to give us His *glorious* Son. If we know that Jesus, bowing his head on the tree, is ours, we may well know that Jesus, exalted in highest glory, will be ours; the pledge is sure, and then as there was the pillar of twelve stones, a stone for every tribe, so will there be the abiding praise of *all* his saints to speak the riches of grace and glory for evermore.

"To Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

J. G. B.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE END.

"The anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have executed, and he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly."—*Jeremiah* xxiii. 20.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1.—THE DESIGN AND PLAN OF THE PAPER.

THE design of this Essay is to submit to holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, the results of my researches as to *the Gospel of the Kingdom, the Testimony of the End, and the Everlasting Gospel*, considered in the light of their historical succession, and the practical influence which the knowledge of the ways of God ought to have on our lives and affections here on earth.

I hope that the result of the communication will be, on the one hand, to induce brethren who have received more light on these subjects than myself to impart it to the children of God; and, on the other, to facilitate in some degree the study of this part of holy prophecy to those who desire to pursue it.

The course I shall follow, with the help of the Lord, will be to bring forward the succession of facts which relate to the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, concentrating upon each point the most light I can, by collecting together the passages of the Word which bear upon it.

This course, I know, offers but little attraction to such as appreciate only a convenient food, in which they are spared all research and labour of their own. The necessity, however, of being brief, imposes it upon me, and, above all, the lack of the gifts necessary to satisfy the need of the class of readers of whom I have been speaking.

I commence, therefore, this essay by the sketch of a biblical history of the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, which, however dry it may appear, will serve as my introduction to the subject, which I hope to develop afterwards with a view to edification.

The Word sometimes uses indifferently the expressions "Reign of Heaven" and "Reign of God." It will begin by the establishment of the authority of God and of His Christ over the Kingdoms of the world, which was a scriptural idea received and well known by the Jews at the time of the Lord's sojourn on earth.

The Church shares in the reign of Heaven, as joint heir with the Son, as His Bride, because it is composed of the brethren of Jesus, members of His body and of the family of God. In this sense the hope of this reign is for us a heavenly hope. The earthly heirs of the reign are the meek, who endure to the end. This little remnant will inherit the millennial earth. This cannot be applied to the Church but by means of a spiritualising interpretation.

The Psalms xcvii. and xcix. are prophetical songs, the fulfilment of which will take place only after the heavens and the earth, which now are, have been shaken yet once more according to promise. (Comp. Heb. xii. 26, 27; Psalms xcviii. 2, 9; xcix. 1.) In the period now present, until salvation be revealed by the return of the Son of man, the subject of the heavenly songs is for the rebellious world a mystery; (Apoc. xii. 10.) "The Lord (*l'Eternel*) reigns," is a prophecy in the mouth of the saints and of the heavenly powers. It is easy to be convinced of this by attentively reading these psalms.

These four things, salvation and strength, and the reign of our God, and the power (authority) of His Christ, exist, it is true, in the counsel of God; they are realities for those who believe; but they remain, nevertheless, a mystery for the world, which can only believe that which belongs to the region of sense. The power of the Spirit of life *which is* in Christ Jesus, acts in the faithful to produce in them the fruits of the Spirit, which are the fruits of the reign; for the reign of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xiv. 17.)

For those who preach the Gospel, this same power is necessary to bring souls to the knowledge of these things, which are mysteries for the world. Such is the value of passages like these: "For our Gospel came not unto you *in word only*, but also *in power*, and in the Holy Ghost." (1 Thess. i. 5) In order that the ministry of the Gospel be really efficacious, it must be based upon the power of the life, and be sustained by the gifts of the Spirit of Christ risen. I speak of the power of the Spirit given at Pentecost, to the apostles *first*, then *to us all*, to the end of the present dispensation. (Acts i. 8; Eph. iii. 20; iv. 11, 16.) "For the reign of God *is not* in word, but in power." (1 Cor. iv. 20.) It is not enough to speak of the things of God in order to edify; it must be done by the power of Christ ascended on high.

And this same power acts in the heirs to sanctify them, to enlighten and to sustain them, even as it will hereafter act, in order to raise them, or to change them into the perfect likeness of the second Adam, in order that they may be manifested with Him in glory.

Then only shall be manifested to the world, salvation, and strength, and the reign of God, and the power (authority) of His Christ; for it is He, Christ still hidden in the throne, who is the Power and the wisdom of God. (1 Cor. i. 24.)

§ 2.—TESTIMONY TO THE GOSPEL OF THE REIGN.

The time fixed in the counsels of God for the fulfilment of the promises made by Himself, or through the prophets, to Abraham and to His successors, being accomplished, John the Baptist came "in the way of righteousness," calling the whole nation to repent and be converted. It was the end of the dispensation of the law and the prophets. The reign had drawn near without observation in the person of the Son of man. "Repent ye, for the reign of heaven is at hand; FOR this is He that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." The testimony of the Forerunner was not in power, for he did no miracle. He was that Elias who was to come; but the Jews knew Him not, but did unto Him whatsoever they listed.

Elias prefigured in many respects John the Baptist; but above all as being the reformer of Israel *by righteousness*. Elias, notwithstanding all his faith, walked after his own heart at a very critical moment of his ministry. The doubts of John the Baptist, when in trial, drew down on him a severe though indirect rebuke in the answer which the Lord gave to the messengers he had sent: "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

Elias, losing courage for a moment, could not understand how the Word of God, confirmed by the acts of power which he wrought, remained without effect for the conversion of Ahab, of Jezebel and of Israel. John the Baptist was not prepared for the interruption of the reign by the rejection of

the Anointed of God. The faith of these two holy men was shaken at the sight of the sufferings and dangers to which a ministry, so glorious as was theirs, exposed them.

In every respect, and in contrast with all the prophets of every dispensation, Jesus is the only faithful witness; whereas the man who is only "born of a woman" has always failed under the responsibility of every ministry intrusted to him for the service of God. It is in connection with this, that the Lord compares what the greatest amongst prophets born of women was *upon the earth*, with what the least of the risen saints *will be in the reign of heaven*. (Matth. xi. 11.)

When Jesus, who was the true Prophet and King, was manifested, it was, according to the counsel of God, needful that John the Baptist should decrease, but that He, the Son of man, come down from heaven, should increase. He it is who, until He left this rebellious world, maintained all the truth and glory of God unsullied, untouched by the malice of Satan, and in spite of the contradiction of sinners.

The first discourses of the Lord are identically the same as those of His Forerunner; it is the pure and simple Gospel of the reign of God. John the Baptist being rejected, the door remained open by the path of righteousness and self-denial in things present. The grace which imputeth not iniquity was still veiled until the shedding of the blood was accomplished. (Heb. ix. 6, 13.) Every enemy is not invisible; we have also to contend with obstacles which are external and seen.

Hitherto the Lord had brought in the reign of God amongst His own, without observation, preaching conversion and repentance. He then added power to the word for the preaching of the gospel of the reign; (Matth. ix. 35; Luke ix. 11;) and this it is which rendered the nation without excuse.

Little by little the interruption of the reign, through the death of the King, becomes evident, for Israel is hardening itself against the manifestation of *the powers of the age to come*, intrusted to the labourers whom the Lord sent *in testimony* against the Jews, and whom He thus formed for the work they were to continue. Israel is threatened with being disinherited; and the disciples and the Gentiles are to receive the administration of the kingdom and access to the reign.

Jesus announces that He is going to return on high, in order to come again in power to destroy His enemies, and to bring the reward to His own.

During the interregnum which draws near, it becomes necessary to sow the word of the reign, in order that there may be sons of the kingdom, for the Heir had found nothing in the vineyard of the Father.

The kingdom, thus usurped by the enemy, will shelter the rebellious nations; it will be the time of the forbearance of God towards the world.

The disciples of Jesus, faithful remnant of the interrupted reign, about to be His witnesses, receive the deposit of the Word of the reign, and Peter receives the administration of the kingdom. This remains a mystery hidden from the multitude and from the mighty.

Everything is now ready for the testimony of the reign to be continued on earth. The death of the Heir, the rejection of Israel, the indignation of God against His people, are established facts. The abounding of iniquity will bring judgment. The reign had been announced in testimony to the Jews, and this continued still for some time after the death of the Lord, because of His intercession for them on the cross. Afterwards this testimony reached unto other nations and all men.

Jesus, about to leave His disciples thus prepared, commends them to the Father's keeping. (John xvii. 11, 12.) He then gives a last and striking testimony to the truth of His reign, which is neither of *this world*, nor of *this age*, but of the world and the age to come: "I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth ..... My reign is not of *this world* .... *But now* is my reign not from hence." (John xix. 36-38; see also Acts i. 3, 6.)

The glorious preaching of the Jewish remnant, left as a testimony by the Lord, proclaimed the fulfilment of the Scriptures in Jesus—the Christ rejected, crucified, risen, and glorified; and, above all, His permanent right to the reign and to the judgment, as well as His return in glory to occupy the throne of David His father. We see the light of the grace that forms the Church, increase in the preaching of these witnesses, in proportion as the things of the reign of God are more and more rejected by the Jews. After the dispersion "Philip was preaching the things concerning the reign of God, and the name of Jesus Christ." (Acts viii. 4, 12.)

Little by little the converted Jews were forced to forsake the synagogue. Then, the separation of the disciples having taken place, and the reign of Christ being finally rejected by the Jews, that is to say, by the heirs, judgments began to fall on the nation, and all "the Christians" received, through the ministry of Paul, the full revelation of the glory of the Bride. A gradual fusion took place between the remnant of the interrupted kingdom and the Church the body of Christ; or rather, this remnant passed out of the first condition into the second, in a manner almost imperceptible. Paul became the apostle of the Gentiles, as a witness of the things *he had seen*, and of those which were revealed to him still later, with regard to the the future glories of Christ and of the Church.

This new light, committed to the Church by the first ministers of the Word, did not remain long before it obscured and even obliterated the notion of the Gospel of the reign. The Church has utterly failed, and still fails, in the preaching of this Gospel of the reign. But these glad tidings, distinct from those of the grace of which they nevertheless form a part, are (God be praised!) deposited in the Scriptures. There it is we again find those things in their place, as Paul, John, and Peter preached them; and I hope, with the help of the Lord, to prove to my brethren that the Church has forsaken the true and pure preaching of the reign of God, and that it is time to return to it, without at the same time giving up the preaching of present grace. Preaching, like the apostles, *the reign of God*, and *all the things concerning Jesus*, is what, I think, the Church no longer does, and which the approach of "the time of the end" renders extremely necessary.

The King, absent, calls Himself "Him that cometh," but the world does not know him as such. To the Church is the charge committed of God of proclaiming in this very world the rights and the return of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Jesus is not only the risen Witness in Heaven—but He is so still upon the earth, in the Church, by His Spirit. It is as His witnesses also that we break bread in memory of Him, in the midst and in the presence of His murderers, announcing thus His death, His resurrection, and His return, until He comes.

Another distinctive character of the testimony of the Church is, that she is not to call for condemnation on those who do not receive immediately the word. The order to shake off the dust of our feet in testimony against the rejector, was only applicable to the Jews, as being the people and heirs of God. An evangelist can well say: "I am pure of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you *all the counsel of God*;" (Acts xx. 26, 27;) but would he act in the intelligence of the present grace if he called for the judgments of God upon the nations and individuals who reject the Gospel? (Romans ii. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 5.)

The position of the redeemed at this time is that of enemies, made sons by grace; but it is no longer that of the violent who take the reign by force; for the difficulties which Satan raises to the Church are generally of another kind than those that presented themselves to the Jews in the time of John the Baptist. The Jews were, by natural birth, the legitimate heirs of the reign; they had, without having yet received the power of the Spirit of Pentecost, to break the heavy yoke of the law and of legal traditions. Outrages, the being forsaken, exclusion and persecutions at the hand of the whole nation, were to be endured; they had to despise the bitter zeal and hatred of the priests and of the great ones, to pass for execrable: in a word, it was

literally necessary to forsake all in order to enter into the kingdom.

And still, separation from the world must be the result of the activity of faith in testimony as to those who speak and "those who hear." But this separation is a fruit of the Spirit, who renews and changes the affections by means of a new creation. This is a way above and independent of our strength; and it is by pure grace that we have become partakers of the reign and members of the body of Christ. If there is violence, it comes from God, and acts against ourselves, without our aid, and in our favour.

The Church is introduced into the reign by its faith, but it is not its faith that takes the reign by force. New-born children cannot be counted as violent men.

§ 3.—THE TESTIMONY OF THE END.

As that which concerns the testimony of the Church with regard to the Gospel of the Reign, has to be treated of further on, I confine myself to the above general reflections on her position, and pass on to the *testimony of the end.*

This testimony, which was interrupted by the rejection of the king and by the formation of the Church, will be resumed towards the consummation of the age, of which, indeed, it will be one of the signs.

The Church finds, in the three first chapters of the Apocalypse, the judgment of the Lord on her conduct here below as one that is betrothed, and also the judgments of God upon all that makes an empty profession of Christianity. In the third chapter, 14th verse, Jesus judges professing Christendom according to the title—Church—which it has itself assumed. This church of Laodicea will be spued out of the mouth of the Lord, because she is a liar in her profession. The things that are to come *after those* which concern the Church are for ourselves still future.

Besides, then, the three first chapters of the Apocalypse, we find in this book, Jesus presenting himself as the prophet of his own *unveiling* to the eyes of the world, and of the manifestation of all those who belong to Him in Heaven. It is for this reason that the Holy Ghost calls the book of the Apocalypse "the testimony of Jesus Christ." We have received this precious deposit as being the friends of God, (John xv.; Gen xviii. 17; James ii. 23,) with the commission to transmit it at the proper time to the witnesses, the future preachers of the judgments of God on the kingdom usurped by Satan, and of the glad tidings of the reign. The contents of this prophecy, which again takes up and closes all preceding prophecies, had to be communicated *to the Churches, and to the servants* (esclaves) *of God*, through the medium of John the beloved, who takes here the character of servant, ministering this testimony as a prisoner, partaker of the tribulation, of the reign, and of the hope of Jesus Christ.

From the fourth chapter, the Apocalypse contains the details of the plans of God relative to the resumption of His government on the earth, or relative to the end of the government "of the Beasts." When this book speaks of the things of Heaven, it is the book of thrones, of songs, and of crowns; but when it speaks of the ways of God towards *this world*, it is really "*the testimony of the end.*"

In this testimony, as in all the things of God, Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending. He is also the centre, or the link which unites the two ends of the chain of the testimony interrupted by the formation of the Church; therefore He calls himself the faithful Witness, the first-born from amongst the dead, the true King of kings, revealing to John the results of the faithfulness of God (*l'Eternel*) to judge the nations and to subject them to His Christ.

I see two great categories of witnesses after the rupture of the Church. First: The Active and Blood-stained Testimony. Secondly: A Passive, and so to speak, Mute Testimony. We find, I think, in Apoc. xx. 4, the two classes of witnesses just named. The passage describes the introduction of the judgment of the living nations, and of those who destroy the habitable earth. (Dan. vii. 9; Matt. xxv.)

Besides those who sit on thrones to judge, (1 Cor. vi. 2,) I see in this verse: 1st. The souls of the martyrs of the active and blood-stained testimony—they are *the violent.* They have been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus, and because of the word of God. They form a body of risen men, for "they lived," as it is said, further on. 2nd. "And those who had not worshipped the Beast nor his image . . ." *the patient*—those of the passive testimony. These last form a remnant kept apart on the earth, beyond the reach and pursuit of the Beast during the great tribulation. They are set at the right hand of the King, they live and reign with the former ones, and with Christ.

A.—*The Active and Blood-stained Testimony.*

Let us consider for a moment the first category of these witnesses. Their origin goes back as far as John the Baptist, as regards the new covenant. The precursory testimony of John the Baptist appears to me to be of the class of prophecies accomplished at first imperfectly, interrupted because of the malice of Satan and the opposition of man, and afterwards resumed in full. We have seen that the almost fruitless ministry of Elias had been the type of him who was the forerunner of Messiah. But the first coming of John the Baptist has been in its turn a type of the future appearing of Elias towards the time of the end.

John the Baptist is that Elias of whom the Lord Jesus has announced the coming since the death of His Forerunner: "Elias truly cometh first, and *shall restore* all things." It is also to this second coming that relate, partly at least, the words of the prophecy of the angel Gabriel: "And he shall go before Him (the Lord) in the spirit and *power* of Elias." For if John came the first time in the spirit of Elias, he did not, however, come in *the power* of Elias; moreover he restored nothing at all with regard to the Jewish nation; much less has he restored "*all things.*"

A second coming of John the Baptist in power, or of Elias, to restore things, can only explain the easily felt, though only apparent contradiction, which exist between the Lord's own words and those of His Forerunner: "And IF yè will receive it, *this is* Elias, which was for to come." Nevertheless, John the Baptist has said, "*I am not* Elias."

I think that the resumption *in power* of the interrupted testimony of John the Baptist is found in Revelation xi. 3, &c., where this prophet is accompanied by Moses. These two witnesses stand at Jerusalem, "centre of the earth," before "*the God of the earth,*" an expression which characterises the epoch of their testimony, and which is not found elsewhere in the New Testament.

The men who inhabit the earth towards the end of the present age will find themselves in a state of open revolt against the Creator. The Lord shall then renew and give a second time the sign of Jonas. He sends, for the last time, His prophets, two in number, to make straight, this time, the paths of His Son *in His glory*. It is here only that the prophecy of Malachi is exhausted.

John the Baptist is then, as regards the new covenant, the first of the active and blood-stained testimony, whether before or after the epoch of grace which forms and gathers the Bride of Jesus. (comp. Apoc. vi. 9, 10; and xx. 4.) The faith of *the violent* (Matth. xi. 12.) was that of the first witnesses for the kingdom, from John the Baptist, until the time when the mystery of the Church having been manifested, they passed evidently into this new condition. I do not doubt then that many of the members of the body of Christ have been made partakers of this glorious activity. It will surely be a gem added to their crowns in the possession of the glory of Jesus; but I do not consider, at this moment, the testimony to the Gospel of the reign but as a fact which has been interrupted, and which is to be resumed at the consummation of the age.

The Jewish nation has put to death a multitude of the faithful, besides John the Baptist and Stephen, because of the gospel of the Messiah, the true David. The same circumstances will be found again to exist towards the end of the age, and for the same cause; but in the midst of difficulties infinitely more serious, because then, iniquity being multiplied and hearts hardened, God will have given efficacy to error, that the adversaries may believe a lie. I do not doubt but that all the martyrs whose testimony has not gone beyond that

of John the Baptist (see John iii. 29), are (with the martyrs of the ancient covenant) referred to in the passage of the Rev. vi. 9-12. Their language is by no means that of grace, but it is the language of a Jewish remnant. The impatience under the altar only manifests itself after the rapture and the gathering of the Church into Heaven. The souls not yet clothed, have already been waiting under the altar during all the interregnum, or rather during the usurpation, of the kingdom by Satan. But they have only *a little longer* to wait; the death of their brethren and of their companions in service, (*esclavage*,) who shall render at the end of the age the same testimony as they did in the beginning, must intervene: the final tribulation, truly the great tribulation, must complete the number of this body of witnesses.

Their reward, also, however blessed it may be, has also a character of its own. It is not in their case to be united with the Lamb, but to be in Heaven, under His care and under His heavenly mediation.

One of the twenty-four elders (Apoc. vii. 13) explains this mystery to John, that he may communicate it to the Churches, for the Bride of Christ is interested in the matter, because it concerns martyrs who have suffered for the name and for the claims of her Bridegroom.

I believe I have given a sufficient outline for brethren who have not yet any settled views on the subject; and I pass over in silence several other characteristic points which make of these witnesses a body entirely distinct from the Bride; because that would lead me beyond the limits of a mere essay.

B.—*Passive and Silent Testimony.*

I have pointed out the principal features of that class of witnesses at the end, whose mission I have designated by the title "Active and Blood-stained Testimony." I have a few words to add on the second class, of the Testimony at the end, which I have called the "Passive or Silent Testimony."

The 144,000, in contrast with the preceding martyrs, keep the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, possessing their souls in patience, keeping themselves quiet, lifting up their heads on high whence cometh their salvation; that is to say, "this Jesus, in the same manner as he ascended up." In conclusion, this new Israel will have *on the earth* the same privileges which the risen martyrs will enjoy *in heaven.* They are under the care of the faithful Shepherd. (comp. Apoc. vii. 17; xiv. 4.) They alone can learn on the earth the New Song, sung in heaven, *before the throne,* by the heavenly choirs.

We find a type of this remnant in Elias fleeing from the anger of the impious Ahab, kept apart far from his people, nourished day by day in the desert, having the testimony of the Lord and the prophetic Spirit, bringing by his return into Judea the bountiful rain of the latter season, in the midst of general apostasy and desolation, and giving subsequently light and abundance to the Gentiles.

I shall not speak here of those who escape from amongst the nations after the great day of God Almighty, (Isaiah xlv. 20; lxvi. 19, &c.) because I do not consider them exactly as rendering a testimony at the time of the consummation of the age.

As to the everlasting Gospel, some details will be found in what follows this introduction.—(*To be continued.*)

GRACE AND GLORY.

2 Chron. ix. 1-12.

It is commonly apprehended among us, and very justly, that *grace* is the thing exhibited in David, and *glory* in Solomon. Grace had a very full exhibition in David. It raised its objects from degradation to honour, it comforted and sustained him in sorrow, restored him from wandering, and kept him to the end in safety. But when the time came for glory to shine forth, grace having thus displayed itself to the full, David delivers the throne into the hand of Solomon.

Each of these, grace and glory, has its own peculiar method. It is this which just at the present has drawn and fixed my thoughts a little. *Grace only divides the scene with other principles, glory forms it all alone.* Grace meets David in either his degradation, sorrow, or defilement, and brings honour, comfort, or restoration, leaving the struggle between the former and the latter things in measure to the end, and the whole a divided empire. But glory holds the entire scene at its disposal, and leaves the trace or reflection of itself on every thing. It is not God bringing out His resources to mingle themselves with man's circumstances; but it is the supreme presence of the Lord forming the whole sphere of the action according to itself. This appears in this chapter. There is no darkness at all upon the scene abroad, nor working of nature in the heart within—no trace of man, or of his passions, or his miseries; the finger of God and the Spirit of God delineate and animate the whole picture.

The queen of Sheba is the witness of this. Her consciousness of what she saw tells us *of glory being everywhere in the regions of the king of Israel*—the stirrings of her own heart tell us of *the absence of all the ways and principles of nature.* There was nothing minute under her eye, that did not to that eye reflect the glory. As the stars of the heaven differ in ther glories, but each of them is glorious, and lends something to the common magnificence, so here. There is the house of the king, and his ascent up to the house of God; but there is also the meat of his table, and the apparel of his servants; and the latter are glorious like the former—in other measures, it may be, but still equally parts and parcels of the glory. The glory was leaving its reflection on all she saw. It might be small in the great account, but still it was glorious. And because it was small, it was only the worthier of the notice of the Spirit-led soul, that delights to put honour on the uncomely member, and enable her the more fully to testify to us that glory was everywhere, even so to speak, on the kitchen furniture—"the sitting of the servants!" Just as another voice of the same Spirit, anticipating the sanctity or cleanness of these same days, tells us of "Holiness unto the Lord" being now upon "the bells of the horses," and "of every pot in the Lord's house being like the bowls before the altar." For the glory had taken the whole scene into its hand, and there was nothing hid from the reach of its beams. It was a morning without clouds—there was no shadow anywhere. All was in the light. The very equipage of the attendants and their sittings reflected it. All was delivered into the liberty of the glory, and fashioned by the power of it.

But the kingdom within was as excellent in its way. If the day dawned around, the day-star had risen in the heart. There was no blemish of nature or of the flesh in her spirit, as there was no dimness or uncertainty in the scene around her. She was small in comparison with the king in Zion, but there was full delight and no grudging because of this. She trafficked for wisdom, and esteemed the merchandise of it above gold or rubies. The best of her land she offered to King Solomon, doing all she could to beautify the house of God's glory. Nothing that she had, could she esteem too good for him. O the blessedness of all this within and abroad! Glory abroad, leaving its memorial everywhere, the beauty of the Spirit's mind within, ordering the whole conversation of the soul, without touch or soil of nature! "Scenes surpassing fable, and yet true!" Scenes to be realised to the enjoyment of our hearts and eyes, and to the glory of our Lord, in the days of the kingdom!

Well is it that *grace now divides the scene with nature's misery and defilement;* and still well is that *glory then will know nothing but its own creation,* for light and its principles will be triumphant. The light which God has as yet brought in shines, is it most true, but shines in a dark place; the light that He will bring in by and bye, will be light everywhere, the day-dawn around, and the day-star within (2 Peter i. 19). It is now the valley of Baca with wells of water, by and bye it will be the dwelling of praise *still,* unbroken, undivided praise. (Ps. lxxxiv.)

"The Lord will give grace and glory."

J. G. B.

THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL XII. 23.

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NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XI.

THERE are worshippers and prophets, that is to say, a testimony. The Gentiles do their own will, and tread the holy city under their feet. God has a remnant which is sealed, and He communicates with them.

Verses 1, 3: We see here the altar of holocausts; the temple and the worshippers found therein are distinguished. The rest is trodden under foot.

Of the forty-two months. There is one week remaining out of the weeks of Daniel,—seven weeks and sixty-two weeks to the time of the Messiah. The events of the last week are irrespective of what concerns the Church. It is of this last week, as it is of the sixty-nine others; they were "determined" on the *people of Israel* and on the *holy city.* (Dan. ix. 24.) "Seventy weeks are determined *upon thy* people and upon *thy* holy city." Sixty-nine weeks were elapsed up to the Messiah, but He was cut off. (Dan. ix. 26.)

The Church is a heavenly system, not providential, which has nothing in common with earthly things, or with the temple at Jerusalem.

The remaining week remains still to be fulfilled. We have here the history of this last week. At that time, God will resume with the Jews His laws, His judgments, and His terrestrial government.

We now have something precise in statement. Jerusalem, a people at Jerusalem; the city trodden under foot by the Gentiles. These are Israel's relations with God. Israel would not submit to Christ; they will submit to Anti-Christ. There is a small remnant who will not recognise Anti-Christ, but the mass of the people will recognise him. God is watching over this remnant, whom He has sealed. I do not mean to say, however, that the sealed remnant is confined to these, for there are others of the twelve tribes that are sealed also. There is a testimony of God against men, by prophets.

Verse 3: The two witnesses are prophets in affliction.

Verse 4: God is Lord over the earth. He will not permit the times of the Gentiles to last any longer, nor that they should tread under their feet what they cannot devour. This is finished. God is going to show Himself as Lord over the earth. He had given the earth to the Gentiles. (Dan. ii. 37.) His throne had judged and left Jerusalem. (Ezek. i. to xi., particularly x. 18 and xi. 22.) And he gives the dominion over the earth to Nebuchadnezzar, to the Gentiles. (Dan ii. 37, 38.) And until the times of the Gentiles are expired, Jerusalem shall be trodden under their feet. (Luke xxi. 24.) But God will resume again His place as *Lord over the earth.* The two witnesses render testimony to this lordship, to *the Lord over the earth*, not to the Father, or to the heavenly glory, to the Lord of heaven.

In Zechariah iv. we see a *candlestick.* All is in order, and every thing in its place. Christ's royalty and priesthood sustain and nourish the Jewish people, and all is in its place. But here all is in confusion. There are two candlesticks, two olive trees, but one does not know where to put them. Nothing is as yet settled; but there is a testimony rendered to these things, to their future fulfilment.

Verses 5-8: Such is the fate of the two witnesses, because the beast, the wicked one, assumes his empire, according to Satan's power. The witnesses give testimony to God's right over the earth. There is an allusion to the character of Moses aud Elias. Egypt was visited with plagues under Moses; God's people was then in captivity under the dominion of the Gentiles. Moses displayed God's power against Pharaoh in a way, preparatory to the judgment that was to come on him. Elijah shut heaven, and made fire come down thence. Elias came at the time of the apostasy of Israel. The last condition of Israel is worse than the first. The spirit of idolatry, the demon of Israel, shall take with him seven other spirits worse than himself, and shall enter again into Israel. The service of the two witnesses is that of Moses against Pharaoh, and that of Elias in the midst of an apostate people. But Anti-Christ comes up out of the bottomless pit and kills the two witnesses. This is all that takes place before the sounding of the last trumpet. The particulars about Anti-Christ are revealed in the subsequent part of the Apocalypse.

It is a serious thing to see the end of the age, and the judgment coming, not on the dead, but on the nations; to see how men are despising all the judgments of God, and how every thing concentrates itself in two witnesses, and a little remnant at Jerusalem. It is written that the publicans believed, having received the baptism of John. But the Pharisees reject this baptism and do not believe in Jesus, and they harden their hearts against the Holy Ghost; while the publicans, having received the first testimony, receive also Jesus, and then the Holy Ghost. It is important to apprehend the least warning, to listen to the smallest whisper of God's voice, and to obey quickly His warning. There are always warnings that we have neglected previous to chastisements.

Verse 14: Two woes are passed, and the third woe, which ends with the judgment of Anti-Christ, comes quickly.

Verses 15-18: *Seventh trumpet.* The particulars of this woe are not given here; they are given a little further on, but the seventh trumpet is the signal for the intervention of God. (See x. 7.) When the sound of this trumpet is heard, the intervention is celebrated in heaven with all its consequences. It is the result that is celebrated. The course of what is judged is reserved for what follows. This intervention* begins with the judgment of Anti-Christ and that of the nations which are angry; but if it is with regard to them, the moment when they are moved to anger, it is with regard to God's servants, and His saints, and His prophets, the time when God is pleased, in His faithfulness and His love, to give them their reward. Great voices are heard in heaven praising God and rejoicing, because the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. The four and twenty elders give thanks and worship God, because the Lord God Almighty has taken His great power and has entered upon His reign. There is great joy in heaven, because the reign of iniquity and of the prince of this world has come to an end; because creation, which from the time of Adam was made subject to vanity and to the bondage of corruption, (Rom. viii. 19, 22,) is come into blessing again, and, by the presence of the second Adam, by the exercise of His blessed royalty and the manifestation of the children of God, and particularly because Jesus reigns—Jesus, hated by the world! Jesus, despised and rejected of men! but Jesus, the beloved Son of the Father, the glorious Bridegroom of the glorified Church!

CHAPTERS XI. 19.—XII.

WHAT precedes the nineteenth verse of the eleventh chapter brings the general history of the ways of God to a termination. And before entering upon the judgments peculiar to

* Some believe that the judgment itself of Anti-Christ is the third woe. I was made to say so in the first edition of these notes, but I doubt it. I cannot believe that the description given at the beginning of the chapter is that of the last days of the man of sin.

the apostasy, the Apocalypse reveals to us more in detail what is to take place on earth. The eighteenth verse had brought us to the end,—to the seventh trumpet. The nineteenth verse resumes the history from a higher point.

We have in what follows,—first, the causes of evil, and what proceeds from those causes; second, the development of Satan's power and of the moving spring of evil, in the instruments he uses, and which manifests itself under a very decided form; and, third, what God does in order to destroy the evil.

Chapter xi. 19. The temple of God is seen open in heaven, and the ark of the covenant is seen in the temple. Before the evil is manifested, we have the joy that nothing can touch the ark, and that everything concerning the people of God is firmly settled and secured in heaven. In treating with His people, God is binding Himself. This is the ark of *His* covenant. The power of God and His holiness must be manifested towards His people, and displayed in their favour. This is precious, for man's heart will fail him at the sight of evil. But before God lets the evil be seen, He manifests to the eye of faith His temple and the ark of His covenant, where every thing is stable, where nothing can be touched. The thunders can fall on the earth, but they cannot fall on God's *temple*. It is no more the throne; it is the place for worship; the place where God is adored.

The lightnings, the voices, the thunders, and the hail, are the action of God over the atmosphere of the earth, on what envelops it. The terrors of God are acting on the world.

The Apocalypse after this shows to us the sources of evil, and the judgment of God on them.

The twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth chapters form a whole. The twelfth chapter presents to us, in their great characters, the sources and the results. The thirteenth, the development of evil on the earth, through Satan's instruments. The fourteenth, God's relation with His people and with the world for good, and His judgment on Satan's instruments, which the thirteenth chapter had made known to us.

The twelfth chapter is divided into three parts; the first, beginning with the first verse down to the sixth verse; the second, from the seventh down to the twelfth verse; the third, from the thirteenth down to the seventeenth verse.

First Part. The first six verses place before us the actors in this scene, viz., *a woman with child* of Him who is the object of all the counsels of God, and the vessel of His power on earth, while herself weak: she is, according to His counsels, clothed with supreme glory. *A child* mighty, but who does not yet act in His might, but is hidden and withdrawn into heaven, while the woman flees into the wilderness. *A great red dragon*, Satan, who would devour the child, and who hates the woman and persecutes her.

The woman is clothed with *the sun*, with the glory of God, with all supreme authority. *The moon* is under her feet; all subordinate and derivative authority is under her feet. She has upon her head a crown of *twelve stars*, power in man displayed to perfection.*

The second sign in heaven is a child, the heir of strength. The woman is not the Church. There is a great red dragon who is against the woman; it is Satan, who resists the manifestation of the glory of the child and of the woman. His power is perfect in its kind; he has seven heads, with crowns, and ten horns. The tail is designative of the bad influence of error in doctrine. The dragon draws after him the third part of the stars of heaven, the authorities. Satan would devour the child.

The child is Christ; it is also the Church, as associated with Christ. Like Christ, she is to govern the nations. (Ps. ii. and Apoc. ii. 26, 27.) The Church receives this power from her being associated with Christ; she will, notwithstanding, be also active in heaven. When the Lord Jesus comes again, it will be in the display of His authority, for He shall rule all nations with a rod of iron, and the Church will be with Him. (Ps. ii. 6, 9. Apoc. ii. 27.) It is what Christ will do when He has taken possession of the inheritance of the nations. Now, he asks for the Church. (John xvii. 9.) Later, he will ask for the world. (Ps. ii. 7.) He makes the Church be partaker with Him in the possession of the world. (Apoc. ii. 27.) The male child, then, is Christ, the Head of the Church, which is His body. The man complete is Christ and the Church. Christ imparts to the Church all He has; but the power of Christ is not yet displayed. Christ and the Church are hidden in God. The woman, on the contrary, who was clothed with the sun, remains on the earth, and is in the desert. As soon as we are obliged to seek the woman on earth, it can be none else but the Jews. The Church is only in heavenly places, she is not known on earth. Jerusalem is the centre where God recognises His people. It is the people of God, in relation with God, which becomes the woman on earth when the male child is in heaven. If we seek for the instruments on earth, we shall find that Christ was born of the Jews. Of Zion, it shall be said: "This man was born there." (Ps. lxxxvii.) We have the thought of God in the woman and the glory. We have besides the result of this thought, which is Christ. It is to the woman that Satan bears an ill-will; he hates her; but he cannot touch the child who is in heaven.

Second Part: 7-12. We are told here the circumstances which force the woman to flee. Satan and his angels are in heaven. (Eph. vi. 12.) Satan has access to the heavens which God created, where His throne is placed. It is there he was the accuser of Job; but Satan has no entrance in the light, which cannot be approached. Jesus saith, speaking of the miracles of His disciples: "I saw Satan like lightning fall from heaven." From a feeble sample of the power of His name, He sees all the power of Satan cast out from heaven. A war takes place now in heaven. Michael and his angels fight against the dragon and his angels. Michael is called the archangel in Jude 9. The Word of God speaks of only one archangel. The immediate result of this war is, that Satan is cast out from heaven into the earth. He has no more power in heaven. It is a great mistake to believe that Satan is in the lake of fire. He is with the angels in heavenly places. Men will be found in the lake of fire burning with brimstone before Satan is there. (Apoc. xix. 20.) He shall be cast out of heaven into the earth, where he will still act and deceive the nations. He is already worshipped amongst the Pagans. As soon as the event here anticipatively announced by prophecy takes place, the heavens are for ever cleansed from the defilement and presence of Satan. He was overcome by those on earth, as accuser, by the blood of the Lamb. Satan's accusations only drew out the manifestation of God's favour towards His children. Cast out from heaven, Satan shall come again on the earth, to gather the nations from the four quarters of the earth to battle, and to make war against heaven.

Third Part: 13-17. Instead of seeing, as in the first verse, the woman in heaven, having the sun for a crown, (that is to say, agreeably to the thought and the counsels of God, a vessel without strength, but clothed with supreme authority,) we find her in the earth. Christ issued from the woman, the Jews. The Church is in nowise the mother of Christ; she is His Bride. When Satan is cast out from heaven, he begins to make war with the seed of the woman, the Jews, the only testimony of God remaining then on earth.

Two wings of a great eagle are given to the woman. The strong man of God, Christ, does not yet exercise His power. The woman has nothing else to do but to flee for three years and a half, during which time Satan exercises his power on earth with great fury. The only resource of the woman is to flee. Jesus foretold this in Matthew xxiv. 16. As soon as the abomination that maketh desolate shall stand in the holy place, (Matt. xxiv. 15. Dan. xi.) three years and a half will elapse until the deliverance. At the beginning of these three years and a half, the disciples are to flee to the mountains. (Matt. xxiv.) The woman fled to the desert. It is the last end of the *indignation*, (Dan. viii. 19,) and of the *vengeance*. (Is. xxxiv. 8; lx. 2. Jer. l. 15, 28; li. 6, 11, &c.)

One cannot apply to the Roman eagles what is said of the abomination of desolation. Nothing, from the time Jerusalem was taken by Titus, coincides with the 1290 days in Daniel

* It will be found that the number seven is figurative of spiritual perfection, either in good or evil; and twelve, of perfection in man, such as the twelve patriarchs, the twelve Apostles.

xii. 11, even calculating, as some would do, 1290 years instead of 1290 days.

The serpent does all he can to kill the woman, even when she flees. There remaineth (verse 17) a remnant of the seed of the woman, with whom Satan shall make war. Those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, are those who have the Spirit of prophecy, who are attached to Jesus; that is to say, to the testimony of the Spirit of prophecy, which is God's testimony to God's promise, and not to Anti-Christ. The flood which the dragon casts out of his mouth is a mass of people. (Is. viii. 7, 8.) When the king of Assyria, and all his glory, come to lay waste through Judea, they are presented under the image of a flood and of waters strong and many. The earth swallows the flood which the dragon casts after the woman. God, in His providence, prevents these nations from devouring and destroying Israel.

We have here the end of the last week in Daniel. What remains of the week is connected with the things of the earth. It still remains to be fulfilled. After the war which we find mentioned here, Satan will never regain heaven. After having been cast into the bottomless pit and bound there for a thousand years, he shall regain the earth and seduce the nations, (Apoc. xx. 8,) but he will never regain heaven.

The inhabiters of the earth are never the Church. They are those who are attached to the system of this world in the prophetic earth of the latter days, and who abide there. *The inhabiters of the sea* are the nations outside the prophetic earth. Those who thus inhabit the earth without being righteous, have against them Satan in his fury.—(*To be continued.*)

THE TESTIMONY OF THE END.

I.

OF THE REIGN BROUGHT TO ISRAEL AND REJECTED.

§ 1.—REVELATION OF JESUS TO THE JEWISH NATION, ACCORDING TO THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE ancient prophets had proclaimed the revelation of the nations (the Gentiles) through *the light of the Christ;* that is to say, the prophetic Spirit had announced at all times that the nations would have part in the promises made to the seed of Abraham, and that they would enter one day into relation with God, so as to become a people before him. These promises are involved in that of the reign of Messiah, which had been interrupted and put off until the epoch of His personal return to the habitable earth. They will be fulfilled in the millennium, together with those that promise *the dominion of the earth* to Israel. (Micah iv. 5-8.)

When the accomplishment of the times fixed in the counsels of God was come, He sent His Son to fulfil the promises made to the fathers. Thereon the Holy Ghost rendered testimony to the faithfulness of God in this, by the mouth of many saints of that epoch, such as Zachariah, Simeon, Anna, and Mary.

The angel Gabriel spake thus of Christ in announcing His birth: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of *his father David*, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Zachariah spoke likewise: God has taken under his protection Israel His servant, to remember His mercy towards Abraham and his seed for ever, according as He spake to our fathers by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began. "Now, O Most High!" said Simeon, "lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light for the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

And already the Spirit of prophecy did not fail to announce clearly the interruption of the epoch of the reign of Christ by His rejection and death. "Behold," added Simeon, "this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against, ... that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

§ 2.—THE TEACHING OF JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES CONCERNING HIS REIGN AS MESSIAH.

The instruction that Jesus personally gave to the disciples relative to the kingdom divides itself into two distinct periods:—before His death; and after His resurrection.

The bearing and extent of this teaching before his death may be appreciated by His answer to the question the disciples addressed to Him: "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the age?" (Matt. xxiv. 3.) The thirtieth verse is an answer to the first part of this question, and without defining the nature of the sign, He marks the place where it would be seen—*in heaven;* and the results, the desolation of all the tribes of the earth and the gathering together of the scattered elect Jews. It is true that the teaching of the Lord before His death had not entered the souls of the disciples with joy and with hope; since, after His resurrection, He found them still without understanding, and slow of heart to believe the things which the prophets had declared, and that He himself had explained, confirmed, and unfolded to them during His life. It was necessary that Jesus should open their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. The things concerning the Church were, I suppose, amongst those which the Lord had not told to the twelve, "because they could not bear them then." (John xvi. 12.) The conversation on the mount of Olives, after the resurrection of Jesus, proves to us that He found it right to leave the disciples with a set of ideas fit for a Jewish remnant, heirs of the kingdom.

"He was seen of them during forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God: and being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise which ye have heard (said He) of me. For John truly baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." The question which they addressed to Him at that time removes our every doubt as to the extent of the last instructions of the Master: "Lord, wilt thou at this time *restore* again the kingdom to Israel?" This question was entirely similar to that of Matt. xxiv. 3. Jesus again admits here the fact of His coming personally on the earth to restore the reign of Israel; for His answer shows that he approves the intelligence of their question in the main. He only reproves the disciples because of their indiscretion on the *subject of the epoch* of the return of the Son of man; but He in nowise reproaches them for unbelief, or for their ignorance as *to the fact* of His personal reign.

At both the epochs which we are comparing, that is to say, before His death and after His resurrection, the thoughts of the heirs of the kingdom are Jewish, they concern the world and Israel in particular; and the answers of the Lord do not go further. If we connect the last of these answers with the conversation of the two angels, (Acts i. 7, 11,) it will show us clearly that the disciples had quite apprehended all the bearing of the teaching of the Master, as to the things concerning the reign of God. The disciples of Emmaus were consequently also right in looking for Jesus as the Christ, the true David. "As for us," said they, "we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." Their hope was the same as that of the prophets, and of the faithful Jews who hailed the coming of Messiah into the world: it was in conformity with the oracles of the Word of God, according to the Scriptures. This hope also rested on the teaching of Christ himself, according to what He had announced concerning His return in glory, and the awful judgments which must precede this return: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

There is nothing, therefore, that authorises us to suppose that Jesus taught His disciples, after His resurrection, "all that concerned Him." We have just seen, on the contrary, that this divine Master taught them after His resurrection, as he did before His death, that is to say, from the Scripture of the old covenant, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets." (Luke xxiv. 27.)

§ 3.—MINISTRY OF THE DISCIPLES ACCORDING TO THE TEACHING OF THEIR MASTER; AND HIS ORDERS CONCERNING HIS REIGN.

"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning;" and the results of them also He knows. Although He well knows that man cannot receive, and still less preserve, under his own responsibility, the promises of grace, God acts towards him as if he was capable of submission and of faithfulness. This is a fact established by the whole Bible; and if God acts thus, it is in order that men may be inexcusable. The manifestation of the children of God will be the occasion when the glory of His grace will be revealed, and then at once shall every man be found a liar. When God leaves man or nations, in order to try them, that He may know what is in their hearts, he does it, not because He is ignorant of the ruin and of the fall of the children of Adam, but rather, because the evil which exists must be made manifest before it is punished, that every mouth may be stopped at the day of judgment. We have seen that Jesus really was manifested to Israel as the promised Messiah. (John v. 39, 40.) But His own having rejected Him, the true David has ascended again to heaven, and His reign will only begin with His return. From that time, the ministry committed to the disciples takes a very special character, which may be summed up in a testimony to the return of Christ. The question about the coming of Gentiles and Jews, as individuals and without any difference, into the Church through faith, was not yet brought forward. The point pressed was, for Israel first to believe that Jesus, the Nazarene, a *man* approved of God among *that nation*, had been made by Him Lord *and Christ*, having been raised up according to the flesh, as son of David, to sit on his throne. It was to the Jews, according to the Lord's command, that "the Word of God was to be first preached;" then, after it had been rejected by them, to the nations. "For thus has the Lord commanded us: I have given thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Is. xlix. 6.)

Now, this blessing cannot be extended to the nations as nations, but, through the channel of Israel, converted and re-established in the possession of the promises: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, In *those days* it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all tongues, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you." (Zech. viii. 23. Zeph. iii. 20.)

The disciples, witnesses of the departure of the Messiah, could not expect His immediate return as the Son of David. They had, on the contrary, received the order from Him not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there the promise of the Father, or "the power of the Holy Ghost which was to come upon them." This promise could not be accomplished until after Jesus had been glorified, and the event showed that there was still a period of ten days, which was to expire before the return of Messiah in person.

The Lord had further shown to the disciples a second period, which was to precede His personal return in glory to restore the kingdom to Israel: "And ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." This last commandment of the Lord reminds us of the prophecy He had made before His death on the same subject: "For verily I say unto you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel *until* the Son of man *be come;*" words which, pronounced by the Son of man standing on the earth, prove evidently that the conversion of Israel could only take place by the view of Christ returning in His glory. It is important to remark relative to this second period, that it still runs on, and that it is concerning the return of *the Son of man*, which will terminate it, that Jesus has said: "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 xiii.; comp, 26, 32.)

The book of the Acts shows us that the Apostles did not fail to preach the reign, such as it had been committed to them. If the Lord had conferred, in any way, on these witnesses, the mission of calling Israel as a nation to be part of the Church of Christ, of the body of the King of glory, we should have reason to wonder that the preaching of Peter and of the Apostles, until the death of Stephen, should only have presented to the Jewish nation the death, resurrection and personal return of the Messiah *for the age to come*. We might have a right to doubt the efficacy of the Holy Ghost, which was given to them at Pentecost, if it had not brought to their remembrance, at the fit time, all the things that Jesus had told them before and since His resurrection. (John xii. 16; xiv. 26; xvi. 4.) But these witnesses were faithful to their mission, for they did not cease to cite Moses, the Psalms and the prophets, in support of the testimony they had to render to the return of the King. It is in their own preaching, inspired by the Spirit of God, that we are to look for the nature and extent of their first ministry. Here, at least, one cannot accuse their doctrine of error.

In that last and solemn moment of the long patience of God towards His people, Peter and Stephen were testifying to the *Son of man* risen, seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, which was ready to open itself to give Him back to the earth, if Israel had repented and been converted. Jesus was preached as Prince and Saviour: if the nation received Him as such, He was to come again to bring to Israel salvation, the reign, and blessings promised to their fathers. (Acts iii. 19-22; v. 32; vii. 56. Luke ii. 30.) "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that the times of refreshing *may come* from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send *the Christ* Jesus which was [before preached] unto you; whom, *indeed*, the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, times of which God has spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets." It was a last respite granted to Israel, while announcing to them the salvation which God had prepared for them before the face of all the nations. "But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me; so I gave them up to their own hearts' lusts; and they walked *in their own counsels* . . . I would have ransomed them from the power of the grave; I would have redeemed them from death: O death, I would have been thy plagues, and thy destruction, O sepulchre: but repentance is hid from mine eyes."

Thus it is that God, in His wisdom, always brings out, by the light of His grace, His faithfulness and His kindness, in opposition to the state of complete ruin and condemnation of the natural man; it is thus that the malice and the corruption of the Jewish nation have been manifested by the gift of Jesus, and that the incorrigible hardness of heart of the people of God has been shown by the ministry of witnesses to the death and resurrection of the Heir, whom this people had in their blindness killed.

We see by what precedes, that the departure of the King has delayed the epoch of the reign, the making of which good belongs to Him alone, personally and visibly present. God has used the time of this delay, first, to offer a respite to the rebellious people; afterwards, to announce His word to every nation. But Israel having rejected the testimony of the reign, the grace that forms the Church has intervened till the return of the Heir.

§ 4.—WHENCE DID JESUS SET OUT? HOW HE SET OUT? WHITHER DID HE GO?

The place where the scene of the ascension took place is the mount of Olives, distant from Jerusalem about two thousand paces. Near this mountain were the two little towns of Bethphage and Bethany, the last fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem. "And he led them out *as far as towards* Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass while He blessed them, He was parted (separated Himself) from them, and was carried up again towards heaven," or withdrawn or carried on high towards heaven. (Luke xxiv. 51.)

This passage indicates a power proper to Jesus, in virtue of which He could say: I go unto my Father, and when I have gone, I will come again. Whereas Acts i. 9 indicates rather the power of the Father raising the Son to His right hand, in order to place Him in His glory above His enemies. "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up, and a cloud withdrew Him out of their

sight." I see in this last passage the indication of the power which caught up the child of the woman, to hide him for a little time in the throne of God. (Gal, iv. 4. Rev. xii. 5.) Jesus then has been received, or gathered up on high from the mount of Olives, and withdrawn from the eyes of the Apostles by a cloud, which concealed Him from their sight. We find a type of this event in Ezek xi. 23. Having then gone up on high above all heavens and exalted by the right hand of God (Mark xvi. 19) in the sanctuary, which is not of this creation, He has seated Himself at the right hand of God. For God has most highly exalted Him, because of His obedience even to the death of the cross. "Ought not Christ to have suffered and *to have entered into His glory?*" (Luke xxiv. 26.)

NOTE A.

At a General Meeting of the Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, held at the Rotunda, in Dublin, in 1838, amongst others, the observations of two speakers made a deep impression. What follows is a faithful epitome of these two speeches, taken from a religious journal of that time.

The Rev. Joseph Wolff, a missionary, and an Israelite by birth, related several occurrences in his numerous journeys: "I have visited Egypt ten times," said he, "but I baptised only a small number of Jews. The great rabbi was opposed to my labours amongst his countrymen. In my last journey there, I did not go to see him, but he came to me, and, after discoursing on something else, he said to me: 'You have adopted a new plan in order to convert us: you affirm that some of the prophecies, referring to Messiah, have been fulfilled at the first coming of Christ; and you endeavour to prove that the other prophecies, those referring to the glory of the Messiah, will only be fulfilled at His second coming; lastly, you believe in the restoration of the Jews. I have exposed your views to my congregation. We now understand you. You take, for instance, the ninth chapter of Isaiah, and you say to us that the fifth verse: 'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,' has been literally fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Granted. But when we oppose to you the following verse: 'Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever,' you, Joseph Wolff, say to us that these words ought also to be taken literally, and that they shall be fulfilled in Christ's second coming; whilst before Christians told us, that by this throne of David, a *spiritual* throne was to be understood. Is this mentioned anywhere in the New Testament?'—I showed him Luke i. 32, 33: 'He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David,' &c. I added, 'He shall be great,' these words have been literally fulfilled. He has been great, even on the cross, when heaven and earth took part in His sufferings, and a poor thief was looking to Him for his salvation. He has been great in his resurrection, in His ascension. He is great now, sitting at the right hand of God. He has been great, and you yourselves, O Jews, ought to confess it; for, whilst you thought of extinguishing this light in crucifying Him, He has always been since and now is looked at as the Messiah and as the Saviour by a multitude of Gentiles. But let us continue: 'And He shall be called the Son of the Highest;' such is literally His title, such is His name, in spite of all the oppositions of Socinians and Unitarians. 'And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David his father.' This is not yet fulfilled; but, as the first part of the prophecy has been literally fulfilled, so it will be likewise with the second part. See also Acts ii. 30, and mind these words, 'according to the flesh,' which do not much indicate a spiritual reign; and Acts xv. 16, 17," &c.

The Rev. Hugh Mac Neile, pastor of the Church of St. Jude, at Liverpool, in a speech of considerable length, came back again to the important subject already discussed by the missionary. "Here is," said he, amongst others, "a fact of which I have been myself a witness, and which appears to me to confirm, in a remarkable manner, the arguments in favour of the system of literal interpretation of prophecies. The fact happened in London, after a sermon in a church in the Strand. Amongst the hearers were two Jews. A discussion took place, in the vestry, between them and the preacher, on the subject of a psalm which contained a prophecy referring to the restoration of the Jewish people. The pastor maintained that it could not be understod in the sense of a national restoration. The Jew who spoke, answered him: 'How then can you be surprised that we should deny what you call the incarnation?' 'What!' said the clergyman, taking a Bible, 'is it not written: 'And, behold, thou shalt conceive, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end?' The Israelite then asked the minister to take up with him again the different parts of this passage, which he did accordingly, and after having read the two or three first sentences, the Jews were convinced that they were to be interpreted literally; but, when they came to these words: 'And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob,' &c., the pastor said, This signifies that He 'shall reign in the hearts of His people.' 'If it is thus,' replied the Jew, 'if it is not in Jerusalem, where David had his throne, where he reigned, then I deny that Mary had a son. I affirm, for my part, that what is said on this subject signifies nothing else, save that the Messiah was to be pure from His birth, and that this is the true meaning of these words 'a virgin having a son.' You see I only follow your mode of interpreting the end of this passage. I apply it to the beginning, and by this means I deny the incarnation.' 'But,' replied the minister, 'we admit the literal interpretation of this part of the passage, because the event has proved that it was to be understood thus.' I shall never forget with what an air of disdain and contempt the Jew then said: 'Oh! you believe this, because it has happened,—as for us, we believe what is written, because God has said it.'" We ought therefore to take heed in what manner we interpret prophecies; for, you see, if we deny the privileges promised to the Jewish nation, we shake thereby even the foundation of our faith. I take occasion here to observe that there is a great difference between figurative language and a system of spiritual interpretation, still too much in vogue. There are facts foretold in figurative language which have been or which will be fulfilled literally. I quote, as an instance, this prediction: "Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." We all know that this was fulfilled in the garden of Gethsemane; yet, literally, Jesus was not a shepherd, nor were his disciples sheep; nevertheless the fulfilment of this was literal. This prophecy shows clearly the difference there is between the figurative language of the oracle and a figurative accomplishment. Prophecies, describing the future glory of the Jewish people under the emblem of a mountain, raised above the hills, and to which all the nations shall resort, are quoted in all Catholic catechisms, as proofs of the infallibility of the Church of Rome, whose authority, they say, is to extend over the whole world. They say, moreover, that the geographical position of Rome proves that these prophecies really apply to her. And truly, if Jerusalem, in the prophets, signifies the Christian Church, it seems that these promises concern the church of Rome, which, alone on the earth, has raised these pretensions to infallibility, universality and dominion. Whilst robbing the Jewish nation of those prophecies which belong to her, to apply them to the Christian Church, Christian controversialists can with difficulty contest the pretensions of the Church of Rome. But Jerusalem never means the Christian Church—it means Jerusalem; Judah means Judah; Ephraim means Ephraim, and not France or England. Let us call every thing by its proper name. Thus we shall understand better the grand but yet unfinished work of our glorious God, that work which, relatively to the Jews, among others, is not yet fulfilled. It is for divine reasons that the Jews have been preserved in the midst of the nations, as a separate people, waiting for the King. This King, the last King of Israel, is still alive: He

has been dead, but He is risen and He is alive; the Jews are preserved for Him, and He is preserved in the heavens for the Jews until the restoration of all things. And then this same Jesus, who was raised up into heaven from the Mount of Olives, shall come down again *in like manner*, that is to say, personally and visibly. I can hardly think of these things without remembering a remarkable phenomenon which I saw in going from Geneva to Lyons: I am speaking of the river Rhone, which loses itself completely under ground. You walk upon a fine green turf in the midst of trees, whilst under the soil which bears you, the large river is rolling swiftly away its waters; it rises again, at the distance of about a mile. This subterranean passage is called "*La perte du Rhone.*" (The loss of the Rhone.) The Christian dispensation appears to me to be likewise "*la perte Juive;*" (the loss of the Jews;) but the time comes when Israel, now trodden under foot, will come out of the obscurity that has surrounded it for ages, spread again abroad its healing waters on the earth, and carry with it to the extremities of the world, the name of the King of the Jews, whom these shall recognise as their Great High Priest, as God and Man, as Jesus the Saviour.—(*To be continued.*)

TRANSLATIONS FROM "*L'ATTENTE ACTUELLE DE L'EGLISE.*"

III.—"THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST."—Acts i.

I DESIRE to speak of the coming of Christ. Several subjects, as for instance, the reign of Anti-Christ, are linked with this principal fact; but I shall confine myself at present to the simple fact of the coming of the Lord. I began by reading Acts i. because the promise of the return of the Lord is here marked out as the one and only hope of the Church, as the first object which was to fix the attention of His disciples, when they in vain followed with their eyes the Lord, who was departing in the air and was going to hide Himself in God. In this chapter, on the occasion of the ascent of the Lord, there are three things to be noticed. The first is, that the disciples desired to know when and how God would restore again the kingdom to Israel. (verse 3.) Now, Jesus does not say that this kingdom was not to be restored; He only said that the time of that re-establishment was not revealed. (verse 7.) The second is, that the Holy Ghost was about to come; (verse 8, cf. 4, 5:) and the third, that while the disciples were looking stedfastly toward heaven, two angels said to them, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (verses 9, 10, 11.)

They were to expect the return of Christ.

If we study the history of the Church we shall find it to have declined exactly in proportion as it has lost sight of this doctrine of the Lord's return. Forgetting this truth, it has become weak and worldly. Desiring, however, not to leave the sphere of the word, I purpose to demonstrate thereby, how this thought of the return of Christ ruled the intelligence, sustained the hope, and inspired the conduct of the Apostles. I am about to do it by textual quotations from the different books of the New Testament.

Acts iii. 19-21.—"Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from (or "in order that the times of refreshing may come by" ὅπως ἂν ἔλθωσιν καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως) the presence of the Lord." . . . The Holy Spirit is come; He has remained with the Church; but "the times of refreshing shall come by the presence of the Lord."* It is impossible to apply this passage to the Holy Spirit, since He was already, at that very time, come down, and since He said by the mouth of the Apostle, "whom (speaking of Jesus) the heaven must receive till the times of restitution of all things." . . . And in point of fact, the Holy Spirit has not restored all things. He who is to come according to this passage, is not to come to judge the dead, nor that the world may be burnt up and destroyed, but, above all, for the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken, by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

I cite these passages to make you understand what I mean by the coming of the Saviour. It is not the judgment of the dead; it is not the great white throne; it is the return of Jesus Christ in person, present and visible, when He shall be sent from heaven. Comparing these verses with what is found in Rev. xx., you will see clearly that the coming of Jesus Christ and the judgment of the dead are two distinct events; that when the judgment takes place, there is not a word about Christ returning from heaven upon the earth; for it is said, "from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away."

The Lord will come again upon the earth.

I am about to show how He Himself first, then the Holy Ghost by the Apostles, have constantly directed our attention to this personal return.

Matt. xxiv. 27-30.—"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." Certainly the expedition of Titus against Jerusalem is not the coming of the Saviour in the clouds of heaven. Neither is it the judgment of the dead before the tribunal of the great white throne; at that time, the earth is no more, whilst, in the epoch which the text describes, the tribes of the earth are presented, and an event is in question which concerns the earth. "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn." It is not a millennium consequent on the exercise of the power of the Holy Ghost; the world has never seen the Holy Ghost; but the tribes of the earth shall lament, when they shall see the Lord Jesus. Verse 33—"So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that He (margin) is near, even at the doors."

Matt. xxiv. 42-51.—The faithfulness of the Church depended on the constant attention it was to give to this truth of the return of Christ. From the moment that it was said: "My lordd elayeth his coming," she commenced a scene of tyrannical domineering and of worldliness. "Therefore be ye also ready," said Jesus, "for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man (not death) cometh."

Matt. xxv. 1-13.—The expectation of the return of Christ is the exact measure, the thermometer, so to speak, of the life of the Church. As the servant became unfaithful from the moment He had said, "My Lord delayeth his coming," so likewise with the ten virgins, since it is said that they all slept. It was neither the Holy Ghost nor death that the virgins were told to wait for faithfully; for neither death nor the Holy Ghost is the Bridegroom of the Church. All the virgins were found in the same state: the wise, (the true saints,) as well as the foolish who wanted the oil of the Holy Ghost, alike slept and forgot the immediate return of Christ.

In Mark xiii., we have nearly the same thing. The twenty-sixth verse forbids the application to the invasion of the Romans;* and when it is said, (verse 29,) "it is nigh, even at the door," there is no question of the judgment of the dead, nor of the great white throne. At the day of judgment before the great white throne, there will be no question of house or household.

There are only four passages in the New Testament which speak of the joy of the departed soul. The first occasion is when the thief said to the Lord, (Luke xxiii. 42, 43,) "Remember me when thou comest into (in) Thy kingdom." He thought about the coming of the Lord in glory,—a truth which was familiar to the Jews. The Lord replied to him, (Thou shalt not wait till I return,) "To-day shalt thou be

* [The author cites from the French version of Martin, "par la présence du Seigneur." But I question the exactness of that translation in the present instance.]

* I take this opportunity of remarking that, though there may have been at the time of the capture of Jerusalem by Titus, circumstances in some respects like those which are yet to take place, when these prophecies of Mark xiii. and Matt. xxiv. shall be accomplished, so that the disciples might have been able to use the warnings which they contain, (which I admit, though there be little certainty of the fact,) there are insuperable difficulties in applying the "abomination of desolation" to the army of Titus.

with me in Paradise." The second case is that of Stephen, who said, (Acts vii. 59,) "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The third is, when St. Paul said, "absent from the body, and present with the Lord." (2 Cor. v.) The fourth is, (Phil. i. 22, 23,) "for I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." In truth, it is far better to await the glory, present with Christ, rather than remaining here below; not that we are in glory when we depart, but we have done with sin, we are out of its reach, and, apart from it, we enjoy the Lord. Yes, it is a state far better, but it is also a state of expectancy, like that in which Christ Himself is found, sitting at the right hand of the Father, and waiting for what is to come.

Luke xii. 35.—"Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning." Here we find again the parable of the unfaithful servant. Only the Lord adds, "that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will," (that is, Christendom,) "shall be beaten with many stripes, but he that knew not" (the Pagans) "and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." All shall be judged; but Christendom is in a state infinitely worse than the Jews or Pagans (inasmuch as it has had more advantages).

Luke xvii. 30.—"Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

Luke xxi. 27.—"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." The fig-tree, of which the Saviour speaks on this occasion, (verse 29,) is specially the symbol of the Jewish nation. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of man."

These two chapters, namely, Luke xvii. and xxi., like Matt. xxiv. and Mark xiii., concern the Jews—the earthly bearing of the Lord's coming. We may add Luke xix., where the servants that are called, and the enemies that rejected the nobleman, are clearly the servants of Christ, and the Jewish nation.—(See verses 12, 13, 27.)

John xiv. 2.—"In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again." The Lord Himself will come to take the Church, that the Church may be there, where He is.

Acts. i. 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."

Acts. iii. 20.—This is the preaching of the Apostle to the Jews: Repent, and Jesus will return. You have killed the Prince of life, you have denied the Holy One and the Just, God has raised Him from the dead. Repent, be converted, and He will return. But they would not repent. During three years He had vainly sought fruit from the fig-tree. The husbandmen, on the contrary, killed the Son of Him who had placed them in the vineyard. Jesus, the Son of God, asked pardon for them upon the cross, whence His voice is all powerful, saying "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of the apostle, answers to the intercession of Jesus; I wot that through ignorance ye did it. Repent ye, therefore, He will come again. Be converted, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. But we know that they resisted the Holy Ghost. (Acts. vii. 51.)

Acts. iii. 20, 21.—"And He shall send Jesus Christ. . . whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." This is the great end of all the counsels of God. As we have seen the secret of His will, that God would gather together all things in Christ, we see here that He has spoken of it by the mouth of all His holy prophets. How are all these things to be accomplished? Is it by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost? No! because it is said that it is "by the presence of the Lord," and "he shall send Jesus." Undoubtedly, I believe that the Holy Ghost will be shed forth, and He will be so especially upon the Jews; but in the passage quoted, the event will take place by the presence of Jesus. Heaven is here out of the question. There cannot be a revelation more explicit than that it is by the sending of Jesus that the things of which the prophets have spoken will receive their accomplishment. I know not how one can evade the force and the simplicity of this declaration.

We see the fall, the ruin of man; we see likewise all the creation subjected to corruption. The Bride desires that the Bridegroom may be manifested. It is not the Holy Ghost who will restore the creation, nor who is the heir of all things: it is Jesus. When Jesus appears in glory, the world will see Him, whilst it cannot see the Holy Ghost. "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow." The work of the Holy Ghost is not to restore all things here below, but to announce Jesus, who will come again. Further, it is the Holy Ghost that was in St. Peter, who said, "whom the heaven must receive." Receive whom? Not the Holy Ghost, for He was already there, but Jesus; and all that we have to do is to believe.

I turn now to the Epistles, in order that by them further we may see that the coming of the Saviour was the living and constant hope of the Church. In Rom. viii. 19-22, we see all the creation in suspense until the moment of His coming. (John xiv. 1-3, and Col. iii. 1, 4.)

1 Cor. i. 7.—"Ye come behind in no gift, waiting for *the revelation* (margin) *of the Lord Jesus Christ.*"

Ephes. i. 10.—On which we have already spoken. Since at the last judgment, the heaven and the earth will have passed away, it is before this period that God will gather together all things in Christ.

Phil. iii. 20, 21.—"For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven, from whence also *we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ*, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body."

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

The two epistles to the Thessalonians turn entirely on this subject.

1 Thes.—All is in view of the coming of Christ; all that Paul says of his joy and of his work refers to it. First, conversion itself links itself with this truth. (i. 10.) The faithful of Thessalonica, who had been as models to those of Macedonia and Achaia, and whose faith was so celebrated that he had no need to say anything, "had turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, *and to wait for His Son from heaven*, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." It is remarkable that this church, one of the most flourishing of those to which the Apostles have written, should be precisely that one to which the Lord has been pleased to reveal, in the fullest detail, the circumstances of His coming. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Behold then the faith of the Thessalonians; it was spoken of in all the world, that they waited for Jesus from heaven. It is for us to have this faith, the same faith as the Thessalonians. Like them, we ought to expect the Lord before the thousand years. Certainly, they did not say, there must elapse a thousand years before the Lord comes.

Chap. ii. 19.—"For what is our hope? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ *at His coming?*"

Chap. iii. 13.—"To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." It is evidently the ruling idea which influences the mind of the Apostle.

Chap. iv. 13-18.—It is remarkable that the only consolation given by the Apostle to those who surrounded the death-bed of a believer, is his return with Jesus, and their mutual meeting. People say, "Be content; he is gone to glory." This was not the idea of the Apostle. On the contrary, the consolation that he gives to mourning friends is, "Be content; God will bring them back." What an immense change in the habitual sentiments of Christians, since the only comfort that the Apostle gives passes, in the present day, as foolishness! The faithful in Thessalonica were so penetrated with the thought of the return of Christ, that they did not conceive the possibility of dying before that event; and when one of them departed, his friends were afflicted, thinking that he would not be present at that moment. Paul re-assures them by declaring that "them which sleep in Jesus will God

bring with Him." We can understand by this example how much the Church has put aside the hope which occupied the spirit of the first believers; how far we are estranged from apostolic thoughts, which we have replaced by the idea of an intermediate state of happiness (the soul separated from the body)—a state true indeed, and much superior to ours on earth, but vague, and at best a state of waiting. Jesus Himself waits, and the deceased saints wait. I do not desire to weaken the truth of this intermediate state of happiness. The apostle speaks of it in 2 Cor. v. 4, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life . . therefore we are always confident." That is to say: if this mortal body is not absorbed in life (is not transformed) the confidence that I have is not interrupted by death; I have already received the life of Christ in my soul, and it cannot fail. It may be that I shall depart, but the life of my soul is not touched. I have already the life of Christ; if I depart I shall be with Him.—One more remark on 1 Thess. iv. 15-17. "We which are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord (those who shall remain living on the earth at the coming of the Lord) shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." If the Apostle had expected a millennium of the Spirit before the coming of Jesus, how could he have said "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord?" There was then with him a constant expectation of the coming of Christ, of which he knew not the moment, but which he had ground to expect. Was he deceived in that? Not at all; he was always expecting, and that expectancy had the good effect of keeping him completely severed from the world. If we were awaiting from day to day the arrival of the Lord, where would be all our plans as to family, house, &c., to flatter the pride of life and to grow rich? It is the nature of the hope we cherish that forms our character, and when the Lord comes, St. Paul will enjoy the fruits of his waiting. The hope that animated him produced its good fruits; it was because of this hope that he cried, "May your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. v. 23.)

Chap v. 2-4.—Note that this day ought not to overtake believers as a thief.

2 Thess. i. 9, 10; ii. 3-12.—Instead of the world blessed with a millennium without the presence of Jesus, behold the man of sin always growing worse, till he is destroyed by the manifestation of the coming of Christ—evidence for me, that this millennium of the Spirit only is a fallacy, because the mystery of iniquity which was already working from the time of the apostle Paul was to go on till the man of sin was manifested, who will be destroyed by the manifestation of the coming of Christ Himself, by the spirit of His mouth. Now, in that state of things, where is such a millennium to be placed? For the meaning of the expression "spirit of His mouth," see Isa. xi. 4; xxx. 33.

1 Tim. vi. 14-16.—"Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords: who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

2 Tim. iv. 1.—"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom."*

Tit. ii. 11-13.—The grace of God has appeared, teaching us first how to live; secondly, to wait for glory. The appearing of grace is already come; it teaches us to await the appearing of glory.

* This passage, compared with 1 Cor. xv., shows that the appearing of Christ is not at the end; for at the end He has delivered up the kingdom; whereas, here, the kingdom takes place at his appearing.—NOTE. The whole period is spoken of; and therefore the judgment of the dead as well as of the quick.

Heb. ix. 28.—"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." As the great High Priest, when He shall have finished His work of intercession, He will go out of the sanctuary. (Lev. ix. 22, 24.)

James v. 9.—"Behold the Judge standeth before the door."

2 Peter i. 16-21.—"For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."* The transfiguration was, then, a sort of specimen, a pattern of the coming of Jesus in glory.

1 John iii. 2, 3.—"But we know that when He (the Son of God) shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we *shall see Him* as He is." We shall be like Him only when He appears, not before. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." He whose heart is filled with this hope conducts himself accordingly, he purifies himself. Knowing that when Jesus shall appear I shall resemble Him, I ought to be even now as much as possible like Jesus. How powerful is the efficacy of this truth of Christ's return! What practical effects flow from this expectation! This hope is for us the measure, as well as the motive of holiness.

Those also who are in heaven (Rev. v. 10) say in their songs: "We shall reign on the earth." There it is the language of the faithful, already on high, surrounding the throne. They say, "*we shall reign*," not "*we are reigning*;" even they are in a state of waiting, like Jesus Himself, expecting that which is to come, "till His foes be made His footstool." Study moreover (Matt. xiii.) the parable of the tares and the wheat. The tares, that is to say, the evil done by Satan, where the wheat has been sown, must increase until the harvest, which is the end of this age. The evil that he has caused by heresies, false doctrines, false religions—all this is to continue, grow, and ripen; these tares increase and sprout up in the field of the Lord until the harvest. Here is a positive revelation which formally contradicts the idea of a millennium by the Holy Spirit without the return of the Lord.

We have now seen that the coming of Christ links itself with all the thoughts, with all the motives of comfort and joy, and with the holiness of the Church, and even the dying bed: and that him who quits the body will Christ bring back. We have also seen, on the one hand, that it is the coming of the Saviour which will be the means of the restitution of all things, and on the other hand, that evil is to increase in the field of the Lord until the harvest. May the Lord apply these truths to our hearts, both to detach us from the world and to attach us to His coming, to Himself in person, that we may purify ourselves as He is pure. Certainly, there is nothing more practical than these truths, nothing more calculated to loosen us from a world which is going to be judged, and at the same time to knit us to Him who will come to judge it. There is nothing that can better show us that which ought to be our purification; nothing which can so console, unite, and identify us with Him who has suffered for us, in order that we who suffer may reign with Him, coheirs in glory. Assuredly, if we were waiting for the Lord from day to day, there would be a renunciation which is but seldom seen among the Christians of the day. May none of us say, "My Lord delayeth His coming."

* This passage explains also Matt. xvi. 25. See xvii. 1. Mark ix. 1, 2. Luke ix. 27, 28.

THE PROSPECT

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—Ezek. xii. 23.

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NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XIII.

In the twelfth chapter, we were taught in the great sign that appears in heaven what the sources of evil are. In the thirteenth chapter, we see the wicked instruments Satan makes use of for the fulfilment of all that iniquity and evil of which he is himself the source. The dragon imitates God, who has given all authority to His Son, and the Holy Ghost acting in His power in the presence of the Son. Thus Satan gives his power to a beast, and another beast exercises that power in his presence. One of the beasts comes from the sea, the other from the earth. We have in these instruments the full display of evil working in the earth. The first beast has also his deadly wound healed, as Christ rose from the deadly wound of death.

First beast: 1-10. The *sea* represents a mass of people without form. When there is order, when population takes a definite shape, this is the *earth*. The sea represents the mass of people previous to its taking a definite form. (Apoc. xvii. 15.) Babylon is sitting on the seas, that is, on the people, the nations and the tongues.

The *bear*, the *leopard*, the *lion*, in Daniel, are the symbols of three of the four monarchies. When God's throne was no more at Jerusalem, God gave all power into the hands of the Gentiles. We see, to the end, four empires represented by four beasts. No mention is made here of the three first beasts, because they had already ceased at the time of the Apostle. In the meantime, Jesus is hidden in God, and sitting at His right hand, according to Psalm cx. Acts ii, 30. Is. ix. 5, 6, &c.

The Roman empire has become guilty of having rejected Him who alone had the right of dominion over the whole earth. This it is which gives a character to this beast. This is not all. This beast makes war with the saints that are on earth, at all times and under all circumstances, and persecutes in them the Lord Jesus. The Roman empire bears the character of the three first beasts, and combines their qualities in its body. The fourth beast shall be destroyed, (Dan. vii. 26,) and the lordship shall be given to the Son of man by the Ancient of days. (Dan. vii. 11-14.) This beast receives power from the dragon, (Apoc. xiii. 2,) and becomes Satan's immediate instrument.

As the Father has given all power to the Son, who acts in this power through the Holy Ghost, likewise the dragon gives his power to the beast, who exercises this power through another beast.

The first beast has seven heads and ten horns. Each horn represents a kingdom. Each kingdom is crowned. All these kingdoms agree in giving their power to the beast, in whom is an active principle of blasphemy. The Roman empire is to be divided into ten kingdoms, which give their power to the beast. This has not yet taken place. The Roman empire has fallen once, and has been divided, it is true, but that does not fulfil the prophecy. There has never been union of the beast with the ten horns. When the barbarous nations of the fourth century were brought upon the scene, they destroyed the unity of the Roman empire. The co-existence of this unity with the ten horns has never taken place. Instead of giving their power to the beast, we must consider the barbarous nations which are looked at as the ten horns which give their power to the beast, as its destroyer. This proves to us that it would be useless to look in the time past for the fulfilment of those things which the Apocalypse reveals to us here, and as to which Daniel vii. and the Apocalypse xvii. 12-14 instruct us also. The fulfilment of these things is yet to come. They are prophetical things, not historical. We may omit the consideration of five heads as already fallen at the time of the Apostle. There is one head contemporary with the Apostle, and another to come. One of the heads is marked by a deadly wound, but it is to be healed, or, as it were, rise again. It is in every thing an imitation of what God does, and of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. All the kingdoms from the west shall unite together to give their power to the Roman empire. All the earth, in admiration at the restoration of the Roman empire, shall follow after the beast. This has never happened yet. We have in Napoleon an image of this. It is like a prelude to the fulfilment of prophecy. There will be such an admiration, equal to adoration and worship, at the resurrection of this empire.

Besides what thus externally characterises it, there is (verse 5) a moral aspect, a mouth uttering blasphemies. (Dan. vii. 8.) This dreadful time of the blasphemies of the beast shall last forty-two months. It displays its anger towards those who dwell in heaven. It is already thus in principle. If a Christian will walk as an inhabitant of heaven, the world cannot bear him. That will be still more dreadful then. A distinction must be made here between those who inhabit the earth, that is the prophetic earth, (whose hopes are upon the earth, and who are not dwelling there as pilgrims and strangers,) from the nations, tribes and tongues, by whom must be understood men in general. Those who inhabit the earth shall worship the beast, which is not said of the tongues, tribes, and nations.

The fate of those who inhabit the earth will be to worship the beast. The tongues, the kindreds, the people and the nations, shall be under its authority; but they do not follow nor worship it. (2 Thess. ii. 9-12.) There is the coming of Anti-Christ, as there is also the coming of Christ. Strong delusion shall be sent to those who have not received the love of the truth, but who take pleasure in unrighteousness, that they should believe a lie. They are those who inhabit the earth, the professing Church, and not the heathen, to whom the truth never was set forth. The terms—power, wonders, miracles—are the same which Peter uses (Acts ii. 22,) to show forth unto the Jews the power of Jesus. The same things will be displayed by Satan in evil, in order to accredit evil. It is an awful thing to see the world, rejecting the truth, have strong delusion sent unto them, so that they should believe a lie, and worship the beast to whom the dragon has given his power, because they refused to worship Christ to whom God had given His power.

What we read in the tenth verse is a principle for Christians. The character of the patience and of the faith of the saints is not to resist at all. That is true at all times. If any one will use the arms of the flesh, he shall be made subject to them. Whosoever draws the sword shall perish by the sword.

Second beast: 11-13. It rises out of the prophetic earth, out of the nations who have a form. It bears the appearance of the power of Christ; its form is, as to its horns, like unto a lamb, but all what it says is the voice of Satan. It has put on the form of the lamb, as to power, and yet its doctrine is that of the dragon. The second beast exercises all the power of the first in its presence. It performs wonders, like Elias, who made fire come down

from heaven. It acts so as to appear to cause the judgments of God to come down upon men.

The form of a beast is not the last form that the second beast takes. It will appear at the end as a false prophet. We have here the first manifestations of it only. The first beast here is seen as a whole; but the end of the second beast is in the latter part of the nineteenth chapter, where the beast and the false prophet are taken; in which we can recognise evidently the two beasts mentioned in the thirteenth chapter. The second beast does not always retain the character of its terrestrial and secular power. It teaches a doctrine, and when it loses its power, its doctrine gives it influence; it falls as a beast, and not as a false prophet. It is a person who exercises all his influence through his doctrine. He has lost his first character and his first power; no mention is made how he lost them. The power of the second beast was in his miraculous signs. The same influence is seen in the false prophet. The beast is recognised in him. It is a seducing influence, in order to deceive the inhabitants of the earth, and cause them to submit to the first beast, to the Roman empire, who is the immediate depositary of Satan's power.

It is the end of what is called Christendom, the end of the inhabitants of the earth. If we are Christians, we are of heaven, and not of the Roman empire. Man thinks that if he could get rid of religion, the march of intellect would be more rapid, and he would be happier. Yes, there would be more activity of mind, but not one *tittle* of conscience. The mouth will be filled with blasphemies. Some think that Christianity will have the upper hand. No! unbelievers will have their desire, that which is the object of their expectation. Man's faculties will produce wonderful things, but they will produce neither conscience nor happiness, nor eternal life; and man is only exalting himself to receive a more terrible blow, a more fearful judgment!

This is what is written in the Word of God. Though the great whore shall be indeed destroyed, (Apoc. xvii. 16, 17,) the result of her destruction will not be the conversion of those who shall have destroyed her, for the ten kings give their authority to the beast. These things must come to pass, in order that the judgment of God may take place. Conscience even may throw us into Satan's arms, if we are not kept by the power of Jesus. In order that none may escape the first beast, the second is there to deceive men and to make them believe a lie. We are told of those things that we may avoid the least details of that system of corruption which as yet has the appearance of Christianity, but which has the speech of the dragon.

The image of the beast, in the fifteenth verse, is the image of the chief of the Roman empire, Anti-Christ.

Verses 17, 18. I confess my ignorance as to the number 666. I cannot present you with any thing satisfactory to myself. We find, answering to the number 666, the words *apostacy* and *tradition;* but I cannot say any thing positive on the point. Without saying greater spirituality might not discern it now, my impression is that it is a mark graciously given to assure the discernment of those exercised by it at the time.

May God give us to see and to mark the course which this world is running, and enable us to avoid all its influences! When one knows what will be the end of a thing, one avoids that which would lead to it. The end of Christendom is awful. God makes us acquainted with it, in order that we may avoid it. The more I see what is taking place,* the more I discover that things are hastening on, that evil may have the upper hand and be judged, that God may judge it and purify the earth. The iniquity must be full before God strikes. (Gen. xv. 16.) We are in the last days, in this respect. Men believe that there is great progress taking place, yet they feel great uneasiness in the expectation of what is going to happen. Christians must keep apart, living according to the principles of their heavenly calling. (*To be continued.*)

* These notes were taken in 1842.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE END.

II.

EPOCH OF THE INDIGNATION OF GOD AGAINST ISRAEL, AND OF HIS LONG PATIENCE TOWARDS THE WORLD.

§ 1.—OF THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH, AND OF THE TESTIMONY WHICH SHE OUGHT TO PRESENT TO THE WORLD DURING HER SOJOURN HERE BELOW.

FROM the moment of the rejection of the King and the Kingdom, God began to form for Himself a *heavenly* people, taken indifferently from among Jews and Gentiles, to make of them the body or bride of the Son. It is thus that since the interruption of the Reign, the middle wall of partition has been broken down, (Eph. ii.) and that the course of Jewish and earthly ideas has been replaced by that of a people of risen ones, of first-born, predestinated to be made conformable to the second Adam, and to come again to judge and to reign with Him upon the habitable earth to come. Jesus is the Head and the Bridegroom of the Church of which He is the Saviour; but nowhere in Scripture is it said that He is *King of the Church*, as He is King of Zion, or King of nations, or King of kings. The Church is His Spouse, bone of His bones, flesh of His flesh. She has her portion in the King, His Reign, and His Royalty. The only passage that could be brought forward, saying that Jesus is King of the Church, would be Apoc. xv. 3: "Thou King of saints." But every brother, who studies prophecy, knows that the authorities agree in reading "O King of nations."

Nothing is earthly in the calling of the Church. The current of the thoughts, affections and hopes, of every believer who is faithful and intelligent in the existing dispensation, may be summed up in three words—*union, communion, reunion* with the Son of God. But Jesus risen, having passed through the heavens,† is entered into the sanctuary not made with hands. He is there on high the *glorified man*, who has introduced us into the presence of the Father. In Him, our own human nature, without sin, dwells in activity and life, in the heavenly house of God. Jesus has united us to Himself, and has made us partakers of His imperishable life and of the divine nature. The result of this blessed union is the present communion, already here below, with the Father and the Son by one Spirit. When the last member of the body is added, then we shall reap, in our reunion with this dear Saviour, the most precious fruit of faith, fruit which we hold as yet only in hope. (Compare 1 Cor. xiii. 13, 10.)

Such is, in a word, the Gospel of grace, and the position (most blessed of all) that He assigns the Church during "the present evil age." This age, which existed when Christ first came, has not yet ended, since we who believe have been taken out of it and set apart by the grace of God and for Him. The Gospel of grace has not changed anything in the course of this present age, except that God suspends the judgments which are to bring it to an end, until He has gathered to Christ all His redeemed. To desire to reform this age, and to make a reign of God out of it, is to deceive the world. We have not to reform, but to come out of it, to witness against and to act in energy to bring souls out of it, by preaching the entire truth.

The formation of the Church intermediately is a *mystery* which was nowhere revealed in the Old Testament, unless in types and figures. Although the Church was to be built on the confession of Jesus, Son of the living God, this title seemed, in the mouth of Peter, more an attribute of *the Christ* or of the Messiah, than as a distinct title of the Saviour of the Church.

This comes, I suppose, from Peter's finding himself

† Heb. x. 12. "Jesus after having offered for sins one sacrifice for ever, sat down," not "set down for ever."—Consult the Greek and 14. (Luke xix. 11, 27. Apoc. vi. 16, 17; xi. 18, &c.—[I give of course the note of the author, but take the liberty of adding, that I am satisfied it means, as in the English version, "sat down for ever," that is, he did not rise up to repeat the sacrifices as the Jewish priests.]—Tr.

still in the same position as the prophets of the old covenant. He beforehand witnessed to the death, resurrection, and to the glories which were to follow the sufferings of Christ. But, as to himself, Peter, although speaking by the Spirit, did not as yet know anything beyond *the mysteries* of the KINGDOM.

Although Jesus had on various occasions given them a glimpse of the future reconciliation to God of Jews and Gentiles in one body, this fact remained nevertheless a hidden *mystery* to the Apostles themselves, until the conversion of Saul. Paul, "*who was born before the due time*," saw, *first*, Jesus, as Head, united to the body of which He is the Saviour. The glad tidings of Jesus identified with the Church, was a mystery revealed to Paul first, and it is for this reason that he calls it *his gospel*. (2 Tim. ii. 8. Rom. xvi. 25.) God taught this to Paul "by revelation," but it had not been given to the sons of men in other generations to know it. Thus, although this mystery was afterwards revealed by the Spirit to the holy Apostles and prophets of God, Paul is nevertheless "*the first*" to whom God made it known. (Eph. iii. 1-12. 1 Tim. i. 16. Col. i. 25, 26.)

In fact, Paul, persecuting to extremity the Church of God, was attacking the Bridegroom and the Head of this body; for it was as Bridegroom of the Church, and not as Son of man or as Messiah, that Jesus addressed this reproach to him: "Why persecutest thou ME? I am Jesus, WHOM thou persecutest." Stephen himself, at the time of his martyrdom, saw Jesus only as the *Son of man*, standing in the glory of God, and at His right hand, and Paul, who was assisting as an active witness at the death of this saint, was already there the persecutor of the Church in one of the members of this body not yet revealed. (Acts vii. 55, 56.)

Paul is, at the same time, the first of the Jews who, in the flesh, shall see Jesus coming again in His glory, and the first member of the Church who received the revelation of the mystery of the union of Jesus with the Church. (See also Rom. xvi. 25-27. 1 Cor. ii. 1-10; xv. 8.)

Another proof of the pre-eminence of Paul in what concerns the revelation and the administration of the mystery of the Church, arises from the study of Acts x. 9-20, 47; xi. 4-19. Peter, at first, was doubting within himself as to what the vision could mean, and was meditating on this mystery which had just been pointed out to him, when the Spirit commanded him to go to the Gentiles to announce to them the Word of life. But he only obeyed in a certain sense, reluctantly, without intelligence; he only surrendered himself, so to speak, completely when he saw the Holy Ghost had been given to these Gentiles after they had believed; this fact became a proof to him that he had no right to refuse water to baptize them. "What was I that I should withstand God?" Peter understood well the fact that Gentiles were to be saved by faith, but he did not then draw from this the idea of the union of believers in one body with Christ, for God. All the authority of the testimony of Peter and the word of James were still needed, in order that the saints at Jerusalem might admit this mystery fourteen years after the conversion of Paul, who, however, had preached it during the whole of this period. (Acts xv. 7-17. Gal. i. 15-17.)

Paul, it is true, although Apostle of the Gentiles and minister of the fulness of the mystery of the Church, ceased not to seek first the sons of Abraham, in every fresh locality wherein he found himself. In this he was subserving the commands of the Lord, and the love of God for His people. "It was necessary," he declared to the Jews of Antioch, "that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts xiii. 46.)

God was not yet wearied, [with their unbelief,] but sent His Word unto the very last remnant of the Jews scattered in Rome, the metropolis of the Gentile world, where already at a very early period, a Church was gathered. He sent Paul there, who set forth to them first the Reign of God, *witnessing* and persuading them of the things concerning Jesus, "*both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets*." (Acts xxviii. 23; compare xxiv. 14.) When Paul was addressing Jewish remnants, wheresoever he met them, his preaching did not extend itself at first to all the things concerning Jesus; but as soon as they withdrew, Paul received without distinction "*all those*" who came to him. From that time his preaching assumed a character of complete universality. Paul addressed all men without distinction, and proclaimed to them the fulness of the counsels of God; preaching always the Reign of God; but, besides that, the things concerning the Lord Jesus, no longer only *both out of the law of Moses and the prophets*, but according to the unfathomable riches of the ways of God. Of this we have a remarkable instance in the conduct of the Apostle Paul at Rome. (Acts xxviii. 30.) The *exclusive* preaching of the Reign of God, as addressed to the Jewish nation in their own land, really ceased at the death of Stephen; afterwards, this Gospel of the Reign was announced to all men, no longer as the only glad tidings, but conjointly with the Gospel of the grace that forms the Church. This last Gospel goes beyond the things which had been revealed concerning Jesus, in Moses, the Psalms and the Prophets.

If, therefore, we suppose a well disposed Jew, who had not heard anything besides the preaching of the twelve Apostles until the death of Stephen, it is clear that he had nothing else to do but to be converted, and to wait in faithfulness for the signs which are to precede the return of the true David to restore the Reign to Israel. (Acts ii. 19-21; iii. 19-22; vii. 1-54.) But if we suppose this same Jew, taught by Paul at Antioch and at Rome, we must think that it was his duty to believe in the union of Jews and faithful Gentiles, so as to form but one body with Christ in God; then to wait for the return of the Lord, Head of that body, to reunite all its members in the glory.

It is good for us, it would have been good for our Jew, to know that God uses the time of His indignation against His earthly people, to create for His Son a heavenly co-heir, partaker of His life and formed after His likeness, whilst waiting to introduce again this Well-Beloved upon (or into) the habitable earth to come.

The Reign of God cannot be established with power on the earth before the reunion of the Bride and the Bridegroom has taken place in heaven, and those are the things revealed in the time of grace, in order to take souls out of the world and of the things which are coming to a close. Would to God that the successors of Paul had continued to preach distinctly both the Gospel of the Reign and that of the union of the Church with Christ! The great ignorance which exists still as to the succession of the dispensations, would not be such as we see it in our days, and have to deplore for ourselves.

After the Apostles had received the revelation of the Church, they had not at any time the thought of giving up the preaching of the Reign of God and of His risen Christ, in order to set forth exclusively the things concerning the Church. They preached strongly the resurrection of Jesus, making use of this truth primarily, to justify His first mission in grace and in humanity; then to establish the certainty of His return in judgment, and the faithfulness of God as to the promises of the reign made to the fathers.

Festus, uninterested as he was in this question, to which he was obliged to give all his attention as a judge, thus summed up before king Agrippa the long and violent debate, for which Paul had to appear before him to be judged—"question of their own superstition and of one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." (Acts xxv. 19.) And the Jews of Thessalonica said to the Roman magistrates: "These all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another King, *one* Jesus." (Acts xvii. 7; compare John xix. 12, 19-23.)

I think that the preaching of the establishment of the Reign of God by the presence of the Son of man has been very wrongly interrupted in the Church; the only

reason one could allege to excuse this culpable negligence would be, to say that the return of the Son of man is a truth less near our consciences, and in some way less dear to our hearts, than the reunion of the Church to her Beloved. But God judges otherwise, since He opens the eyes of His own to these things, and teaches them to distinguish that which was confounded together. He acts thus in grace to the Church, that she may separate from the world. He acts thus in grace to the world, that it may be brought to a stand about its conversion, by hearing proclaimed the approach of the times of the end and of the judgments of the Son of man on the mystery of iniquity which goes on increasing.

I shall say a few words on the subject of the mystery of iniquity, because intelligence as to our position depends in a great measure on the intelligence of the ways of God towards the world, and of the condemnation of all that is connected with the present age.

Although the providence of God preserved the nations, He only considered them as a troubled sea, as a mass of confusion, and not as a people. From the election of the Jewish people until Jesus, the nations were not revealed. God had given up the Gentiles to the lusts of their hearts, and to the foul course of their shameful passions. But God passed over these times of ignorance; Jesus, the light of the world, came to be the light of the Gentiles, in putting them under the responsibility of free grace. As to the world, this light only serves to demonstrate the progressive rebellion of which the final apostacy will be the last result, and bring on inevitable judgment. The severity of this judgment will be in proportion to the different advantages in grace afforded to every nation who shall have respectively rejected them. For when the judgment of nations placed in the light is in question, God acts towards them as if He only considered the life of one single individual. Faults are accumulating until the cup runs over, and then correction comes.

Another remark, which one cannot repeat too often, because it destroys an error fatal to the intelligence of the dispensations and of the ways of God, is, that the Reign of God and of His Christ is not destinated to *re-establish* things as they were in the time of Solomon, of David, of Moses, of Abraham, or of Adam, but to introduce, after all the dispensations spoiled by man, a dispensation superior to the preceding ones. It would have been contrary to the views and ways of God to wish to restore Judaism, and to continue it by means of Christianity. Judaism had become, before God, like the earth, which, notwithstanding the care of the cultivator, produced only thorns and thistles. Now, such a ground *God does not mend*, but He says that it is fit for *burning;* it is no longer good for anything else. As to Judaism, what withheld God's hand for a time from setting fire to such an order of things, is that He was minded still to rescue many souls from it, to introduce them into the succeeding and more excellent dispensation. Thus, when the course of Judaism shall be re-established towards the end of the age, it will not be by God, but by unconverted Jews; neither will it be for God, but for Anti-Christ. Thus also, when Jesus shall return to reign on the earth, it will not be to re-establish catholicism or protestantism, or for anything like it; it will not even be to re-establish man in the earth in the state of innocency and of royalty of the first Adam, but to bring in the mediatorial and heavenly dominion of the risen second Adam. The saints, then, have no other position here on earth but that of strangers and of pilgrims; their duty is to walk in it with fear, during their short sojourn, bearing witness to grace and to the Reign of God and His Christ, and to the judgments that will precede it, calling souls to come out of a world corrupted and condemned, and hating all the abominations of the present age.

The Israelites were attached to the earth, because they were blessed on the earth. But now that grace has intervened, judgment on the world is only suspended. It is not set aside; on the contrary, it is drawing nearer every day, and it will fall like a deluge on all that which has had the light of the cross. The curse that is on the earth will not be removed until the reign of Christ; (Is. xix. 24.) we are, therefore, not called to enjoy the earth, since it is already judged with the prince of *this world.* (John xiv. 30.) The prophetical word says thus: "*He that is righteous let him be righteous still, and he that is holy let him be holy still;*" for, God having set us apart *to wait for His Son*, we are to keep ourselves apart, to worship Him and serve Him in spirit, all the days of our life.

It is also our duty to call on men to lay hold of grace, and we are to remember that it is not by corruptible things, such as silver or gold, that we have been redeemed from our vain conversation, which was handed down to us by our fathers; but by the precious blood, as of a lamb without spot and blemish, by the blood of Christ . . . But, alas! the Church has lost sight both of her position and her calling, of her duties and her testimony, because she has confounded the Gospel of the Reign with the Gospel of grace, union with Christ by faith and reunion with the Son of God before the consummation of this age.

I think that the labourers of the Lord are particularly responsible for the light which has brought out again both the difference between these two testimonies and the duty of proclaiming distinctly these two truths. If the Church, urged by the desire of suiting herself to the world, hides these things, and thus keeps back the truth in fetters, she will have to give account of it; for, far from weakening the testimony of God, her testimony ought to consist, above all, in withdrawing from evil, in avoiding any participation in it, in order to be "kept from the hour of temptation which is coming on the whole habitable earth, to try those who dwell upon the earth."

It is true the church has retained the fundamental doctrine of free justification through faith in the Lord Jesus dead and risen; but, although the power of the resurrection of the Christ is now sought after by a great number of the faithful, we are yet far behind the time when the saints of Thessalonica waited daily for the coming of the Lord, to be reunited with Him in the air. The goodness of our God has given back this truth to the Church, and we suppose that it has already been received by most of the brethren who will read this paper. We shall, nevertheless, say a few words in passing about it. The resurrection from *among* the dead, that of the saints or the first and better resurrection, will take place before the return of the Son of man to judge the living. It is altogether distinct from the resurrection of the dead, which will take place *after* the millennium. It is called a resurrection of life, in opposition to the second, which is a resurrection of judgment. (John v. 29.) The Church, being justified, and living by the life of Christ risen, resurrection and change are to her only the redemption of the bodies of the saints; it is a consequence of the present resurrection of our souls, which secures us from the judgment of the dead. This opposition between the future portion *of men*, as sinners, and the hope of *those that are redeemed*, is very striking: (Heb. ix. 27, 28,) "And AS *it is appointed* unto men *once* to die, *but after this* the judgment; *so* Christ ALSO was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

I repeat that I have no intention to establish in detail the doctrine of the rapture of the Church, or of the first resurrection and change of the saints. I suppose that brethren have learned to distinguish clearly between the return of the Lord *for* the Church and His return *with* the Church. It is necessary that the saints should have been reunited in heaven, in order that the Lord may *bring them back with Him.* This return of the children of God in glory will be the answer to the groanings of the creation, (Rom. viii. 19, &c.) which, instead of being then destroyed, shall be restored and delivered from the dominion of Satan.

My only desire is to present this hope and this expectation of the saints, as having for its object the nearest of all the things promised to us, but which we do not yet actually possess. The reunion of the Church to her

Saviour will be for her the accomplishment of grace, the entrance to glory, and the realization of the promises, which are beforehand reckoned ours here below, through faith.

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, whose faith was spread abroad everywhere, praises them for "having turned from dumb idols to God, to serve the living and true God, and *to wait for His Son* from heaven" . . . . not the Son of man, but "His Son," *the Son of God*,—two titles quite distinct, and which determine the character and value of the word *coming*. Such is a laudible faith. It consists not in waiting for things concerning the world, but only for the return of the Son of God. Now, it is a very different thing to wait for the return of the Son of God for the Church, or to wait for the return of the Son of man for the world. When the Lord returns *for the Church*, He will not come upon earth, but into the air; for heaven is to contain Him until His coming *on the habitable earth* as the Son of man accompanied by all His saints, to restore all things and to reign. But when the Lord appears as *Son of man*, with all His saints, He will come back on the earth itself, and not only "into the air." The first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, (i. 5-9,) written six years later than that to the Thessalonians, gives the same praise to their faith: "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ." "The grace of God . . . . teaches us *to wait* for that blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," (Tit. ii. 13,) "for our citizenship is in heaven, whence also *we look for* the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who *shall change* the body of our humiliation, that it may be *fashioned like* unto the body of His glory." (Phil. iii. 20, 21.) It is never the part of the child of God to wait for death, but for *transmutation*, (a sudden change like lightning,) or transformation. It was this that Paul was looking for, eighteen hundred years ago, as well as the saints to whom he then wrote. (See Cor. xv. 51, 55. 1 Thess. iv.) "Therefore," says Peter, "gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter i. 13.)

The thought predominating in the two epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians is the immediate and daily expectation of the Lord personally in the air, for the rapture of the saints, and for their reunion with Himself in glory. Paul would not first have the brethren be *in ignorance*, then that they might not be *in sorrow as to* brethren that were fallen asleep, and again that they *might comfort* one another with the expectation of the Lord coming to raise the saints that had fallen asleep, to change those that were alive, to gather them up, and to reunite them all in glory. (*To be continued.*)

FAITH AND UNBELIEF.

Sin is a thing which affects the conscience when a man thinks; and it is only the direct exercise of faith in the blood of the atonement which can give knowledge of actual forgiveness, which purges the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. And here, consequently, is the association of salvation with it; because the redeeming love of God is personally known, the Spirit witnessing with our spirit that we are the children of God; and hence persons holding these general views can go along with the world as others, because they have never personally come to God. And I add, its thoroughly Antinomian tendency cannot be too strongly pressed; because what is it that is to be got over in man? The enmity of his heart against God; the carnal mind, which is enmity with God; and the friendship of the world, which is enmity with God. But how is the enmity of the natural heart to be got over? but by bringing in love. And how? by knowing that "He loved us." And how shall we know this? but, "hereby know we love, because he laid down His life for us." For observe now, the enmity is a real thing, and the love must be a real thing: as Paul expresses it, "by whom we have now received the reconciliation," or, if you please, "atonement;" and, to be produced, it must be practically knowing "He first loved us," which is known by the value of Christ's death received by faith, and the Father's love as manifested in it. If I rest in a pardon received in baptism, I can feel assured that I am pardoned without ever personally coming to God in my conscience, which is the root and essence of Antinomianism; whereas, if it hang on the exercise of personal faith in Him, this brings me directly into His presence and subjection. But if I now exercise faith in Christ's death, as an atonement and reconciliation, now that I am writing this, I must believe that my sins are everlastingly forgiven, and rejoice in the Father's favour, or I do not believe in the efficacy of Christ's death, or the Father's manifested love therein. I say, that not to see it, is neither more nor less than unbelief. A man may be brought afterwards to believe, but at present he is not properly a believer in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. If I can see that he really believes in His person, but Satan is clouding his mind, then I may feel a good assurance that he is a forgiven sinner, though *he* cannot. But I am not to sanction his unbelief, but to minister the sure mercies which I may be given to know myself. But if I am told; True, if it be so with you, you are very happy; but how do you know you will continue to believe? This is still unbelief. I may wait on a person's weakness of faith, but cannot preach it: it is simply getting back into distrust of God, which is the devil's greatest triumph. I knew thee, said the unprofitable servant, that thou wast an austere man. I heard Thy voice in the garden, said Adam, when the devil had effected his first self-ruining purpose, and I was afraid and went and hid myself. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is not of their perseverance, but of God's faithfulness. Their confidence is not that they would not fail, but God: it is a trust in His promises, as the opposite is unbelief. They have known and believed, as St. John expresses it, "the love that God hath to them:" and they rest and hang upon this as a child upon a parent, yea, much more. Nor is this present enjoyment or confidence in the favour and known love of the everlasting God (how better known than in the gift of His only glorious Son?) merely stayed by the witness in their own hearts, but is given the stable foundation of testimony which they dare not disbelieve, yea, which it is sin not to believe, and a great dishonour to God. They believe that God did not show them this love in the gift of Christ, and the earnest of His Spirit, to leave them as uncertain as they were before of their estate. They read, "who also shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. *God is faithful*, by whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ." And they believe it; and bless God that to such poor and mere sinners He could have destined such things, and shown such love. They believe that if any man sin, they have an advocate with the Father; and that He is the propitiation for their sins; and they do therefore believe that if they should fall, through mercy they will rise again.

They reason with wondering faith, if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life; if God commended His love to us, so that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, much more then, being now justified, we shall be saved from wrath through Him; for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. Observe here the singular and marked contrast between the argument of natural unbelief and of that holy faith which believes in God. . . . Faith is that which sees the intervention of God's power and leans on it; it knows that it has been justified, and from its justification concludes infallibly its salvation. One indeed has taken place, says unbelief, which it cannot help ascribing to God, but that is no proof that he shall obtain the other. God reconciled us when we were enemies, argues faith; certainly, having reconciled us, He will now save us from wrath; and again, if we were reconciled by His death, surely His life shall save us. Thus, while unbelief sees nothing but that they (i.e. salvation and justification) are distinct things, and they are distinct only because we are in the body, and therefore the latter is matter of faith and not of sight, faith sees yet the certainty of one from the other, as proving God's love with an *a fortiori* argument, and the certainty yet again of the same from the power of the instrument now exalted in life, who reconciled us by death. The sinner doubts no more about his falling than his standing: he knows certainly that he would fall instantly if in himself; but he knows that God has promised, and that God will perform, and that he cannot fail; and that none, not Satan himself, can pluck him out of His hands; nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor life, nor death, nor any other creature can separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus His Lord. . . The saint is persuaded that "he who hath begun a good work in him, will perfect it unto the day of Jesus Christ." Unbelief is not so persuaded. The scripture hath said, "Faithful is He which hath called you, who also will do it;" and the saint believes it. Nay, but I cannot be sure of it because of my infirmity; that is, you do not believe the word of the testimony of God, you are making your weakness a greater evidence of the result than the power of God. Such precisely is unbelief. But a justification without the exercise of a personal faith in Christ, the sent of God, the Saviour, cannot possibly be accompanied with any knowledge of salvation, nor can it either be accompanied with any renewal of heart, for the heart is purified by faith; but the love of God, and God who is love, is known by faith; and, therefore, we can say, "who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." But indeed it were endless to quote passages, for this simple reason, that this is the Gospel. The Jew could be circumcised and brought into the covenant of God: nay, the Jew could, if so given of God, walk uprightly; but the Jew could not know, what in faith he might hope for and trust in, what is the essential distinction of the Christian—the finished work of the atonement, and the earnest of the Spirit shed abroad till the redemption of the purchased possessions. This is Christianity, and received into the heart by faith; and this, therefore, unbelief can never know anything about.

"Blessed is the man whose unrighteousness is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." There is not a man in the world that is not a hypocrite, that has not guile in his heart, till his conscience is washed in the blood of the Lamb. But what blessedness, what reconciliation, what purging of guile, if the forgiveness of sins be not known?

But the [unbeliever] says: "I bless Him that He has taught me not to trust in my own works, but in the assistance of His Holy Spirit." What will the Holy Spirit assist him to do, according to this view of the case, except to work? So that he trusts in his works after all, and the Holy Spirit is a mere assister, or helper, of him in this. But He never taught him to put his trust here; but they shall be to the praise of the glory of His grace, who have trusted in Christ. And they who have so trusted have ever, according to His promise, been sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of their inheritance. There is not such a thing in Scripture, as trusting in the assistance of the Spirit, contrasted with trusting in works; nor in common sense either. And Christianity is a fable if it do not enable one who believes in the atonement to pronounce his sins forgiven. I do not say but there may be doubting souls under gracious influences; but I say as to this, it is unbelief ..... There is one idea which runs in the strongest way though the writings of the Reformation, and is one great hinge of this matter—the acceptance of the person. "By the which will we are sanctified," says the Apostle, "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." And what then? Why, that "by one offering *He hath perfected for ever* them that are sanctified."

This part of my subject I feel fully to be most feebly treated: I know that none but believers can feel assurance; but I know that it is the direction of the Apostle to "draw near with full assurance of faith." I know that believers will supply infinitely more than any pen could write, or tongue of men or angels could tell: if it be made the instrument of strengthening any soul, or convincing it there is such a thing as peace, (a peace which, having received forgiveness, is able to rest with undoubting assurance on the promises. of the God who gave it, when its possessor was in his sins,) I shall be satisfied, yea, abundantly thankful. The hope of the Christian is not of forgiveness, which the hope of one who cannot pronounce his sins forgiven must be, unless he be a madman; but because he can, of glory. "Beloved," he says, "now are we the sons of God;" for, "behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but *we know* that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And he that *hath this hope in him*," not a vague estimate of the portion of somebody or other, "purifieth himself as He is pure." He who throws down the assurance of salvation throws down all Christian progress; for I affirm, that there is not one atom of Christian holiness in the person who has it not, nor any purification which is truly of the sanctuary.—Oudeis, Oxford 1831.

"ALL THINGS ARE OURS."

Every possible glory indeed is ours. The blessedness that is in God Himself, as far as it can be communicated, for we dwell in God and God in us. Relative blessedness, for we are children. Associated blessedness in union with the blessed One, for we are the bride Official nearness and glory, for we are kings and priests. Human blessedness, for we shall be perfect men after the image of the second Adam. Corporate blessedness, for we shall have joy together. Individual, for we shall have a name given which no one knows but he that receives it: and we shall have the fulness of the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, unhindered by these poor bodies; yea, clothed upon by a vessel suited to the power of the divine inhabitant, so as to be able in full largeness of heart to enjoy all this.

J. N. D.

REVIEW.

An Introduction to the Canticles.—1848.

London: J. K. Campbell, Holborn, facing Gray's Inn Lane. J. Nisbet & Co., Berners Street.

A happy tone of spiritual thought is sustained through the pages of this little book. The imagery of the Canticles may be in some instances obscure, and require much critical discrimination, as well as Biblical learning, for its complete elucidation; but the broad general outline, the love of Christ to the saints, and their responsive affection for Him who has espoused them, is sufficient in itself to gladden and refresh the Christian's spirit; and with this, the usual aplication given to these sacred idyls, the view of the author appears to coincide.

But it is possible for the most precious truth to assume a vague and impalpable character, if it be regarded only in its most general and abstract form. Without disparaging or forgetting the glorious truth that Christ "loved the Church, and gave Himself for it," there is yet a more individual sense of His personal affection to us, (to all His saints alike, surely,) but still to *us*, so that each saint should rejoice to think and speak of Him in the spirit of the Apostle Paul, when he says of Him, "who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." The nearness of affection in the Lord to the members of His body individually, is intimated in the New Testament, perhaps more especially in the brief notices we have of His occasional interviews with the disciples, after His resurrection, (see Luke xxiv. John xx. xxi.,) and is traced by the author through the leading incidents in the lives of several of the Old Testament saints. The deep sleep and symbolical suffering of Adam, ere he received Eve—the toil of Jacob for Rachel—the separation of Joseph from his brethren, ere he got his Asenath—the earning of Zipporah by Moses, her rescuer from opression, and the family reproach which his marriage with the despised Ethiopian cost him, and, lastly, the acceptance by Boaz of the suit of Ruth, so lately a poor dependent—are all touched on as telling out "the same mystery, that the Bridegroom of the Church is the one who had before been humbled to redeem her, and make her His own."—(pp. 9. 10.)

The typical history of the Bride, too, is traced through the book of Genesis. The heart of Adam is satisfied with her who had been formed for him. He took her and clave to her; (Gen. ii.) and this, we know, is "Christ and the Church." (Eph. v.) The journey of Rebecca under the conduct of Eliezer, Abraham's faithful servant, to meet her unknown bridegroom, shadows forth the mystery of "the Lord receiving His bride at the hand of the Father and of the Holy Ghost, chosen for Him, and given to Him, He having nothing to do but to take her at their hands, and to find in her, as Isaac found in Rebecca, the relief of his solitariness, the inmate of his tent, and the companion of all his joys."—(p. 15.)

In the case of Rachel we have the bride still, but under a different aspect. If, "in one sense, Christ has only to receive the bride at the hand of the Father and the Holy Ghost, the gift of the one and the workmanship of the other," in another sense, He has truly toiled for her, (as Jacob for Rachel,) and won her in spite of difficulties, reproach, and wrong. In Asenath the wife of the exiled Joseph," we get the Bride in her Gentile, heavenly character. . . And how does all this witness to *us the delight which Christ takes in His saints!* It is not merely that He has saved them by his blood, but they are His crown and His joy, His glory and His delight. . . .We love Him for the sorrows He has endured, and He loves us, because we so prize His sorrows. And if these affections be not understood as passing between Christ and the saint; if we do not, without reserve, allow this satisfaction in each other, our souls will not enter into much of that communion which the Scripture provides for. The Canticles will not be understood, if we do not allow and entertain the thought of Christ's delight in the saints, with the same certainty that we allow the thought of His having purchased and "sanctified them by His blood."—(pp. 17, 18.)

"The intercourses of an espoused pair are the imagery, the loves of Christ and the saint, the mystic sense." "There is no inquiry into the fact or the ground or the nature of our acceptance with God in this book. Such questions and inquiries are settled beforehand. The communion is *upon* the settlement of them all. It is delight in Christ, occupation with Himself, that we get here. It is not the finding of Him out, nor is it the confession of sins. The communion is a *sinner's* communion, most surely, but it is of a consciously pardoned, accepted, and loved sinner."—(pp. 31, 32.) The author proceeds to illustrate, in the latter portion of the book, the reciprocal confidence and affection of the Lord and His saints, founded on this known acceptance; and His complacency in those graces which flourish in proportion to the undivided allegiance of the heart to Him, and its appreciation of His love. It can hardly be supposed that this little work is intended as an exact interpretation of the Canticles; but it may be commended to the attention of the

Christian reader, as containing a happy application of truths and principles which must ever be precious to those who desire to enter more deeply into the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. C. P.

HEAVEN AND EARTH.—Second Edition. Revised and Enlarged. London: J. K. Campbell, Holborn; J. Nisbet & Co., Berners Street.

ANOTHER little work from the pen of the same author. The title indicates its contents; for its theme is to shew, that as the scene of the divine handiwork was two-fold, accordingly, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, God will display Himself again both in *heaven* and on *earth*. The author begins his meditations with Genesis i.-xlvii., which presents, in his judgment, a view of the Lord acting by turns, as in heaven and on earth; till at the close is found the type of what their connection, and yet distinctness, will be in the coming dispensation. Ezekiel i.-xi. and xliii. are then referred to as the witness of the departure of the glory from the earth, and its return to the very spot from whence it set out. After this, we have a notice of the *intercourse* of heaven with earth, and of some of the joys and glories *peculiar* to each.

One extract towards the close will serve as a sample of the way in which this blessed subject is treated: "All this may well account for the place which Jerusalem holds in the thoughts of the Spirit. His prophets, those who spake as they were moved by Him, address her again and again as the Bride, the Queen and the Mother, in the days of the approaching glory. But what shall we say of Him who has thus decked her with all beauty and dignity, and given her such relationship to Himself? Is it not wondrous and happy to see the circle of human sympathies thus seating itself in the divine mind? Is *friendship* only human? How can I say so, when I see Jesus and the disciple whom He loved walking in company? Are the affections of *kindred* merely human? How can I say so, when I think of Christ and the Church, and a thousand witnesses from Scripture? Is the heart's fond delight in home a divine as well as a human joy? How can can I doubt it, when I thus see the Lord and Jerusalem? Surely, the divine mind is the seat of all the pure and righteous sensibilities of the heart, and 'the man Christ Jesus' tells me so. The Lord God of Israel has known, and will known again, the affection that lingers round the homestead of many a family recollection and joy.

"Such will be Jerusalem, and such the earth itself, the nations and Israel, in the promised days of the presence and power of the Lord. Faintly traced by the hand, more feebly responded to by the heart. But still, though 'surpassing fable,' they are 'yet true.'

"All Scripture, however, shews us that such joy cannot be had on earth, or in the circumstances and history of the world, in their *present* state, nor indeed till the earth is made the scene of righteousness; and such it is not to be, till the Lord has ridden it of all that offends, and all that does iniquity. *The sword of judgment* must go before *the throne of glory*. The earth must be cleared of its corruptions, ere it can be a garden of holy, divine delights, again.

"The Gospel is not producing a happy world, or spreading out a garden of Eden. It proposes no such thing, but to take out of the world a people, a heavenly people, for Christ. But the presence of the Lord will make a happy world by and bye, when that presence can righteously return to it.

"The close of the Psalms shews us this. Beautiful close! All praise—untiring, satisfying fruit of lips uttering the joy of a filled heart, and owning the undivided glory of the Blessed One! But this had been preceded by the sorrow of the righteous in an evil world, and then the judgment of that world. For that Book gives the cries of the righteous in an evil world, the joys of the Spirit in the midst of that evil, the varied exercises of the soul by the way, and then the end of the righteous in the joy of praise. All, however, forbids the heart from entertaining the thought of joy *in the earth*, till the judgment have cleansed it: the *rest* is to be prepared for *Solomon* by the *sword of David*.

"The proper thought of this will keep the heart from being tossed by disappointments, and take it off from the expectation of any progress to rest and stability for the world or in it, till the Lord has executed judgment. Our joy now is to be in Himself, in spirit, in thought of His love, and the sense of His peace, helped onward, day by day, in the hope of full and righteous joy with Him, when the wicked have gone from the scene for ever."

WORDS OF TRUTH FOR THE SAINTS OF GOD. No. 49.
A CHRISTIAN—WHO, AND WHAT, IS HE—NOW, AND HEREAFTER? London: J. K. Campbell.

THE following extract will suffice as a specimen of this number. "We have all been too much accustomed to confound these two things (resurrection-life, and heavenly standing). What I see as the effect of resurrection-life is this, a man quickened and raised in Christ becomes a pilgrim down here. This is not the whole of a Christian. But it is the power of divine life in the new creature moving in the world that does not belong to him, and to which he does not belong. The Christian, begotten by the resurrection of Christ, is a distinct thing to consider from a Christian sitting in the heavenly places in Christ. Though the same individual is both, they are distinct things to consider.

"In the first chapter of first Peter, we read: 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy, hath (not 'blessed us with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ,' as in the Ephesians, but) begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.' (verses 3, 5.) I find here persons begotten unto a lively hope, and *what* is their hope? Are they sitting in heaven? No: they are hoping for it. Therefore, the Apostle says, (chap. ii. 11,) 'Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.' It is the Christian on his pilgrimage that is contemplated. He is a stranger here. He has an inheritance in heaven; when he is in his inheritance, he will be no stranger; but he is not there, he is *going* towards heaven. He is a resurrection-man on earth, walking through the world with new affections and feelings, going on towards his inheritance, but he is not there,—an Israelite in the wilderness, redeemed from Egypt, and a stranger, but not in Canaan. And there comes in the trial of faith. The Apostle goes on to say: 'Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.'

"Where do I find the Christian in Ephesians? Not going a journey at all: he is *sitting down*—and *where?* 'In heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' That is what I am doing now: I am sitting in heaven—settled there. And Christ being Heir of 'all things,' the inheritance is not heaven. The inheritance in Ephesians is different from that in Peter; it is all that Christ possesses (and, therefore, earth comes in). The inheritance of all things is the heavenly man's hope; but heaven is his home, his *position*. In Peter, heaven is his hope; he is going *towards* heaven as his home, and *towards* his inheritance, which is in heaven. Three I get a very different condition.

"Both these things are true of the same person—both are true of the Christian. It is good to have the trial of faith; (it supposes faith to be there;) it is good to sit down with Christ where no trial is, and it is good to come down into trial. But these are different conditions. The place of Christ in the mount, when with Moses and Elias, (Luke ix.) was different, in the midst of the excellent glory, to that in which He stood when He came down from the mount and had to meet the crowd, and

cast out the devil. My true position, as a heavenly man, is to sit in heavenly places in Christ; but, on the other hand, as begotten to a new hope by the resurrection of Christ, it is simply going through the world. But it is through the world I am going. Here I am, a new creature, quickened and raised up with Christ, and what a world am I in! So with regard to Christ's coming;—if walking on earth, I am waiting for Christ; the hope of the coming of Christ is His appearing to set things right here; but, if sitting in heaven, *I am there in* Christ, and wait *to be there with* Christ, actually, and there enjoy Christ fully. The Lord's coming is not spoken of in the Ephesians; the saints are viewed as sitting in heaven.

"I get these two elements of a Christian's position, and, in one sense, I do not call one more important than the other. I may look at the Christian at the spring-head of peace, in full enjoyment of heavenly places, and in settled peace with God, and fighting for Him in conflict with Satan. But I cannot have him fighting for God in Canaan till I get him into Canaan; I may have him in Egypt under the enemy's power, but that is not conflict with him. It needs redemption by God. But this places him in the wilderness—a second element of his Christian life.

"A person acting under the consciousness, and in terror, of Satan's power, fearing he may be lost if left there, is sometimes more in earnest than when he has got peace; but I do not trust this energy. He has not learned what the flesh is, though he may have learned what Satan's tyranny is. It is when he has to say to God that he will find out what the flesh is. A man will always go fast enough, if he finds Satan behind him. The Israelites travelled faster when Pharaoh was at their back than they did afterwards in their stages in the wilderness. There was no murmuring because of the way, when Pharaoh was behind them; but then it was afterwards in the wilderness that they were put to the test. Then came the question: Is Christ sufficient; or is the manna 'light food?' If a man is not spiritual, he must get something to satisfy his craving. All this is put to the test—not put to the test when a man is flying from Pharaoh, but when he is walking with God.

"And there comes in the mediation of Christ. In this wilderness state, I get Christ between me and God—'if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;' but this is not union with Christ. I am looked at in myself: we get individualised. A man may be floundering about, through not having his eye simply fixed on Christ, not knowing how to get to the end; but he finds a thread let down from heaven to bring him to the place exactly where he ought to be, while he is only thinking of the mud, or judging himself for not having valued Christ enough. There are a thousand thoughts, and feelings, and affections, brought out into play, as the result of our having resurrection-life. We get the constant loving care and tenderness of Christ brought home to the soul; and there is a necessary character of intercourse with Christ which heaven will not give." (pp. 14-22.)

JERUSALEM OF GOD.

Rest of the saints above,
Jerusalem of God,
Who, in thy palaces of love,
Thy golden streets hath trod?

To me thy joy to tell,
Those courts secure from ill,
Where God Himself vouchsafes to dwell,
And every bosom fill.

Who shall to me that joy
Of saint-thronged courts declare;
Tell of that constant sweet employ
My spirit longs to share?

That rest, secure from ill,
No cloud of grief e'er stains,
Unfailing praise each heart doth fill,
And love eternal reigns.

The Lamb is there, my soul—
There, God Himself doth rest,
In love divine diffused through all,
With Him supremely blest.

God and the Lamb—'tis well,
I know that source divine
Of joy and love no tongue can tell,
Yet know that all is mine.

And see the Spirit's power,
Has oped the heavenly door,
Has brought me to that favoured hour
When toil shall all be o'er.

There on the hidden bread
Of Christ once humbled here—
God's treasured store—for ever, fed,
His love my soul shall cheer.

Called by that secret name
Of undisclosed delight,—
Blest answer to reproach and shame,
Graved on the stone of white!

There in effulgence bright,
Saviour, and Guide, with Thee
I'll walk, and in that heavenly light,
Whiter my robe shall be.

There in the unsullied way
Which His own hand hath dressed;
My feet press on where brightest day
Shines forth on all the rest.

But who that glorious blaze
Of living light shall tell?
Where all His brightness, God displays,
And the Lamb's glories dwell.

There only to adore,
My soul its strength may find;
Its life, its joy, for evermore,
By sight, nor sense, defined.

God and the Lamb shall there
The light and temple be,
And radiant hosts for ever share
The unveiled mystery. J. N. D.

THE COMING OF THE LORD, AND RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH.

He comes! Hark the solemn last trumpet proclaim,
The lightning His coursers, His chariot of flame;
Lo! brilliant o'er all the bright hosts of the sky,
Shine the glories of One—'tis the Saviour on high.

And nearer the anthem, as swells the bright train,
Peals louder and louder the Lamb that was slain;
Whilst seraphs with angels are chanting His fame,
Redemption His triumph, and Jesus His name.

No thorns embitter that countenance now,
But diadems halo the Conqueror's brow;
The reed is replaced by the sceptre of might,
And the purple exchanged for a vesture of light.

O patient Redeemer! ah! yes, it is He
Who sank 'neath our woes on Calvary's tree;
Those indelible pledges that His love never fails,
See the scar on His side, and the prints of the nails,

At length, gracious Lord, thou hast answered our sighs,
Thy gentle hand wipes off the tears from all eyes;
Death yields his dominion—his triumphs to Thee,—
The sepulchres open, the captives are free.

Lo! millions on millions are breaking away
From the bands of the shroud and the cumbering clay,
And awake, blessed Lord, with that likeness divine,
The glory of each, the reflection of thine.

Hark! the shout of the Lord—He calls from the sky,
The bride of His love to her mansions on high,—
From the sorrows of night and the shadows away,
To the brightness of bliss and the realms of day.

"O come then with me to the land of the free,
The home where the weary find rest;
My glory there and throne I'll share
With thee for ever blest."

"We're soaring away to the regions of day,
There in glory with Thee to shine—
Thy face to see, and, Lord, to be
For ever, ever thine." S.

THE PROSPECT

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—Ezek. xii. 23.

No. 6.] GUERNSEY, MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1848. [Vol. I.

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE preceding chapter gives the description and history of the great instruments of evil on the earth. This (which is the last of the three chapters, [xii.-xiv.] which taken as a whole, form, so to speak, a book,) gives us the history of the ways of God on the earth, during the period of the beast up to the end of the judgments. We find ourselves here; not in heaven, as in the twelfth chapter; not on the earth with the beast, but on mount Sion. God still acts in grace, not now with the view of gathering the Church, but towards the remnant on the earth.

Verses 1-5. There are redeemed ones from amongst those of the earth; they are first-fruits unto God and unto the Lamb. Before the harvest is completely ripe, some of the first-fruits are presented to God. We are *heavenly* first-fruits of the whole creation, to be with Christ, who is Head of the creation in a heavenly manner. But God's purpose is, that there should be a bond between heaven and earth. Jesus is to unite all things in heaven and on earth. Sin has brought everything into confusion and rent the tie. Jesus came, and He was, while on earth, a link between heaven and earth. The Holy Ghost came down upon Him. Heaven was open, because Jesus, the only one heaven could recognise, was on the earth. In John i. 52, the angels are seen descending on Him as the Son of man, which will be entirely fulfilled in the time of the glory of Jesus. Stephen saw heaven opened; but Jesus, who is the object of God's delight, was in heaven, where man is entered in Christ, and where man can find a place with Christ. When the Jews rejected the Gospel, heaven was opened, that the Church, full of the Holy Ghost, might contemplate the glory of God. When Jesus was on the earth, heaven looked on the earth; now that Jesus is in heaven, the Church on earth looks on high. In a yet fuller revelation, as at the conversion of Paul, it is owned as one with Jesus, who is there.

Jesus has not given up His rights over the earth. The Church is chosen by Him, to be with Him in heaven, and to share with Him His rights over the earth. Jesus is to reign, and to unite the heavens and the earth. The beginning of this takes place here. The hundred forty and four thousand are on mount Sion, and learn the song of heaven. In Sinai, God requires obedience from the earth. Mount Sion on the contrary, represents the kingly grace upon earth. After Israel had failed under Moses, under the judges, and under Saul, David became the king chosen of God to reign over His people. Jesus is to sit on David's throne. David carried the ark on mount Sion, in the city of David. (2 Sam. vi. 12-19.) It is written in the epistle to the Hebrews, xii, 22: "But ye are come unto mount Sion," that is to say, not to heaven, but to the mount of royal grace, (in opposition to Sinai,) to the mountain where the ark of the covenant was, before the temple was built. (Ps. lxxviii. 67-72.) After Israel had been unfaithful, God made choice of David to feed His people. Mount Sion is the seat of that authority. The passage quoted above, in the epistle to the Hebrews, shows all the glory that will surround the Lord Jesus when He mounts the throne of David; and the epistle to the Hebrews tells us, that we do not belong to the system of Sinai, where man fails, but to the system of grace.

John sees the Lamb on mount Sion. We cannot enjoy God's favour but through the Lamb; and the suffering Lamb was the true Messiah and heir of David. Heaven is raising a song of joy, because the blessing of the earth is beginning to appear. Those that are redeemed from the earth learn this song. It is a peculiar work and blessing before the general harvest. They are the ears of ripe corn, the first-fruits chosen and presented to God before the others. The hundred forty and four thousand are the only ones that can learn that song. Their ear is more quick to understand the things of heaven, and to be a link between heaven and earth.

In the Revelation, the earth is always distinct from the world. The earth, where the light has already shone, is what is called the prophetic earth. Before God judgeth nations, kindreds, people, and tongues, (which are outside the earth,) as well as those who inhabit the earth, there shall be a new testimony given, that of the angel who announces the judgments of God that are going to fall on the world. (Verses 6, 7.) It is not here the Gospel that gathers the Church; it is the everlasting Gospel. The testimony of the angel is: "Fear God, and give glory to Him: for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." This testimony bears on the judgment of God, and is an appeal to the idolatrous nations to flee from this judgment.* There is no question here of the message of salvation which God is now addressing to men by the preaching of the name of Jesus. To apply this passage to the present missions, is to close the mouth of the angel who says: "The hour of His judgment is come." God, on the contrary, allows us time still to announce and to proclaim His grace towards poor sinners, and to preach the Gospel to every creature. The time for this message is that of which the Holy Spirit says; "Behold, now is the day of salvation." The Gospel we have to preach gathers the Church for heaven; that of the angel announces the judgment to the earth. God always sends a special testimony before the judgment. He sent Noah before the deluge. He will act in the same manner before the judgment of the earth.

Verse 8 shows us the downfall of Babylon; this is not yet the fall of the beast. Babylon is the city of corruption, where every thing has become merchandize—even the souls of men. The particulars of this judgment are seen a little further on.

Verses 9-11. A third angel announces the chastisement of the inhabitants of the earth, who worship the beast. Men must choose between the wrath of God or that of the beast. The great proof of faith at that time will be in not worshipping the beast.

Verse 12. "Here is the patience of the saints." There are times where one can walk quietly. An entire separation from the world, then, is that in which faithfulness would consist; but peace renders this difficult, because the respective boundaries being easily forgotten, worldliness comes in. In times of persecution, faithfulness consists in bearing testimony, and not in denying the Lord, nor His testimony, in order to escape the wrath of man and of the enemy.

Verse 13. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." The question of dying for Jesus is settled in the happiness of those who die in their glory and return with Christ.

Verses 14-16 show us the harvest of the earth. The

* "When the everlasting Gospel then goes forth, it is not the bringing in a universal state of blessedness, but a call to fear God amongst wide-spread apostasy of all sorts, 'for the hour of His judgment is come,' as 'this Gospel of the kingdom must first be preached to all nations, and then shall the end come;' (i.e., of the age;) and this last, while I fully recognize what precedes as involving the principles, is the strong final sense of the passage, and therefore, God is announced as a Creator, who had a right to His creatures, and presented Himself as such to men in the earth, as against all their idolatries, resuming (first in testimony) His place as God in the earth. Babylon, which had been the great corrupter of the earth, and the centre of idolatry, is next judged of God."—*Same author.*

harvest includes both good and evil. It is the end of the age. It concerns here only the earth. Two shall be found in one bed; one shall be taken for judgment, the other left, as it happened at the deluge and in Sodom. The world is judged and separated from those that are faithful.

Verses 17-20. Fire always figures the judgment of God. Every one shall be salted with fire. The angel coming from the altar has power over the fire, over God's judgment.

There are three things to be remarked in what scripture says of the vine.

"The house of Israel is the vine of the Lord of hosts, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant." (Is. v. 7.) But this vine of Israel produced nothing but sour grapes. The fifteenth of John presents to us Jesus as being Himself the vine on earth, the true vine; but He is rejected. It is because this vine is on the earth, that every branch that beareth not fruit is taken away. The question there is not concerning the elect for heaven, as such. A Jew might conform himself to the law, and yet produce no fruit. The question now is about bearing fruit. What we have in the Revelation presented to us here is a vine on earth, the form of the people of God in the earth; but each cluster is the object of the judgment and of the wrath of God. It is not a harvest in which you have to separate the good corn from the bad; there is nothing but what is bad in that vine, and there is an awful judgment of God "without the city," near Jerusalem, and in Edom. (Isa. lxiii. 1-6.) One does not understand how this passage could be applied to the work of Jesus on the cross. He is clothed with a glorious apparel. He is in all the greatness of His strength. He treads the wine press, and tramples down the people in His anger. His garments are sprinkled with their blood, not theirs with His. It is then He redeems the Jews.—At the cross, His arm did not save Him.—The vine, the form of religion in the earth, will be the object of judgment. This contains an allusion to what took place amongst the Jews. In the twenty-third chapter of the book of Leviticus, the feasts are presented to us in the following order: 1. The *Passover;* Christ is our Passover. 2. The *Pentecost;* the coming of the Holy Ghost has given us the reality of that feast; the Holy Ghost gathers the Church as the first-fruits of creation. 3. The feast of *Tabernacles;* this feast has not yet had its antitype. Several months of interval elapsed without feasts after Pentecost. In the seventh month, which begins with the feast of trumpets, on the tenth day, the people were to afflict their souls. On the fifteenth day began the feast of tabernacles, during which Israel lived in tents, in remembrance of and as a testimony that Israel had been a stranger and a pilgrim in the desert—he who now was living in peace in the land of promise. This feast of tabernacles was celebrated after the harvest and the vintage were over, after the produce of the earth had been gathered. This harvest and this vintage are yet to come, and the true feast of tabernacles has not yet taken place.

To sum up things, this fourteenth chapter of the book of Revelation presents to us an elect people; grace acting, and a testimony rendered; the downfall of Babylon; a warning to those who shall worship the beast; the blessedness of those who die in the Lord; the harvest; and the vintage of the earth.

It is very instructive for us to see where all this leads, and what the end of it will be. All that which is of the flesh shall fall under God's judgment. It is there that all men's prospects and hopes end. There is also the consolation of being able to rise above these things, of seeing heaven open. The more death is our condition on earth, the more also we shall see of heaven. If the power of the Holy Ghost carries us to bear a testimony that would lead us to death, we shall be a thousand times more happy, and we shall see heaven open for us.

The principles of the corruption of the earth are all in activity. Faithfulness consists in fleeing from those principles whose fruits are clusters for the vintage of earth.—(*To be continued.*)

THE TESTIMONY OF THE END.

The duty of waiting for the Lord becomes more and more urgent in proportion as the night is spent, as the evil is increasing, as the hours pass. The word *duty*, which has just escaped me, is in itself a proof of the unfaithfulness of the Bride in this respect, since we are obliged to present, as a responsibility, what constituted the joy, hope, and consolation of the saints in happier times.

The Thessalonians and the Corinthians were, as we are, sons of the resurrection and of the light; and hence it is that Paul, putting himself in the same position as these faithful ones, wrote to them in nearly the same terms, although at different epochs: "*We*" (you and I) "that are living, the still remaining or surviving ones," words repeated with emphasis, with a peculiar stress on them, in the space of six lines: "*We* (believers) shall not all die, but *we* shall all be changed" . . .

The Apostle John was also an example of the hope of the faithful to the close of his long career. The Lord, after having announced to Peter by what death he should die, had said of John: "If I will that he tarry *till I come*, what is that to thee?" But Jesus had not said expressly that John should not die, and, although John be dead, he was necessarily and during all his life placed, by these words, in the position of looking for the Lord Himself, and not for death. John, the prophet beloved of Jesus, has received and transmitted to us, in the Apocalypse, the prediction of all the events which are still, from this time, to be accomplished in the world before the return of the Son of man; but it is also in this same book that Jesus announces Himself to the Church always as "*He that cometh.*" "Behold, I come quickly." "I am He that is coming."

John was the last of the twelve that remained waiting for the coming of his Lord; we see by his epistles that the expectation of Jesus did not lose its power in the heart of this Apostle more than in that of Paul. The sixty-three years which had elapsed since John had received the precious and last words of his Saviour did not prevent him expressing with vehemence the desire of the Spirit and the Bride: "Come: come, Lord Jesus!" And John, in writing the Apocalypse, had to repeat often to himself: "If the Lord will that I tarry till He come!"

I think that, after the spiritual intelligence of the heart, which ought always to take the first place, nothing better justifies the priority of the rapture of the Church to every other prophetical event, than the light spread by this truth, thus set in the place that the Word assigns to it, on the ways of God, as a whole.

The gathering of the Church to Jesus is as the keystone which binds the prophetic truths together. This event will close the existing dispensation of grace, properly so called. And the present dispensation is intermediate between the interruption and the resumption of the government of God over His Jewish people and on the earth. Therefore, I repeat, that no event whatsoever, prophetic or not prophetic, can be placed before the gathering of the Church to the Lord in the air. It seems to me that a heart which is faithful in searching out the thoughts of the Lord in His Word, wants nothing more positive; but I do believe that the soul, in which these different passages produce any other desire than that of the Spirit, which cries; "Come, Lord Jesus!" would be with difficulty convinced by other still more peremptory declarations, if it were possible to find such. God alone can break the ties which bind us to the earth, and which prevent our going forth to meet our Beloved. Whence comes it, then, that so small a number of souls let this cry of love be heard? Is it because the Word of God is not sufficiently positive? or is it because the Spirit of God no more teaches the faithful on these points, which they call secondary? As if a subject of hope and of daily expectation could be a secondary thing for the Bride of the Son of God—for the heirs of the glory of God!

The fault, dear brethren, is neither in God, nor in His Word, nor in His Spirit, but in the unfaithfulness of the Church; and I say, blessed is he who recognises it and who is humbled for it, for it is in confessing the sins of their people and in identifying themselves with their guilt, that Ezra, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Jeremiah, and nearly all the holy prophets, were strengthened and taught of God.

The Church is to serve the living and true God, who will that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth. It is for this we have received the mission to call upon the spiritually dead, repeating the cry of, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him," (1) in order to avoid the judgments which shall follow the rapture of the Church, so as to be with the King when He shall shake once more the heaven and the earth. It is not allowed to "him that heareth" to wait till the Church is taken up, in order to say also: "Come." Now, the Apocalypse is the book of Him that cometh, and that book is open, for the time is at hand. The Lord pronounces these solemn words, for him who does not hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still." Awful judgment to those whose heart remains shut against such an appeal: "Let him that heareth, say, Come!"

The Lord Jesus, when on earth, said: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." The Church in her turn, on this same earth, says, by the Spirit of Jesus: "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

The Spirit cries in the Bride, with groanings that cannot be uttered: "Come, Lord, Jesus, come." These words are evidently in this place an appeal put by God into the mouth of the saints, in order that "he who heareth may say, Come." If our cry: "Come, Lord!" comes from the heart, it will reach to the heart of those who are athirst, but who have not yet found the water which springs up unto life eternal; then they will cry also: "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Dear brethren! appeals generally remain without efficacy in our days, the last days, in the midst of a world worn out and withered; however, the voice of the Spirit and of the Bride may still reach more than one heart amongst those who are to be saved. He who traces these lines has known the holy and powerful energy of it; he certainly stands not alone in this position, and may perhaps not be the last efficaciously invited to unite with the Bride in saying: "Even so, come, Lord."

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§ 2.—CONFUSION OF THE GOSPEL OF THE REIGN WITH THE REIGN OF THE GOSPEL.

It is always difficult, and sometimes painful, to put in relief the falseness and the lie of traditional precepts, were it only because one is in danger, while so doing, of hurting the feelings of some pious souls, in thus presenting to them a mirror in which they are forced to recognise the error which the power of habit has endeared to them. However, it is no longer so, in the same degree, when one has begun by establishing the truth destined to take the place of the error pointed out. A heart that is sincere will receive the truth wherever it comes from. What Paul and John preached by the Spirit of God is the truth. From whatever quarter this truth comes to us, we ought to accept it and to seek after it with love, although it might be Caiaphas, Judas, Herodias, or Pilate, who present it to us.

I will point out the false hope, which is the fruit of the confusion brought into the Church with regard to the Gospel of the Reign, because this error is become common in our days. The mixture of truth and error which is found in the doctrine of many, concerning the coming of the Lord, appears to me, at least as dangerous, on account of its subtlety, as the total ignorance into which the Church had fallen formerly on this subject.

The Reign of God will remain a mystery for the world until its accomplishment. It is a thing interrupted, but of which the resumption is rapidly drawing nigh. It has been revealed to the Church, who is charged with the announcement of the establishment of this Reign in power. The fault of the Church consists in that she has come to consider herself as the Kingdom of the Son of man.(2). It is true that she is partaker of that Kingdom, but only as the Bride of the King who is to sit with Him on His throne. Now, the promise of the Reign is neither less positive nor lost, but it is not to be fulfilled while the dispensation of the Church lasts, (and, we may add, the apostasy up to the end of Anti-Christ, and the judgments which follow, of which the particulars are given in the Apocalypse and in the Prophets.)

The appearance of the sign of the Son of man, the shaking of heaven and earth, the harvest and the vintage, and then the re-establishment of all things,—such are the events which are to precede *the consummation of this age*, and the coming of the true David. And since it is so, we ought to understand that the Reign of God will not be realized in any way by the blessed preaching of the glad tidings of the death and resurrection of Christ, but by the personal return of the risen One Himself.

Is it not dreadful to think that the unconverted world should be taught by Christians to call down upon itself the most awful judgment, in asking God "that His Reign (Kingdom) may come?" For, in order that this Reign may be established, the Son of man must previously send His angels, who shall pluck up out of His Kingdom all offences and those who work iniquity, and throw them into the furnace of fire. (Matt. xiii. See also 2 Thess. i. 7. Apoc. xix. 19-21.)

The hope of the Reign of God and the act of hasting His coming only belong, in the dispensation of grace, to those who, being kings and priests, know the secret of the Lord. (l'Eternel.) We can pray that the counsel of God may be fulfilled, because we have intelligence of it, and because we have been set, through grace, outside of all that is to be judged and condemned. The body of Christ is composed of a people righteous with the righteousness of its Head, and who will pass neither through the earthly judgment of the living (Matt. xxv.) nor the eternal judgment of the dead, after the final destruction of the heavens and earth that are now. (Apoc. xx. 11-15).

From the time the Church has considered herself as the Kingdom of God, she has confounded the preaching of the Gospel of the Reign with the preaching of grace: this error has produced the spurious doctrine of the reign of the Gospel,—a doctrine which this very expression condemns. The Word never speaks once of this pretended Reign, but it says *the Gospel of the Reign*, where the Christian world says the Reign of the Gospel. The perversion of the words could not be more characteristic, for it expresses the perversion of the thoughts of God.

The Gospel of the Reign is identical with the *everlasting Gospel*, which alone will be preached from the time of the rapture of the Church, and also during the complete apostasy of the Jews and Gentiles. This is the substance of it: "Fear God and give glory to Him, *for* the hour of *His judgment* is come" . . "to judge the habitable earth *in righteousness*, by the man whom He has appointed." I think that this news, although good tidings

(1) I do not quote here the parable of the virgins save as *an application* useful in calling sinners at the present time. As to *its explanation*, I protest, on the contrary, against the opinion which makes, of the retinue of virgins, the Bride herself. The word "then," expressly put in this parable alone, between the xxiv. 31 and the xxv. 31 of Matthew, excludes all spiritualizing explanation. "When the Son of man shall come," (and He will come with a heavenly Bride,) "THEN the Kingdom shall be likened to ten virgins."—[I take the liberty, however, of saying, that up to the present moment I still, notwithstanding the protest, believe what is protested against. The virgins did *go out* to meet the Bridegroom, and came back with Him. The Bride is not named, but I believe it here to allude to Jerusalem on earth. According to the writer himself, it is the Church who is to accompany the Son of man, though that expression is excluded from the best editions.]—Tr.

(2) This confusion between the reign of Christ, or of the heavens, and the administration of grace, will always give to the Papists an incontestable advantage over the Protestants, in the discussion of the pretensions which they precisely ground on this false interpretation of Matthew xvi. 19.

to those who have the thoughts of Christ, and who, being in Him, are kept by Him, is not (far from it) the Gospel of the grace now presented. The final preaching of the *everlasting Gospel* contains the last period of the three "woes" announced in Rev. viii. 13 by the angel, the precursor of the last trumpet. This period is that of the definitive judgments which are to introduce the Reign of God and the authority of His Christ. It is the *Reign* which is *everlasting;* and if the Gospel which announces this Reign is still called everlasting, it is that the thing it announces will have no end. "For in that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old, *that they may possess* the remnant of Edom and *all the heathen.*" Such, then, is the reign promised to the earthly seed of Abraham. It is a reign of the Jews, under the supreme authority of the true David and of His Bride; but I see nothing in this that answers to a spiritual millennium. "And I will dwell *in the midst of Jerusalem,* and Jerusalem shall be called the holy city." "Behold *a man* whose name is THE BRANCH; he shall grow up out of His place, (or branch up from under him,) and he shall build the temple of the Lord." Is not this the true David, He who has already shown all His power in raising, after three days, His body—the temple of all the fulness of God? And does this prophecy admit of a spiritualizing interpretation, that would make of Jesusalem the Church?" "*He Himself* shall build the temple of the Lord, and *He Himself* shall bear the glory, and sit and rule upon His throne." "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth in that day". . . . *He Himself*—over all the earth. Are these the quickening principles of the Gospel or the Holy Ghost? He that has an ear let him hear! (Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12, 13; viii. 6; xiv. 9.)

There is not in the whole Bible one single word that speaks of a *spiritual* Millennium, or of a pretended spiritual return of the Lord, either for the Church or the world.

The Holy Ghost has been sent from heaven since the ascension of Jesus, and it was He who testified immediately of the future sending again of the Son of man in person. (Acts ii. iii.) The disciples announced a future restoration of all things, not by the presence of the Holy Ghost, or by what is so improperly called a second Pentecost, but, "by the presence *of the Lord.*" The children of God will then be manifested with the Lord, present with Him in the liberty of the glory; not present or manifested in the Spirit, but present corporally in the glory; conformed to Jesus and like Him.

Acts iii. 21: When God *shall send Jesus Christ,* He will, no doubt, after the judgment, pour out His Spirit on all flesh, and *His glory* shall then cover the whole earth, but only then. We do not see that the sending and the presence of the Holy Ghost since Pentecost, have restored the least thing in the world, since the Holy Ghost in the Church serves to "convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," until the epoch of the return of the Son of man. We do not see that the Holy Ghost has subjected all things to Christ; but we see, on the contrary, the Son of man glorified, *waiting* till all His enemies be made His footstool; *waiting* for the moment when He shall set His foot on this footstool to tread under His feet kings in His wrath, and to break the nations as the earthern vessel of a potter is broken. That is the Gospel of the Reign; but is it a spiritual millennium?

In short, when God shall send Jesus Christ, all flesh shall see Him, even those that have pierced Him; but since the Holy Ghost has come down from heaven, the world receives Him not, *i.e.* because it sees Him not and does not know Him. (John xiv. 17.) To hope for what is called a new and more abundant out-pouring of the Holy Ghost, or to confound the accomplished promise of sending the Holy Ghost with that of the return of that same Jesus, coming again *in the same manner* as He went away," (Acts i. 11,) is to set aside the glory of Jesus as only begotten Son, as Heir. And further, what is not less grave, it is to set aside His actual presence in the Church in Spirit, since one confounds thereby *the principle on which we are united to Him,* with the act by which we shall take possession of the Kingdom conjointly with Him. If Jesus is present in Spirit in the Church, and this Church is in the world, Jesus cannot *come back* spiritually into the world; for one comes back only there where one has already been but where *one is no more.* In order that a spiritual return of Jesus in the world might take place, it would be necessary that His Spirit, which takes His place in those that are His, should leave the Church, and reascend into heaven; breaking thus the link which unites the Bride to the Son of God. Those then who teach a spiritual millennium or a spiritual return of Christ, deny virtually the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church. They impugn the glorified humanity of Christ and His rights as Messiah and Heir, as the posterity of Abraham. They deny also the personal return, and the manifestation of the redeemed to the whole renewed *creation.*

The force of the text in Acts i. 11, has certainly struck in a particular manner the mind of many powerful teachers at all times. Calvin, while putting off, according to erroneous tradition, the return of the Lord to *the end of the world,* says however: "That this coming is the hope of *the faithful here below,* and that this hope ought to check the troublesome desires of the flesh." And the same Calvin says, in his commentary on this verse, that "it is a frivolous thing to discuss, as St. Augustin, the question whether the Lord would come back in His own clothes."

Death often serves as a text, in preaching, to call sinners. It seems to me that one might as well, in cases like this, content oneself with the use of passages which go directly to the conscience, like the words of Jesus in Luke xii. 20, or such like. But people prefer to put forward the coming of the Son of man, which they confound arbitrarily with death. It is at least the sense that is generally given, in preaching the Gospel, to this warning: "Be ye ready, for in such an hour as ye think not *the Son of man* cometh." This applies to the world, and even to Church warnings which concern the witnesses of the interrupted reign and the witnesses of the time of the end. Thus Jesus, the Prince of life, becomes the King of terrors, hideous death which deprives us of those we love; Jesus becomes the wages of sin in the mind of the unbelieving hearers—He who has destroyed the works of the adversary and conquered the Prince of death! What does one gain in the conscience of unbelievers by such a lie? Nothing, for the natural heart may contemplate very quietly the coming of the Son of man. Every one, and above all those who speak thus, ought to know that a multitude of events come in between the present moment and that coming, so that such a delay, however vague, gives to the hearers time to realise their plans and carnal hopes.

When the saints are addressed with exhortations grounded on such a basis, it is forgotten that *the day of the Son of man* will not overtake us, because, as to the world, it comes as a thief in *the night,* but that we are children *of the day,* children of the light and of the resurrection, and because *in that day* we shall come back with Him, having already been made partakers of the Kingdom which cannot be shaken. And last of all, our Bridegroom is presented to us as a thief, and, instead of being kept vigilant through love, and through hope, we are stimulated through fear. (1 Thess. iii. 4.)

All these confusions have also led the Church into the hopeful chimera of "*the conversion of the world,*" as if the world, for whom Jesus does not pray, was designed to become, some time or other, the Bride of the Lord,—as if the final destruction of heaven and earth could be the reward of this pretended conversion of the world,—as if this destruction was not to be the fruit of the last revolt of the nations. If what the Scripture calls the reign of God was to be established spiritually by the conversion of the world to the Gospel of grace, we should have a *spiritual millennium,* in which the Lord would not be manifested with His saints to reign in person on the millennial earth. The millennium is to terminate by the

destruction of the heavens and of the earth that now are, and after that* there will be only one judgment, that of *the dead* before the great white throne, or the *eternal judgment.* (Heb. vi. 2; Apoc. xx. 11 and the following verses.) If the Church, as many teach, is to pass through that judgment before she is gathered to Christ to reign with Him personally, it is clear that, according to such false principles, the re-union of the saints to the Lord, and their manifestation in glory to reign with Him, could only take place when the heavens and the earth that now are no longer existed.

I do not think it worth while to contend with such an unscriptural doctrine, otherwise than through the light of the Word, such as I have already presented it in speaking of the rapture of the Church. The only thing that I shall add with regard to these confused notions, is the following remark on one of the errors which have the most encouraged them. As long as Satan is not bound in the bottomless pit, the reign of God and the authority of His Christ will not be established on the earth. And, as soon as Satan shall be loosed, the reign of the thousand years will be closed. If one retains this truth, this alone will preserve us from many dangerous illusions as to the coming of a spiritual reign.

I have mentioned here the error of those brethren who are expecting a spiritual return of Christ, in order to beseech them to ask of the Lord a clearer knowledge of those things of Jesus, which the Holy Ghost has undertaken to show us. "But ye, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware . . . and grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (2 Peter iii. 17, 18. Apoc. iii. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Heb. v. 12.)

Many works are undertaken in the vain hope of bringing about the reign of God by converting the world, but alas! the zeal which labours to obtain *the conversion of the world* by the preaching of grace, is founded on an error proceeding from ignorance of prophecy. Such a hope finds itself more and more disappointed by the increasing hardness of heart of the evangelical world. In spite of this, people persist in defiance of the evidence of facts. Instead of turning back and acknowledging that they have made a mistake, they continue in the false road.

It was with a very good intention, no doubt, but with a zeal without knowledge, that David set the ark of God upon a new cart drawn by two oxen, instead of having it carried by the Levites. (Deut. x. 8.) The consequence of these first steps of David in a false path was that Uzzah would sustain a work that God did not approve. Then came judgment. Uzzah died, and David, the chosen of God, lost immediately the greatest blessing that a believer can possess. He was deprived of the sense and enjoyment of the love of his God. (2 Sam. vi. 1 Chron. xiii. 12.)

Our intentions may be quite right, and even rest on a certain measure of truth; but it is only in a simple faith which honours the sovereignty of the Holy Ghost, that we shall find the spring of an intelligent activity, that seeks for souls to bring them to God through Jesus Christ, and that calls them wheresoever the Lord sends it, directing, drawing, and blessing it.

Scripture furnishes us with many proofs of the sad consequences which deference to the traditions of persons who are looked up to, the idolatry which consists in believing man rather than the Creator, the love of the world and the thoughts of our own carnal hearts may produce.

When the epoch fixed in the counsel of God came for visiting His people Israel, the Jewish nation expected Emmanuel, but expected Him *without intelligence,* because it was following the traditions of scribes, priests, and great ones who sat in their councils. The people on whom the name of God was invoked no longer knew how to discern either the signs of the times, or the seasons. This people was without faith, although possessing the oracles of God and His promises; although having prophets whom they no longer listened to. All obeyed commandments and doctrines of men, instead of following God whom they did not know, although they affirmed that He was their God. (John viii. 15.)

It is not surprising that the glad tidings, spread by the poor shepherds and by the wise men from the East, should have had no acceptance amongst a people thus disposed. So when the scribes, the priests and the chiefs, pressed by the questions of king Herod, had pointed out the place where the Christ was to be born, they took care not to go there themselves. As for Herod, he had only inquired *exactly* of the time and of the place, because he wished to put the King of the Jews to death.

Finally, the pride and lust of Herod having induced him to sacrifice John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus found Himself then alone and rejected. No traces were left of the joyful message of the faithful witnesses of His birth; one would have said that no one amongst God's people had heard the voice of the shepherds and of the magi, or that of Simeon, of Anna, and of John the Baptist.

The result of this state of people's minds is well known. It brought on finally the murder of the Holy and the Just, the rejection of Israel; and the indignation of the Lord reached its height.

As soon as we rest upon tradition, instead of listening to the teachings of the Spirit of God in His Word, every thing is upset, and Satan triumphs in the Church.

Amongst the Jews, the value of earthly property was in proportion to the distance or nearness of the jubilee, the year of rest and of liberty. The law said: "According to the number of years, (until the jubilee,) thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years, thou shalt diminish the price of it: for, according to the number of the [years of the] fruits doth he sell unto thee." (Lev. xxv. 16.) It is the same with the Christian: the things that are visible lose their value in his sight in proportion as he believes in this Word: "Yet a little, a very little while, and He who shall come will come, and will not tarry;" and, on the other hand, if the thoughts and the affections of the Christian are attached to the course of this world and to the things of the earth, his heart will be naturally disposed to receive the course of ideas which accord with the still distant return of the Son of man in judgment, rather than His coming quickly to take us into the liberty and repose of heaven.

The prospect of the consummation of the age and of the wrath of the Lamb, however distant it might be, still made the conscience uneasy; it did not leave sufficient latitude for all the plans for establishing oneself, and of aggrandisement and honour, which man likes to form and to set on foot for himself, *for his name,* for his family. And men have succeeded by degrees in putting in the place of this uncomfortable prospect a more vague, more convenient hope, which allows one to establish oneself honorably and pleasantly upon the earth, and to make provision for one's family. And hence all idea of the return of the Lord has been laid aside. Jesus has been dismissed into heaven for ever. Men have invented a spiritual return, a universal conversion, a Reign of the Gospel. All this keeps the Lord at a distance, and one may, provided there is a measure of effort, and of sacrifice for this pretended Reign, live comfortably enough here on earth. The life and the activity of Jesus lose much of their efficacy on the conscience, as soon as the scriptural and daily hope of His return is laid aside.

I have pointed out the confusion of mind that has been introduced into the Church, and through it also into the world, with regard to the Gospel of the Reign. I have endeavoured to point out the causes of this confusion. I have shown some of its fatal consequences; but on this last point there would be a great deal to say, which the confined limits of this little work force me to leave to the spiritual intelligence of brethren who reflect on these serious subjects. Nor is there indeed need of great penetration to see, in the actual walk of the sheep of Jesus, the fruits of the deplorable tradition which presents death or eternal judgment to them as their nearest interview

* Quere if it be after.—Tr.

with the Lord. It is not surprising either that the world, instructed by the Church to expect a mild reign, without a King, and a progressive improvement of humanity through the culture of grace, should be blinded as to the road it is following, and which leads it straight to judgment and to eternal ruin.

I close this in repeating, that in as much as it is true that Scripture often speaks of the *Gospel of the Reign*, so it is untrue to say that it ever speaks of *the Reign of the Gospel*, or of a spiritual reign of Christ by the principles of the Gospel.—(*To be continued.*)

TRANSLATIONS FROM "*L'ATTENTE ACTUELLE DE L'EGLISE.*"

IV.—The First Resurrection.—Luke xx. 17.

The subject on which I propose to address you this evening is the resurrection, and specially of the Church apart, the resurrection of the just, as entirely distinct from that of the unjust.

We have spoken of Christ, Heir of all things, of the Church as co-heir with Him, and of the coming of Christ before the thousand years, in order to reign—a coming which must not be confounded with the day of the resurrection of the unjust and of the judgment before the white throne, which will not take place till after the millennium. Now, we have to see the participation of the Church in this advent of Christ: it is what is effected by the first resurrection.

I need not speak to you of the resurrection of Jesus as being the seal of His mission: I regard it as an admitted truth. It suffices to cite for this first point Rom. i. 4, where the Apostle tells us that Jesus Christ has been "declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead." This resurrection was the grand fact which proved that Jesus is the Son of God; but it was likewise at the same time the grand theme of the preaching of the Apostles, the groundwork of their epistles, and of all the New Testament.

Let us say in passing, that the difficulty with regard to the subjects before us proceeds not from the Word of God not being simple, clear and convincing, but from the fact that, ordinarily, preconceived notions deprive us of its natural sense. Habits of thought exist, which are independent of Holy Scripture. Men bring ideas to the Word rather than draw them from it, and then they find inconsistencies because of the incompatibility of that which is presented, without suspecting that this incompatibility is only due to ideas altogether human.

The doctrine of the resurrection is important under more aspects than one. It links our hopes to Christ and to the whole Church—in a word, to the counsels of God in Christ. It makes us understand that we are entirely set free in Him, by our participating in a life which, in uniting us to Him, is also the spring of all strength for glorifying Him even from the present time. It establishes our hope in the most solid manner. Finally, it expresses all our salvation, inasmuch as it introduces us into a new creation, by which the power of God places us, in the second Adam, beyond the sphere of sin, of Satan, and of death. The soul, in departing, goes to Jesus, but is not glorified. The Word of God speaks of glorified men, of glorified bodies, never of glorified souls. But, as I have said, prejudices and human teachings have displaced the Word of God, and the expectation of the resurrection has ceased to be the habitual state of the Church. The resurrection was the groundwork of the preaching of the Apostles.

Acts i. 22. "Must one be a witness with us of His resurrection." This was the constant subject of their testimony. Let us see now the very terms of this testimony.

Acts ii. 24. "Whom God hath raised up." (Verse 32.) "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

Acts iii. 15. "And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses."

Acts iv. 2. This doctrine of the resurrection was recognized as the doctrine publicly preached by the Apostles; not that the soul, in dying, went to heaven,* but that the dead shall rise again. As the Pharisees were the most decided opponents of the Lord, whilst He was on earth,—that is to say, the falsely righteous ones, as opposed to the truly righteous One,—in like manner, after His death, Satan stirred up the Sadducees, who were enemies to the doctrine of the resurrection. (Acts iv. 1; v. 17.)

Acts x. 38, 40, 41. St. Paul testifies to this same fundamental truth before Cornelius, the centurion, and his friends. St. Paul preached it likewise to the Jews of Antioch, in Pisidia, (Acts xiii. 34,) saying: "And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead. . . . He said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David."

Acts xvii. 18, 30. He announced in the midst of the learned Greeks this doctrine, which was the stumbling stone of their carnal wisdom. Socrates and other philosophers believed in the immortality of the soul; but when these men, curious in science, heard of the resurrection of the body, they mocked. An unbeliever can discourse about immortality; but if he hears of the resurrection of the bodies, he turns the subject into derision. And why? because, by means of the immortality of the soul, he can exalt himself, he can raise his own importance. There is a something which attaches itself to man just as he is; but dust raised again! and a living and glorious being made of it—this is a work which belongs to none but God. God, and He alone, is capable of such a work; for if God, who has reduced to dust all the elements of the body, can reunite them anew, and make of them a living man, assuredly He can do all things.

See again Acts xxiii. 6, (whether the Apostle was right or not in appealing to the prejudices of the Pharisees,) where Paul directly affirms that it was for the preaching of this doctrine he was called in question. In xxiv. 15, he expounds the same truth; in xxvi. 8, he presents it to king Agrippa as the point in question; and so likewise verse 23.

From these passages, the resurrection is seen to be constantly the foundation of the preaching of the Apostles, and the hope of the faithful.

We come now to the second part of our subject—the resurrection of the Church apart, or the special resurrection of the just. There will be, says the Apostle, a resurrection of the dead, both of just and of unjust; but the resurrection of the just, or of the Church, is a thing altogether apart, which has no relation with that of the unjust, which occurs not at the same as this last, nor according to the same principle. For, although both the one and the other are to be accomplished by the same power, there is in the resurrection of the just a particular principle, namely, the dwelling of the Holy Ghost in them, which is foreign to the resurrection of the wicked.

Observe that the virtue of the resurrection embraces the life, the justification, the confidence, the glory of the Church. God Himself is presented to us under the name of "*God which raiseth the dead*" (2 Cor. i. 9)—who introduces His power into the last depths of the effects of our sin, into the domain of death, to bring out of it a life which, from that moment, puts man beyond all the baleful consequences of sin—a life near to God.

Rom, iv. 17, 23-25. It is in "God who quickeneth the dead" that we are called upon to believe. It is the resurrection of Jesus which is the power—the efficacy of our justification. This is the truth presented in the passage before us. Our union with Jesus risen gives us acceptance with God. We ought to see ourselves already as beyond the tomb.

On this account the faith of Abraham was a justifying faith; "he considered not his own body now (already) dead;" but he believed in a God "who quickens the dead;" for this reason, his faith "was counted to him for righteousness." The resurrection of Jesus was the great proof, and as to all its moral effects, the establishment of this truth, that the object of our faith is that God raises the dead. This truth is pointedly expressed in the first Epistle of Peter. (1 Peter i. 21.) The application is made to us by our union with the Lord.

Col. ii. 12. "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised Him from the dead." The Church is raised now, because Christ is raised as its head. The resurrection of the Church is not a resurrection whose object is judgment; it is simply the consequence of its union with Christ, who has been judged in its stead.

We see also in this passage how these truths hang together, The resurrection of the Church is a special thing, because the Church participates in the resurrection of Christ; we are raised, not only because Jesus Christ will call us from the grave, but because we are one with Him. It is by reason of this unity, that in partaking of faith, we are already raised with Christ, raised as to the soul but not as to the body. The justification of the Church is that it is risen with Christ.

This same fact is expressed in Eph. i. 18, &c., and ii. 4-6. St. Paul never said: "If I am saved I am content." He knew that it is hope which makes the soul active, which excites the affections, which animates and directs the whole man; and he desired that the Church should have the heart full of this hope. Nor is it enough for one of us to say: "I am saved;" it is not enough for the love of God, which is not satisfied unless we are participators of all the glory of His Son; and we ought not to be indifferent to His will.

Ephes. ii. 6 presents the same truth. The presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church, is that which characterizes our position before God. As the Spirit of Christ is our comforter, and helps us in our infirmities, testifying withal that we are children of God, and making us able to serve God, so it is on account of the Holy Spirit which is in us, that we shall be raised; and it is on account of the Holy Spirit also, that the principle of the resurrection of the Church is quite other than that of the resurrection of the wicked. Our resurrection, we say, is the consequence of the abiding of the Holy Ghost in us. (Rom. viii. 11.) Herein is the difference: the world does not receive the Holy Ghost, "because it seeth Him not neither knoweth Him." (John xiv. 27.) Now, "our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost;" (1 Cor. vi. 19;) our soul, in consequence, is filled, or at least ought to be filled, with the glory of Christ. Thus, our body, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost, will be raised according to the power of the Holy Ghost, which dwells in us; that which can never be said of the wicked.

It is the resurrection which, having introduced us into the world of the new Adam, (even now, as partaking of this spiritual life,) will introduce us, in fact, into a new world, of which He will be the head and the glory, since He has acquired it, and will reign there as the risen man.

You will observe in the passages concerning the resurrection, that those which refer to the resurrection of the just, speak of it always as of a thing distinct. All will rise; there will be a resurrection of the just, and a resurrection of the unjust, but they will not take place together.—(*To be continued.*)

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* [The author does not mean that the Apostles doubted this, but that the theme of their preaching was resurrection, and not the separate state of the soul.—Ed.]

REVIEW.

"It is Written;" or, Every Word and Expression contained in the Scriptures proved to be from God.—By Professor L. Gaussen. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons.

This is a second English edition, in a cheaper form, of the work well known among continental Christians under the title of "Théopneustie." Plenary inspiration is claimed for *the entire Scripture;* for, as the author justly observes, "it is with the book we have to do, and not with *the writers.* Belief in the inspiration of the *thoughts* might be dispensed with, whilst we may not dispense with the belief of that of the *language.* If the words of the book are dictated by God, of what consequence to me are the thoughts of the writer? He may have been dull of understanding, but that which came from his hands would still be the Bible; whereas, if the thoughts only are supplied to him, and not the words, it is not a Bible which he gives me—it is little more than a sermon." (Page 295.)

The soundness, however, of the author's use of 1 Cor. xii. and xiv., in pages 64-66, for clearing up the expressions *propheteia graphês,* (2 Peter i. 20,) may be well doubted. If the editor agrees with this doubt, he might append a note in a future edition. The professor seems to me unhappy also in his first example of bad translation. (Pages 176-178.)—Ed.

The Mystery of Providence; or, the Prophetic History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire: A Historical Exposition of Rev. VIII. IX.—By the Rev. T. R. Birks, Rector of Kelshall, Herts, and late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.—1848. London: J. Nisbet & Co., 21, Berners Street.

Mr. Birks' volume, as the title indicates, sketches historically the decline and fall of the Roman empire. Regarded thus, it is a valuable and faithful compendium, interspersed occasionally with the just observations which might be expected from the author.

Still, the work appears to me to be founded on a mistaken view of the internal structure of the Apocalypse, which is of course a very important preliminary question, before entering upon any of its details. As is commonly known, the nineteenth verse of the first chapter supplies the answer: "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be *metà taûta.*" The things seen (or chap, i.) form the first division; the seven Churches, with their epistles, are the things which are, (chap. ii. iii,) or second division; as the third embraces the rest of the book, (chap. iv.-xxii,) or the things which are about to happen after these. All hold that these seven churches existed as a matter of fact, and that the second and third chapters applied to them really and literally in the days of the Apostle. "Seven epistles then follow," says Mr. Birks, "addressed to the seven churches of Lydian Asia, and through them to the universal Church of all ages." (Page 4.*) They describe prophetically the prominent and varying phases of the Church and the Lord's judgment of her state as long as she exists on earth. But, if this is admitted, it is impossible, consistently herewith, to say with the author, in the next paragraph, "the rest of the book contains a series of visions revealing the things which should be hereafter, or from the days of the Apostle onward to the final judgment." And for this reason, if the seven epistles address and depict the Church, not only according to her actual condition when they were written, but through all ages of her course on earth, we are shut up in the conclusion that, *from this point of view,* the subsequent chapters only apply when she has disappeared from the scene below. Chapters iv.-xxii. (the first two being prefatory) are the things which should be *after these;* that is, after the prophetic sketch of the Church while on earth, given in chapters ii. and iii. It is true that, if you limit the application of the seven epistles to the literal churches of Asia, and to that era only, the prophetic visions commence from this, as the *terminus à quo;* but if it be allowed that they look onward to the Church universal in her earthly career, then "the things which must be hereafter" commence with the close of the Church's history here below. And why, I may ask of unbiassed Christians, who see the symbolic character of chap. iv.-xxii. and also of chap. i.—why are we to exclude the second and third chapters from this general analogy? Is there nothing in the "tribulation ten days" (ii. 10) but what is literal and local? Are the illusions to "the doctrine of Balaam," (ii. 14.) to "that woman Jezebel," (ii. 20) and to "the hour of temptation," (iii. 10) neither emblematical nor prophetic? Without denying, then, the literal application to the actual state of the Asiatic Churches, as they then were, the view which gives and extended sense to "the things that are," (so as to present a complete picture of the Church, from her appearance in the Lord's eye then, until her disappearance from the sphere of testimony altogether,) seems to me consistent with the general symbolical character of the book, as well as borne out by the minute, internal evidence of the epistles themselves.

The next leading enquiry is into the subdivisions of the third part, or the part which treats of the condition that follows the Church state. Few intelligent Christians have ever doubted the relative consecutiveness of the seals; (and so of the trumpets and vials;) in other words, the order of the opening of the seals indicates the order of the events represented by them. Their fulfilment is in a similar and regular succession. But Mr. B. contends, chiefly as it would appear because of the difficulties of the seventh chapter, that the seals and trumpets are two closely connected series of prophetic history, parallel in the times to which they relate, with distinct and appropriate symbols in each series that retain throughout their own proper meaning. Here I am compelled to differ with the author, and it is evidently a material question, affecting the application alike of the later seals and of the earlier trumpets. For once it is assumed that the palm-bearing vision brings you in its fulfilment, historically, to the close, the fifth and sixth seals will be inevitably accommodated to this idea; as, again, the warning preparation of the seven angels and the earlier trumpets will be supposed to recommence a survey, from a different aspect, of the ground already occupied by the seals. But if the latter vision of the seventh chapter refers, not by anticipation, but actually, in the course of events, to the final and "full triumph of divine grace," how comes it that the last seal is not yet opened? One might have admitted the reasonableness of this scheme, and the parallel relation of the trumpets to the seals, if the *seventh* seal, and not a parenthetic appendage to the sixth, had seemed to refer to the consummation, as it is clearly the case with the seventh trumpet. But, as the Word of God really stands, the idea seems inadmissible. According to the author's own showing, it is a parenthesis consequent upon the *sixth* seal, which answers to the *seventh* trumpet, so that the assumed parallelism will not bear a scrutiny. If parallel, we should have the *seventh* seal, as well as the *seventh* trumpet, bearing on the last crisis. But what does occur on the opening of the seventh seal? "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour," and the prophet sees the seven angels receiving seven trumpets; another angel at the altar ministers with a golden censer, and, upon the prayers of the saints rising up, mingled with the smoke of the incense, he takes the censer, fills it with the fire of the altar, and casts it into the earth, whereupon are thunderings, lightnings, voices, and an earthquake, and the seven angels prepare to sound. Clearly, then, if the principle of a consecutive series is confessed, and if acted on in the case of all the other seals, it is equally true of the seventh; but if true of the seventh seal, the fulfilment of the events foreshown by the trumpet-blasts begins *after the last seal is opened,* and not with the opening of the first seal, as the author supposes.

While I fully concur, then, with the author, that there is nothing in the vision itself to confirm the idea that a contrast is here intended between true and pretended saints, or the One true and the many false mediators,—

* The author *may* have meant no more than as all Scripture can be said vaguely to be addressed to the Church: if so, the remark was needless, for why should it be said of this rather than of the subsequent portion? If he did mean more, following Vitringa, More, Sir I. Newton, Gill, &c., the inconsistency urged in the text applies to all these writers equally with him.

while I believe that the theory of "allusive contrast" in general, so often and ostentatiously reiterated as a discovery in the "Horae Apocalypticae," is a notion without sound scriptural proof, as it has been applied in a manner altogether arbitrary; yet I cannot see that the author has made out a satisfactory case against the usual dates, according to the long period, assigned to the early trumpets by those who regard them as subsequent to the seven seals. His objection that the intercession of our Lord did not begin after the death of Theodosius, is of no weight, because, according to his own view, chap. viii, does not refer to the commencement of the Lord's intercessory work, but to a special season of intercession, which *he* dates from the fall of the temple. And how then could the seventh seal, or its consequences, be among the things which *should be hereafter?* The supposition makes the event to be past, instead of future; whereas, the plain words of Scripture speak of it as future, and not as past. But I need not reason further upon this misapprehension and many others, which are the result of the one great error; that is to say, the disarrangement of the true relation in which the trumpets stand to the seals. For, according to the confessedly true principle, that the seven seals are in orderly consecutive arrangement, whether one looks at the chain of narration or of fulfilment, it is evident the events predicted under the seventh seal *must follow* those which are shadowed by the sixth seal and by its accompaniments. But the pause of the seventh seal precedes the seven trumpets. "After a pause of solemn silence," says Mr. B., "a new series of emblems is introduced, and describes the succession of divine judgments," &c. (Page 6.) What, then, is the meaning of this solemn pause—a pause subsequent to the palm-bearing vision, and introductory to the sounding of the trumpets, and what is the corresponding era? It is no answer to say that the seventh follows in order of revelation. This is true, but the difficulty is unsolved; for, if the events which answer to the sixth seal are consequent upon those prefigured by the fifth, what plea is there suddenly to break a similar relation of the seventh seal to the sixth? But if the same relation subsists, the trumpets are successive to the seals, not parallel with them; and the author, admitting this, would feel that his application of the greater part, at least, of chap. viii. is necessarily erroneous.

Again, without going through all the links seriatim, and thereby showing how little the idea of a parallelism consists with the application actually given by its advocates to the seals and trumpets, how comes it to pass, if each trumpet in the succession of judgments harmonizes with each seal in the outline of the work of redemption—how comes it to pass that under the *fifth* trumpet (ix. 4) there should be found a distinct reference to the sealing that follows after the *sixth* seal? It is quite true, as the author states, that the distinctive symbols of the seals and of the trumpets are entirely different, and that this naturally suggests the idea that the trumpets form a new series; but this, with other internal marks, ought to lead us, not to the author's idea that the same era is gone over again from another point of view, but rather to infer that the Spirit of God contemplates a different epoch, with circumstances in many respects peculiar to itself. And the commission to hurt those men which had not the seal of God on their foreheads, establishes the fact, in my judgment, that the sealing of the seventh chapter had already taken place, which clearly could not be if the seals and the trumpets were really parallel in the times to which they relate.

There are several more minute and not unimportant questions on which I should have gladly commented, as, for example, on the second section of chap iii.—the meaning of the third part,—which Mr. B., taking in an *ordinal* rather than a *partitive* sense, refers to the Greek or eastern empire. But it seemed better to confine my remarks, for the present, to the larger inquiry as to the arrangement of the early visions, the ascertainment of which is so important to a right understanding of this wonderful book of God.—Ed.

HYMN.

O Lord, Thy love's unbounded!
So sweet, so full, so free!
My soul is all transported,
Whene'er I think on Thee!

Yet, Lord, alas! what weakness
Within myself I find,
No infant's changing pleasure
Is like my wandering mind.

And yet Thy love's unchanging,
And doth recall my heart
To joy in all its brightness,—
The peace its beams impart.

Yet sure, if in Thy presence
My soul still constant were,
Mine eye would more familiar
Its brightest glories bear.

And thus Thy deep perfections
Much better should I know,
And with adoring fervour
In this Thy nature grow.

Still sweet 'tis to discover,
If clouds have dimmed my sight,
When passed, Eternal Lover,
Towards me, as e'er, Thou'rt bright.

O guard my soul, then, Jesus,
Abiding still with Thee,
And if I wander teach me
Soon back to Thee to flee;

That all Thy gracious favour
May to my soul be known,
And, versed in this Thy goodness,
My hopes Thyself shall crown.

J. N. D.

A HOME, AND A HEARTY WELCOME.

There is a green grass blade,
And a lovely daisy blowing,
And a king-cup there,
And a primrose fair,
And all by the green grass growing;
And there I shall meet,
For my weary feet,
A home, and a hearty welcome.

And there is a noble bed,
Where many a prince has been lying,
And a rest for the head,
And a white sheet spread,
And a door to none denying:
And straight though it be,
There is room for me,
For a home, and a hearty welcome.

And I have been called to go,
When all the rest denied me;
Though dark, I know,
Is that chamber low,
And cold will the friends be beside me;
And though cold they be,
They are ready for me,
And a home, and a hearty welcome.

But there 'll be a window bright,
When the cock-crow gives his warning,
And the long dark night
Will break at the light,
And joy will come in the morning;
And I shall arise,
Through the flaming skies,
To a home, and a hearty welcome.

But, hark! 'tis the clarion sound,
Which calls us from our slumber,
And the hearts around,
From the dull cold ground,
Spring up in countless number:
And He bids us all,
To His golden hall,
To a home, and a hearty welcome.

For us He shed His blood,
To rescue us when strangers:
And His word made good
When by us He stood,
Through all our toils and dangers:
And now we rest,
At His royal feast,
At our home, with a hearty welcome.

No more away we'll go,
No more from Him we'll sever;
From our wand'ring woe,
In the vale below,
We rest with Him for ever.
In His world of light,
And His kingdom bright,
We've a home, and a hearty welcome.

THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL xii. 23.

No. 7.] MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 1849. [Vol. I.

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTERS XV. XVI.

THESE two chapters contain one and the same subject; namely, the vengeance of God. The seven vials are the vials of the wrath of God. They are still things preparatory. It is the wrath of God, and not yet that of the Lamb and His judgment. The seventeenth chapter is an episode on Babylon. The eighteenth chapter is the judgment of Babylon.

CHAPTER XV.

The things presented to us in this chapter do not form a continuation of those contained in the fourteenth chapter. We have *another* sign. It is the description of the last plagues by which God will consummate His wrath against the inhabitants of the earth. They are preparatory judgments, which invite men to repent, but which, after all, only provoke anger. We do not yet see the Lamb here; it is not the manifestation of Jesus in person.

Throughout the Apocalypse, we find the faithfulness of God towards His people before the execution of His judgments. No, it is impossible one hair should be lost, even if the faithful be killed. Satan can for awhile kill the body, but all his power ends there. The second and third verses set before our eyes the symbols of things very affecting. The circumstances of the scene allude to the service of the temple. The sea of glass recalls to mind the brazen sea in the temple. We have seen souls under the altar of burnt offerings. We are led here a little further to the laver, the brazen sea where the consecrated priests washed their feet, as Jesus washes the feet of those whom He has consecrated priests, after having been made a burnt offering for them. This brazen sea represents purity. The sea here is filled with glass that is as transparent as the water was in the brazen laver, but it is solid. It is purity, but not now employed as an instrument of purification; it is firm, unalterable, on which they stand. (Compare chapter xxi. 18.) In our contact with the world, we are always defiled. Our feet are on the earth. We are washed; but we walk on the earth that is defiled, and Jesus washes our feet. In the heavenly city, we shall walk on purity itself. The whole city is purity. That is the nature of heavenly things. Those that are in the city are in contact with the perfection of the purity of God. There is therefore no longer defilement nor purification. That is in the main what is seen in the elect (second verse); they stood on the sea of glass. There is, moreover, the fire, because they had gone through the judgments of God. They had come out of tribulation under Anti-Christ. (See xiii. 13–16.) They had conquered, conquered even unto death. They had also shown their faithfulness, and had not worshipped the beast. The faithful spoken of here form a distinct class. They are on a sea, as it were, of fire. In principle, this is the character of our tribulations. Water will not always suffice for the hardness of our hearts. Fire, chastisement, trial, becomes necessary; but trial would be of none effect if there was not the action of the Holy Spirit through the Word. If I correct my child, and he submits, the punishment ceases; if not, it continues. Therefore it is that we often see trials and chastisements continue. We must then ask and accept that the inward work be perfected, and then the trial will be removed.

In chastisements, the hand of God is applied to the soul exactly according to the state in which it really is. Abraham, being more faithful than Lot, escapes the sufferings of Lot. Lot's position was more trying. Unfaithfulness may be the occasion for God to manifest His ways, although he that is more faithful will be more blessed, at all events. Faithfulness (although displayed in circumstances from which more faithfulness would have kept us) does not fail to have its reward; but it takes place in the midst of more sufferings.

Verse 3. There are two subjects for praise. We may sing the wonders of God, *His works*, as this was the case in Israel; or else we may sing *the ways* of God, as it is the case with the Church. The Church has not known the plagues in Egypt, the Red Sea, Sinai: as events happening to herself, these things are written for her instruction. She has the knowledge of the ways and of the thoughts of God. In the Jewish state, when under tutors and governors (Gal. iv. 1–3), those things *happened* to them, but they were *written* for us: they were as children, they had need of palpable things. The Red Sea was not divided for us; but when Paul says "they were all baptized to Moses in the sea," I understand better than Israel what the Red Sea means, and I have in the event the knowledge of the intention and of the thought of God, which is evidently a much greater favour.

The faithful sing the song of *Moses* and that of the *Lamb*—the visible power of God over the Red Sea and in Sinai; and the glory of God in the Lamb, His faith and His obedience unto death, having been made subject for awhile to the power of the wicked: they sing the love of God, the ways of God, the glory of God, things manifested by His judgments, but concentrated in the cross of Jesus:* "How marvellous are all thy *works!* Thy *ways* are *ways* of justice and of truth!" The saints have here these two things before their eyes—the works of God, the manifested deliverance of His people, His judgments over the wicked—this is the *song of Moses;* the purpose and the counsels of God towards His people—this is the *song of the Lamb.* (Ps. ciii. 7.) "God has made known His *ways* unto Moses, His *acts* unto the children of Israel." Moses had seen on the mount the pattern of the things of God, the pattern of the tabernacle. The names given to God in the third verse are those of LORD, a name revealed to Israel—and of *Almighty*, a name revealed to Abraham. It is the works of God that these names recall.

We see in the fourth verse how the nations will be brought to God; namely, that His judgments will be fully manifested. Isaiah xxvi. 9, 10 displays the same principle, a principle which is essential to the understanding the ways of God in this respect. "Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness." This is what we have set forth to us in the Gospel; but when the judgments of God are upon the earth, the inhabitants of this world will "learn righteousness." Judgment will devour the wicked, and the earth will be instructed thereby. The effect of the Gospel will not be to render the inhabitants of the earth subject to God. The Gospel is to gather the Church for the heavenly glory. It is because the judgments are made manifest that the nations come and prostrate themselves before God.

Verses 5–8 open to us a new scene. The seven angels are clothed in pure and white linen; it is personal holiness. They have their breasts girded with golden girdles. *Gold* is the emblem of the perfect righteousness or justice of God. The *girdle* is the sign of activity in service, or of that government and of that power over ourselves which would render us fit to act, and by its very character to execute this righteousness. Christ also is girded with a golden girdle. Here, it is not grace that is in activity; it is the wrath and vengeance of God.

Jesus had said: "In your patience, possess ye your souls" (Luke xxi. 19)—a position of faithfulness while the testimony lasts. There will be a time when God alone will testify of Himself, without any man's testimony rendered to Him; it will be a testimony of vengeance, because His power and His righteousness have been despised by man.

* I have some doubt whether the song of the Lamb does not refer here rather to the exaltation of the Lamb in royal power and preferment in the latter day, than to His perfect work on the cross. The Lamb had been slain, but in the Revelation it is ever rather the place He who had been slain takes than His death that is in question. It is that suffering person that is brought forward. So here. Mercy and truth will then be met together; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Truth shall flourish out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. These are God's ways. No doubt this was morally accomplished on the cross; but that psalm speaks of its manifestation in result on earth, and so here. It is the manifestation on earth of these things rather that are sung, not that in which they are known to faith.

The vials are given by the four living creatures. The smoke from the glory of God is a testimony of power and majesty, but it obscures and hinders any relations with God, and no one at that time can draw near Him. God does not appear there either in the ark or in Christ, where He is reconciling man to Himself, and dwells in Israel. It is a time of majesty, and not of grace.

In the sixteenth chapter the vials are poured out. The prophetic earth is here the object of judgment; the earth where God made Himself known, and where He has been rejected. The vials of His wrath are to be poured out upon the impenitent inhabitants of that earth. When God alone can render a testimony to Himself, because every other testimony has been rejected, all the world must undergo the vengeance of God.

CHAPTER XVI.

You will recollect that we have been particularly occupied with those that are on the sea of glass, who escape the judgment, and are singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb. They had expressed in their song that the judgments of God were fully manifested; the angels come out of the temple for the execution of these judgments. We have distinguished between the wrath of God which falls on the earth, without Christ being manifested, and the judgment and the wrath of the Lamb manifested in person. The manifestation of the Lord Jesus and of His judgment is something quite distinct from the wrath of God; and when God has acted in His wrath, all is not over. God manifests solely His glory through the instruments He has chosen, and it is not then the time to enter into the temple. The wrath of the Lamb, which is subsequent to these events, falls on the beast, who is brought on the scene in a peculiar way after this.

Verses 1, 2. The scene is altered. Before, it was the beast who persecuted those that had not its image; now, God is acting, and smites those that had persecuted and such as had submitted themselves to the power of the beast. The sun here is only the supreme authority over the earth—that which shines on the earth and on this prophetic scene of judgments. The inhabiters of the earth had worshipped the beast and persecuted the saints and the prophets. When the vial of the wrath of God is poured out upon the earth, it strikes those who had worshipped the beast and received its mark. An allusion is here made to what took place in Egypt. A malignant and dangerous ulcer—misery and anguish reach those who would not bow down to the Lord Jesus, who preferred ease upon the earth and the lie of Satan. Thus it is that men blind themselves, and then God sends a judicial blindness. He hardened Pharaoh's heart and made fat the heart of Israel. God will do likewise to the world which calls itself Christian, and which is rejecting His warnings and despising His judgments. God gives them up to a lie, and then sends His judgments upon them. The end of the Christianized world is seen in the remaining part of the book. The more I read those passages, the more I am astonished how those who read them can do so without learning from them that all we see around us is coming to an *end*, and an end *in condemnation*.

Verses 3-7. The second angel pours out his vial on *the sea*, on the nations which are outside the prophetic earth. The earth is the theatre where things of a moral character in the creation are resolved. Infidels have often made a comparison between the importance of this earth and that of other stars; but in this they have only shown the folly of their wisdom. It is in *man* and in this *earth* that all moral questions of God's justice, and of His wisdom and of His love, are resolved. The importance of the battle does not proceed from the place where it is fought, but from the principles which it decides. Here it is that all which manifests the dominion of God and the power of evil is brought into evidence by the death and the resurrection of Jesus. During the time of the Jewish dispensation, Judea is the scene of the manifestation of God's ways; it is then called *the earth*. Now, the *earth* is Christendom, where God's ways were also displayed. The *sea* is the mass of the nations dispersed outside this prophetic earth. There is a universal judgment upon those nations. The rivers represent people made distinct the one from the other, as under the influence of certain principles. It is said, *the fountain of Jacob*.

The *blood* out of the body is death. Death is the character of the judgment which falls on those nations. Moses changed the water into blood. With regard to those mentioned here, the principle of their life and of their being before God, is death. They are given death to drink. They shed the blood of the saints, of the righteous, and God gives them up to death. (Verse 67.) The voice comes out of the altar, because it is there, so to speak, that the souls that have been persecuted, and of whom God is taking vengeance, were, so to speak, offered to Him. The expression, as the blood of a dead man, gives the most awful idea of death.

In the body is the blood, is the life. That which ought to sustain life becomes the expression of death.

Verses 8, 9. *The sun*, the power which rules over the earth, becomes intolerable, and scorches men as with fire.

Verse 10. When judgment comes alone, it does not produce repentance. God has had patience with the world, and this patience has delayed the return of Jesus. The apostles had been taught by God to wait for the return of the Lord Jesus. Man finds that the Lord delays His coming; but, when the Church holds this language, she begins to do her own will, and to enter into fellowship with the world. From the moment the servant says within his heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming," he beats his fellow-servants, and begins to eat and to drink with the drunken; he becomes unfaithful and worldly. It is true the Bridegroom does delay His return; nevertheless, we must wait; and those who are like men waiting for their master shall reap according to their expectation. If we give up waiting for Him, we prepare ourselves a part with the hypocrites. The waiting for Jesus was that which, at the beginning, detached the heart from the world, and rendered faithful. The Christian religion has made its way into the world, in consequence of this faithfulness and of this detachment from it. If we wish to act with power over a mass of men, we must be above their range of character; the Church is not to adopt the principles of men—she is to manifest God. The looking for the Lord is what distinguished the earlier Christians, and separated them from the world. Who will have the better part, those who have acted thus, or those who have said, My Lord delayeth His coming? As soon as such a language is held to us, a principle is proposed which falsifies our position as Christians. And although He does, in fact, delay His coming, yet those who are waiting for Him are fulfilling His intention, and those who do not wait for Him shall be made ashamed.

God has patience towards the world, and waits, because He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. But the judgment comes sooner or later. I see evidently that men oppose the doctrine of the coming of Jesus, or at least that they would wish to persuade themselves that He is not coming so very quickly. That is the principle of the unfaithful servant, and this principle leads the Christian to mix with the world; whereas, the looking for the coming of Jesus separates the Christian from the world. God has had patience. He has given warnings; and, when these judgments strike men, men blaspheme. When the will is not subdued, the heart is always made bitter through chastisements.

Verses 11, 12. The fifth angel smites the seat of the beast, not the beast itself. The irritation of man's heart against God has become excessive, and men gnaw their tongues in their phrensy. The kingdom of the beast, which had made such fine promises, is filled with anguish. It is even so now with God's enemies, their conscience is gnawing them.

Verse 12. The sixth angel pours out his vial upon the great river Euphrates. We see evidently that the beast is not destroyed, although its empire is rendered miserable. There is an interval here, as after the sixth seal and the sixth trumpet. The river Euphrates, which is the barrier of the prophetic earth, on the side of the east, is dried up. The barrier falls, and the kings of the east can enter. (Verse 12.)*

Verse 13 presents to us the direct power of Satan, the dra-

* "There is reference here plainly to the position of the Euphrates: it is not, I conceive, the kings of the east, but the kings who came from the east, τῶν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν ἡλίου. This drying up of the great river Euphrates prepared their way. I suppose from other passages the Euphrates will, at any rate temporarily, be dried up for Israël to pass over, but I do not see that this passage applies to it in the midst of a symbolical prophecy, the vial being said to be poured out on it. It is commonly, from a previous passage, considered that it is the drying up of the Turkish power: it may be so, or at least there may be something analogous, taking the whole chapter in a subordinate and preparatory sense, which I believe it has had, and is having in our own days, as I have expressed of other chapters, only over a longer period. Such application I believe this chapter has had; and this falls in consistently with the whole plan of the protracted scheme of prophecy, because the second beast loses its character as a beast, and becomes a false prophet before the final close. The saints in the fifteenth chapter had their victory over the effort to make them worship the image of the beast; but it was the second beast, not the false prophet, who sought to make them worship the image of the first; but here he has the character of the false prophet, so that thus far

gon, the direct enemy to Jesus, the Christ; the power of the beast, the Roman Empire in its state of revolt against God; the power of the false prophet. Unclean spirits proceed from them and go to the kings of the earth. All that which governs and directs in the earth will be gathered by these three unclean spirits. It is not then Christianity that will embrace the world by its influence; on the contrary, it is the diabolical influences which gather the inhabitants and the powers of the earth. It is very evident that unclean spirits are not the Gospel; and there is not a greater illusion than to believe that the Christian religion will extend to, and embrace, the world. It is undoubtedly through judgments that the knowledge of the glory of the Lord (not the knowledge of His grace) shall cover the earth. (Habak. ii. 14.) It is easy for man to say: *we* shall fill; but this is not said. It is written: "For the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD." This does not mean that the Gospel is not to be preached. If I believe that the judgment will come quickly, and fall on Christendom, this will urge me to bear testimony according to the mind of God, and not according to the illusions of men. See the judgment that is coming, and seek with all your might to draw sinners away from the wrath to come. When we see infidelity more and more openly manifested, and a testimony designed to rescue men from the ways of wickedness, it is a proof that judgment is drawing nigh. If three thousand souls were converted in one day, it was because Jerusalem was going to be given up.

The fifteenth verse contains another warning. I do not know anything satisfactory as to the word Armageddon, mentioned in the sixteenth verse. Compare Judges v. 19, and 2 Kings xxiii. 29; but the first passage rather.

We see from the 17th to the 21st verses the great upsetting and confusion of the nations. All that which seems strongest and most elevated (mountains) is overthrown. A direct judgment from God falls upon man. All the foundations of the earth, as a system half moral and half civil, are thrown down. What a blessing for the Christian to have assured peace, to know that having kept the word of the patience of Christ, he shall also be kept from the hour of temptation, and the more the storm is raging outside, the more there is calm and tranquility in the house of God! We have on our side the immutability of the throne itself, from whence proceed these judgments, and these judgments do not touch us. This is the joy of the child of God. The peace of God keeps him in the midst of the awful time coming on the world.—(*To be continued.*)

THE TESTIMONY OF THE END.

III.

OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE END.

§ I.—THE CONSUMMATION OF THIS AGE, AND THE AGE TO COME.

I KNOW that this subject is surrounded with many difficulties in its details. Far from wishing to force my thoughts on any one, my only desire has been to awaken amongst Christians the feeling of the need of studying this subject, while facilitating to them therein by the general sketch of what I believe to be conformable to the Word, as to the final testimony which is about to be given to the everlasting Gospel.

We shall never know but in part, and here on earth very imperfectly; this is particularly obvious in our ignorance of holy prophecy. Nevertheless, in studying it, we are obeying God, who says to us: "Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophecy." (1) The revelation of hidden things is of grace and a fruit of the love of our God, who would have us to know the future history of the world, the Church and heaven.

(*i.e.* in principle) the victory had been obtained, and could be celebrated by the Spirit, for the Church. But when we come to a more positive fulfilment of judgment, and the actual bringing it into effect, on the separation of the saints out of the scene, and the closing the testimony of grace which gathered into the heavenlier, then there must be something more distinct, something which makes way for the eastern kings to take their part in the great catastrophe. The barrier and resources of the western Roman empire were dried up, so that the way for this coming in of the kings of the east was prepared. Thereon it is that the unclean spirits go out, to gather the kings of the whole world to the battle of the great day of God Almighty."—*Same author.*

(1) [This is given literally from the French, though others may judge that the ordinary English version is more in accordance with the thought of the Spirit.—ED.]

The witnesses who shall preach the Reign towards the consummation of the age, will receive, in a particular manner, "the spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus." (Apoc. xix. 10.) And this spirit will be a powerful help in penetrating into the counsels of God, through the veil, of which only a corner is lifted up for us in the Word. These witnesses will stand in a very simple position, because unaccomplished prophecy will then be found disentangled from all the events which are at present still connected with the Church in the world.

The Gospel of the Reign proclaims the resuming of the government of God over men. This Reign is divided into two periods: first, the personal and mediatorial Reign of the Son in power over the renewed world. This is "the Reign of God and the power (authority) of His Christ, (1) an epoch essentially transitory, or the first act of the eternal Reign. (2 Peter iii. 8.) It is with this first period that we are here, in a special manner, occupied as to its introduction and nature, and the testimony which proclaims the glad tidings of it. Secondly, after all things shall have been either reconciled or subdued, and after the judgment of the dead and of the rebellious (all things being made new), the Reign of God will continue over the new creation, which alone will remain. In this new creation, come forth then from its state of birth, God, without mediator, shall be all in all." (2)

At the first coming of Jesus, He brought with Him the deliverance of the people Israel; "glory to God in the highest; on earth peace; good will toward men." When the Lord shall have trodden under foot the earth and His enemies in judgment, when His inheritance shall be purified from all that offends, the throne of God will be established at Jerusalem. Then the Jews, converted (3) by the sight of Christ, will inherit the spiritual and earthly promises made to Abraham. They will have dominion over the whole earth. For if the diminishing of them has been the riches of the nations, how much more their fulness? The re-establishment of the people of God will be for the nations a resurrection from amongst the dead. The return of the Son of man will bring in the Reign of glory and righteousness on the earth. Justice will take cognizance of evil to cut it off. (4) Satan being thus bound, the irremediable corruption of man will be fully demonstrated by this last test. The flesh which had turned away from God, which had prospered under the law, and which, during eighteen centuries, had hardened itself against grace, will finally revolt against glory and righteousness. To close all, Satan having been loosed, (5) the nations will revolt against the empire of the mediatorial Lamb, against the earthly metropolis of God, and against the camp of the saints. (Apoc. xx. 7-11.)

What Jesus calls *the regeneration*, that is to say, the re-establishment of all things, by the presence of the Son of man, seated on the throne of David His Father, will be preceded by all the signs described in Matthew xxiv., and by the judgment of the living nations. (Matt. xxv.) Although perhaps some of the events predicted by the Lord have had a partial fulfilment at the time of the ruin of Jerusalem, nevertheless these things have never yet been fully accomplished; never has the sign of the Son of man yet appeared to the remnant in distress; never yet has the remnant been delivered; never has the Son of man come in His glory. (Luke xxi. 28, 36; Matt. xxiv. 23-32.) If, besides the passages quoted on this subject, any one studies 1 Thess. v. 1-6, 2 Thess. ii., and the numerous parallel passages, he will see that many important events are to take place before

(1) Apoc. x. 7; xi. 15-18; xv. 1-5; xii. 10; xix. 1-7. Eph. v. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 24-26. John xviii. 36. Heb. i. 6; ii. 5. Luke i. 33. Matt. xiii. 19; xix. 28. Dan. ii. 44; iv. 3; vii. 4.

(2) Col i. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 26-29. Apoc. xxi. 1-7. 2 Peter iii. 13. Heb. xii. 22-24.

(3) See note to page 28.—Tr.

(4) Ps. xciv. 15; ci. 5-8. Apoc. ii. 26; xii. 5; xix. 15. Isaiah xi. 5; xxviii. 17.

(5) Ps. xlvii. The five first verses give the description of the millennium and of the submission of every people to the Jewish nation. This has never yet taken place. The sixth verse has for its types Gen. xviii. 33, xix. 13, 24. "The Lord is gone up with a shout of joy. The Lord is gone up with the sound of a trumpet." The tenth verse indicates, I think, the assembling of the camp of the saints around the beloved city, which is Jerusalem. (Apoc. xx. 19.) "The princes of the people are gathered together near the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God. He is greatly exalted." (Ps. vii. 7.) "Let the assembling of the people surround thee, and then return thou to a place elevated far above it." (De Wette, Calvin, Diodati.)

I see in this a last manifestation of the truth of 1 John v. 19. There will be yet at that time two marked by separate camps—the saints and the adversaries. The Lord will give up the wicked to their wickedness. He goes up on high to draw thither the faithful after their separation on earth, and before its destruction and that of the adversaries.

the return of the Son of man. The Apocalypse, from the fourth chapter, presents a detailed development of the signs announced by the Lord: it supposes everywhere the Jews re-established in Judea as at the time of the Saviour, the temple rebuilt, and all the course of Judaism resumed. The Apocalypse was written more than twenty-six years *after* the ruin of Jerusalem by Titus, that is to say, after the present dispersion of the Jews. Now, the Spirit of God calls the prophetic contents of the Apocalypse, "the things which shall be after these;" that is to say, after the things which concern the Church. (Apoc. i. 19; iv. 1.) "The great tribulation," the unparalleled temptation which is to come upon all the habitable earth, or on all the monarchy of the fourth beast (the Roman empire); afterwards, the final and complete gathering of the elect people of God, now dispersed to the four winds of heaven: none of these things has yet taken place. All this is connected with the resuming of government towards Israel by God. These things will take their course when the seventieth week of Daniel shall come, of which the accomplishment is postponed until the administration of grace and the exercise of the indignation of God against His people. (Hosea iii. 4. Dan. ix. 25, 26; xi. 33.) As for the Church, her rapture will be, for those "that are wise" of the end, a true sign of the times. (Apoc. iii. 10.)

"The end," or "the consummation of the present evil age," will not come before all these things have been fulfilled. (Luke xxi 9, 28. Matt. xxiv. 3, 6, 13, 14; xxviii. 30.) "The Reign of God and the authority of His Christ," instead of being established before "*the end*," can only be so after "the end." The consummation of the age is quite a different thing from "*the end of the world*"—an expression which is also the fruit of theological confusion, and which is found nowhere in the Word. The heavens and the earth, renewed for the millennium, will only pass away *after* the mediatorial Reign of the Son of man; but before this Reign comes, the existing age must be finished. "The times of the nations (Gentiles) must be fulfilled." I understand by this expression that the dominion of the fourth beast, or of the Roman empire over Jerusalem and over the prophetic earth, ceases at the coming of the wicked one. Antichrist shall be a new beast, grafted on the Roman beast, and which will take its place by continuing it under a theocratic form. (Rom. viii. 21; xi. 25. Acts xiii. 47-50. Matt. xxiv. 14; x. 22. Mark xiii. 7, 8, 13. Ps. x. 16.)

Amongst the signs of the end of the age which are to precede the return of the Son of man, I put, in the first place, after the rapture of the Church, the pure preaching of the Gospel of the Reign. (Matt. xxiv. 14.) When this preaching shall be resumed "*as a witness*," it will then be a sign of the times, and the time of signs will come. (Apoc. xiv. 6.) I insist on the force of the very remarkable expression, "*as a witness*," or "for a *witness*," or "for *witness*."

This expression always includes the idea of stopping a person's mouth, of taking away all excuse from those who, having seen or heard a truth, have rejected it. Heb. iii. 5: "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a *testimony* (witness) of those things which were to be spoken after." Now, Moses bore witness to the future Reign of the Christ, and to the law which condemns transgressors. (James v. 3.) *The rust* (Fr. *venin*, venom) of riches will stand "as a witness" against the avaricious, and shall devour their flesh like a fire."

(Luke v. 14. Mark i. 44. Matt. viii. 4.) The Word of the Lord having been rejected, His miracles remained silent witnesses, which attested that "the powers of the age to come" (1) acted through Jesus. The generation which saw those things and rejected the sent One of God, and those whom He established after Him, shall never be forgiven. (Mark iii. 30. Luke xi. 13-15. Matt. ix. 34. Mark iii. 21, 22. Matt. xxi. 23.) These acts of power were granted to the Jews as a corroboration of the presence and word of the Son of God, and they shall be remembered against them "as a witness" and in condemnation in the day of their judgment.

The first essay at evangelisation, made by the witnesses of the remnant of the Kingdom, consisted, as to preaching, in a call to conversion and to the reception of the Reign of God in the person of Christ. The evangelists of the Reign of God, sent by the Master with the power of working miracles, received this order: "And whosoever shall not receive you nor hear you, when ye depart *thence*, shake off the dust from your feet for *a testimony* against them." (Mark vi. 11, 12. Luke ix. 2, 5.)

(1) Heb. vi. 5. Luke xix. 37. Mark vi. 2, 5, 11. Matt. xiv. 2, &c.

Now, the cities of Israel, peopled by the children of Abraham, are not yet gone through; they were not converted by this first testimony of the faithful remnant. The testimony to Jesus of Nazareth will not be received there before the return of Christ in person; for they will not be converted, or repent, as a nation, until their eyes shall see Him. (1)

After that first essay of evangelisation in testimony, the disciples learnt from Jesus, that before coming in His Reign, He must suffer and enter into His glory. They expected and preached the time of the regeneration, (2) when they shall be seated on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Matthew x. 13, Mark xiii. 9, Luke xxi. 13, have had a beginning of accomplishment in the persons of the first witnesses after the ascension of the Lord, that is evident; but all is not yet accomplished of them, looked at in that light. Although Paul and John have also been witnesses before many kings, peoples, and tongues, to declare to the nations all the counsel of God, (3) I repeat that the Gospel of the Reign of God, *solely as such*, will be resumed "for a witness" before the consummation of the age by a special remnant, which will be found again in the position of one who heard the prediction of these things out of the mouth of the Lord Himself. (Matt. xxiv. 14; Apoc. xiv. 6.) "And *this Gospel of the Reign* shall be preached in all the habitable earth for a witness unto all nations; and THEN shall the end come."

I believe that it is with this powerful testimony, borne solely to the eternal Gospel, that the wise (les intelligents) of Daniel (Dan. xi. 33, 35; xii. 3, 10; Jer. xxiii. 20) will be occupied "in the latter days." (Ps. xcvi. &c.)

When in the days of Noah the wickedness of men was nearly reaching its height, God made of this holy patriarch *a preacher of righteousness*, charged to announce the awful judgments which were about to fall on a rebellious and corrupted world. The voice and the example of Noah were lost in the desert of the world; the family of the witness alone was saved. "So shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." The voice of God will make itself heard in the midst of heaven, (4) and in all creation, by means of the messengers whom He has set apart for this office: "Fear God, for the hour of *His judgment* is come." Behold, the great day of the wrath (5) of the Lamb has come, and who can stand? Woe! woe! woe! to those whose affections are on the earth! Behold, the day of the Lord is drawing near, burning as an oven! A day of darkness and of gloominess! The great and terrible day which the Lord has made! (6) And this will be the result of the testimonies of the end. "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not; . . . and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail." (Apoc. ix. 20; xvi. 20.) Now, these plagues are announced by the Spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus in the Apocalypse, and I think that the preaching of the witnesses of the end will be particularly based on the written *Revelation*, although with a more extensive intelligence of its contents than that which we at present have. Peter (not taking into account here his reception into the body of Christ) was in a position very analogous to that of the active witnesses who will be established towards the end of the age, to announce the return of the Son of man and the resumption of the Reign of God and of the authority of His Christ on the earth. Notwithstanding all his protestations (Luke xxii. 33), Peter had not been capable of following the Son of God in His death; none was to taste that cup before His lips had changed into sweetness for the saints the bitterness with which it was filled for Him alone. But afterwards this same Peter received from the risen Lord the command to follow Him. (John xiii. 37; xxi. 20.) The way opened by Jesus on earth and from the earth

(1) Luke xiii. 35, &c.

(2) Matt. xix. 28. Isa. i. 26. Ps. cxxii. 5. Isa. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22.

(3) Acts xx. 26; ix. 16. Apoc. x. 11. Ezek. iii. 6.

(4) Μεσουράνημα Rev. viii. 13; xiv. 6; xix. 17, properly *meridian*, or the *midst of heaven*, in the sense of the space which is between heaven and earth.

(5) This last is only accommodated, because these are the words of the kings, &c., in chapter vi —Tr.

(6) It is not necessary to say that I do not at all doubt of the reality of the special and *heavenly messenger* announced in the Apoc. xiv. 6; and perhaps he is connected with the sign of the Son of man (Matt. xxiv. 30); but this would lead me beyond the limits I have prescribed to myself.

to heaven, had become the way for Peter. "Follow me, said Jesus to him, to signify by what death he should glorify God." (John xxi. 19; compare xviii. 32.)

I see then, as I have explained in the introduction, three distinct classes in the testimony borne to the Reign in general: The Church who waits for the Bridegroom, and ought to proclaim the King; the violent, who take the Kingdom by force through difficulties and persecutions; and the remnant of patient ones, who will wait for the signs of the end and the return of the King.

§ II.—IN WHAT CHARACTER AND IN WHAT MANNER JESUS WILL BE MANIFESTED TO THE WORLD—IN WHAT MANNER HE WILL COME BACK—WHERE, AND WHEN HE WILL COME BACK.

What is Jesus our Saviour now doing? He is praying for His own, and *He waits* till the Father sends Him as the Lamb, the King of the kings of the earth, as Heir, as THE SON. What is the faith that looks to Jesus to do? Faith is *to wait* also, for it is governed by [its object—that is] its author and finisher. The Church waits for its reunion to Jesus, in order to be brought back with Him, when God "*shall again bring in* the first-begotten into the habitable earth to come, of which we speak." (Heb. i. 6; ii. 5. Greek.)

Jesus shall then come back as a Conqueror and as a Judge, no longer distinctively in grace. For "God has given Him authority to execute judgment also, *because He is a Son of man*, or *Son of man*," (1) whereas, at His first coming, Jesus had not been sent *either to judge or to reign in power, but to save.* (2) This subject has already been treated of in several parts of this essay, but it was well to establish the force of the passage in Acts i. 11: "*This* Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come" . . . . The text has almost the strength of "*this same Jesus*, (3) which has been taken up from you into heaven, shall come *so—in the same manner—as* you have seen Him go into heaven." "And every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him." That return will then be personal and visible to the eyes of all flesh. Jesus will be borne "on the clouds," accompanied with all His saints who are in ten thousands, and with the angels of His power. (4)

The mode of the return of Jesus on the earth, at the beginning "*of the age to come*," will be quite the opposite of that of His first coming in grace. When the Word came among His own, bringing grace and truth, Jesus could say to the Pharisees: "The Reign of God *cometh* not (5) with observation: it shall not be said, Lo (he is) *here* or *there;* for the Reign of God is *in the midst* (6) of you. And afterwards to Pilate: "I am a King; to that end was I born;" "*but now* my Reign is not of *this* world." The pride of the Jews could not accept of a King coming to them, "meek and lowly, and sitting upon an ass, and upon *the colt of a beast of burthen*," in feebleness, as the despised and the rejected of men.

But this very Word of God shall come again to earth, full of majesty, having on His head many diadems, mounted on a white horse, as a sign of victory and triumph. It is the Faithful and the True who *judges* and makes war in *righteousness*. Jesus will come back to the same mount of Olivet from which He went up. (Isa. iii. 13, and the whole of the iv. Zech. xiv. 3, 4. Acts. i. 11. Joel iii. 2-12. Deut. xxxiii. 2. Habak. iii. 3, shall come. Zeph. iii. 8-19. Zech. xii. Micah v. 4.)

"And His feet shall stand on that day on the mount of Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, on the east." "Let the nations come forth, and go up in the valley of Jehoshaphat (at the foot of mount Olivet), for then will I *sit to judge* the nations round about." "For the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle." "And before Him shall be gathered all the nations." (Matt. xxv. 32.)

The epoch of this return is unknown and sealed to the disciples. The words "the time is at hand," are addressed in the Apocalypse rather, I think, to the Bride who is waiting for her Beloved, than to the faithful remnant of "the end." The time will be at hand then for the witnesses of the Kingdom, who will nevertheless always, in His Word, have a light by which to recognise their path, and the signs of the times will not overtake unawares those who have "the Spirit of prophecy and the testimony of Jesus." "But of *that day* and of *that hour* knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father." It is not *for you* to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His *own* power." (1)

These words were addressed to the remnant of the Kingdom, not only with a view of suppressing an idle curiosity, but, above all, with a view of maintaining the disciples in vigilance, in prayer, and in the activity of the mission which was entrusted to them.

NOTE B.

The word *ἐντὸς* is not found, as a preposition, except in Luke xvii. 21; and, preceded by the article, *τὸ ἐντὸς*, Matt. xxiii. 26. Wahl quotes the LXX. to support the translation "*among you*," "*in the midst of you.*" Pape says *drinnen, innerhalb*, "*in the midst of.*"

I do not deny that this word also signifies *within*, but I say that in this it is quite similar to *ἐν*, which ought to be translated, and which has been frequently rendered "*among.*"

ἐντὸς γίγνεσθαι, to come within, ἐντὸς τείχους . . . μάχεσθαι, to fight *within its walls, within the space* described by the walls . . . . of the city.

But I go farther, and I translate here: "For behold the Reign of God is *within your reach.*"

E.g. *ἐντὸς βελῶν; within the reach* of the arrows; *in reach* of the arrows. *ἐντὸς τοξευμάτων in the circuit, in the empire,—in reach* of the arrows of the bow.

ἐντὸς τῶν ἑαυτῶν μητέρων τρέφεσθαι, to be trained up *among* the mothers, at home.

As to the meaning of Luke xvii. 21, it coincides with Matt. xii. 28, Luke xi. 20, *ἔφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς*. "The Reign of God is come unto you *first.*" The verb *φθάνω*, signifies literally "to reach first," "to come at first," "to anticipate, to go before-hand." And this force of the verb *ἔφθασεν* suits here, if you compare Acts iii. 26; xiii. 46; i. 8. Luke xxiv. 46. Rom. i. 16; ii. 9, &c., and all the passages which prove that the Reign and the salvation had been brought, *in Jesus the Messiah*, to the Jews *first.*

One cannot overlook, in Luke xvii. 21, the persons whom the Lord addresses. The Pharisees had seen the Reign of God which had come nigh to the Jewish nation first, that Reign which, in the person of Messiah, was in the midst of them "*without observation.*" But the Pharisees stand there as adversaries, and because of their unbelief one was not to say, at that time, at His first coming: "Behold, He is here; or, Behold, He is there," Whereas, later, if any comes to those adversaries in his own name, seeking for the glory of man, him they will receive.

It is then because He speaks to Pharisees that are blind, that Jesus says to them in the present tense: "The Reign of God *cometh* not with observation." Now and because of your wickedness, "it shall not be said, Behold, He is here, or He is there. For behold, the Reign of God is *among* you, or is within your reach." But you reject it, as your own question proves.

There is a very strong opposition between these reproaches addressed to adversaries, grounded upon their present obstinacy and its consequences, and the warnings which the Lord gives immediately after "to the disciples" in turning to them. This faithful remnant had received the King, and had been made worthy and capable of inheriting the Reign and of testifying against the adversaries until the return of the Christ. "*Then* He says *to the disciples*:" Jesus here speaks no more in the present tense, but He prophesies to them that are wise: "The days *will come* when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, but ye shall not see it." You will desire to see Him who speaks to you, but you shall not see Him any more. Whilst these Pharisees prevent as a present thing that one should say the truth, in crying aloud: "Behold, He is here," they themselves will cry, "*then*," in the time of Antichrist, when you shall be in the tribulation at the end. "And *they*

(1) John v. 27. Compare Luke ix. 56. John iv. 42; vi. 33, 51. 1 Tim. ii. 4. 1 John ii. 2; iv. 14.

(2) John iii. 17; v. 22, 25; xii. 31, 47, 48; xviii. 36. Acts x. 42; xvii. 31. Apoc. xix. 13.

(3) The English reader knows it is so translated in the English version. I have left the passage as it stands, as shewing the author's view.—Tr.

(4) I only cite here a few passages, on account of the richness of the subject, but the reader may further consult, among others, Rev. i. 4, 7. Zech. xii. 10. Matt. xxiv. 30; xxv. 31; xxvi. 64. Mark ix. 7; xiv. 62. Luke xxi. 27. John xix. 34, 37. Dan. vii. 13. Isa. xl. 5. Jude 15. Rev. xix. 6-16: 2 Thess. i. 7-11; ii. 8, and the parallel passages.

(5) Not "*shall* not come."

(6) On the sense of the word *ἐντὸς*, see Note B, at the end.

(1) Acts i. 7. Matt. xxiv. 36; xxv. 13. Mark xiii. 32. Luke xxi. 34-36; xvii. 26, 31. Read 1 Thess. v. 1-12.

shall say unto you, to you who are the faithful witnesses, they shall say unto you, that which they refuse to say as a present thing: "Behold, He is here." "But do not go out then, and do not follow them." (Compare verses 21, 23.)

It is then on account of the grammatical sense, and the prophetical sense, and the context, that I insist strongly on the literal translation: "For behold, the Reign of God is in your reach, or among you."—(*To be continued.*)

TRANSLATIONS FROM "*L'ATTENTE ACTUELLE DE L'EGLISE,*

IV.—The First Resurrection.—Luke xx. 17.

(*Continued from page* 46.)

I will cite the passages successively that refer to it.

It is at the coming of Christ that the Church will rise. (Phil. iii. 20, 21. 1 Cor. xv. 23.)

The idea of a resurrection of the just was familiar to the disciples of the Saviour; and as such it is represented to us in Luke xiv. 14, "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

But, before coming to direct proofs, I would express the full conviction that the idea of *the immortality of the soul* has no source in the Gospel; that it comes, on the contrary, from the Platonists, and that it was just when the coming of Christ was denied in the Church, or at least began to be lost sight of, that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul came in to replace that of the *resurrection*. This was about the time of Origen. It is hardly needful to say that I do not doubt the immortality of the soul; I only assert that this view has displaced the doctrine of the resurrection of the Church, as the epoch of its joy and glory.

Luke xx. 35, 36. "They which shall be counted worthy to obtain that world (αἰῶνος) and the resurrection from the dead." The resurrection, then, mentioned here, belongs only to those who shall be made worthy of it. "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world," that is to say, that world of joy—of a reign with Christ. This resurrection of the dead, then, belongs to the period spoken of, and not only to eternity. "Neither," adds the Lord, "can they die any more . . . . . for they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." The wicked shall be raised to be judged, but these others shall be raised, because they have been accounted worthy to obtain the resurrection which Jesus has obtained. We see, in the passage quoted, the proof of a resurrection which concerns the children of God alone; they are the sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. To be a son of God, and to have part in this resurrection, are the title and inheritance of the same persons.

John v. 25–29: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to exercise judgment also, because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." People oppose the latter part of this passage to the view of a resurrection of the just apart; but we shall see that the entire passage enunciates, and even explains and strengthens, the truth which is occupying us. Two acts of Christ are presented as the attributes of His glory; one to make alive, the other to judge. He gives life to those whom He will, and all judgment is entrusted to Him; in order that all, even the wicked, should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. Jesus has been outraged here below; God the Father takes care that the rights of His glory shall be recognised, He gives life to those whom He will; to their souls first, then to their bodies. These glorify Him of good will. As to the wicked, the way of vindicating the rights of Jesus in their case is to judge them. In the work of vivification, the Father and the Son act together, because those to whom life is given are to be in communion with the Father and the Son. But as to the judgment, the Father judgeth no one, because it is not the Father that has been outraged, but the Son. The wicked will honour Jesus Christ in spite of themselves, when they are judged. At what epoch will these things be accomplished? They will be, as to the wicked, at the judgment, whether of the living or of the dead, before the great white throne; and as to the just—the children of God—when their bodies shall participate in the life already communicated to their souls (the life of Christ Himself), at the resurrection of the just. The resurrection for these is not a resurrection of judgment; it is simply, to repeat it again, the act towards the children of God, of the quickening power of Jesus which has already worked upon their souls, and which, in God's good time, shall work also on their bodies. "They that have done good," says our text, "unto the resurrection *of life;* and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of *judgment*." But the objection is made—Jesus has said, verse 28: "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice;" the wicked and the just will then evidently rise together. But three verses before (ver. 25) it is said: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." *Hour* comprehends here all the space of time which has elapsed since the coming of the Saviour: and under this word is contained two states of things quite different, seeing that the dead heard the voice of the Son of God during the time He was living on earth, and that they have been hearing it for eighteen centuries since. This, then, is the interpretation: the hour* for giving life to the soul, is an hour which has lasted eighteen centuries already; and the hour is also coming for the judgment. The word hour has the same sense in the two passages: that is to say, there is a time of quickening and a time of judgment; there is a period during which souls are quickened and a period when bodies shall be raised. For me, the resurrection is only the application of the quickening power of Jesus Christ to my body. I shall be raised because I am already quickened in my soul. The resurrection is the crowning of the whole work; for, as the Spirit dwells in me on that account, as far as my soul is concerned, I am already risen with Christ.

There will be a resurrection of life for those who have been already quickened in their souls, and a resurrection of judgment for those who have rejected Jesus.

1 Cor. xv. 20–23 sets forth also the connexion which exists between the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead; and the order of the resurrection is explicitly shown; "Christ is become the first-fruits of them that slept;" (ver 20) "of those which slept," and not of the wicked. They that are Christ's shall rise at His coming; then cometh the end, the time when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father. When He comes He will take the kingdom, but at the end He will deliver it up. The appearing of Christ will therefore take place before the end; it will be for the destruction of the wicked; He will come to purify His kingdom, "Christ the first-fruits; afterwards *they that are Christ's* at His coming; then cometh the end."

1 Thess. iv. 14–16: "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him;" "and the dead in Christ shall rise first." It is the complement of our hopes, it is the fruit of our justification, the consequence of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. The righteous dead shall rise first, then the living righteous shall be changed, and "shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord." All this is a matter which belongs exclusively to the Church—to those who, sleeping or living, are in Christ, and who will be from that moment for ever with the Lord.

As to the period or interval which elapses between the resurrection of the faithful and of the wicked, it is a circumstance altogether independent of the principle itself, that is, of the distinction of the two resurrections; our faith on this point depends upon a revelation, which has only importance, because God has so chosen to order it for His own glory. The period is only mentioned in the book of Revelation, under the expression, *a thousand years*. Between the two resurrections a thousand years elapse. The only question is upon the length comprised in the term—a thousand years. The passage is found in Rev. xx. 4: "And I saw thrones." . . . . .

The world will then know that we are the subjects of grace; that we have been loved as Jesus Himself has been loved by the Father.

If the first resurrection, that of the just, is not to be taken literally, why should the second, that of the unjust, be so taken? As the object of our hope and source of our consolation, and of our joy, it is but a small thing to know that the unjust shall be raised; but the precious thing, the essential, is to know that the resurrection of the just will be the consummation of their happiness; that in it God will accomplish His love towards us; that after having given life to our souls, He will give life to our bodies, and will make of the dust

* For the use of this word, see (in the Greek) John v. 35; xvi. 4, 25, 26; Luke xxii. 53; 1 John ii. 11; 2 Cor. vii. 8; Philemon 15.

of the earth a form suitable to the life which has been given to us on the part of God. We never read in the Word of God of *glorified spirits*, but always of *glorified bodies*. There is the glory of God, and the glory of those who will be raised.

As to that expression (2 Tim. i. 10), "brought life and immortality to light;" immortality signifies the incorruptibility of the body, and not the immortality of the soul.

I desire, dear friends, that the knowledge of this truth, by the power of Christ, on which depends its entire accomplishment, may strengthen us in our hearts unto all perfection. For this knowledge, in all its extent, is that to which the Scripture applies the word "perfection." Christ was thus made perfect as to His state and position before God; we also ourselves are now perfect by faith, in acknowledging that we are raised with Him, as we shall be later as to our bodies. May your bodies, souls, and spirits, be preserved blameless until the coming of our Well-Beloved! may this truth of the resurrection of the Church become linked in our minds, with all the precious truths of our salvation consummated in Christ! and may it be accomplished in the fulness of salvation in our bodies also!

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NOTICE.

Reflections on the Life and Times of Hezekiah. (2 Chron. xxix.-xxxii. and Isa. xxxvi.-xxxix.)—Bristol, 1848.

The following copious extracts from different parts of this little work may enable the reader to judge how much profitable truth it contains, put forth in a simple, familiar way:

"We now turn to Hezekiah, whose history will yield us somewhat more comfort than that of his two predecessors on the throne of Judah. Of him it is written that 'he, in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them.' This was a happy opening of his reign—an encouraging pledge of what his whole after-course was about to be. A course begun *with God* is sure, in the long run, to prove a triumphant one. There may be a failure—difficulty—temptation—sorrow—clouds and darkness; yet, in the end, it will be made manifest that he who begins his course in the sanctuary will end it in the glory. 'They that be planted in *the house* of the Lord shall flourish in *the courts* of our God.' (Ps. xcii. 12.) Hezekiah, through mercy, seems to have felt this; we find him at once beginning at the right point. He did not go out into the mountains to build, but proceeded directly to the work of a thorough reformation. He sent the Levites into the very innermost part of the house of the Lord, to cleanse it, and thus set God in His due and proper place, feeling persuaded that, once that grand point was secured, all the rest would follow in course. In this Hezekiah teaches us a most salutary lesson. In the experience and actings of a Christian, every thing depends upon the place which God occupies in the heart; in other words, there is a strong moral link between our estimate of God, and our conduct; if our thoughts of God are low, low will be our standard of Christian walk; if high, on the contrary, the result will be accordingly. Thus when Israel, at the foot of mount Horeb, 'changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass,' the Lord's words were, 'Thy people have *corrupted themselves*.' They could not do otherwise than corrupt themselves when they let down their thoughts of the dignity and majesty of God so low as to imagine, for a moment, that He was like 'an ox that eateth grass.' Similar is the teaching of Romans i. There the Apostle, by the Spirit, shews us that the reason of all the abominations of the Gentile nations must be sought for in the fact that, 'when they knew God, they glorified Him not *as God*.' Thus they too "corrupted themselves.' This is a principle possessing vast practical influence. If we lower God, we must necessarily lower ourselves. In this, I conceive, we are carried far above all merely systematic views of truth—it is not at all a question of mere doctrine. No; it leads us into the deep recesses of the soul, there to ponder, as beneath the piercing jealous eye of God, the estimate which we, as individuals, are daily and hourly forming of Him. We cannot refuse to apply our minds seriously to this important point of truth; our neglect of it will be found to contain much of the secret of our low walk and lamentable deadness. God is not sufficiently exalted in our thoughts—He has not the supreme place in our affections—we do not sufficiently live in the atmosphere of His divine benevolence and faithfulness—our own state of mind—our experience—our services—our conflicts—our sorrows—our infirmities have, in a great measure, got in between our souls and God, and obscured the soul-stirring light of His countenance. Now, whenever *our own things* so act upon us as to hinder that calm, fixed, and certain rest of the heart and conscience in redeeming love, and the eternal efficacy of the work of atonement, we are sure to lapse into the mere religiousness and legalism of nature, or into thorough worldliness and moral evil." (Pages 8, 9.)

"But to return. I think we shall find a truly divine order in all the actings of Hezekiah, at least as regards the reformation. He did not merely begin right, but he continued right. It may be said of him, save 'in the matter of the ambassadors,' that all his works were 'begun, continued, and ended in God.' He determined to keep the passover unto the Lord; and, in doing so, to act upon the largeness of God's own principle with reference to *all* Israel. He would not selfishly confine the aspect of this great foundation feast, or the cleansing efficacy of the blood, to the narrow limits of Judah or Jerusalem, but rightly commanded 'that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.' (2 Chron. xxix. 24.) True, Israel had grievously apostatised, and become sunk in gross idolatry; but what of that? The blood that could cleanse Judah could cleanse Israel, and both stood equally in need of it. And, may we not say, wherever a soul is taught of God, it will always entertain those large thoughts about *the whole family of God*. There is no such thing as a section of the body of Christ; you must either think of the whole body or nothing. Every truth, to be seen in its fulness, must be seen as bearing upon the whole body; whether it be the redemption in which we stand, the ministry by which we are sustained, or the hope by which we are animated—all must be viewed in connection with the whole body. 'In thy book were *all my members* written'—'He keepeth *all his bones*; not one of them is broken.'

"Now, it was this largeness of heart, and comprehensiveness of view, with regard to all Israel, that enabled king Hezekiah to send the following touching message throughout all the land of Israel: 'Ye children of Israel, turn again to the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and He will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the king of Assyria. (Chap. xxx. 6.) There is much moral power and spiritual intelligence exhibited in this message. It is plainly a message issuing from a sanctuary—a message from one who had entered, in some measure, into the largeness of the divine mind. It is the purpose of God that Israel and Judah shall yet, in company, tread the earthly courts, and stand in the efficacy of the same sacrifice. Jehoshaphat had entered into a union with Ahab, king of Israel, for military purposes. (2 Chron. xviii.) This union was, as we know, quite wrong. True, it was for a good end; namely, to recover Ramoth Gilead out of the hand of the king of Syria. Now this Ramoth was one of the cities of refuge; and to recover it out of the hand of the enemy must have appeared a very desirable object to the mind of Jehoshaphat; an object, moreover, which might be regarded as a good reason for entering into a league with Ahab. Yet was it all wrong! The basis of their union was wrong; it was not a union based upon 'the blood of the lamb;' hence, notwithstanding it was for a religious, and in itself a right object, God could not approve of it; it proved a source of much sorrow of heart to Jehoshaphat.

"Not so, however, in the case of the good king Hezekiah. He sought to bring Israel and Judah together, not even to recover a city of refuge—not even for a religious object. No; he sought to gather their scattered tribes around the one altar at Jerusalem 'whither the tribes go up.' He had set up a centre of unity round which every Israelite could rally because he was an Israelite, but which had no attraction for those whose hearts were uncircumcised. But it is most important that we should see what it was that enabled him to send out the invitation. If Hezekiah had been walking in the cold and withering exclusiveness of the flesh, he would have left the children of Israel to their idols, and thought only of his own enjoyment, and that of those in immediate connexion with him. But no; his heart had been softened and his affections expanded in the presence of God—he had felt the sweetness and atoning efficacy of the blood—he saw its power to meet the need of idolatrous Israel—he knew that the lamb slain on the altar was the divine basis for the union of all, and he would therefore seek, in the attractive power of grace, to draw together 'the children of God that were scattered abroad.' And is there not deep instruction for us in all this? May we not ask why is it that we have so little of this holy attractive power about us? Why are we not drawing the children of God together? I believe it is because we are not walking in the practical exhibition of the grace of the Lord Jesus, who said, 'I, if I

be lifted up from the earth, will draw *all men unto me.*' (John xii. 32.) We are not acting out the great principle set forth by Hezekiah; namely, 'the burnt offering and the sin offering must be made for *all Israel.*'" (Pages 9–11.)

"There is, however, a marked difference in the way in which Hezekiah's actings are presented in 2 Chronicles xxxii., and in Isaiah xxxvii. In the former, it strikes me, we have the matter presented more as a narrative of facts, while in the latter it is looked at in a moral point of view, as bearing upon the future destinies of Israel. In 2 Chronicles we are informed about Hezekiah's military operations; in Isaiah these are altogether overlooked. We shall therefore look a little at the closing scenes of Hezekiah's interesting life as put before us by the Spirit in Isaiah.

"I have already observed that Hezekiah vastly preferred the silence of the sanctuary to the din of the battle-field. This is very apparent throughout his entire course; but specially so in Isaiah; he spent the most, if not all, of his time in services connected with the sanctuary. God's place 'between the cherubim' gave him far more concern than his own place on the throne of David; and so far does he carry his attachment to the house of the Lord, that when the time comes at which he might expect him to issue forth therefrom into the field of battle, we actually find him making the very sanctuary itself his field of battle. This is particularly instructive. The proud king of Assyria was at the gates of Jerusalem, with a mighty conquering host, and one would naturally expect to find Hezekiah in the midst of his men of war—buckling on his armour—girding on his sword—mounting his chariot; but no; Hezekiah was different to most kings and captains—he had found a place of strength which was quite unknown to Sennacherib—he had discovered a field of battle in which he could conquer without striking a blow. And mark the armour with which he girds himself, 'And it came to pass, when Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and *covered himself with sackcloth*, and went into the house of the Lord.' (Isa. xxxvii. 1.) Here was the armour in which the king of Judah was about to cope with the king of Assyria. Strange armour! The armour of the sanctuary. What would Sennacherib have said had he seen this? He had never met such an antagonist before—he had never come in contact with a man who, instead of covering himself with a coat of mail, would cover himself with sackcloth; and instead of rushing forth into the field of battle in his chariot, would fall upon his knees in the temple. This would have appeared a novel mode of warfare in the eyes of the king of Assyria. He had met the kings of Hamath and Arphad, &c.; but if he had, it was upon his own principle, and in his own way; but he had never encountered such an antagonist as Hezekiah. In fact, what gave the latter such uncommon power in this contest was the feeling that *he* was nothing—that 'an arm of flesh' was of no avail; in a word, that it was just Jehovah or nothing. This is specially seen in the act of spreading the letter before the Lord. Hezekiah was enabled by faith to retire out of the scene, and make it altogether a question between Jehovah and the king of Assyria. It was not Sennacherib and Hezekiah, but Sennacherib and Jehovah." (Pages 16, 17.)

"Thus far it is most instructive to see the temple service restored—Judah rescued from the hand of the oppressor, and Judah's king raised up from the pit of corruption; and one is disposed to think that now the glory might shew itself; but alas! alas! it cannot be so; all this is merely a shadow, blessed though it be, of what is yet to be revealed amongst us, when the true King of Judah shall take his seat on the throne of His Father David, and wield the sceptre of a kingdom that shall never be moved.

"We now come to consider the closing scene of Hezekiah's life, which but too plainly demonstrates the fact above stated; namely, that the glory cannot yet show itself. Upon this part of our subject, however, we need not dwell at any length; the Spirit Himself has not dwelt long upon it; for He has given us the narrative of it in two verses, and his commentary upon it in one. And indeed we always find the divine Penman taking much greater delight in setting forth the graces than the failures of those whose history He deals with. This is specially observable in Hezekiah's history; the narrative of his good deeds occupies four long chapters in 2 Chron. while, with reference to his failure, we have the following few words: 'Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, *God left him, to try him, that he might know* ALL *that was in his heart.*' (2 Chron. xxxii. 31.) These words are but few; yet they are most comprehensive. For a man to know '*all* that was in his heart' required no small measure of the knowledge of God's redeeming love. It would demand all that Hezekiah had learned of God during his previous history to enable him to look into the deep recesses of his heart and behold '*all*' that was there. Oh, what was there not wrapped up in this little word 'ALL!' Who could bear it, save the one who had learned to say, 'Thou hast cast *all* my sins behind thy back'? Surely none else. It is only when we know that the Lord has forgiven *all* our iniquities and healed *all* our diseases—when we are enabled, by faith, to see the divinely-appointed scape-goat bearing away with him into the land of forgetfulness '*all* our iniquities, and *all* our transgressions, and *all* our sins' (Lev. xvi. 21), that we can turn round and look into our hearts and see *all* the fearful evil there. To get a sight of the latter, ere we have known and proved the former, is to be overwhelmed by the terrible discovery; but when we have gotten a view of God in the cross, the more we learn of our own vileness—the nearer we approach to the end of that wonderful word 'all,' the more highly do we estimate the grace of our God, and the cleansing efficacy of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"But it is very profitable to mark how that, at each successive stage of Hezekiah's truly interesting history, the Lord is dealing more and more closely with him. 'Every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it.' (John xv. 2.) The more devoted a man is to the Lord, and the more elevated his walk, the more jealously will the Lord watch over him, in order that he may have still larger and more blessed proofs of his devotedness; or, it may be, in order to bring out, and execute judgment upon, some hidden evil that may have hitherto lain dormant in the heart. The latter was His wise and faithful purpose in Hezekiah's case.

"So far as the ordering of the kingdom was concerned, there can be no doubt but that recent circumstances, and specially the defeat of Sennacherib, would have produced a powerful effect upon the nations round. There was abundant testimony to the fact that the kingdom was well-ordered. Again, the joyful hearts of the children of Israel, as they journeyed home to their own land, would prove very decidedly that the temple service was also well-ordered. In other words, Hezekiah had the testimony of the world *without* and his brethren *within* as to the soundness and rightness of his ways. All this was most important. It is happy for us when we are not giving to 'the world any occasion to speak reproachfully, or our brethren to speak suspiciously, of us.' We should at least know this happiness. But there is far more than even this. God looks more narrowly into our ways than the world or the Church. He will not rest satisfied with a well-ordered *kingdom*, nor even a well-ordered *house*; but, setting up a still loftier standard, He looks for a well-ordered *heart*. This, I conceive, is most instructive and searching. When Hezekiah set out upon his public career, the first thing he had to direct his attention to was the disorder of his kingdom; the next was the disorder of his house; and last of all, and most searching of all, was the disorder of his *heart*. Now, in the very fact of his being called to submit to the last-named trying test, we learn how very far Hezekiah had outstripped even men of more than ordinary grace. Jotham, for example, was never called to such a trial; and why? Because at the very threshold of his course he proved defective. There was a 'howbeit' with regard to him in the mere matter of the kingdom, to say nothing of his house or his heart. Not so with regard to Hezekiah; there was no 'howbeit' in his case, 'save in the matter of the ambassadors,' *i.e.* in other words, God had a question to settle with him as to the state of his heart. And may we not say there was but one who could stand the threefold test above alluded to; even He who could say, 'I will walk within *my house* with *a perfect heart*.'

"But whence, we may ask, came the enemy that vanquished the man whom we have hitherto beheld moving onward in the ways of God with such a steady pace? *From Babylon.* Yes, Babylon, that old fountain of moral evil, a stream from which poisoned the camp of Israel in Joshua's day. 'At that time Merodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and *a present* to Hezekiah.' (Isa. xxxix.) Here we have another king attacking Hezekiah: not the king of Assyria with a numerous army; nor the king of terrors with a solemn summons to surrender; but *the king of Babylon, with a present.* And, strange as it may seem, the present from Babylon proved too powerful an assailant for the heart of Hezekiah. When the king of Assyria sent letters to him, 'he went up into the house of the Lord and spread them before the Lord.' Thus he conquered. When summoned to prepare for death, 'he turned his face to the wall and prayed unto the Lord.' Thus he was raised up. But when the ambassadors from the king of Babylon approached him, 'he shewed them the house of *his precious things.*' THUS HE FELL. Solemn—most solemn warning! Hezekiah was off his guard. No prayer—no seeking the Lord—no spiritual perception to detect the hook that lay concealed beneath this gilded bait. Had he gone and spread Merodach's letter before the Lord, he would have been raised above the influence of the world's polite attractions, as he had before been raised above the influence of its angry threats. He would have found the sanctuary as safe a retreat from the guile of the serpent, as it had been from the roar of the lion. But then we have the secret cause of the failure in the secret commentary on the matter. 'Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon . . . . *God left him*, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.' When God leaves a man, a straw is sufficient to upset him." (Pages 26–29.)

THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL xii. 23.

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NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XVII.

WE have now entered on the scenes of the last judgments, which God is to fulfil in order to introduce the glory of Jesus. The seven vials have accomplished the wrath of God. The Spirit of prophecy gives, with more detail, the two forms of evil developed at the end—Babylon and the beast. Things are more simple and more easy to understand than at the beginning of the Apocalypse. When evil becomes openly manifest, the thing is more evident; for the winding up of the scene of this world interests more particularly the Church.

Verse 1. In speaking of heavenly things, one speaks of things that are not yet as though they were; for God has foreseen and judged every thing. Heaven is familiar with evil as judged, as with that which is good to enjoy it. God has taken notice of every thing beforehand; and all is found on the path to His glory. The angel is familiarly acquainted with all that relates to the great whore. To us this is not clear, and must be explained. All that happens to us is foreknown and pre-arranged of God, in order that His child may stand in the midst of difficulties. All I have to do is to say, God is perfectly acquainted with the position I am in, and He knows the way He has prepared to extricate me out of difficulties if I remain faithful. In all things present your requests to God, knowing that He careth for you. John could not so much as even imagine such a thing as this great whore: she has the double character of corruption and influence over the nations.

Two things are contained in this chapter: Babylon and the beast; corruption and the power of evil—violence. Man's will manifests itself in two ways, corruption and violence; this was the world's state at the time of the deluge. Satan is a liar and a murderer. The Lord Jesus is the truth and the life, instead of being a liar and a violent man. Antichrist does his own will. Jesus does the will of Him that sent Him. Here is corruption, violence, self-will, and murder. Babylon is corruption in all its depth, and the beast is self-will, revolting even against God Himself. These two principles, which have been from the beginning, are embodied, and act.

Verse 2. *The kings of the earth* are the powers where light has shined; the powers of the last prophetical scene of monarchies.

Verse 3. Babylon is the centre of commerce, of riches, the capital of the vanities of the world, the mother of all idolatries; but as to the Spirit of God, it is a desert. (Verse 3.) He finds nothing in the world that can satisfy the holy desires of a renewed heart. What the flesh or the natural man loves, the Spirit hates. What is desirable to the natural heart, is only a desert and corruption to the Spirit.

The beast, having seven heads and ten horns, is the Roman empire. The woman is here seated on the beast, and rules it. This is the relationship between the moral corruption of this world and the civil powers. Later, these relations are changed. In the Old Testament, Babylon poisons the nations. Here also she is the centre to which the nations are attracted, the centre of the corruption, the luxury, and the glory of this world. It is also the centre of religious idolatry.* (Dan. iii.) This system of corruption at the beginning rides the beast, and rules it. The kings of the earth find it profitable for themselves to sustain this relationship with the woman. Corruption governs.

The names of blasphemy are varied characters of self-will and of rebellion in the beast, which opposes God.

Verse 5. We see in Babylon the spring of all corruption. She is the cause that all the relationships that ought to subsist with God are sustained with the world. She leads men to abandon the true God; they may give themselves up to idols.

Verse 6. The secular power puts the saints actually to death; but it is Babylon who is guilty. She is drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs, the witnesses of Jesus. As it was once Jerusalem that was guilty of the blood of the prophets, so it is now in Babylon that the blood of the saints is to be found. It is here we find the principle of that religion which is connected with the world, and has its resources there. It is the most hateful thing in the sight of God.

Verse 7. John is marvelling that that which had the form of godliness and the name of religion should be guilty of the blood of the martyrs. It must have been no less amazing to a Jew that God should require of Jerusalem the blood of the prophets. In the sight of God, one generation inherits of the preceding generations all the iniquity which they have completed. Their conscience ought to be warned by this iniquity. "Ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers," says the Lord. If Christians are not entirely separated from Babylon, they inherit the iniquity of the preceding times, because they join themselves with it, their conscience not gathering any instruction from it. When man has exhausted one principle, God presents him with another to work upon his conscience; and, if he rejects it, he is so much the more guilty. In Abel, nature is violated; afterwards, the traditional knowledge of God (Rom. i. 18-23); afterwards, it

* The idolatry is that by which God characterises its real Satanic evil; its luxury, and pleasure, and gain, that by which man is attracted to it.—["There is a certain working, suited to the passions and lusts of men, such as they naturally are; another of positive deceit and influence over their souls—the more immediate and positive power of Satan. He occupies men with the former, to which they are naturally prone, and which has no apparent evil, which connects itself with social improvement, employment of the poor even, and the progress of peaceful civilization, in order that behind this, and by leading men to sacrifice every thing to this, he may exercise over men and advance the other influence, by which he may not only completely withdraw these from being accessible to the testimony of God, but thereon establish his own direct and complete authority . . . What is the fact? What has the commercial prosperity of these countries been identified with, and helped on? Religious apostasy. Because of that, men have acquiesced in the renunciation of all principle. The nation has given up its public outward testimony and protest against Satan's power and lie against Christ's mediatorial glory; and, in helping that on elsewhere, has done much more than that—has relinquished, as a nation, the public profession of the truth itself.

"It is a fact that the woman sits by many waters. Her association, her connection is with them, of course to seduce them if she can. She has to do with peoples. But while the fact is stated, the how is not to be reasoned out, but learned from the Word. Now, I learn from this chapter, that she is the source and mother of idolatry, and *the earth's idols;* for no one can doubt that that is the meaning of abominations. That was her real and, to the eye of faith, her plain character. It was written on her forehead, though it was a mystery. That commerce ministers to pride and religious indifference, I do not doubt, and enlarging its desire, runs after that which God has not given at home, and is thus called fornication, is true. And that this will be found prevalent, I doubt not, as in Tyre of old. Still, what God has written upon the forehead of this mysterious woman is idolatries. That is her character. Nor indeed is there any great mystery in men loving riches, and seeking them by commerce. That may assume unusual influence now, but it is no mystery. It has existed at Tyre, Carthage, Venice, Genoa, Holland, and elsewhere, as a supreme system. Further, it is hard to say how commerce was found to be drunken with the blood of the saints, and of the witnesses of Jesus. That commerce may help to bring in the system that will be so, perhaps more than ever, I do not doubt. But it is not the commercial system that has itself got drunk with blood. I believe the complete development of this system is future; but I could not say altogether future, because she is rightful inheritress of those who have shed all the blood of saints on the earth. Jerusalem, in like manner, was guilty in a new and unusual way, but it was but the *filling up the measure of their fathers.* . . . .

"Protestantism, save so far as it approaches Popery, is incompetent to act on and to lead the masses, and therefore is comparatively useless to governments. It values truth too much, and that is of no use to govern any with, save those who love it. Popery, therefore, is what governments cultivate. And by encouraging commerce and filling people with commercial prosperity, principle becomes immaterial, and latitudinarianism leaves the field to Popish influences and Popish activity. Christians must be a separate people. Hence Popery is in every way in the ascendant, while the government can hold the ascendant. But its success will ruin it, and I doubt not that the popular unity which commercial enterprize will produce, and by which national feeling is necessarily so far destroyed, will help on what democracy will ultimately demand, and indeed is demanding where ripened, and which political circumstances will render necessary the establishment of a centre of union, and this will be found in the little horn. The consequence of this will be a subversion of all the peaceable system, and military energies and conflicts, which God will terminate by judgment. All this future every one will judge of according to the light given to him. As to the present facts to which I have referred, nothing is wanting but acquaintance with what is going on to recognize the truth of what I have said. That commerce plays a great rôle in this, I fully believe: men's hearts being occupied with it, that the actors on Satan's part may have leisure to do their work behind it, even more than by it. But whatever appears to man's eye and fills its horizon, to faith the name on Babylon's forehead is, 'Mother of abominations;' on the beast's, 'Blasphemy.'

"In fine, the blinding of commercial wealth I fully own; but it is blinding to something else which Satan is working out, and which will be judged. Man's lusts are in the one, and so far Satan's power; but Satan's proper work is in the other, to alienate men from, and raise them up against God. The delusive power of Satan is religious power—open blasphemous rebellion his last effort. See 2 Thess. ii. also as to this, and Rev. xiii. 12, seq."—*Same author.*

is the law; and then, it is Jesus Himself who comes to put the heart to the proof. When the knowledge of the Father and of the Son is introduced, the Jews then seek to show their faithfulness to God, by killing those who introduce this knowledge. Man glories in a truth that costs him nothing, inasmuch as it is generally received, and takes advantage of it to oppose the admission of more light which would demand faith. The Jews insist on the unity of God, in order to deny the Son. When we appeal to a truth, that was blessed to us at one time, in order to refuse another sent now, it is rejecting the means by which God will act now. It was the bigoted Jews, not the heathen, that opposed themselves most to the introduction of Christianity.

Sincerity alone will not do. The new light must be admitted. "They will kill you, because they have not known the Father nor me." (John xvii. 3.) Thus it is that the most precious light becomes the instrument of evil in the hands of infidelity. This principle is very important for those who are acting in the kingdom of God.

From the eighth verse, the angel leaves the woman to give us the history of the beast.

The contents of the eighth verse had already been announced in a less clear manner before. When the Roman empire is spoken of, it is said that it exists no more. Here we find this difficulty foreseen, pointed out, and explained. Here is the key to the enigma, with the certainty that He who gave it invented the enigma also.

The Roman empire is to come out of the bottomless pit, from the region of darkness, and act with power for evil. It is a very serious matter to see at the end the power, which has dominion over the earth, come up out of the bottomless pit itself. The inhabitants of the earth shall marvel at this kind of resurrection of the Roman empire, and then it is that the world shall follow after the beast. (xii. 3.) It will be seduced when the beast shall have taken the character of the resurrection of the Roman empire destroyed centuries ago.

Verses 9, 10. There is a certain likeness between the woman and the beast. A woman, a city built on the perfection of power, upon seven mountains, represents the centre of corruption. The beast has seven heads also. The heads are kings or powers of government. Five are fallen; five kings, or five forms of government. The particular facts which have accomplished parts of this are of little importance; history is not necessary in order to understand prophecy. It is even oftentimes an obstacle, because what is often important to man is not so to God, for God has Christ in view.*

Although history fulfils prophecy, yet it never explains it; whereas prophecy explains history. The faithful are called to believe in the prophecy before it is fulfilled. The way to understand the Word is to have the mind of God, and to apprehend His purposes with respect to Christ. At the time of the Apostle, five kings had already fallen. The sixth was there. A seventh was to come for a short time.

Verse 11. The eighth head of the beast is the beast itself, the whole power of the beast concentrated in the person of the chief. It is the Roman empire brought to life again through Satan, with a diabolic character, but which shall be destroyed. There will be a restoration hereafter of the Roman empire, and this restored empire shall be destroyed by the power of God. In the 2 Thess. ii. 3, the man of sin is called the son of perdition.

Verse 12. The ten horns have their power *at the same time with the beast*. The kingdoms that arose out of the destruction of the Roman empire through the barbarians, were not the prophetic horns. The trouble men have taken on this subject has been to no purpose. The barbarian kings destroyed the Roman empire instead of exercising their power at the same time with it. There will be a kind of confederation of kings with a centre, that is, a head exercising power in the midst of them.

Verse 14. These kings will make war with the Lamb; but the Lamb, who is the King of kings, shall overcome them. The Church shall accompany Him. The called, the elect, and the faithful, these are they who shall be with Him.

Verse 16. The horns.* They shall hate the whore, and shall eat her flesh, and make her desolate and naked. They are tired of her, and cannot endure her any longer. Man thinks that if he could get rid of this outward and corrupted form of Christianity, he would be blessed. It is the contrary. When the ten kings have made the whore desolate and naked, they give their kingdom *to the beast*. The kings of the earth will not give their power to Christ: quite the contrary; they will give it to the beast, and will make war with the Lamb. It is inconceivable how those who read the Word of God can entertain the thought that the kings of the earth shall give their power to the Lamb. If one could succeed in destroying the whore, there would be no other result than to make war with the Lamb. It is important the Church of God should not be deceived in this respect. God is warning us, in order that we may escape the way that leadeth to perdition.

This chapter is divided into three essential parts: *the woman* who becomes the centre of corruption, and who exercises her influence over the mass of people; *the beast*, which has ascended out of the bottomless pit; *the ten kings*, who † persecute the woman, give their power to the beast, and fall in making war with the Lamb.

A distinction is to be made between the expressions *the woman* and *the whore*. That Rome has been the centre, this I do not doubt. The woman is the city; but the whore embraces a whole system of corruption that has varied forms, and of which the spirit of worldliness, long covered over under the form of religion, is the overruling principle. In this chapter, the whore is more particularly shown to us under her religious form.‡ Her flesh is eaten, and she is no more seated on the beast, because the kings give their power to the beast, and the beast rules itself.

It is important to avoid these principles and forms that lead to perdition. The chosen, the called, and the faithful, are with the Lamb, when He destroys the beast and the kings. This is exceedingly precious, and separates from the spirit of this world. A heathen is not in Babylon.§ He cannot be there. A Christian

* "I believe that the attempt to interpret prophecy by history has been most injurious to the ascertainment of its real meaning. When we have ascertained, by the aid of the Spirit of Christ, the mind of God, we have, as far as it be history, God's estimate of events and their explanation. But history is man's estimate of events, and he has no right to assume that these are in prophecy at all; and it is clear that he must understand prophecy, before he can apply it to any. When he understands it, he has what God meant to give him without going further. I do not admit history to be *in any sense* necessary to the understanding of prophecy. I get present facts, and God's moral account of that led to them, and thereby His moral estimate of them. I do not want history to tell me Nineveh or Babylon are ruined, or Jerusalem in the hands of the Gentiles. Of course, where any prophecy does apply to facts, it is a true history of those facts; but it is much more. It is the connection of those facts with the purposes of God in Christ; and whenever any isolated fact, however important in the eyes of man, is taken as the fulfilment of a prophecy, that prophecy is made of private interpretation, and that I believe to be the meaning of that passage. Of course, when any prophecy is fulfilled, the fulfilment is evidence of its truth; but the Christian does not need this; and evidence of truth and interpretation are two very different things."—*Same author.*

* The best manuscripts add "and the beast," which would modify what is said here. Thus, in following the will of the beast in the destruction of the woman, it would seem that it is not at the time when her destruction takes place that they give first their power to the beast. It is a proof of their subjection, but not its commencement.

† With the beast. See the preceding note.

‡ There is no doubt but that the abominations presented here, as that which characterise the great whore, are idolatries; religious corruption characterises her. Worldliness and luxury serve as occasions to dazzle the eyes and to blind and take hold of the heart. All these latter things fall into ruin, but the cause for the judgment is the religious evil. (See the note, v. 16.)—("Worldly association then this has, and wide extent of merchandising and wealth—a great system of worldly prosperity; but its character for judgment is her fornication, not her purple, her scarlet, and the like, though all these were connected with it and designated her. And this is always the case—the becoming worldly—and by this spirit, and to gain this wealth, pandering to the passions of the kings of the earth, is just the very cause of this. But, as in old time, the blood of all righteous men was found in God's house, then apostate—not in the world's or the wicked one's outwardly; judged in Jerusalem, not in heathen Rome;—so ever; the ecclesiastical form of wickedness takes the lead, not the worldly. The gainsaying is recorded as the gainsaying of Kore, not of Dathan and Abiram, though the earth might swallow them up too; and the beast may be judged as well as Babylon, but not presented in the same sad terms in God's moral judgment, in the sight of men. Moral corruption is ever worse than evil power. Babylon was also the mother of harlots, and of the abominations or idolatries of the earth. The invocation of a demon under the name of Paul was worse than under the name of Hercules or Theseus; and the uprooting of the mediation of Christ more fatal and destructive (as of the remedy itself) than that of the unity of the one true Jehovah. She was here a mystery. The apostasy of worldly power and grandeur was no mystery in the escaped remnant of Babylon and the Patmos prisoner of Domitian. That the Church which the Apostle watched over should assume this form was a mystery indeed, ruling that which he was suffering under as a poor despised follower of the crucified Jesus, and corrupting a world, of which the Church properly was the only true light. She was the mother of the abominations of the earth; but her sway was over the many waters, peoples, and tongues, and nations, and languages."—*Same author.*

§ "I know that many take Babylon as merely a great worldly system. That it is a great worldly system, is freely admitted; but the exclusion of the ecclesiastical character in this place seems to me a great error; it is the virus of her active will in this place, though clothed with the world. She is not viewed here as the city of the apostate king at all, though, in the worldly sense, she may be the beginning of his kingdom. He comes in here as the eighth head of the beast, supplanting the woman. The kings lay her waste, to give their power to him; for power, not wealth, is the last form of evil presented, and that against the Lamb, which is true active rebellion, and more than mere apostasy. *God*, therefore, judges Babylon; and the destroyers of her wealth and importance are those who give their kingdom to the beast; *thereupon*, and then, the war against the Lamb comes. I have no doubt the principles of Babylon were manifested in her—not royal power. Though Babylon was the beginning of his power in whom royal power was first displayed, yet it was specially what the confederate will of man had done. This is shown in the character which constituted the whore, yet had its development by her corruption and fornication; and the effects of this are supplanted by another confederacy, which is not only apostasy, as all human will apart from God is, but active war against God's King, the Lamb."—*Same author.*

may be found there. Whatever connects the world with religion is the principle of Babylon. The spirit of Babylon, the spirit of worldliness, is very slippery ground. Therefore it is that we are warned of God. May God keep us!—(*To be continued.*)

THE TESTIMONY OF THE END.

§ 3.—THE INTELLIGENT HOPE.

THE hope of the "coming" (1) of the Lord, suddenly to take away the Church, is entirely foreign to all that interests the hearts of those whose affections are engaged with the things that perish. Since Pentecost, Jesus, though invisible, is present with His own, as the raiser * of their souls, and in this sense He will be with them also to the end. But He is only present in the Church in spirit. In order that His personal presence be realized with regard to the Church, we are waiting here till we hear His shout (2) and His archangel voice in the air. The result of the rapture of the Church and of the marriage in heaven which will follow it, will be our return in glory with the King of heaven and earth.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God *bring with Him.* (1 Thess. iv. 14.) The presence of the Lord in the air concerns, then, only those who are of faith, and we have reason to believe that the world will in no wise see the Lord then. I am led to think this by the comparison of John xiv. 19, 21, 22, with 1 Thess. iv. 17. I see in John xiv. 22, Jude asking Jesus: "Lord, how is it that thou *wilt make thyself visible* (3) unto us and not unto the world?" As Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, made Himself visible to His disciples only, and not to the world; so, when He comes again to take those that are of faith, He will not then make of the earth His footstool; and I presume that that arrival will be known only "*unto them that look for Him unto salvation.*"

This event, I repeat, is entirely apart from the things which are in connection with the senses; it is a matter of faith in opposition to those of sight (John xiv. 17), and concerns only *those who are "of faith."* (4) It is nowhere said that the world shall see the rapture of the Church. So there stood no witness between God and Moses (5) at the time of his death and of his burial.

Enoch, who *walked with God* in the midst of apostasy, "*was no more seen*, because God took him." The privilege of seeing Elias (6) ascend up into heaven was granted to Elisha alone and on his reiterated request, because he was of the faith, and had to continue the testimony of Elias against the apostasy. I believe that the rapture of the last is a type of what will take place at the time of the rapture of the Church.

We see, in these various examples, a proof of what we have just brought forward, viz. that the things of faith are quite foreign to the world. And, if we study these types in the light of their moral effect upon the world and upon Israel, we see that evil increased rapidly after the disappearing of each of these men of God. Prophecy announces to us that like results will be produced by the absence of the Church. (2 Thess. ii. 7; compare 1 Tim. iii. 15.) This absence, in removing the obstacle which now opposes itself to the full development of the mystery of iniquity, will hasten, in one sense, the coming of the Son of man to destroy the wicked one, whom He shall consume by the breath of his lips.

The history of the first coming of the Lord presents us with some remarkable instances of the intelligent hope of the saints of that period, and of the blessed fruits which the simplicity of their faith produced in them.

God, in His faithfulness towards Israel, who, although rebellious, was always beloved for the fathers' sake, made choice of some poor and simple shepherds, who slept in the fields, to announce to them the peace and good will which His Son came to publish on earth, as well as Israel's deliverance. According to the mind of God, this would be a great subject of joy *for all the people.* These men went in haste to Bethlehem, and found Mary and Joseph, and the Saviour of the world, lying in a manger. We do not see any hesitation in these simple and unprejudiced people; nor were they confounded in their joyful reception of the word of the angels. "And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

The Magi, representatives of the nations, came afterwards to the manger of the Son of God, because they had resolutely followed the light and the word of God; there was amongst them more wisdom than amongst all the wise men, rulers and rabbis, whom the people of God took for their conductors and guides.

In following the course of events, we see Simeon and Anna succeed Zacharias in testimony. Here again God glorifies His faithfulness in separating a little Jewish remnant, who wait for *the consolation of Israel*, and who, obeying the Spirit of revelation, keep their hearts in communion with God.

The faith of Anna and Simeon rested neither on the traditional teachings of the scribes, levites, priests or high priests, nor on the opinion of king Herod and of his court, but on Moses and the Prophets, and what the Spirit said to the remnant conformably to the words of Scripture. Yet how little and despised was this faithful remnant! How utterly was its testimony depreciated and decried by the religious of that time! But then how blessed to these faithful ones was the result of their submission to God alone! Simeon sings the song of redemption, and departs in peace according to the promise of his God; Anna, for her part, speaks of Jesus to all those who in Jerusalem waited deliverance.

John the Baptist, brought up in the desert, was at last manifested to Israel as the forerunner of the Lamb of God, but already at that epoch we cease to find any trace of the preceding testimonies; the activity of Satan had once more buried the truth of God under the tradition and authority of men. It was necessary, when Jesus presented Himself, that God should create the beginning of a new people, to be given to the Heir. The twelve, as afterwards the seventy, evangelised in vain the cities of Israel; for tradition and idolatry, under the mask of religion, prevailed against the presence of the Son of God. The angels had announced "Peace ON EARTH." But that peace, sent to the earth and rejected by the great of the world, was going to reascend "INTO HEAVEN." (1) Little children and the poor alone gave a beginning of fulfilment to the promise sung of by Anna thirty-three years before. (Luke ii. 38; Matt. xxi. 9; xxxiii. 39; Ps. cxviii. 26.) And here again God glorified His faithfulness by means of things vile and despised, and if "these had held their peace, the stones themselves would have cried out." God calls the things that are not as though they were. Even a beast of burden can be chosen by the Lord to put to shame the ingratitude and unfaithfulness of human pride and folly.

The end of this succession of humble and faithful witnessess was brought about by the hardening of the hearts of the chief priests, who, while declaring "*the people accursed*," knew how, nevertheless, to render them docile to *their law*, and extinguished at last this feeble testimony by the cross.

The Church being, like the varied bodies of witnesses which preceded, a remant taken out of the world to be a light to it, it can only bear a blessed testimony by living in the hope of deliverance. Its principal responsibility lies in not rejecting the knowledge and light designed to direct its zeal and to make its testimony shine. (2 Peter i. 19.) The union of *zeal* and *knowledge* is indispensable, in order to bring forth fruits abounding to the glory of God. And now, more than ever, the activity of a true service in love flows from a state of intelligent expectation, and not from a state of expectation built up on the traditional knowledge of this age. The knowledge of the love of God and

(1) Παρουσία, literally "the presence," the act of being there.

* Rather *Quickener.*—ED.

(2) Κέλευσμα (1 Thess. iv. 16) is only found here. It is a naval term which refers to the cry of a commander, as, for example, that of the admiral of a fleet. —[I apprehend it is equally applicable to the shout of a general to his troops to assemble them.—Tr.]

(3) Ἐμφανίζω, Matt. xxvii. 53. Acts xxiii. 22, *to discover.* Heb. xi. 14, *to appear, show manifestly*, properly *to make visible*, with ἑαυτόν, *to show one's thoughts.*

(4) Rom. iii. 25; iv. 16; Gal. iii. 7, 9; vi. 10. Compare 2 Thess. iii. 2.

(5) Matt. xvii. 3. Moses, type of the risen Church; Elias, type of the Church "changed."

(6) Consult 1 Kings xix. 16, and 2 Kings xii. 1.

(1) Luke ii. 19, and xix. 38.

of His purposes towards the Church and towards the world is not *science*, in the human sense, still less is it that knowledge without love, which puffs up or destroys. If we are desirous to distinguish "the good works which God has prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them," (1) we must not cease to "retain * the Word of life . . . . . to shine as lights in the world." Peace and joy will always be the assured portion of those who keep the Word of God, and who are waiting on Him, not according to the current of ideas of the religious world, but with a simple faith in the eternal promises: "Blessed is he *that readeth*, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and who keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand." God announces His judgments to those "whom He had called and who did not answer, to whom He had spoken and who did not hear;" but He is attentive to those who hearken to the Lord, who fear Him, and who speak of Him one to another. (Jer. xxxv. 17; Mal. iii. 16.) "Let the Lord show forth His glory: He shall be seen to your joy, but they shall be ashamed." (Isa. lxvi.) Jeremiah also suffered reproach for the Lord; he was persecuted and ill-treated by his brethren, because of the Word which he kept before him; but here was his consolation: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." (Jer. xv.) Prophecy is wormwood to the flesh, because it annihilates all hope, and pours confusion upon all attachment to the things of the world; but it is like honey to the mouth of him who is nourished thereby and who has tasted how good the Lord is, how faithful and how mighty. In vain one would stir up oneself "with good resolutions," to self-denial and separation from the world; these affections proceed from the heart—resolutions can avail nothing here; for, without *a better* hope, without a living hope, no separation of heart from it is possible "We are strangers and pilgrims on earth," and God has placed us here for a little while in order that we may glorify Him. For this it is necessary that we should, by the power of the Word, be put in a condition to begin each day in a hope of getting to heaven, avoiding in our journey every halt that would make us forget its end.

Such was, at the first coming of Emmanuel, the practical testimony of Simeon, a just and devout man; such was the testimony of the daughter of Phanuel; such ought to be now that of the brethren of Jesus.

The joy and union of the children of God in common hope here below, were always the precious fruits of waiting for the Lord. The apostle John saw nothing of more moment for the brethren than that their life should be pure, holy, and separated from the life of the world, and that they should abide closely united here below, in the hope of being soon re-united in the glory. "And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." (1 John ii. 28.) We may fall asleep, no doubt, we know it; but we know also that, if the Lord will, we shall remain till He comes, waiting always, not for death, but to be changed; not for to-morrow, but for the Lord personally. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." In comparing Col. iii. 4 and 1 John iii. 2, 3, one is struck with the analogy between the language of Paul and John. (2) Their hearts also were united in the same sentiments, in the same hope of reigning and of glorious felicity. Is this the case amongst us, dear brethren? Alas! how many of the redeemed say, or act as if they said, "What do I care for the rest, provided I be saved!" And is not such language insulting to the grace of God, who has revealed to us all His purposes of love?

When Paul repeatedly pressed the exhortation: "Rejoice always; be careful for nothing; rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice;" he did not fail to present at the same time the subject, the cause, the marrow of the joy, if I may venture so to speak. "Rejoice always . . *the Lord is at hand.*" Yes, the Lord, the Bridegroom is at hand; and we, poor exiles in a hostile land, we who are brethren and citizens of the same country with the Lord, shall we not unite together to get ready to set off? We who are about to return together to our country, shall we not walk together to the haven, that we may perhaps reach to-day under the guidance of our Leader? "His left hand shall be under our head, and His right hand shall embrace us." "Who is this (say they in heaven), who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?" "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners?" "My beloved is mine, and I am His." "He brought me to the banqueting-house, and His banner over me was *love*."* (Cant.)

The Apostles always presented the doctrine of the first resurrection and of the reunion of the saints in glory, with a view to influence the walk of the Church, in filling the heart of the redeemed with joy by the energising hope of soon being made partakers of the fulness of our acceptance and of a divine life without sin in the presence of God our Father.

I have been obliged to act differently, and to separate for the most part the doctrine itself from its blessed consequences, in order to point out the confusion introduced into the Church between the coming of the Lord as the Bridegroom, and His coming as the Son of man. It is always with a certain grief of heart that one writes on this subject, because one knows that many of those one would so much like to see enjoy these things, do not seek after them with love. Nevertheless, the example of Paul ought not to be lost upon us; and when we think of the sluggishness of the Church, we ought to repeat with the Apostle Paul: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, *God shall reveal even this unto you.*"

I point out yet a few more passages, which, joined to the preceding ones, will show to us that the daily hope of the Lord's return and of our reigning with Him, is always presented to us in the Word as the source of all sanctification, of all power, of all assurance, and of all joy:

1 Thess. i. 3, the perseverance of our hope OF our Lord Jesus Christ (ii. 12; iii. 13; iv. 3, 4, 7, 18, v. 23; ii. 19; James v. 7, 8; 2 Tim. ii. 6, 11, 12; 1 Thess. iv. 13; Rom. xii. 12; 1 Thess. v. 6; Rom. v. 17) "in life," (livingly) "in power of life." (Apoc. v. 10.)

Faith has saved us, and the power of God keeps us in the faith and in Jesus Christ; but hope makes us grow and go forward and heavenward. Whilst the world hastens on to judgment in the pursuit of corruptible things, the Church, on the contrary, goes on towards glory. We ought, therefore, to attach ourselves every day more firmly to heavenly and imperishable things, which we find only in Jesus, living and coming again to introduce us into the mansions which He has prepared for us. If we pursue this end, we shall in this walk with those whom Scripture calls the "perfect," and our conduct here on earth will be consistent with what the conduct of the children of God ought to be, in proportion to the strength of our expectation of the Lord. It is, therefore, necessary that the hope of glory, consequent on our justification and adoption, should be vivid, and built up on the Word of God, in order that our testimony may be that of the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. The Spirit of God, or "Christ in us the hope of glory," is at the same time the seal of redemption, the unction which instructs us as to it, and gives us the enjoyment of it, and also the earnest of the glory and of the inheritance itself. The Spirit, as earnest of the inheritance, constitutes a true hereditary portion given beforehand to the Bride of the Lord. Every time the Spirit acts in the redeemed, He stamps on their thoughts, on their affections, and on their lives, that heavenly character which constitutes real separation from earthly things. The eye that habitually contemplates the sun, finds nothing but darkness when it is turned towards the earth.

Our heart living in this firm expectation, we shall be comforted *when we fall into* divers temptations, and such a hope will not deceive us, for it is grounded on the Word of our God and Father, who rejoices in those to whom He can say: "I

(1) Eph. ii. 10; compare for the word Rom. ix. 23, "prepare beforehand."

* English translation "hold forth;" but the word being capable of the other sense, I leave it as in French, as it is connected with the exhortation.—Tr.

(2) I am anxious also to arrest the attention of brethren on the accuracy of the language of the Holy Ghost on these matters. The two passages in 1 John iii. 2, 3, and Col. iii. 4, say absolutely the same thing, and the most ancient editions of Calvin translate them the same: "When *the Christ, our life*, shall be manifested, then shall ye be manifested with Him in glory." (Col. iii. 4.) "We know that when HE shall be manifested, we shall be like *Him;* for we shall see Him as HE IS." *

* The English translation is faithful in this case; only it uses the word "appear" instead of "shall be manifested."—Tr.

For my own part, I doubt the application of the Canticles to the Church prophetically. In principle, it may of course be applied, as also to an individual.—Tr.

remember without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope OF our Lord Jesus Christ." (1) The strength, the joy, the activity, the consolation of the Church, her deliverance, all her hope, the end of her pilgrimage on earth, is the expectation of the LORD *Jesus Christ Himself.*

The truth of our position before God consists in the perseverance with which we ought to wait for our Bridegroom Himself, or for His presence or for His coming. It was thus that faith made Mary act; this holy woman would not remain in the tomb of her Lord; her faith desired the Lord living; she must needs see Him again, adore Him; she wished to possess Him, to hear Him: this is the living faith which God loves to see in the Church. Such was also the truth according to God in the position of Anna (2) and Simeon, who were waiting, not for a consolation without Jesus, but for the person *of Jesus, the consolation of Israel.*

Beloved of the Lord! it is turning back in heart into Egypt to wait for any thing else whatsoever save Jesus in person; but if our heart is in heaven, our testimony will be a living testimony and our service intelligent, because our hope will be grounded on the truth of God. Now, *in practice,* we cannot maintain our holiness, we cannot be sanctified but by the Word of God, which is the truth. (John xvii. 15–20.) May the Lord give us to understand more and more what the holiness of His grace is which has set us apart for Jesus!

CONCLUSION.

Before Paul's conversion, the disciples of Jesus had no positive knowledge of the formation of the Church, the body of Christ, nor of the coming of the Lord to gather the Church and to receive it into heaven.

Until the disciples had received the knowledge of the things concerning the Church, they had borne testimony to the resurrection and return of Christ, the true David, author of the salvation of those who should be converted and believe in Him.

This testimony, so far as it is viewed as proclaimed alone and separate from that of the union of Christ and the Church, has been interrupted, and will only be resumed as such, that is to say, as the testimony of the Reign, only after the rapture of the Church.

The time of the interruption which I have just referred to, is occupied with the formation of the body or Bride of Christ.

To the Church "the testimony of Jesus" is committed, such as John has transmitted it to her, for the testimony of Jesus is to her also "the Spirit of prophecy." (3)

The preaching of the Gospel of grace that forms and gathers the Church, ought then never to have gone alone, still less to be confounded with the Gospel of the Reign. In this the Church has totally failed; it is to this that God in His grace will bring her back again.

The Church ought to expect her rapture at every moment. The expectation of death, that of the Reign of the Gospel, that of the Son of man, are to the Church, under the present dispensation, so many things opposed to the daily and scriptural hope of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

No event whatever, no, not even one of those which the Word of God announces as being still future, can be placed between the present moment and the rapture of the Church.

This, like every other truth, ought not to be limited to a mere barren knowledge only, but must be a living truth in our hearts, in order that we may reap, either for ourselves, or for the edification of the body, or for the glory of God in the eyes of men, the fruits which every truth of God, present to the conscience of the faithful, ought to produce.

IF HE TARRIES, wait for Him; for He will surely come—HE WILL NOT TARRY. Amen.—*Translated from the French of*

J. B. ROSSIER.

(1) 1 Thess. i. 5. I believe that the translation ought to render the original and peculiar force of these three consecutive genitives. The question is not about hoping in Jesus Christ, but of hoping for the presence of Jesus Christ.

(2) The daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Assur, left a widow, after having been married seven years, aged about eighty-four years, appears to me as belonging to the former dispensation, capable of being taken as a type of the earthly remnant, spared and sealed from amongst the twelve tribes of Israel, and redeemed out *of the earth and from amongst men.* (Apoc. vii. 10; xiv. 1–6.) This remnant is to survive the actual state of death of the nation, and after long waiting will hear the cry of "Behold, the King cometh!" The testimony of the Jewish remnant, spared on the earth while the second half-week of years lasts under antichrist, will be, in many respects, like that of Anna and of the faithful who waited for the Christ. These witnesses represent to the eyes of God "all Israel;" they live apart, praying, fasting, and persevering, *through patience,* in waiting for the consolation of their widowhood.

In another sense, a testimony analogous to that of Anna is committed actually to the Church, although she has not, as we have seen already, *that testimony only to bear.*

(3) Apoc. i. 2, 9; xix. 10.

TRANSLATIONS FROM "*L'ATTENTE ACTUELLE DE L'EGLISE.*"

V.—THE PROGRESS OF EVIL ON THE EARTH.—Dan. ii.

UP to this we have spoken of the union of Christ with the Church conformed to Him; of the coming of Christ, properly so called, and of the resurrection of the Church, by which it shares this glory of Christ, as co-heir.

The subject about to occupy us to-night is not so full of joy and happiness, but it is needful that we should know aright the testimony that God gives of man's *wickedness.* I hope, dear friends, that the result will be to produce seriousness of spirit. The sight of the progress of evil and of the judgment it draws down, effects, first, our avoidance of this evil; next, our conviction of the power of God, who alone can set it aside. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." (Heb. xii. 25–29.) Such was the Apostle's thought respecting the great change that is to occur when the power of evil will be overthrown.

What I have to present to-night tends to show that, instead of being able to hope for a continued progress of good, we are to expect, on the contrary, a progress of evil; and that the hope of the earth being filled with the knowledge of Jehovah, before the exercise of His judgments and the consummation of this judgment on the earth, is a false expectation.

We are to expect evil, until it become so flagrant that the Lord must judge it.

First, I shall show that the New Testament constantly presents to us evil as going on increasing till the end, and that Satan will aggravate it till the Lord destroys his power; secondly, I shall endeavour to explain the character which evil assumes as an external secular power. In other words, what I have to say reduces itself to these two points: first, the *apostasy,* which takes place in Christendom itself; secondly, the formation, the fall, and the ruin of the worldly power of the *antichrist,* in the sense of a visible power.

I begin with Matt. xiii. 36, the parable of the tares. It presents, as is well known, this circumstance, that whilst men slept, the enemy sowed tares in the field of the householder; and that, upon the demand of the servants whether the tares were to be gathered up, the answer was, Nay—that the wheat and the tares were to grow together until the harvest. It is then the sentence of the Lord, that the evil which Satan has done in the field where the good seed of the Word has been sown, remains and ripens there even to the end. It is an express declaration that the efforts of Christians shall not result in removing the evil which is to exist till the day of judgment. "Let both grow together until the harvest." The harvest is the end of this age," that is to say, of the present dispensation.

That with which we have to do now in the kingdom of God is grace, not judgment; we have not to judge the world. Even could we pronounce of such an one—he is a child of Satan—he is by that very fact out of our jurisdiction, he belongs to the tares. Our affair is with grace; that is to say, we cannot touch the evil that Satan has produced, but we can act as instruments of grace, for God permits us to sow good grain.

The tares are not simply wicked men, or pagans; these last have not been sown among the good grain. The tares are a specific evil effected by the enemy, after Jesus Christ had sown the good seed. What I can call heresy, corruption of the truth, will remain until the harvest. The evil that Satan has produced by corrupted religion will subsist to the end. All our efforts ought to be directed, not to remove the tares, but to gather the children of God, to assemble those who are joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.*

1 Tim. iv. 1. "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy. . . . ." We ought not to expect the progress of the Gospel, properly speaking; there may be, and *there will be,* as much as is necessary for the gathering together of the children of God; but what we ought to expect is contained in these words, a picture, as it were, of the latter times: "Some shall depart from the faith." (Compare 2 Peter ii. 1–3.)

2 Tim. iii. 1–5. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. . . . ." Are we to heed what men say? No; but what God says. Observe the language of Jeremiah to Hananiah. (Jer. xxviii. 6, &c.) So must we reply, when told that the knowledge of Jehovah shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. I believe, doubtless, that the knowledge af Jehovah shall fill the earth, but that is not the question. The question is, *How* will this be accomplished? By the judgments of God. "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will

* We read in 1 Sam. xxiii. 4, a very remarkable prophecy of the judgment of the wicked "who cannot be taken with hands," and of the beauty and blessing of the coming of Him who will reign in righteousness, and whose blessings will correspond to his faithfulness in keeping the covenant during our state of misery.

learn righteousness." Returning to our passage, "Men shall be lovers of their own selves." They are not pagans, they are Christians—Christians nominally; for it is said, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." The characteristics, indeed, traced by the Apostle, are those of pagans, such as they are painted in the lowest degree of their vileness at the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans, and nearly in the same terms. And it is added concerning these men of the last times, they "shall wax worse and worse."

We see the same expectation of evil in 2 Tim. iv. 1-4. "I charge thee, therefore, before God," &c.

It is to be remarked that the tares were already sown, while the Apostles themselves were alive, and it is, in one sense, a happy thing for us. If it had happened later, we should not have had the testimony of the Word in this respect, in order to warn and direct us, when these perilous events came to pass. As it is, God has communicated His perfect light upon this state of things.

1 Peter iv. 17. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God." Compare these words with Acts xx. 28-31. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." These things commenced in the lifetime of the Apostles.

1 John ii. 18. We see by this passage that "the last time" means, not the time of Jesus Christ, but the time of antichrist. There were precursors of the great antichrist. What characterizes the last time is, not the Gospel spread over all the earth, but the presence of antichrist.

Jude. We have in this epistle a treatise particularly dwelling on the apostasy, and in the fourth verse a succinct description of its character. The Apostle declares that it was needful to exhort the believers to contend for what they had already received; that among them were certain men crept in unawares, who were the promoters of the Apostasy, and that this was to continue until the judgment of Jesus Christ. For after having described their character more in detail, he adds, in verse 15, that this very class is to be the object of the Lord's judgment when He returns; that is to say, the evil manifested in the Church from the beginning is to last even to the coming of Christ. In verse 11, we have the three kinds of apostasy combined in these men: natural apostasy; ecclesiastical apostasy; and open revolt, upon which judgment will fall. We see first the character of Cain—apostasy of nature, hatred, unrighteousness; secondly, the character of Balaam—teaching of evil things for reward, which is ecclesiastical apostasy; and, thirdly, the character of Kore—that is to say, of him who exalted himself against the rights of priesthood and royalty, the royalty of Christ in the types of Moses and Aaron. Alas! that which will gather together the world is evil, not the Gospel. "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet 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." (Rev. xvi. 13, 14.) It will be said, that the external power of corrupted Christendom has disappeared, and that the destruction of its influence will give place to the Gospel. But the Spirit says: "The ten horns (kings) which thou sawest upon the beast (the Roman empire), these shall hate the whore (the ecclesiastical power), and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." (Rev. xvii. 16, 17.) Christians are desiring the destruction of the influence of the whore over the world. But when her external power is destroyed, will the kingdoms be given to Jesus Christ? On the contrary, the kings will give their power to the beast. Long has the whore ruled the beast; at length her rule and her wealth will be taken away, but only that the ten horns may give their power to the beast, that all uncertainty may be dissipated, and that its will and blaspheming character may be fully displayed in its last apostasy. It is the power of corruption and seduction which will give place to the power of open rebellion against God.

2 Thess. ii. 3-12. "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God." This must happen before the day of the Lord comes. We must take things as the Word of God reveals them. Christians having seen in the Scripture the promise that the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, have said, Well, we will fill it; whilst in the Scripture this event is attributed to the glory of Christ. *The Spirit of His mouth* by which the Lord will destroy the wicked one, is not the Gospel, but the force and power of the judgment of Christ. (See Isa. xi. 4.) "With the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked." (Isa. xxx. 33.) "The breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." We may observe that this antichrist will reunite the characteristics of wickedness which have appeared from the beginning. First, man has desired to do his own will; secondly, he has exalted himself to be as God; thirdly, he has put himself under the guidance of Satan. These are just the three things we see reproduced in the antichrist: all the energy of man exalting itself against God, under the form of the Roman empire, or fourth beast. It is the ripened fruit of the human heart, which is itself an antichrist.

You know that there have been three successive beasts—the empire of Babylon, then the empire of the Persians, then the empire of the Greeks, or specially of Alexander; and that the fourth is the Roman empire. But this last has a character altogether *peculiar to itself*.

At the beginning, or rather before the beginning, of these four monarchies, you know that the throne of God was on the earth at Jerusalem. Above the ark, wherein was the law, in His temple, Jehovah (*l'Eternel*) manifested His presence in a sensible manner. But at the beginning of this present period, which is that of the Gentiles, the throne of Jehovah was taken away from Jerusalem, as you find described very clearly in chapters i.-xi. of the prophet Ezekiel. The glory of Jehovah, which the prophet had seen in the first chapter, near the river Chebar, he sees in the eleventh chapter depart from Jerusalem; in the tenth chapter, 28, 29, from the house; in the eleventh chapter, 23, from the city. It is a very remarkable fact, that the glory of Jehovah has quitted its earthly throne. Furthermore, at the same time, this earthly power was transferred from Jerusalem to the Gentiles (government of men), as we see in Dan. ii. 36-38: "This is the dream, and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king: thou, O king, art a king of kings, and the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory ...." You see that by the destruction of the last king of the Jews, human dominion passed to the Gentiles in the person of Nebuchadnezzar. This king began by establishing false religion by force; he made a statue for all the world to worship, and became lifted up with pride, and therefore he was reduced to be as a beast for seven years; that is to say, instead of behaving as a man humbly before God, as before Him who had given him his power, on the one hand he exalted himself, and, on the other, ravaged the world to satisfy his will.

Omitting the second and third monarchies, which have no such direct importance for us at this moment, and, pursuing the character of the fourth, in it we meet certain features worthy of remark. The Jews have been in a state of captivity since Nebuchadnezzar unto this day. It is true that there was a return of this people from captivity, but without their having ceased to be under the power of the Gentiles. The throne of God was in no way restored, and if God permitted the Jews to return for a short while to their land, it was for His Son to appear at the beginning of the fourth monarchy. And, in fact, at the time when the fourth monarchy, under its imperial form, had become the universal power, just then the Son of God, rightful King of the Jews and of the Gentiles, was presented to them. And what have they done? They crucified Him. The chief priests, who, as viewed of God, were the representatives of the religion of the earth, and Pontius Pilate, representative of the earthly power, conspired to reject and put to death the Son of God. Thus the fourth monarchy became guilty of rejecting the rights of the Messiah. The Jews, as we shall see more in detail at another time, if it please God, are put aside, and then takes place the call of the Church for the heavenly places. But as regards the dispensation of the Church on earth, we have seen it marred by the seed of the wicked one, and the apostasy which is its result; we have seen afterwards that this corruption will give way to a more open and daring revolt of the beast itself; that is to say, of this same fourth monarchy under a new and final form yet to come. This will lead to its judgment. (Dan. vii. 9, 11, 13, 14.) "I beheld till the thrones were set,* and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame....I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." This is the kingdom given to the Son of man when the fourth beast is destroyed. Now, this judgment and destruction of the fourth monarchy has not yet taken place. I will cite, in proof, Dan. ii. 34, 35: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." That is, before the stone cut out without hands extends, and fills all the earth, it completely destroys the statue; gold, silver, brass, iron, clay, are carried away like the chaff of the threshingfloor. But that has not yet been accomplished in the least degree. In the action of the stone, there is no question of a change in the character of the statue. It is a blow—a sudden blow— a blow which breaks, destroys, and leaves not even a trace

* The ordinary translation is "cast down," but "set" is more exact, as the LXX and a considerable number of other authorities have it.

of the existence of the statue;—as it is said here, "No place was found for them." The Roman empire, the feet, and with the feet all the rest, disappeared. By this simple blow all is pulverized, destroyed, annihilated; and after this judgment, the stone which struck the statue becomes a mountain which fills the whole earth.

Dear friends, is it the fact that Christianity struck the fourth monarchy, when it began to spread? On the contrary, the Roman empire continued to exist; nay, it became Christian; and what is more, the feet of the statue did not exist at this epoch. The act of destruction designated by the fall of the little stone upon the feet of the statue, in nowise represents the grace of the Gospel, nor has it any reference to the work which the Gospel accomplishes. Finally, it is *after* the *total* destruction of the statue that the stone *begins* to grow; that is, the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, which is to fill the whole earth, will not begin to spread until the fourth beast has been judged and destroyed.

There remains a difficulty, which the history of this beast presents. It may be alleged that the Roman empire does not exist in our days. It is an additional proof of what we have been saying. (Rev. xvii. 7, 8.) "The beast that thou sawest was and is not;" that is, the Roman empire, as an empire, has ceased to exist. But what follows? "And shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition, and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder." It existed; then it exists no more; then it will issue from the bottomless pit. It will have a really diabolical character—it will be the proper expression of the power of Satan.

What we learn then, in general, as to the character of this beast is, first, that from its commencement the Roman empire has been guilty of rejecting Jesus as King of the earth here below; secondly, that later in this fourth monarchy there is a little horn which speaks great things; and, lastly, that this fourth beast, after having ceased to exist for some time, will issue from the bottomless pit, in order to exist anew, and then be destroyed because of the great words which the little horn utters. That connects itself with 2 Thess. ii. 9, that wicked "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." His destruction is found in verse 8. There is besides a description of the last head of the beast (Rev. xvii. 11), which is the beast itself.

Dan. xi. 36, &c.* The agreement between this passage and 2 Thess. ii. 9 is recognised: we see there the same exaltation of himself against God. The epistle adds the power of Satan, because there the wicked one is presented in his character of apostasy and iniquity; in Dan. xi. in his earthly and royal character. As to the third mark which we have specified in iniquity, the will of man appears there clearly—"the king shall do according to his will."

Observe also that which is described in John v. 43. The Jewish nation will receive him who comes in his own name.

Behold the iniquity of man's heart arrived at its height in the last head of the fourth monarchy.

Isaiah xiv. 13, 15 describes his self-exaltation under the title of the king of Babylon: "Thou hast said," &c. It is exactly all the privileges, all the rights of Christ which this king arrogates to himself. "I will ascend into heaven" is what Christ has done. "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;" the throne of Christ is above principalities and powers. "The mount of the congregation on the sides of the north" is the palace of the great King, the King of Israel at Jerusalem. Christ is to come with clouds. "I will ascend alone the heights of the clouds," says this one; "yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."

This evening I have wounded some ideas very dear, justly dear to faithful souls; I mean their hope that the Gospel is to spread over the whole earth during the present dispensation. It was for the Church to accomplish this task, to sound everywhere the proclamation of the glory of Christ. But in fact, expressing ourselves according to the Word, we shall see all that is influential and mighty in this world at work, but without reference to God. All the means of man, all his faculties, all his talents, all his knowledge will be displayed; all that can seduce the heart and rule the mind; all the resources in the character and nature of man, without conscience, will astonish the world, and drag it in the train of antichrist, because men desire human glory and self-exaltation, not the service of Christ, nor self-humiliation under Him. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased."

But it will be said, it is to discourage all undertakings for the propagation of the Gospel on the earth, if they are to close in such a result. Certainly, if false hopes are entertained, men are already deceived. It is very true that this view of the progress of evil offers little encouragement to our efforts; but it is because our hopes have been grounded on our own thoughts. But did the fact that God told Noah He was about to destroy the world, and that Noah was fully convinced the judgment of God was soon to come, hinder him from preaching to the men of his day? On the contrary, it was precisely what urged him on, in order to gain those who had ears to hear. The conviction that false Christianity will become more refined and more corrupt in the world, will only give more energy and decision to the love of him that believes; and the nearness of the judgments of God, far from paralysing our efforts, will urge us with infinitely more power, more perseverance, more faithfulness, to present the Gospel—the only means of causing men to escape the righteous woes that threaten them.

When I say that the tares, instead of diminishing, will continue to grow, is it said that the good grain will not increase? By no means. If the evil is to grow worse for judgment, God, at the same time, gives power to the testimony that would separate the good from it. I believe it is always thus that God acts. Had we seen three thousand souls converted in a day at Geneva, it would be said: The millennium is come; the Gospel is going to spread over all the earth. Now, there are not perhaps three hundred converted in a year. The conversion of several thousands at Jerusalem—what did it prove? Simply that God was about to judge that city, and that He saved from that perverse generation such as should be saved. Whenever we see evil increasing, and God acting in order to withdraw from it those who believe, it is just a sign that the judgment of God is nigh. It cannot be denied that God is acting palpably in our days; we ought to thank Him with all our hearts; and this convinces me more than ever, that the time hastens when God will withdraw His own from the world.

There are two signs that judgment is impending; the one is, that evil increases, that all the resources of man develop themselves marvellously; the other is, that Christians withdraw themselves from this state of things. Still, there is nothing in either to hinder us from labouring in the work of God. I see that the good is working, deepening, extending, and that God separates His children from the evil. On the other hand, I see all the principles of the wicked one visibly display themselves. In the word of God, I see an express declaration that the present dispensation will terminate, and the evil arrive at a greater height, until that wicked one is destroyed by the coming of Christ.

Rom. xi. 22. Let us close with the warning the Lord gives us: "Behold therefore the goodness and the severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." Has the Church kept itself in this goodness of God? Christendom is completely corrupt: this dispensation of the Gentiles has been unfaithful. Can it be restored? No, impossible. As the Jewish dispensation has been cut off, the Christian dispensation will be so likewise. May God give us grace to continue steadfast in our hope, and to rest upon His faithfulness, which will never fail us!

* Verse 35, the Jews are passed by. Read verse 36, "the king (antichrist shall do according to his will."

PHIL. II. 12, 13.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

Fear and trembling is a condition attached to fellowship of spirit with Christ in the humiliation of a servant (verse 1 with Eph. vi. 5); a condition implying weakness as to nature (1 Cor. ii. 3; 2 Cor. 13, 14); a condition implying obedience and subjection of will. (2 Cor. vii. 15.) It is the condition of the people of God in a suffering dispensation, as contrasted with the condition of Israel, who, in working out *their* deliverance and salvation, struck fear and terror into their enemies. (Exod. xv.; Deut. xi. 35.) It is in contrast with the condition of Israel when restored and blessed in the land. (Isa. liv. 14.) It is in contrast with the Noachic state. (Gen. ix.) In short, it is a condition of fellowship of spirit with Christ the sufferer in an evil world, patiently enduring all things for God, so that He might be glorified in the suffering. Hence the supply of the spirit of Christ, sought for in chap. i. 19, is not the Holy Spirit generally, which he had, but the spirit of Christ, the Martyr—the mind which was also in Christ Jesus. (ii. 5.)

Clonmel, December 10, 1848. * * *

[I add that, in working out their own salvation, the ground of fear and trembling was not lest God should have nothing to do with them, but just the contrary; "for *it is God* which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." It was with God they had to do. It was God that wrought in them, and hence the fear and trembling. The fact that it was God who wrought in them (and especially as the Apostle was absent too), was the strongest reason why they should look to God alone in a humble sense of weakness and dependence—not a reason why they (or he) should distrust God's grace and faithfulness towards them. In the chapter before (i. 6), the Apostle had expressed his confidence of this very thing, that He which had begun a good work in them would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; in which day *he* would thus rejoice that he had not run in vain, neither laboured in vain, as it is said in the present chapter.—Ed.]

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH.

That Christ will be the centre of all in heaven and earth in the millennium is clear; but that does not hinder the Church being in the proper, special, peculiar place of the bride, the body of Christ, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all when He is in glory. Israel, moreover, has its place as Israel, distinct, and, in many respects, in contrast. . . . . Nor is it ever said that Israel will govern the earth at all. That they are the favoured, glorious nations on the earth, where the government of Christ is placed, which extends over the earth, is true; but they do not govern nor judge the earth. It is the heavenly saints who do that. They are governed by Christ, who will be "great to the ends of the earth," and "all nations call Him blessed." That they will celebrate the ways of God in justice and judgment, I fully believe. But what

then? There is nothing at all like the knowledge, the anticipative knowledge, of the mind of Christ and of His glory, which we find in Ephes. i. 9-11. When the things are accomplished, they will understand them, and celebrate them. But the *peculiar* character of the Church's place is to know and celebrate them *by faith*. Not to know the justice and judgment merely, which are the habitation of His throne, but His counsels and thoughts. The mind of Christ is more than the works or the ways of God in *judgment*. It is all His *counsels* in Christ. Who hath known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? but we have the mind of Christ. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God." Thus it is we have the mind of Christ—as Joseph, yet unexalted, was the interpreter of the revelations of God. And Christ is the wisdom of God and the power of God. Power will be displayed hereafter; we have but samples of it now, the display of which confirmed faith. But Christ is made unto us wisdom; and if in infirmity we know only in part, still as regards the object of knowledge and the source of knowing, the whole wisdom of God is in Christ, and we have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things—we have the mind of Christ. But it is never said that Israel has the mind of Christ. They will see the displays of His power, recognise and celebrate them. But is that having the mind of Christ as we have it? The Egyptians knew what Joseph knew, when the things came; but had they the mind of Joseph? The Holy Spirit will be poured out on all flesh in the millennium. They will prophecy and see visions; but though the lump is holy, it is not that separate consecrated first-fruits. The Holy Ghost will enable them to enjoy, but will not, in identity with the sufferings of Christ, make saints the vessel of the outgoings of His heart in the sorrows of a groaning world, nor in the joy of its deliverance by power, as the day when their love is answered. They will profit by the answer themselves, but they will not, as in the love which has thought of others, though in itself "according to God." This place they will never have, they *can* never have. It is reserved for us who have gone before the day of His power, and fore-trusted in Him. Blessed privilege! If sovereign grace has given it us, shall we disown or depreciate it?

J. N. D.

A SONG OF PRAISE FOR THE HOPE OF GLORY.*

I SOJOURN in a vale of tears.
  Alas! how can I sing?
My harp doth on the willows hang,
  Distuned in every string.
My music is a captive's chains,
  Harsh sounds my ears do fill,
How shall I sing sweet *Zion's* song
  On this side *Zion's* hill?

Yet, lo, I hear a joyful sound,
  "Surely, I quickly come;"
Each word much sweetness doth distil,
  Like a full honeycomb.
And dost thou come, my dearest Lord?
  And dost thou surely come?
And dost thou surely quickly come?
  Methinks I am at home.

Come then, my dearest, dearest Lord,
  My sweetest, surest Friend
Come, for I loathe these Kedar tents,—
  Thy fiery chariots send.
What have I here? My thoughts and joys
  Are all packed up and gone,
My eager soul would follow them
  To thine eternal throne.

What have I in this barren land?
  My Jesus is not here;
Mine eyes will ne'er be blest until
  My Jesus doth appear.
My Jesus is gone up to heaven,
  To get a place for me;
For 'tis His will, that where He is
  There should His servants be.

Canaan I view from Pisgah's top;
  Of Canaan's grapes I taste:
My Lord, who sends unto me here,
  Will send for me at last.
I have a God that changeth not,
  Why should I be perplexed?
My God that owns me in this world
  Will own me in the next.

Go fearless then, my soul, with God,
  Into another room;
Thou that hast walked with Him here,
  Go see thy God at home.
View death with a believing eye,—
  It hath an angel's face,
And this kind angel will prefer
  Thee to an angel's place.

The grave is but a fining-pot
  Unto believing eyes;
For there the flesh shall lose its dross,
  And like the sun shall rise.
The world, which I have known too well,
  Hath mocked me with its lies,—
How gladly would I leave behind
  Its vexing vanities.

My dearest friends they dwell above,—
  Them will I go to see;
And all my friends in Christ below
  Will soon come after me.
Fear not the trump's earth-rending sound,
  Dread not the day of doom,
For He that is to be thy Judge
  Thy Saviour is become.

Blest be my God that gives me light,
  Who in the dark did grope;
Blest be my God, the God of love,
  Who causeth me to hope.
Here's the word's signet, comfort's staff
  And here is grace's chain;
By these thy pledges, Lord, I know,—
  My hopes are not in vain.

* Taken out of an old Hymn Book, by G. J. The editor does not vouch for every expression.

THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL xii. 23.

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NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WE have seen that at all times there is lying and violence, Babylon and the beast. Satan was from the beginning a liar and a murderer. From the beginning of the seventeenth chapter to the tenth verse of the nineteenth chapter, we see the contrast between Babylon and the new Jerusalem. In order to show to us the judgment of the whore, the Spirit has presented to us, in the seventeenth chapter, the woman and the beast in their relations one with the other. Here, in the eighteenth chapter, Babylon is shown to us standing alone, that the judgment on her may be revealed.

The great principle seen in Babylon is worldliness, but worldliness as a position of captivity for the people of God, in connection with the prostitution of man's natural affections. In the *Old Testament, fornication is applied to trade, not to trade with* an eye to provide for wants, but to the spirit of trade to make a gain of it. Tyre is a proof of this. Idolatry was, properly speaking, the sin of adultery* for Jerusalem, because the Eternal was her husband. In the Church it is called prostitution, because the marriage of the Lamb has not yet taken place; but there is more moral connection than one thinks, because the heart is at a distance from God, and conscience likewise, by the allurement of gain and covetousness, which is idolatry. (Eph. v. 5. See also Phil. iii. 13–20.) The most abominable form of worldliness is that of those who call themselves Christians, separated unto God by the blood of the Lamb, and are living in worldliness, after the principles of the world who rejected the Lord Jesus. We are speaking of moral analogies; we have already seen how idolatry characterises Babylon, the abominations meaning idolatry.

The Revelation is almost entirely borrowed from the Old Testament; so that we derive much light from the Old Testament for the understanding the book of Revelation. Babylon is the enemy of Jerusalem. Israel came out from Egypt. Egypt is the world in its natural state; this is not so with Babylon.† Babylon was, from the beginning, the spirit of worldliness presenting the allurements of this world to the heart come out of Egypt. It was a goodly Babylonish garment which attracted the heart of Achan. (Josh. vii. 21.) When the king of Babylon sent unto Hezekiah, because he had heard that he had been sick and was recovered (2 Kings xx. 12, and Isa. xxxix. 1), Hezekiah showed all that was found in his treasures to the men that the king of Babylon had sent him. But Isaiah said unto him: "All that which thy fathers have laid up in stores shall be carried to Babylon." As soon as the Church will extol herself before the world, through things pertaining to it, she will, as it is besides always the case, fall under the influence and under the power of the world. Later, Babylon is presented in her power, and the people of Israel captive under it. There is the idolatry, the golden statue, and all kinds of riches. Babylon is the centre of idolatry and of the power of the world. She fell by the power of Cyrus, and the people of God were delivered to a certain extent. Such are in the Old Testament the features of Babylon. Babylon is the power of this world which makes a traffic of everything of the world that has been exalted because of the iniquity of the people of God, and where the people of God have been found in captivity. When the Church becomes worldly, the world has always the advantage over her.

What we find in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation is not Babylon in her glory, but in her downfall. It is the judgment of Babylon. (Verses 2, 3.) She has for a season enjoyed the pleasures of the earth. After her downfall she becomes an habitation of demons; and, at the same time, it is said to the people of God (verse 4): "Come out of her, my people." Israel has been, through the judgment of God, captive in Babylon. When Babylon fell, Israel came out of her. If I discern Babylon, I am called to come out of her.

Verse 8. The people of God is called upon to reward her even as she rewarded them, and to double unto her double according to her works. And the Church in heaven is called to rejoice over her, because the Lord God has judged her. (Verse 20.)

Why does the Spirit of God enumerate all these articles of luxury and commerce? (Verses 11–13.) It is in order to describe unto us what is the occupation of the children of Babylon. All was merchandise to her. She was the centre of all those things which the inhabitants of the earth enjoy. And if the bodies and the souls of men could help in any way to this enjoyment, they also would be made a traffic of. All is made then a matter of gain, of pleasure, and of commerce of this world. This spirit is seen already, although all these details are not yet visible. To traffic and to become rich, there is the spring of all the actual politics of the world; and if the traffic of souls can serve to that end, it matters not, provided the aim be attained to make much gain and to embellish this world, of which Satan is the prince. The more facilities increase to satiate this thirst after gain and luxury, the more the souls of men will be devoured with the lust after them. The world must be everything, and the prince of this world must rule without obstacle, and everything must yield to this. Nothing is more melancholy than to see that everything is to be made a matter of selling and of buying, that this is the end of everything in this world, and that everything yields when the question is a matter of gain. This annihilation of all principle through the spirit of gain, leaves an open field to the ascendant Satan has over the hearts of men to enslave them under his dominion. It is to be feared that the hearts of Christians may be carried away by these principles; for the principles of the world take possession, to a certain point, of Christian hearts. They glory even in them.

There was not only positive hatred and murder in Cain's heart, but also the character of the prince *of this world*. He built a city, and embellished the world. (Gen. iv. 16.) Satan rules over the hearts of men through these means, and thus becomes the prince of this world through means of all the pleasures of life which the world calls innocent pleasures. They say, Why, what harm is there in riches, in music, in drawing, and in so many other things? Why, that Satan, by their means, rules the world and enslaves the hearts of men for eternity. This is the character of Babylon. It is an abominable thing when a Christian can put up with Babylon's principles, and conform his taste to them.

* As a general term, fornication is used for idolatry, as is indeed πορνεία for adultery:—["It is quite impossible to say here that the Church is represented as married, because her marriage is recounted in the nineteenth chapter as subsequent to the destruction of Babylon. Paul's object was to present her as a chaste virgin to Christ. And the Lord will present it to Himself a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. So that the Church is represented, as to its actual condition, as a bride, not as married, though the figure of the love of husband and wife is used as an image of the love of Christ to the Church. Nor am I aware of any passage where the Church is married, though such an anticipative expression as being his wife I could suppose used by faith. Earthly Jerusalem *is* called the *married* wife."—*Same Author.*]

† A pagan is in Egypt. Satan is his prince. Israel came out of Egypt—never returned there, but was in captivity in Babylon.—["As regards the use of Babylon in the Revelation, it is certain, like all the rest of that book, that it is taken from the Old Testament prophecies, changing what was to be changed, as the description of new Jerusalem from the sixtieth of Isaiah. The Jerusalem of the Revelation could be much more reasonably supposed to be the earthly Jerusalem of Isaiah, than this the earthly Babylon of that prophet and Jeremiah. There is a literal Babylon, and a mystical one; a literal Jerusalem, and a mystical one. But to pursue the character of Babylon. It had this double character, commerce and idolatry, anciently. It was 'a land of traffic, a city of merchants'—the emporium, as an able writer on these subjects calls it, of the world; but Scripture suffices us, and the garment of Shinar at a *very* early period, and the city of merchants in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, show us clearly for what the city was famous, as it naturally from its situation would be (so it is said 'the *Chaldeans*, whose cry is in the ships,' Isa. xliii.), as Bagdad in a measure since. Next, it was full of idolatry. (Isa. xxi. 9; so Jer. l. 38.) 'It is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols.' Hence, in Isaiah, the controversy between Jehovah and these idols is settled in judging Babylon, and begins, 'Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth.' Thus Babylon had been a golden cup in the Lord's hand that hath made all the earth drunken; the nations had drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad. (Jer. li. 7; compare 15–18.) These two points are taken up in the way of analogy. Let any reflecting Christian say which is the real departure from God, commerce or idolatry. And as then the denial of the glory and unity of the Divine Being was the aim of Satan and idolatry, so now the denial of the sole glory and efficacious work of the Mediator is his object—of that by which God brings men back to Himself in grace. Hence we have the means of judging of the nature of the corruption of the mystic Babylon."—*Same author.*]

This corruuption and this system of pleasure is especially evil for us, inasmuch as all these things are done when man, having been driven from the presence of God, and gone out from before the face of the Lord, has done his best in arranging the world, in forming a polite society, in cultivating arts, and creating pleasures, &c. God has presented to the world His own Son as heir of all things, and the world has rejected Him. But the Father receives the rejected Son, and the world is found in direct opposition to God. After having killed his brother, and being cast out of the presence of God, Cain embellishes the world. The world had already been sinning against God; but, like Cain, it added to this the murder of Him who had made Himself our brother. Jesus is not of the world, but of the Father. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." (John xvii. 25.) What characterises the disciples is, that they follow the Son to heaven, are heavenly-minded, and not of the world. "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John ii. 16.) The Father is opposed to the world—the Son to Satan—the Spirit to the flesh. So far as the Christian enters into the ways of the world, it is a complete prostitution. When the world is in the place of the Church and holds the Church in captivity, the full character of Babylon is then unfolded, although she was already Babylon before she did it and in order to do it. Whatever makes the world happy in spite of God, is in the spirit and course of Babylon, and, for the Christian to be there, is to be in Babylon. The world may get rich without our having anything to do with it; but when a goodly Babylonish garment is found in the tent of Achan, then the whole camp is corrupted, and God judges it. When friendly associations begin to take place between Babylon and the people of God, it is an indication that all Hezekiah's riches are going to be transported there. When Hezekiah is rich enough to make a display of his treasures, the principles of the world are working in him, and judgment begins already. When Babylon becomes guilty of carrying Israel away captive, the people of God are already without power.

Verse 4. The misfortune of the people of God is to have any part in the sin of Babylon; and the only way to avoid having any part in it, is to come out—to come out of her, not to be made partaker of her sins, and so not to receive of her plagues in consequence. We come out of her because of her sins and not to be partakers in them, not because her plagues have arrived. It is evident that the true Christians, the Church, have become worldly. God has had long patience. Babylon falls when Belshazzar is boasting, not merely of having the people of God captive, but also of having prevailed over God. When Babylon fell, the people of God were there; this is what will take place again, though the rapture of the Church is to take place first.

The spirit of worldliness opposes itself to the testimony of God, and is guilty of the death of those who have borne testimony to Jesus. The more religion there is in the world, the more obstinately set it is on putting to death those who bear testimony to Jesus. When Nebuchadnezzar made the golden statue, he threw the Hebrews into the furnace. When Jesus Christ is preached, it is the Jews who go from one city to another, urging the heathen to persecute the Christians. It is they who pursue to that end the Apostles from town to town. That which least bears the light of God, is what assumes to be the religion of God without being so. If Jesus is the Son of God in heaven, what have the Jews done? Babylon is the spirit of worldliness cast out far away from God, as guilty of the death of Christ, and which nevertheless gives itself up to embellish the world. Thus the Church, as the light, is extinguished by the spirit of worldliness. Babylon slays the prophets and the saints. Not being the true God, and there being no possibility of her being of Him, otherwise she would no more be Babylon—she makes use of idolatry, enforcing it as a means to establish unity; this is what Nebuchadnezzar did. Such are the great principles of Babylon; and those who do not act from conscience must undergo the yoke of this prosperous worldliness, which traffics even in the souls of men. The testimony remains with us that the world is not of the Father, that Christ is not of the world, and that the world will be judged. (Verse 8.)

Until the judgment of God falls upon the world, the world will prosper more and more. This is not yet fully accomplished. But we are warned, that we may flee from all those Babylonish *principles* by which society is embellishing and arranging itself without God, and which leads it even to make a merchandise of conscience. May God keep our hearts from being made partakers of her sins, that we may not also receive of her plagues! All those Babylonish principles, all that your eyes may lust after for your drawing-rooms and for your pleasures, all those things separate you from heaven. All that is of the world which rejected Christ. Would you perhaps like to be of Babylon on a small scale? As the Spirit is opposed to the flesh, the Son to Satan, so is the Father likewise to the world. It is the power of heavenly affections which takes away the desire after these carnal things.—(*To be continued.*)

"WE ARE SAVED BY HOPE."

In all dispensations, the people of God were practically sustained by hope. Though the hope might be different in all, yet its power, as a principle of action, was similar in all; and if we study the mode by which we are led along from one pursuit to another, or sedulous in any, it is simply from hope. You enter on the drudgery of learning a language with the hope of being able to understand it; you sow your field with the hope of enjoying the fruits of it; and thus also in the details of life, there is always something in the distance which buoys up the spirit and encourages you to advance. It is the principle which begets all enterprize and is always active in a man, and never satisfied till shown by the Spirit of God what eye hath not seen nor ear heard. No present blessing has ever shut out hope. There was always, at all times, to the man of God something better beyond, and if his mind fed not on it, things around unduly engaged him, to the prejudice of what was more blessed. Man is engrossed by some hope, and the nature of the hope gives him character. If Christians are not led on by their proper hope, there must be failure in their service, as well as in personal blessing; for they are taken up with some other hope which distracts them, and prevents them from being engaged with their proper one. This I believe has been the cause of the Church's great departure from its proper character and path on earth. Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. This hope did not save him (that is to say, if thereby be meant the remission of sins), but it made him turn his back on the stately structure of Babel, in the land of Shinar, for the city of God, which glistened in the distance. With his eye resting on it, he trod his weary way towards it through many a year, across this desert world. This made him a pilgrim and a stranger here; his hope was beyond this scene. Not so with Cain: his hope centred in his attempt to present this unredeemed earth pleasing to God by the fruits of his labour; and what have been the effects of his hope? Bitter disappointment on all hands, and worse! for with the same hand that gathered its sweet and beauteous fruits did he stain it with the blood of his brother. Philanthropist, he would mend the world and sacrifice his brother! How important then is it that we should ascertain distinctly the nature and range of our hope.

I fear the Church has been looking for conversions and earthly extension, and the like, instead of that hope which, like a beacon-light, would not only encourage it to advance, but also guide it in its course. How seldom have Christians examined into the nature of the place God has set the Church in here below! Are we Jews? Certainly not. Are we Gentiles? Through God's grace we answer, No! We are of the Church of God. The Jews are displaced. Israel is *broken off* that we might be grafted in, and here is our earthly place; but the question occurs, How did we come there? We were strangers to the covenant of promise. I believe the gospel of St. Luke is especially written to show us how God was preparing to disclose the mystery of the Church. The language of Simeon is different from that of Hezekiah: earth is nothing to one as soon as Christ is seen, and he longs to depart. The prodigal son does not, on his reformation, get another living, but he gets a higher thing—even the father's house and the glories of it; also Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, for one who had been in no earthly blessings whatsoever; and, lastly, paradise opened out to Christ's last companion in this earth, too bad for the men of this world, the first to be with Christ in heaven! As a Jew, he asked to be remembered in Christ's kingdom, but he is taught there is higher blessing before that, where it is impossible for a man to utter the glories that surround him.

God made the last trial of Israel when He sent His Son. In His

mercy, every offer should be made to them. Hence, even the apostles were not instructed as to the destiny of the nation; their hopes were Jewish, and all their early ministration was to Jews. The stoning of Stephen, the witness of the Holy Ghost resisted, gave the grand blow to Jewish things. Samaria then hears the word of God, and, stranger still, an Ethiopian eunuch, as he "*was returning*" from Jerusalem, is owned and received. Notwithstanding, the apostles were not prepared for the entrance of the Gentiles into the root and fatness of the olive tree. The natural branches we see are broken off, and God is now about to bring in the Gentiles. This is detailed in Acts x. to Peter in a vision. He is shown a sheet knit at four corners, as comprising the whole world, in which were all manner of beasts (clean and unclean). It came out of heaven, and was let down on the earth, and was received up again into heaven. All these minutiæ are important, as instructing us in the characteristics of the new body about to take the place of testimony on earth. They were to be distinctly heavenly in origin and heavenly in hope: they came from heaven, they reached earth, but they returned to heaven. True, they were to fill up the hiatus caused by the breaking off of Israel, and this only for a season, as we see in Rom. xi. The error which has seduced the Church into the world, was the idea that it was to take the place of Israel in respect to hope as well as in respect to testimony. Now, Palestine was never given to the Gentile, and it alone God had claimed in a peculiar manner, but yielded into the hands of the Gentile King when His people ceased to be witness for Him in it. The great power given over the wide earth to the Gentile is not yet reassumed, because He, whose right it is, has not yet come. He is gone to seek for Himself a kingdom, but is not as yet returned, and until then *no portion* of earth could be claimed by the Church now. Hence, the place given to them is in heaven: like the prodigal, it is to the Father's house and glories they are called. The word is "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Man on earth had dishonoured God, and it had been cursed on his account; and the man who, like Cain, attempts to make it a scene pleasing to God, not only subjects himself to bitter disappointment, but his spirit must be opposed to godliness. Man on earth has been tried: Jew and Gentile, all are found wanting. He who is Lord of heaven and earth tarries for a little season ere He shows Himself as King of kings, and Lord of lords; and during that season He is gathering out a people for His name, and heaven is their locality, for earth is yet unsubdued.

I am insisting on this point especially, because if we know not our present calling, we must be ignorant of the hope to which we are saved, simply because that if our proper hope engaged us, it would put us in our proper place here. If I am actually now a heavenly man as to calling, and if all saints are so, my eye must rest on them as such, and my hope is not connected with earth or earthly things. The hope of a man now, holding citizenship in heaven, is to look for the Saviour, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like His own glorious body. (Phil. iii.) This is the first work of Christ on His return, and hence it is the hope of the saints, and it purifies them. (1 John iii.) Christ is raised; then they that are His at His coming. He will manifest the sons of God. He will show the triumph over death in the thousands of His saints. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, the first in whom was arrested the power of death, at one and the same time gave Satan a prestige of his final catastrophe, and the people of God, thus early in their history, an assured prospect of deliverance. For three hundred years he walked with God, and his testimony and hope ever was, "The Lord cometh." He did not, like Cain, expect that anything could be produced from earth pleasing to God, or that he could by any process remove the evil and violence then gathering over the land. Cain had failed. Enoch left it for better hands. Daily the earth grew worse, and what Cain, with the best intentions if you please, could not effect in its infant state of evil, how can we, who are now in the condition spoken of in Jude's Epistle? If Enoch had need in his day to look for the coming of the Lord, how much more have we? It is evident that the coming here does not mean Christ's first coming, for then Jude would not have referred to it as it was passed, and moreover, Christ's first coming was not with ten thousands of His saints. The object of the apostle is to connect the minds of the saints with the only hope which could sustain as well as satisfy in the midst of evil and perplexity. If Enoch had not been walking in the faith of translation, would his hope have been in the coming of the Lord?

Thus it is we see that ascertaining my place now has much to do with my hope. If I am not looking to earth at all for blessing, but offering blessing to men on it from heaven, then I am not looking towards earth, but looking from heaven. The apostle in Phil. iii. says there are certain persons "enemies of the cross of Christ;" and the summing up of their character is, that they mind "earthly things." Christ has quickened us with Himself above all these—not delivered by Him to be again immersed in them, but risen with Him, with our affections set on things above, not on earthly things. These are still the theatre where Satan acts, and they that set their minds on them are enemies to the cross of Christ. The spirit of Cain is in them; alas! how it clings to us. Cain was a seeker of God, but in earthly things; and many a seeker of God nowadays, whom one could love and value, is found seeking and expecting blessings to spring up and flourish in this evil world. This being their hope, they are labouring for the extension of Christ's kingdom with an energy and assiduity which puts to shame the better taught. Cain's labour did not sanctify his service; and no amount of self-sacrifice or serving others can hallow such work. If it be minding earthly things, it is the act of the enemy, not exactly of Christ, but of *the cross* of Christ. Many a man would assert very positively that he was not an enemy to Christ; but is he an enemy to THE CROSS of Christ? That cross put everything on earth to death. If you revive anything, and maintain that anything here is not crucified (Satan's great object), then you are an enemy. It matters little whether here or there or how I seek to produce an improvement in society, as making things and persons here more externally good and comely. If I am seeking for such a reformation either in a less or a greater degree, as bettering things here, I am minding earthly things; I am acting as a citizen of earth, and not as a citizen of heaven. The apostle says our citizenship is in heaven, and our hope is the return of Jesus. Let us not think of ourselves and the amount of good we are doing. So Cain thought. So said Saul, in sparing the beasts of Amalek for a sacrifice to the Lord. But let us honestly, in secret with the Lord, ask ourselves, Are we happily in the place of the Philippian saints, viz., in heaven in spirit? and is our hope as theirs, looking for the Saviour to change the body of our vileness into the likeness of the body of His glory? Oh that it were, and the track of our footsteps would guide many to blessing!

TRANSLATIONS FROM "*L'ATTENTE ACTUELLE DE L'EGLISE.*"

VI.—THE TWO CHARACTERS OF EVIL.—Dan. vii. 16–28.

UNTIL now, dear friends, we have only spoken of the happiness that belongs to the Church, and at our last meeting we traced the progress which evil will make on the earth, even to the end. This evil presents a twofold character, on which I purpose to say a few words more, seeing that the relations which exist between the power of evil and the judgments which await it, have a special interest for the children of God. When the evil is come to its height, God destroys it.

The verses I have read, in commencing, are the interpretation which the angel gives to Daniel of the vision of the beasts he had seen; and, as is always the case in the symbolic prophecies, the interpretations contain several new features. Here, for instance, in the explanation given to Daniel, is added all that will happen to the saints. But what I have read, and the entire chapter, refer to the beast that exalts and raises itself against the most high God.

I have said, dear friends, that there are two characters in the evil which is developed on the earth: the first is ecclesiastical apostasy; and the second, apostasy of the civil power itself.

First, apostasy of the Church, viewed in its responsibility here below: this has taken place. On the other hand, the civil power will rise up against Him to whom government belongs—against Christ, whom God will establish King on the earth. It is under the fourth beast, or Roman empire, that this revolt will take place.

At our last meeting, I spoke much more of the tares; that is, of ecclesiastical apostasy, of the progress of the evil which has happened within the sphere of the professing Church. Now, we have to see the apostasy of the outward civil power, and the judgment from God which will strike it; for the blows will fall upon the civil power. If the ecclesiastical evil somewhat disappears in the character of secular power and of its external form, and if the civil evil exalts itself, the ecclesiastical evil is not less active; only it has not the supremacy. Herein is the difference. In other

words, it is not that the ecclesiastical power becomes better. By no means. Only it is not exercised in the same way, and its influence is only the more pernicious. It is no longer an ecclesiastical power, disposing of the secular arm; it no longer rides upon the beast and rules it. It assumes a character more mysterious, and consequently more dangerous. The secret influence continues, though it is deprived of its outward splendour; for, by their pride, men now rise and combine against God, preparing the way for the son of perdition.

Although ecclesiastical evil is ever the worst, yet, as we have been saying, civil apostasy will take place and be manifested. You know that all civil power is of God: now, just as the Church loses its character by its rebellion against God, so the civil government will be found in a state of rebellion or apostasy when, instead of owning allegiance to God, it rises in opposition to Him who had conferred its authority.

The Spirit of God being the true strength of the Church, the Church's revolt begins when, instead of being subject to Christ, it obeys the mere will and power of man, leans upon man, and renounces the truth to follow a lie. Christ is the head, and the Holy Spirit is the only strength by means of which the Church acts. When the Church is not directed by the Holy Ghost, and is not in this sense really subject to Christ, Christendom is apostate. Now, my dear friends, the civil power will be found, at the end of the present dispensation, in the same state of rebellion; and apostasy in the civil power is a thing far more external and prominent than in the Church. This will take place in the bosom of Christendom, and seemingly the ecclesiastical evil will be its source and principal motive power. It is what may be always seen. Thus when Absalom rebels against David, Ahitophel was his counsellor (2 Sam. xv.): the prime source of the rebellion was doubtless Satan, but it was always Ahitophel that directed the conspiracy against the king. When the children of Israel, Dathan and Abiram, rebelled against Moses, the revolt was called that of the Levite Korah, who had seduced them. Exactly so—God charges the priests and the prophets, in the kingdom of Judah, with the iniquity of the people, because the civil power had followed their wicked counsels. This is what has happened in Christendom. Those who ought to have edified the professing Church, to have displayed the wisdom of God, and to have recalled the government to its duties before God, being themselves in rebellion against Him, have concealed the truth, have assumed a form that has seduced the world, and have dragged the civil power into the same departure from God.

There will be a revolt of the civil power, but the ecclesiastical power will be its soul.

What do we see at Armageddon? A false prophet that falls with the beast. From the commencement to the close there is always a beast, and with the beast the false prophet. It is the one or the other that directs the evil. But at the close the beast takes the upper hand, being able to act more freely and more directly, as it is the beast which is found at last the express object of judgment. Such is the teaching of Dan. vii.

From the moment that the beast or the civil power of the fourth monarchy shall set itself in revolt against God, this monarchy will be found in relation with the Jews, and it is this which will introduce us into the history of that people. You are aware, dear friends, that when the fourth beast appeared on the scene of this world there were Jews at Jerusalem; that Christ was presented as King of the Jews to the fourth beast before Pontius Pilate, and that He was rejected in this character of King of the Jews, which He will never lose. At the end, the same fact will be reproduced. The Jews restored to their own land, without being converted, will be found in relation with the fourth beast; there will be saints among them; and this fourth beast will exalt itself against God, and put itself in direct opposition to the rights of Christ as King of the Jews. Its self-exaltation, no doubt, will be much higher than ever against Christ, for it will claim the rights of Christ as King of the Jews; and it is then that Christ, coming from heaven, will destroy it, with antichrist its head, will take the remnant of the Jews to be His earthly people, and will put all nations under His feet.

What I have said enables you to understand that many things apply to the saints or faithful remnant of the Jews, and not to the Church. For example, we know that whilst the ecclesiastical apostasy has reigned, there have been many persecutions against the faithful. But in these last times, when it will be a question of persecuting the saints, the remnant of the Jews are to be the sufferers, whose "blood shall be shed like water." (Ps. lxxix. 3.)

If we take up the history of the beast in a general manner, even from the epoch of Tiberius Cæsar, and the other emperors—if we take up the beast itself, not under its pagan character, but as being under the influence of corrupted Christianity in the middle ages—we see there have been at every succeeding epoch persecutions against the saints, and may say of them also: "In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." But when we come to the time when the civil power will openly raise the standard of revolt, to the time when these prophetical facts will be fully realised, it is upon the Jews that the persecutions fall. The moment that it is a question of the rights of Christ, as King of the Jews, the Jews appear upon the scene, because the Jews are the earthly people of God. But what has become of the Church? It shall have been entirely removed from the then scene of these last persecutions.

Before we quote the chapters which treat of *that wicked*, that is, of the apostate civil power substituted for the apostate ecclesiastical power, let us again insist on the principal, that the revolt of the ecclesiastical power is not the less dangerous, because it has no longer the supremacy. On the contrary, it is this power, as we have already remarked, which is the secret counsellor of all the evil. The only change is, that the ecclesiastical power ceases to have, *outwardly*, the preponderance; and the not seeing this has led many into error. Because men have merely exercised their natural observations, and have seen that it could no longer depose kings, they have believed that all this ecclesiastical power had absolutely disappeared. Attention was not paid to that which the children of God ought to see in the Word—that its moral influence would survive the destruction of its political existence, and that it was precisely this influence which would urge on the political power, properly so called, to revolt against God and finally to its destruction. I do not mean to say that it is not the will of man, which, by its own energy, leads the beast to its ruin—I myself believe it; but, in the meantime, it is the ecclesiastical apostasy which, haughtily claiming to itself the power of God, or closing the door against the manifestation of the will of God, seduces by its machinations the inhabitants of the earth to acknowledge and worship the beast.

I now proceed to the passages which refer to that which I have been saying.

First, the end of Dan. vii., where the fourth beast is found; next Rev. xvi., and especially xvii., where we find two things wholly distinct, the great whore, or Babylon, and the beast. In the seventeenth chapter, there is the woman clothed with scarlet, the principal element of which is ecclesiastical power; she is mounted on the beast, or civil power. After that, "the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore (ecclesiastical power), and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire; for God hath put in their hearts . . . . to give their kingdom to the beast."

Let us now examine the passages which concern the sources of evil, and more particularly of the evil of that power which revolts against God (that is to say, of the fourth monarchy), and the form which the revolt is to assume.

The twelfth chapter of Revelation reveals the source of this power, namely, the great dragon. We are there, as it were, admitted behind the scenes, and we see the power of Satan desiring to destroy Him who is to govern all nations with a rod of iron—Christ, and in Christ, and with Christ, the Church. It is properly the power of Satan, the great combat. The word of God puts in contrast the Father and the world, the flesh and the Spirit, Satan and the Son of God. Here it is the great dragon, or Satan, who wishes to devour Him that is to govern the nations with a rod of iron. But it is in heaven that we see it. Afterwards (verse 9) he is cast out; an event which has not yet taken place.

Here arises a difficulty to some minds. Because Satan is cast out of the conscience,* which is true, they imagine that he is cast out of heaven. It is perfectly true that Satan has no power over our conscience, if we have understood the value of the blood of Christ; but it is also for that Christ intercedes in heaven, when Satan accuses the children of God. We see, Ephes. vi. 12, that the wicked spirits are in the heavenly places (margin). By consequence, there will be a battle in heaven—a battle which will be the effect, not of an act of intercession or priesthood, but of power, which will take place perhaps through the medium of angels, but which will be ever a work of power. Though, thereupon, Satan is to be cast down from heaven, he will be on the earth; but he will not yet be bound in the bottomless pit, and the fruits of his wickedness will not yet have reached their limit: as it is said, "The devil is come down to you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

Satan, cast down from heaven upon the earth, will act there by the agency of the Roman empire. You will see in Rev. xiii. what will appear on the scene as the providential instruments, by means of which he will make good his power on the earth. "I saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns." † Here are the earthly instruments. This beast will reunite the characters of the three other beasts.

Here the power of the dragon becomes established in the Roman empire, in the beast with seven heads and ten horns. "I saw one of its heads, as it were, wounded to death;" that is to say, one of the governing forms of the Roman empire ruined. But finally the mortal wound is healed, and the destroyed form restored. Further, if we compare the characteristics and the acts of the little horn of the same beast in Daniel, we shall see that this little horn, whose mouth speaketh great things, before whom three horns fell, becomes the beast itself. That is, the beast will be found under the power of this little horn; as we might say, for example, that Napoleon was the French empire, because he represented all the force of the empire. This beast will be the civil power, the Roman empire apostate, as in open revolt against God.

But there is also another beast (which is not the Roman empire), which exercises the power of the first before it. (ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ.) Verses 11–14. "And I beheld . . . . and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth." Here is something which has the appearance of Christianity; but, understood by the intelligent ear

* That is, his accusing power is rendered null by virtue of the blood and work of Jesus Christ.

† It is remarkable that the dragon has his crowns upon his heads; the beast of chap. xiii. has them on his horns. There is no question of crowns on the beast in his last form.

of the apostle, it is Satan. It is then the second beast which will seduce the inhabitants of the earth, and which will cause them to follow the first, that is, the civil power, the Roman empire.

The beast had received a mortal wound—it is just what has already happened to the imperial form of the Roman empire; but the wound is to be entirely healed. We see here that the beast loses its imperial character for a time, and that its wound is afterwards healed. When thus restored, all the world in wonder follows after the beast. The imperial beast, then, will again be seen on the earth, and throughout it men will be seized with astonishment. But we have also seen that the second beast, by the great wonders it does, seduces the inhabitants of the earth. At the end, this second beast will appear under the character, not of a beast, but of a false prophet; that is, all its secular power will be lost. It will be no longer a beast, ravening and devouring; this feature will be entirely effaced, and it will be seen as the false prophet,* who will be recognised as the old second beast, by a perfect resemblance of character, which is exactly that of the personage who has done the things which the second beast has done, but who appears under this new form. (Compare Rev. xiii. 14 with xix. 20.)

We know who has exercised all power in presence of the civil power—one who will do great wonders, and seduce the inhabitants of the earth. We shall see further on the consequence of all that.

To resume what we have said—chap. xii. presents the dragon in heaven as the source, the prime cause of all this revolt; chap. xiii. shows us the providential visible agent, the Roman empire, under its imperial form; this beast is wounded to death, but its deadly wound is healed; there is also in its presence another power, which seduces the inhabitants of the earth. When the wound of the first beast is healed, all the world wonder after it. Add to this the circumstance of chap. xix., that the second beast ceases to be one, and appears at the end as a false prophet.

In chap. xvii. there is a description of this beast, which furnishes other particulars that concern it. Verses 7, 8: "And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." "It ascends out of the bottomless pit," or becomes positively the power of Satan towards the end; and this is precisely what will happen when Satan, being driven from heaven (an event which will occur when the Church has been caught up to heaven), is come down to earth, having great wrath. Under his influence, the beast (or Roman empire) "that was, and is not, and yet is," resumes its strength and form; that is to say, the civil power, instead of being submissive to God, takes altogether the character of Satan, and signalizes itself at his instigation by an open revolt against the power of God.

To find all the marks whereby this last power of the beast may be recognised, we must wait until the imperial head of the Roman empire (Antichrist, the son of perdition, the eighth king) appears in the world, which must happen before its ruin.

When the Roman empire existed formerly under its pagan form, it had not ten kings. But when this beast exists, ever remembering that it is the Roman empire, ten kings will give their power to it; it is not ten kings who replace it. Moreover, it is after having been destroyed that it will exist afresh; that is, it is not the pagan beast, nor the history of the middle ages, when certain barbarian kings (if even we could fix upon ten with any certainty) replaced the empire. "And yet is;" that is, the deadly wound will be healed, and the imperial beast will reappear.

The ten kings "shall give their power and strength unto the beast." The kingdoms will continue in existence, but this will be a confederation of them; as we have seen under Napoleon the kingdoms of Spain, Holland, Westphalia, &c.; it is only to explain myself that I make the allusion. There has been the beast; there have been perhaps ten kings, but never *ten kings giving their power to the beast that was not, and that came afresh into existence.*

"The seven heads are seven mountains." (It is always the Roman empire.) "And there are seven kings; five are fallen, and one is (namely, the imperial head in the time of St. John), and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space; and the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth" (because the seven have passed), "and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." That is to say, there will be an eighth head, a particular head, who will unite in himself all the power of the beast, who will be the beast itself, and who, whilst a head apart, is one of the seven. It is the imperial head, but under a new form; for there are ten kings who will give their power to this eighth head; and in this form it will go to destruction. It is exactly here that the coming of Christ and the Church connects itself with the subject of which we are treating. (Rev. xix. and 2 Thess. ii.)

I must yet quote Dan. xi. 36–45: "The king shall do according to his will." . . . . (Compare 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, &c.) We see in Dan. xi. that the question is not at all one of ecclesiastical power, but of wars among civil powers. It is the history of Antichrist, of the king who "shall do according to his own will" (as we have seen the little horn equally doing his own will), and who at last, after divers occurrences, goes to Jerusalem, and there finds his end.

* The false prophet is not Mahomet, but the second beast, which exercises all the power of the first beast before it. This Mahomet has not done.

It is a king like any other, a king of the earth. The form of Christianity is not the point here—that had preceded the appearing of the wicked one in Thessalonians. It is, we repeat, no question of ecclesiastical things, but of a king of this earth, who is coming to his end.

One remark on 2 Thess. ii. for our comfort, in the midst of this sad occurrence of events: "Now we beseech you, brethren," says the apostle, "by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not troubled." Those who love the truth will altogether escape this power of delusion, to which, on the contrary, the judgment of God will give up those who have not received the love of the truth, but have "pleasure in unrighteousness." This is the evil which is coming, and it is of moment that the world should be warned of it, because some may be salutarily made to tremble, and led to think of the truth of God. And why is this announced to the children of God? In order that they may derive thence the greatest comfort, and that they may be detached from all that drags along to that same end. I say not that we shall find ourselves involved in this catastrophe, but that, by being told beforehand of the judgments which will take place at this terrible crisis, we may be led to separate ourselves even now from the causes which draw it down by their nature and by the justice of God.

The apostle had spoken much of these things to the Church of the Thessalonians, and had taught them to await the coming of the Saviour. Now, what had Satan done? He had tried to frighten them, saying that the day of the Lord was there. (ἐνέστηκεν, 2 Thess. ii. 2.) No, says the Apostle, I beseech you by the coming (presence) of the Lord, and by our gathering together unto Him (which is to precede that day), I beseech you not to be troubled, as if we were already in it. This day will come upon the wicked one and not upon you, since you will have been already caught up to Him, and will accompany Him personally in that grand day when He will return. *

The day is there, said the seducers, that is to say, the day is come. No! that day will not come until you, the faithful, have been caught up into the air, and until the wicked one be revealed. These comforts are confirmed in the second passage cited, "Even him whose coming . . . . is with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth." I will add only, as to this chapter, that it is the description of the moral character, of the unbridled iniquity of the wicked one, and of the power of Satan. In Dan. xi., we have the picture of his outward character.

This evening, dear friends, I have sought to expound something which probably diverges a little from your usual way of viewing these subjects. I have tried to put in relief the distinction, and at the same time the connection, of the civil and the ecclesiastical powers, as well as the distinction, and the connection too, of the ecclesiastical and the civil revolts. The two things are closely bound together, since we see that the second beast exercises all the power of the first beast before it, and that the false prophet, who is this second beast, is thrown into the lake of fire with the first. Let it be remarked also, that this fact connects itself with that of the presence of the Jews at Jerusalem, where the beast will find his end—the event which will terminate the present dispensation, by manifesting the power of Christ on the earth, and which will lead us to see the connection of Christ with the Jewish remnant, and, in consequence of that, all nations under His sceptre.

We have only spoken of the fourth beast.

We see two things in the history of Israel: first, the nations which are found leagued against Israel, when they were owned of God; and, secondly, the nations which carried them into captivity. Hitherto we have only spoken of the times of the Gentiles, of that period during which the kingdom was transferred from the Jews to the Gentiles, or four beasts—the period of the Gentiles. Daniel speaks only of these four beasts. Ezekiel speaks of the nations before and after the four beasts, but never of the times of the Gentiles themselves. During the period embraced by the history of these four beasts, Christendom and the moral revolt takes place. We have seen that the ecclesiastical power, which has served as an instrument to bring about such a result, by putting itself in the place of God, taking away faith, and at the same time disgusting reason, having set aside natural religion, under the pretext of the rights of revelation, in order to corrupt and destroy this revelation itself, so that men should have no other object than themselves—this power, I say, having played a part in the drama of iniquity, which the enemy of our souls and of the Lord has effected, will itself fall before the malice and violence of the human will which itself had emancipated; and being incapable, by its pretensions to religion, openly to serve Satan, as it will be to serve God with sincerity—incapable, in a word, of truth, it will become the base counsellor of that iniquity, of which it cannot constitute itself the agent. It will provoke crimes, which it dares not consummate. It is the civil power, which will become their chief and executor. Dear friends, when the natural conscience is more upright than that which religion presents, it is all over with the Church; it is near its downfall,

* The idea which usually prevails in the interpretation of this passage is, that παρουσία and ἡμέρα have the same meaning affixed to them by the apostle, and that he uses the words interchangeably. Παρουσία means "presence," not necessarily involving manifestation to the world; ἡμέρα "day," on the contrary, always has to do in the Old Testament with judgment. Here the apostle uses the presence of the Lord and our gathering together unto Him, in contrast with the day—"I beseech you by His presence and our gathering together unto Him, not to be distracted about the day, as if it were here."

and the candlestick will be removed from the spot, where it serves as the instrument of more wickedness than the world can imagine; for, as has been said, the corruption of the best thing is the worst corruption. As to the Antichrist, properly speaking, he will deny that Jesus is the Christ, he will deny the Father and the Son (1 John ii. 22); he will not confess Jesus Christ come in the flesh (2 John 7); he will deny every thing—the Father and the Son, Jesus the Messiah, Jesus come as very man. We have seen his character, his acts, his form, the source of his power. We have seen who will confer the throne upon him. As already observed, this will be a sort of Satanic imitation of what God has done. The Father has given the throne to the Son, and the Spirit acts according to the power of the Son in the Church before Him. In the same way, the dragon (Satan) will give the beast his throne and great authority, and the second beast (the ecclesiastical power, or false prophet) will exercise all the power of this last or civil power before it.

Judgment will decide, dear friends, in such a state of things. May God make us attentive to the true character and to the end of the pride of man! The energy of his will can employ and put to use all the means which God has delegated to him, and they are great; and the results, so long as God, in His patience, lets him alone, are great also. But man is ever their centre. The sense of his responsibility to God goes for nothing. God is in reality dishonoured and degraded. The highest aim, the most worthy of man, God Himself, is wholly wanting. Finally, it is the same principle and the same source—sin—from the beginning to the end. Man acting of his own will to satisfy his lust; covetous of knowledge for himself; exalting himself to be as God; disobedient, and consequently acting under the influence and by the energy of Satan. Such is the character of Antichrist, such the history of Adam in his first fall—his first sin: the commencement and the consummation of the same evil, of which the evidence and the contrast appeared in the death of our beloved and perfect Saviour, who has made the expiation of it for us. May His name of grace and glory be eternally blessed, and may He engrave these things upon our hearts! Assuredly, He will preserve His Church from all these woes which threaten the world, for His Church is one with Him.

THE DAY OF THE LORD, AND EVENTS WHICH SUCCEED IT.

St. Peter, in his second Epistle (chap. iii.), speaking of "the *day* of the Lord," says, "The day of the Lord will *come* as *a thief in the night;*" here we have the suddenness of its approach: he then goes on to say, "*in the which*" (not at its *first approach*, but) "*in the which* the heavens shall *pass away* with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. . . . . Nevertheless, *we*, according to *His promise*, look for *new* heavens and a *new* earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

This *promise* we find in Isa. lxvi. 22: "For as the *new* heavens and the *new* earth, which I will make, shall *remain* before me, saith the Lord, *so* shall your seed and your name *remain*." Its connection here is with the permanent blessing of an earthly people, even Israel.

The more complete unfolding of this subject is found in Rev. xx. xxi., where the *order* of things is very distinctly marked.

1. We have the millennium, or thousand years' reign; Satan being *bound* during the whole of that period. The Church reigns "*with* Christ." The laws and the nations are ruled over.

2. At the *end* of the thousand years, we find Satan *loosed;* and, as if to prove that a long period of punishment does not make a sinful being better, he comes forth with more hatred and revenge than ever. In mad fury he gathers together the nations from the four quarters of the earth in *open revolt* against God, and judgment falls upon them.

3. The devil is now cast into the lake of fire, to be "tormented day and night for ever and ever."

4. The great white throne is now set. The Lord Jesus, as the "Judge of all," sits upon it. It is at this period of the *day* of the Lord that the heavens and the earth "flee away," or, to use St. Peter's words, "pass away," and are "dissolved." The dead are judged; and "whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire."

5. All evil being now cleared away for ever, God introduces the *eternal* state of blessedness. "Behold, I make all things *new*."

"I saw a *new* heaven and a *new* earth: for the first heavens and the first earth were *passed away;* and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, 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, their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

"God shall be *all in all*." (1 Cor. xv. 28.) W. C. B.

REVIEWS.

Lectures on Prophecy. By the Rev. James Kelly, M.A.

The prophetical lectures of the author contain truths far beyond what can be found in any of the current works of the day. There is too large an infusion of heavenly principles in them to admit of a very extensive popularity, although their style is clear and simple.

But I am sorry to feel obliged to say, that approbation of the general argument of this work needs to be qualified by a caveat against many ideas running through its pages. No intelligent Christian could undervalue its testimony to the coming glory of the Lord, as well as to the peculiar object and character of the present dispensation. But it is a grave flaw in prophetic lectures, when they open with intellectual speculations as to the nature and relations of the Son of God, betraying, to my mind, a measure of confusion between office and person. At the threshold, it must stumble a saint, who loves the honour of the Lord Jesus, to find His person subjected to a manipulation, which seems, I confess, occasionally rude and unguarded. It is true that Mr. K. confesses unequivocally, the divine glory of the Son, and that his intention is no doubt sincere to wrest the more effectually, in his opinion, from the Arian and Socinian, the Scriptures they rely on. But Christians, in general, will seriously question the spiritual judgment of a brother, who deliberately interprets Prov. viii. 22–31, and John i. 1, 2, as teaching merely the Son's anticipative assumption of a covenant relation. Sorrowful no doubt it is to think that some, in vindicating the dignity of our Lord, have based their statements upon texts that speak only of His subordinate glories; and the rather, as such errors have been used by the enemy to overthrow the faith of many. But, surely, it is sad to the renewed mind to see, on the other hand, passages that treat of the essential, eternal majesty of His person, lowered down to declarations of a relationship taken up predestinatively in covenant. It would be revolting to others, as to myself, to reason minutely on such a subject; most holy is the ground; "for no man knoweth the Son but the Father." I repeat, that I do not insinuate that the author doubts the divine glory of Christ; but he does appear to me to have misapplied Scripture in such a way, as to weaken that glory in the minds of those influenced by his disquisitions, and to help on (most unwittingly, I grant) those who oppose the mystery of godliness.

Let me give one specimen of the author's reasoning; and that, confessedly, the most plausible: "Once more, and let this close our scriptural citations on the subject, though alone it might demonstrate the point contended for—look to John xvii. 5. 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.' Such is our Lord's prayer, in His own behalf, and therefore the glory for which He prayed is that which He has now entered upon. What, then, is its character? We shall see by referring to Phil. ii. 9, 10," &c. Now, I humbly contend that the author is mistaken, and that this juxta-position of texts demonstrates it. For be it remarked, that he identifies the *given* name and glory of the Lord Jesus with the glory which *He had* with the Father before the world was. I am not denying that Phil. ii. 9 may connect itself with John xvii. 22, and it is certain that the glory which the Father gave the Son, the Son has given to His own. But it is not proved that the glory which the Son had with the Father, before the world was (verse 5) is the same thing as the glory which the Father gave the Son (verses 22), and consequently no proof that the Church will share the glory which the Son had before the world was. But this is the very point in question. Mr. K. identifies the two things, and thereby introduces the Church into a participation of this pre-creation glory. But it is argued that *He prays* for the glory spoken of in verse 5. I answer, that His prayer is for His glorification *as* man in this place—Πάτερ, παρὰ σεαυτῷ. *He had* this glory previously, but now He takes it *as man*, and so He prays in that blessed subjection to His Father which was His perfectness, whatever might be His own intrinsic and irrefragable title. This seems to me sufficiently to meet the author's difficulty. That the Church, through the matchless grace of God, will have her portion, as coheir, in the conferred glory of the Lord, is clear; but only the more carefully ought we to repudiate the touch that tends to obscure that paramount glory which the Son had with the Father before the world was. There are other censurable statements in this preliminary lecture; but what I have pointed out is, I think, their main source.

In the third lecture, the author dwells, among other things, on the oneness of Christ and the Church. Now, of course, we are agreed that this is a most precious truth; but I cannot, therefore, allow that his proofs are just and conclusive, as *e.g.* in pages 113-115. First, there is no proof whatever that, in the construction of the cherubim and mercy-seat, we have this oneness intimated. It is as easy for one to say that their being made of one piece typifies this, as for another to say that the gold here signifies the divinity of Christ, and thus to deify the Church. This is the result of teaching that the cherubim means the Church. To me, the grand thought of the mercy-seat is rather what *God is in Christ for us*, than what *we are in Christ before God*. Next, on what grounds does the author identify the cherubim of Exod. xxv. with the living creatures in Rev. iv.? I see that the Holy Ghost refers to the living creatures in Ezekiel, though there be characteristic differences here and in the Revelation; but where is the link with

the cherubim of the mercy-seat? Thirdly, the object of Rev. iv. v. is not to exhibit the oneness of Christ and the Church; for even supposing that the four living creatures there represent the Church, they are not seen in vision as forming one body with Christ. The Lamb and they are definite and distinct objects, not united. Union is not the idea of the vision. Lastly, if Gen. iii. 24 be referred to, the difficulty increases, for here by no ingenuity can the cherubim which God placed at the east of the garden of Eden be made to set forth the Church. They were set there, and the flaming sword that turned every way, to keep or guard the way of the tree of life—not one word of which agrees with the facts of the calling, character, and object of the Church. In the same lecture the author tells us that in the four-and-twenty crowned elders "we have a representation of the future portion of the Jewish or circumcised Church." The author's ground is, that they answer to the four-and-twenty courses of the Jewish priesthood. But it is evident that the same reasoning would take away from all application to Gentiles, not only the type of Exod. xxv., which the author had just interpreted of then, but also the entire range of Jewish images. But if on the contrary we, though Gentiles, can say "Christ *our* passover is sacrificed for *us*," why may we not have the priesthood accomplished in us, of whom it is expressly said that Christ "has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father"? The principle of the author is clearly unsound. In either case the type was Jewish, but the antitype is not.

In the fourth lecture there is a setting forth of the peculiarity of the present dispensation—of "the mystery" rather, wherein Jews and Gentiles are taken out of their own previous conditions, all distinction being merged in Christ, who has made in Himself of twain one new man; and this as a thing obtaining *now*, in contrast with the millennium, when the difference between Jews and Gentiles will be resumed, and the former have the pre-eminence. After this it is not a little astonishing to read, in page 153, that "the elect Church now gathering might have been composed altogether of the natural seed of Abraham, who were conversant with the outward aspect of the covenant," &c.; and the more so as the author had said, only eight pages before, that "though the materials of this dispensation are chiefly Gentile, yet individual Jews are not excluded." Now it is immaterial whether we look at the teaching of the Holy Ghost as to our earthly place in dispensation traced in Rom. xi., or as to our heavenly place in Ephes. ii. iii., the direction of God's dealings towards Gentiles was as necessary (arranged thus in His counsels) as it is clearly revealed. For from the earthly point of view the branches, that is the Jewish branches, were broken off, and the wild olive tree, the Gentile, was grafted in. Such is the present aspect of the tree of testimony here below, while it is true that some of the natural branches were spared to attest the patience and faithfulness of God towards His ancient people. "Blindness is happened to Israel, until *the fulness of the Gentiles* be come in." Could such language be used if the present election were *altogether* from the natural seed of Abraham? Just as little is the notion sustainable if we look at our heavenly place in Ephesians. "If ye (Gentiles) have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which *is given me to youward*" . . . . "that *the Gentiles* should be fellow-heirs" . . . . . "that I should preach among *the Gentiles* the unsearchable riches of Christ." (chap. iii.)

In the fifth and last lecture I submit to the author that the following passage, page 215, requires correction: "So will it be when Christ appears as a thief in the night. Stealing upon the world—locked in fancied ease and security—shall He rifle it of His precious jewels, His blood-bought; and, arrayed in them, shall He burst like the lightning flash upon the eyes of men;" that is, the author seems to treat the day of the Lord as identical with His coming for the saints. But the idea which the Scripture connects with that day is not the stealing away of the saints, but rather His sudden and unwelcome appearing, and His judgment of the world. (1 Thess. v.) "*Ye, brethren*, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." It comes on those who are of the night and of darkness. We on the contrary are of the day, and of course will come with the day. Hence, says the apostle, it will not overtake us as a thief, whereas the author says it will. Again, I cannot even conceive on what grounds the author considers that the letter (or withholder) in 2 Thess. ii. is Satan, and that ἐκ μέσου refers to his occupation of the heavenly places.

"All the members have not the same office." "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?"

Will the author then allow me to say one word more in love? It is that the examination of all his writings that I have seen convinces me that his gift lies rather in simplifying, illustrating, and enforcing what others have discovered, than in striking out a new path for himself. In the former he is generally successful, and really happy; in the latter, whether we look at verbal criticism or scriptural exposition, he has so far as signally failed.—Ed.

Apocalyptic Interpretation; or, the Apocalypse Intelligible not in any History of the Past, as alleged by the Rev. E. B. Elliott, but in the light of "the day when the Son of man is Revealed."—By the Rev. James Kelly.

The author of this little work is successful in exposing the unsoundness of Mr. Elliott's theory, who *assumes* the subject matter of the Apocalypse "to be the continuous fortunes of the Church and of the world; that is, of the Roman world and Christian Church settled therein, from the time of the Revelation being given, or the time of St. John's banishment, to the end of all things."

The general principle that the prophetic portion of the Revelation, commencing with the sixth chapter, is yet unfulfilled, and will receive its accomplishment *after* the ascension of the Church to meet the Lord in the air, is asserted with much distinctness, and illustrated by various arguments and analogies founded on the testimony of Scripture. While, however, there is much in the general scope of the work which will be received with approbation by the Christian reader, whose heart is animated with the present hope of the Lord's return, it is to be regretted that the author should have founded much that is important in his reasoning on verbal criticisms, frequently of a questionable, and in one or two instances of a positively objectionable, character.

A few examples will suffice in proof of this assertion. In pages 31, 32 the author remarks, in reference to 1 Peter i. 11: "These 'sufferings and *glories*' (for in the original the word is plural) are not to be limited to Messiah's, personally; Israel's, His mystical members, are also included (though even of theirs He is to be regarded, so to speak, as the great *sensorium*). And that the passage has this enlarged signification would appear, were the translation literally given; for it runs thus, 'Who testified beforehand *unto Christ, the sufferings, and after these the glories*' (προμαρτυρόμενον τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα, καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας)."

Now, without entering on the question whether the sufferings of Israel may be considered as referred to or implied in this passage, it does seem to be highly objectionable to assume the affirmative from a loose and inaccurate translation of the passage itself. The sense of the words I believe to be as follows: "Who testified beforehand the sufferings which (had reference) to Christ [and which surely were accomplished in His person], and the glories which (should be) after these (sufferings)." If this be so, the authorized version, though not exactly literal, is preferable to that of the author, which violates the obvious structure of the original.

Again, in his anxiety to prove that in the first verse of the Revelation the word ἀποκάλυψις is equivalent to the *personal appearing* of Jesus Christ, the author is chargeable, in my judgment, with an assumption unwarranted by the Scripture to which he appeals. I refer to his reasoning (pages 57, 58) on Gal. i. 11, &c., where he alleges that the statement of the apostle regarding the gospel which he preached, "divested of what is parenthetical," runs thus: "I was taught it by the Revelation of Jesus Christ, *for I went into Arabia*." "I submit accordingly that this journey into Arabia, of which it is remarkable no notice is taken in *the Acts*, where the apostle's preaching expeditions are enumerated, was for the purpose of his receiving a 'Revelation of Christ,' in the strict uniform sense of the term"—that is, what the author assumes as such, viz., the personal appearance of the Lord.

Waiving the objection that this is not a correct statement of the bearing of the context (as I think will be seen by reference to Gal. i. 15–17, which verses appear to allude to the conversion of the apostle during his journey to Damascus, and contain not a hint at any personal appearance of the Lord in Arabia), I believe it will be found that the only passage which affords even a colour for the supposition of such subsequent appearing is to be found in 2 Cor. xii. 1, where the apostle speaks of "visions and revelations (ἀποκαλύψεις) of the Lord." What then were these? We are told of one "caught up to the third heaven" (verse 2), "that he was caught up into Paradise, and *heard unspeakable words*," &c. (verse 4); but nothing is *stated* here of a personal manifestation of the Lord, still less that this was the occasion on which "his gospel" was committed to the apostle.

On the whole, after a careful examination of the author's reasoning, I cannot but think that he has failed to establish that the words "Revelation of Jesus Christ" imply His personal manifestation, although he argues on this as "the proved import of the word;" nor does it seem to me that his argument justifies the abandonment of the sense usually attached to the expression, viz., the disclosure of the thoughts and purposes of God, given by Him to Jesus Christ, "to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass," &c. (Rev. i. 1, 2.)

The above remarks are submitted not with any desire to depreciate the testimony of the author to the important doctrine of the personal appearing and reign of the Lord, of which he is a faithful and zealous advocate, but for the sake of *truth*, and because of the real danger which may accrue from a hasty assumption of principles of interpretation founded on inexact or even erroneous verbal criticism. C. P.

CONSCIENCE.

(Prov. xviii. 14.)

Go gather the down which floats on the wind,
And the leaves from every tree;
Can ye make a couch for a troubled mind?
Can ye find a rest for me?

Go gather the honey-dew from the leaf,
And the labour sweet of the bee;
Can ye 'suage the bitter tongue of grief?
Give a drop of sweet to me?

Let the cold wind blow through the midnight rain,
  And the breeze flutter over the sea;
Can it breathe one chill on a burning brain?
  Can it cool my brain for me?

Let the gale which springs in the morning cloud
  Give life to all that be;
Can it quicken again my murdered mind?
  Give back my mind to me?

Let the spring-time shine, with its sunny hours,
  And the merry birds, all in glee;
Can ye gather, amidst ten thousand flowers,
  One bud that blooms for me?

ATONEMENT.

Ah! there is a bed that was hewn in stone,
  Where He lay that was nailed to the tree!
'Twas there my Lord lay, all alone,
  And there's the rest for me.

And there was a dew, all silvery bright,
  It fell on plain and lee;
They gathered it fresh, at the morning light,
  And sweet's its taste to me.

And there was a rushing mighty wind,
  It blew o'er a *bloody sea*,
It breathes a calm for my troubled mind,
  A Comforter for me.

And there was a gale, when the day-star rose;
  His shining clear I see;
My mind in his beams revives and glows,
  And all is life with me.

And there was a flower which sprung from the tomb,
  When the days had number'd three;
Upon my heart that flower shall bloom,
  Eternal joy for me.

THE PROSPECT.

Lord, I can see,
  By faith in Thee,
A prospect bright, unfailing;
  Where God shall shine
  In light divine,
In glory never fading.

  A home above
  Of peace and love,
Around thy holy person;
  Thy saints shall there,
  In glory fair,
Shine e'er as Thy reflection.

  Oh how I thirst
  The chains to burst
That weigh my spirit downward,
  And there to flow,
  In love's full glow,
With hearts like Thine surrounded!

  No more to feel,
  In woe or weal,
A thought or wish unholy;
  No more to pain
  The Lamb once slain,
But live to love Thee wholly!

  No more to view
  Thy chosen few
In selfish strife divided;
  But drink in peace
  The living grace
That gave them hearts united!

  Lord, haste that day
  Of cloudless ray—
That prospect bright, unfailing,
  Where God shall shine
  In light divine,
In glory never fading.

THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL, XII. 23.

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NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THERE are still in Babylon other principles which I have not yet brought under notice. The tenth and eleventh chapters of Genesis give to us the enumeration of all the families of the earth, and their divisions.

We find therein two great principles which characterise the natural energy of the human heart in doing its own will, viz. the spirit of despotism, and the spirit of association. Nimrod, the first example of individual supremacy, begins to be mighty in the earth. (Gen. x. 8.) Nebuchadnezzar, the first chief among the four monarchies, exercises, by a strong will, dominion over his fellow-men. Upon the other hand, man does not like to be governed, and he associates himself with others, in order to make himself entirely independent of God. Associated with others, he thinks himself capable of every thing. Union, he says, is strength, and this is true until God intervenes. Men associate together to make themselves a name upon earth; that is the spirit of association. But, when God had scattered men, Nimrod took possession of all they had done. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel. (Gen. x. 10.) God recognises (Gen. xi. 6) the power of the principle of association; but this is the proper principle of Babylon. Man will associate, and, by his own will united to that of others, get some reputation. This spirit of union has no other object but man's glory.

For the Church, there is true unity—"one Spirit and one body." This unity has the Holy Spirit as the power of life, and Christ as the centre of all. Christianity alone could give great force to individuality and to conscience, and at the same time unite men under the direction of Christ, towards one centre, which is Christ. This could only be possible by the Holy Spirit, which takes away selfishness, while it gives power to the conscience; giving, by faith, an object to the heart outside of itself—an object which acts on the individual conscience, and unites us all through one predominant affection to one centre of affection, by one life, and one only power of the Spirit.

The unity of Babylon is of quite another nature. It tends to the glory of man, who desires to gather men around one system, which the wisdom and the prudence of man have invented. Babylon will always have a chief. After God had scattered Babel, one man took into his own possession all those scattered wills, united them under his own will, and made them obey. Under the two forms of association and of despotism, it is man who will make himself a name. Conscience is not exercised; there is neither root nor fruit. Conscience does not admit of any thing between God and itself. All that man can do, as an instrument, is to put the conscience, or the heart, in relationship with God. During a long period, the spirit of this false Babylonish unity has been outwardly religious; it is nothing the less, for all that, the spirit of Babylon.

The spirit of association is very powerful in these times. Commercial association governs every thing, and a desire for union is every where proclaimed. Man will succeed in a wonderful manner; but all this will only end in the confusion of the will of man and in his submission to Anti-Christ, as the last chief. The remedy to all this is conscience. The Holy Spirit acts as the spirit of union of the children of God; but conscience cannot be in society and reject its own individual responsibility. It is individual, otherwise God could not be the master of conscience. The Holy Spirit directs it towards Jesus. If we will avoid the principles of evil, it must be through conscience; there is no other way. Through it, we are rendered wise concerning that which is good and simple concerning evil. The Christian who acts from conscience will avoid a thousand snares, of which he is not at all aware.

This Babylon, of which we have seen the glory, will be the object of the judgment of God. When this takes place, every enemy will not yet be destroyed. The eighth head of the beast still remains. God still exercises the patience of His children.

Babylon is a harlot, not an adulteress. Israel was an adulteress, when unfaithful; but the Church corrupted is a harlot, because the marriage of the Lamb has not yet taken place.* Jehovah was the husband of Israel. His presence was there, and earthly blessings flowed from it. However, man's folly threw him into idolatry. The bride of the Lamb is not yet formed in its heavenly completeness. The assembling of the universality of the Church is not yet completed, neither is it yet risen. The Church has still to be in a waiting posture. And as it is not agreeable to wait without professing, the Church would have, like Judaism, some enjoyments in the earth. But the more there is of the Spirit, the more, on the contrary, there will be suffering, and the more we shall be put in front of the battle. The Church, having ceased to look for the return of the Bridegroom, would have pleasure and enjoyment in the world, and has corrupted herself. It is because the system of earthly blessing has failed in Israel, that the Church has been introduced. The Church has only the earnest of her future possessions. Hers is a waiting position. Satan has confounded all this, and has lowered the thought of devotedness in the Church. In the beginning, no one said that what he had belonged to him. Later, one sees, through the epistles, warnings given to the rich. (1 Tim. vi. 17-19.) Afterwards, the Church would be rich. The wise virgins slumbered. Satan came in, and the prince of this world has become a prince in the Church, even her true members being almost all lost in the corruption. And it is in this corrupted Church that Satan is found, and that souls of men even have been sold. At last, the kings will not have any thing more to do with this harlot.

The beast itself having put away the harlot, and she herself being destroyed, the beast will itself make war with the Lamb. It is the Roman empire brought to life again, the eighth head of the beast, which makes war openly with the Lamb. It is no more simply corruption; it is violence. Isaiah xiv. 12-17 show to us the king of Babylon taking all the titles and the characters of Christ. He would seat himself on the mount of the congregation (at Jerusalem) in the palace of the great king, on the sides of the north. He claims all that belongs to Jesus, and assumes to be made like Jesus. He will raise his throne above the stars, ascend above the clouds, be like the Most High. This is a recapitulation of the titles of Jesus, and the boldest form of the pride of the earth. In one sense, it is a blessing that this happens, because then God must judge it and destroy it. But the Church must before this be united to Jesus, in order to enter into this glory; and we are introduced to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

APPENDIX A.

Some may not be alive to the importance of what is said as to the Church, in the mind of the Spirit, being viewed as not yet married, though affianced to Christ; and, consequently, the sin of the false professing body in the world being designated as harlotry rather than adultery. I therefore take the liberty of adding, that the astute Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, felt this to be so grave a point, that he elaborately sought to deny the Protestant application of Rev. xvii. xviii. by the argument, that if an unfaithful religious body had been in question, the symbol must have been adulteress, not harlot; that is, it must have had the expression of guilt proper to a married woman who should prove untrue. The idea was regarded as a triumphant refutation of the stigma, which that eminent controversialist sought to hurl back upon pagan Rome

* See Appendix A.

from Rome in her present and future state. Now, not only was Bossuet mistaken, but the careful sifting of the fact establishes the very point which he sought to upset. And this cannot be demonstrated better than by a few words on Rom. vii., from the author of the Notes on the Apocalypse. "The expression γένηται ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ is translated 'married to,' which seems to be more than its force, as in the third verse, if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man. It seems to be a more general phrase, though, in an honest sense, it may of course have this force. But while it may be said, in a certain way, that the soul is married to the risen Christ, the Church, (I believe,) as such, is never said to be married to Christ. It is said, as to a particular body, that I have *espoused you* as a chaste virgin unto Christ.—In the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, we have the joyful celebration: 'Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.' This is after the judgment of Babylon. And again in chap. xxi. 9: 'I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.' Here, then, we have the Church confessedly not married to the Lamb; and I believe this to be a most important difference; error as to which has produced as much mistake as any other at all concerning Scripture. It may be said to be espoused or destined for Him, but the marriage is not yet come: this takes place on being united to Him in that day when He shall appear in His glory, when He calls them up into the air, then 'shall He present it to Himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.' The Jewish body *was* so married, 'for I am married unto you, saith the LORD.' (Jer. iii. 14. Is. liv. 4-6.) 'Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame; for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called. For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.' And we shall find this remarkably maintained throughout. Thus the Jewish body is ever called an adulteress, as in Hosea iii., the Church as corrupt, but not breaking covenant. 'Thou hast judged the great whore,' and fornication is the sin of the Church. Now, this difference affects the whole position we are set in. The Church has never *yet* been brought into the position with God, in which the whole argument of the great body of comments on Scripture supposes it to be placed; (and this is another instance of the evil of applying Old Testament statements to New Testament subjects, as if they belonged to them;) though faith, by the Spirit, sees that place to belong to it, and therefore keeps itself for it. It is the part of Babylon to corrupt itself with all the kings of the earth; but we, though with long protracted affections, know the faithfulness of the Redeemer's love, and remain in solitude till He who has loved us shall appear. For we are 'espoused to one husband,' and this shall be in the resurrection; for the second Adam is known to us in the resurrection; we were taken out of Him in death; He is dead to all but faith now, and the Church is therefore still taken out of Him; and in resurrection we shall be one with Him, married unto Him. We are indeed one spirit with Him *now*, and therefore know the blessing; but the whole body of the Church shall be finally united to Him in the joy of its Lord. I think it will be found that all the Scriptures will bear out this difference, and clearly it strongly affects our position, while we learn distinctly the aspect of faithfulness which the Church should present, its utter separation from the world, and all secular help in its character, and chaste virgin unto Christ: γενομένη ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ, it has lost all its character as well as relationship. When the Spirit of the risen Saviour is in me, I am so far united unto Him, and so ought I to keep myself: I am vitally and everlastingly one with Him, but the Church corporate is not so married unto Him, for indeed it is not yet formed. To assume the privileges of a wife, does not become her position; not to have more than the modesty of one in her deportment, as ill suits her state: she shall reign queen over all her Lord's goods, and rule in his house with Him; fidelity of hope to one long absent from His pledged love—as a stranger, therefore, in the midst of all that knows Him not—her present portion. Whether receiving the tokens of His love to her from on high or not, faithfulness to Him is her clear part. The world may count her case foolish and hopeless, but she knows in whom she has believed, and she may be content to abide the jist of them who know it not, because she has the secret of His love by His Spirit dwelling in her, and will rejoice in that day when He makes good *His* faithfulness and celebrates *hers*, before them that have despised her. (Compare Rev. iii. 8, 9.) I am daily more and more convinced that this is the real, the only, position of the Church; it may have the desolateness of widowhood, but the keenness and poignancy of affection of one widow before she was a wife. Babylon has no need to be sorrowfully and separatedly waiting; she has wasted her affections upon ten thousand lovers who shall hate her in the end. But the true-hearted believer, as partaker of the spirit of the Church, will, as separate from the world, wait for Him in whom his hope is, in the spirit of holy separation. I would also add, that we find, I think, a remarkably beautiful association of the act of God and of man in the person of the Lord, in the connection of Gen. ii. 22 and Ephes. v. 27."

APPENDIX B.

(Rev. xviii. 24.)

That men are held responsible for their conduct, and that they must give account of themselves before God, is a principle on this subject generally recognised, with respect to which it is not needful to insist. "Every one of us," says the Apostle, "shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. xiv. 12.) "Every man shall bear his own burden." (Gal. vi. 5.) He "will render to every man according to his deeds . . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel." (Rom. ii. 6, 16.) But there it is not the government of God in the world. God often acts in the world toward the masses, consequent upon the general result which the whole body presents to His eyes, and even to the eyes of the world, if it be a question of His people who are to render testimony to Him, for, without that, God would be identified with the evil, and His character compromised. He can endure while He chastises; but, as it is said, the nations shall know that Israel is gone into captivity, because of their sins. Sometimes the sin of a ruler, who ensnares others, but who is himself the grand offender, brings judgment upon his posterity and his people. (2 Kings xxiii. 26.) "Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of His great wrath, wherewith His anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked Him withal." On the other hand, we see the world suffering the consequences of the sins of their fathers—witness the Pagans: God gave them over to a reprobate mind. Here then, evidently, we must distinguish very clearly between the everlasting judgment of God, and His judgment in the government of the world. For, in reference to His everlasting judgment, it is said of the Gentiles: "As many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law . . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel" (Rom. ii. 12, 16)—the Gospel which Paul preached. But, as to the government of the world, it is said of these same Gentiles, "the times of this ignorance God winked at;" for, in fact, "sin is not imputed when there is no law." Nevertheless, sin and death reigned. Here the sin of their fathers is inherited. But in government they were not held as responsible for their own acts; whereas, it was exactly this, they were for eternity according to the light they had neglected. When God has put Himself in relationship with a people, and has placed a testimony in their midst, so that the light of this testimony is let fall upon the sin they commit, and in which they continue to walk, notwithstanding this testimony, then God, according to His government here below, brings the judgment of all this sin upon the generation that has filled up the measure of their guilt; so that there is no longer room for patience. Witness the Jews, who rejected Christ and the testimony of the Holy Ghost: all the blood which had been shed from the blood of righteous Abel, had to be required of that generation. God had not required it before: He had enlightened them by His law, roused them by His prophets, and warned them by chastenings; He had appealed to all their moral being by the mission of His Son. The sins even of their fathers should have been a warning to the children to avoid the same offences, because, after the sins of the fathers, these offences were committed in the light. But they persisted in them, and thus heaped up wrath for the day of judgment; and they have suffered the consequences of all, according to the righteous judgment of God. That does not at all hinder each of their

fathers from suffering, or from not suffering, the consequences of his own sin in the judgment of the dead; but the nation, all the system, the public object of the government of God in the world, has been judged. If there were faithful saints who mourned the evil, they were removed into another system; just as also the righteous of the preceding ages will enjoy the effects of their faithfulness in the world to come. And the fact is, that if the son sin after his father, his sin is greater than that of his father; because if the light is in my heart, as it shines in the system in whose midst I live, the sight of evil will act powerfully on my conscience, will produce horror at the sin thus committed before the eyes of God, and I will avoid it, astonished to find such conduct possible, like a man that sees another walk in the dirt, or fall into a precipice. If I persevere in the sin of my father, I am more culpable than he, inasmuch as his sin was a warning to me; my sin is doubled, morally increased, by all the effect that his sin should have produced to turn me from it; that is to say, by all that his sin was in the eyes of God; for we are supposing the case of such as have the light and testimony of God. My sin is increased by all his, though he be responsible equally for what he has done. Also, it is evident that my heart in this case is hardened, by reason of the sin of my father that I have seen, or ought to have seen, in the light of God which was given me. (Ezek. xxiii. 11. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 19, &c. Jer. vi. 15.)

Such is what we see of the judgment of God in Israel. Only we may add, that God, in His goodness, has continually renewed this testimony, and that, in His patience, He has sent His prophets, rising up, as it is said, betimes, and sending till there was no remedy, (see also Jer. vii.) and at last sending His own Son. The consequence of this was, as we have already said, that all the righteous blood, from Abel unto Zacharias, came upon the generation which filled up the measure of the iniquity of their fathers in rejecting the last testimony of God. (Matt. xxiii. 34.) Here is sin inherited and people held, in regard to the government of God, as responsible for the sins of their fathers; for their own were *morally* the accumulation of all those that were passed, and that God had endured according to the patience which they had despised, and of which they had taken occasion for plunging themselves further into the evil.* (See also Dan. v. 18-23.) Evidently, that consideration may increase the individual sin; but that hinders not the application of the other great principle of God's government as to those who bear His name or who enjoy His light, or who are found (in consequence, perhaps, of their own pride and of the blinding of Satan) in the position (or pretending to enjoy the position) wherein God had placed His own. (See, for examples, Jer. xxiii. Matt. xxiv. 48, &c.)

It may be added, that the judgment of God is according to the iniquity of the people: He makes their iniquity come upon them. (Compare Jer. v. 21 and Is. vi. 9, and other passages, as 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11.) Now, the Spirit of God applies this general principle to Babylon in the Revelation: in her was found the blood of all that were slain upon the earth. The judgment of God makes her responsible for all that which had been done since the beginning, and the apostles and prophets were called to rejoice at the vengeance that God takes on her. These apostles and prophets had no relationship with her, but Babylon of the last days will inherit and be responsible for the evil from which the apostles had suffered. Nevertheless, each shall answer for his own sin committed at the beginning, or at the end, of the ages; although, as we have already said, the individual sin may be aggravated by perseverance in the same sin, or may, on the other hand, be less grave, through the want of light. That the culpability of Babylon is real, no man that knows and honours God will question.†

Here are very plain examples of this principle in the government of God—of holding a system to be responsible for all the evil that has been done during all its duration, even during all the duration of what has preceded it, and of which it has inherited, or even gone beyond, the privileges. Men inherit the sin of those who have preceded us, and are judged responsible for the whole. As regards the individual, he will bear the burden of what he has done.—(*To be continued.*)

LATTER TIMES AND LAST DAYS.

It is sorrowful to have to look at departures from God and His truth. It has been said of the Lord, that His soul tasted some of its bitterest grief, when He looked on the treachery of Judas; and ours should be thus affected when we think of the corruptions of Christendom, which are as the kiss and the treason of that apostle again.

"The mystery of iniquity" had begun to work, we know, in the times of the apostles. And as the small seed cast into the ground carries with it the form and character of all that which the harvest is afterwards to manifest and yield, so the leaven that was working secretly then, to the keen eye of the Spirit in the apostles, had in it the varied evils which, in the progress of corruptions, were to be manifested in Christendom: so that St. Paul guards Timothy, even then, against the pravities of both "the latter times" and "the last days," as though Timothy himself were in the midst of them.

But those pravities are different. In "the latter times," there was to be a departure from the Word of God, or from the religion of "the truth," which alone is "godliness." Consequently, there would be the giving heed to something beside the word or the truth, to "seducing spirits," and to "doctrines of devils" or demons. Then there would be speaking lies "in hypocrisy," making an exhibition of religion; and all this, man's religion, or what man has got up, would "sear the conscience," deaden it to God's religion, or the religion of "the truth," fortified, as it would be, by man's forbiddings and "abstinences," which must be complied with and practised, though so contrary to the thoughts and gifts of God. (See 1 Tim. iv.)

"The last days," on the other hand, were not to be religious, but infidel. Superstitious vanities were to yield to man's will and independency. He was to be a lover of "himself"—and in the train of that, "heady," "high-minded," "disobedient to parents," "covetous," and such like—all qualities and characters making him as one who had broken the bands, and cast away the cords; not religious, but wilful. And in the midst of all this, there was to be "the form of godliness"—the appearing to return to that from which "the latter times" had departed, "godliness," or the religion of "the truth;" but when looked at a little within, no "power" would be found, though so much "form." (2 Tim. iii.)

Now, here we see a great moral reaction. All the cords and bands of the latter times cast away, and man indulging and admiring himself—religious vanities gone, but human independency asserted.

And these things have had their day. In the two great characteristic eras in the history of Christendom we get them—in the times before and since the Reformation. In the times before, there was *man's religion*, opposing itself to "the truth," and having its own vanities; in the times since, there has been *man's pride*, asserting his independency and breaking off all bands. These have been the *characters* of the two eras. Of course, something of the second was known during the time of the first, and much of the first still lives in the second; but these different pravities are the characteristics of the two eras.

And what is a very solemn truth, I judge that the history of corrupted Christianity will close by a kind of coalition between the two pravities. And of such a state of things we get the pattern in the time of our blessed Lord, when there was both *man's religion* and *man's independency* combined against Him,—the unclean spirit who had gone out, having himself returned and brought with him other spirits more wicked than himself. There was Jewish religion, which would not let its votaries go into the judgment

* Finally, God was forced, as regards His public government in the world, to impute every thing, for His name was called upon His people. He became responsibly partner, so to speak, in all the sin done by His people if He judged it not. His glory was to exercise His patience, but never to allow sin among the people with whom He identified Himself; and it is evident then that it is the sin of *the people* which has to be punished. While the sin of my child accumulates by reason of my patience, it is not the last fault that I punish finally, but my child, by reason of all the evil that I have borne with until then, and which is the more grave because of my very patience. It is just so with the people of God.

† As regards Babylon, we find her active in corruption; she makes the nations drunk. If Israel became corrupt instead of observing the law, Babylon corrupted instead of acting in love and in truth. The people of God are found in her, and are in danger of participating in her sins. To me it is evident that, while we have pride and idolatry as the root, her iniquity is the result of the contempt and abandonment of all the light of God, from Noah until the Church, as well as of the testimony of the last times. Her heart is full of all the iniquity of man, in presence of all the light of God and of all the privileges of His own in Christ, and having knowledge thereof. It will be the activity of Satan in point of fact; but as to men and their responsibility, it will be to falsify and abjure all the relations established upon the revelations of God. The beast is a different thing; it contends against the power of the Son of man, of Christ. It is not the entire corruption of men in the things which they held, in principle, from God.

hall, lest they should be defiled; and there was Jewish infidelity, which could say: "We have no king but Cæsar."

This is a solemn, fearful prospect. Surely, there is real godliness in the midst of it all, but the sight is dreadful.

And there was the counterpart of what I have been here tracing in the wilderness. There was, first, *the calf*, and then *the captain*—the two ensigns of Israel's departure from God during their journey from Egypt to Canaan, the two distinct standards of rebellion set up at different eras.

The calf was the ensign of man's *religion*. Man had his own gods then, and in eating and drinking, and rising up to play, man exhibited his religion, spake "lies in hypocrisy." The captain was the ensign of man's *infidelity*. Man was his own god then, setting up himself to be his own leader, as though answerable to none, breaking all bands, "heady, high-minded."

Thus, by either the calf or the captain, man is ever working against God and his truth. It is either false religion or a spirit of independency that is moving him. And *reaction* is always to be dreaded, even by the true worshippers and saints of God, as is also *the spirit of the times in which they live*. Both of these must be watched against. If the present time exhibit much of the spirit of human pride and independency, of course the saint has to guard against his being drawn into the stream, and carried along the current which has set in around him. But he has also to guard against reaction. He has to watch and pray, that he may not, through dread and hatred of the present form of evil, look for relief by a return to the previous form of evil. I believe there is very much of both of these at present. I see people who should have stood only in godliness, dropping into the *current of these times;* and in the revival of high church principles, and return to ecclesiastical ceremonies and observances of human imposition, there is evident *unhealthy reaction* among men of a sensitive righteous order of mind, who have marked the evil that is now predominant, and have sought relief from it, but have been turned back by Satan to the religiousness of man, and away from "godliness" or the religion of "the truth." In avoiding the evil of the last days, they have returned to that of the "latter times," at least in measure.

In the midst of all this condition of things, I believe the poor saint of God, "who walks in the truth," as St. John speaks, may now see himself. His path is narrow. Errors on both sides threaten and attract him. The calf and the captain are erected as the standards of rival parties. The word alone is to work his passage through both, and the Spirit to lead him along it; he is to "purify himself by obeying the truth through the Spirit." He has been baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and his soul is to know its living communion according to this. He has to continue in the things that he has learnt, knowing the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make a child, a fool in this world's wisdom, wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. He is to know that, as a *sinner*, he is cast only upon God—as a sinner, God, and not man, has to do with him—and taking his sin, yea, and his sins too, into the presence of God, he is to see them there, by faith, washed away by the precious blood of a precious Sacrifice. He has to keep his conscience unclouded, so that his living communion with the Father and the Son, in the life of the Holy Ghost, be not broken, and to walk in the love of the Spirit with all who are Christ's, and in the charities of the Gospel with all men—doing withal what service among the saints he may be fitted to do by gift of the Spirit, and what service to others he may have opportunity or power to fulfil—waiting daily for the Son from heaven, who, he is to know, has delivered him from the wrath to come.

J. G. B.

THE PREMILLENNIAL ADVENT.

THAT Christ will come again, and come again *in person*, is agreed by all. The testimony of Scripture on this point is so plain and so express, that none who really believe it to be inspired can question for a moment that Christ will hereafter return in person to this earth.

There are some, indeed, who suppose that, in a certain sense, Christ came at the destruction of Jerusalem; others think that he comes at death; and others again speak of his coming to the soul of each believer in the power of his Spirit, and of his coming to the Church when, at any season, the power of the Spirit is specially manifested. But even these persons look for a coming of Christ beyond all this; a coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory; a coming to punish his adversaries and to reward his faithful servants; to render to every man according to his works. This event all Christians expect; and it is of this event we now wish to speak.

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." "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." These passages, and a host besides, are so explicit and decisive, that there can be no dispute respecting them. All Christians are led by them to look forward to a future appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Nor are we aware of any doubt being entertained by those who believe the Scriptures to be an inspired book, as to the certainty of a future period of universal blessedness on the earth. This also is so plainly foretold in God's Word, that all are agreed in expecting it. There are differences of opinion as to the means *by* which, and the time *at* which, this period will be introduced; but in the expectation of such a period, all are agreed. The passages which foretel such a period are so numerous and well known, that we do not quote them here. Many of them will have to be referred to, besides, in the consideration of the question to which we are anxious to draw the attention of our readers.

That question, then, is not as to whether the Lord will come—we all expect his coming. It is not as to whether there will be a millennium, a long period of universal righteousness and peace—we are all agreed in expecting this. The question is simply, Which of these comes first? Are we to expect the millennium before the Lord's return? Or, are we to expect the coming of the Lord to introduce the millennium? This is the question; and to this question we now solicit the most serious, patient, prayerful attention of God's dear children.

1. "And in the days of these kings (represented by the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (1) The last of the four kingdoms represented by Nebuchadnezzar's image was Rome, as all students of prophecy agree; and it was when Rome was in the zenith of its power that Jesus Christ appeared amongst men. The miracles he wrought and the doctrines he promulgated were so extraordinary, that numbers in Judea began to look upon him as the Messiah they had been so long and so anxiously expecting; and they thought that the kingdom of the God of heaven was about to be set up at once. Jesus spake a parable, however, to correct this erroneous notion. "As they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, *and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear*." (2) And what was the parable that he spake? "He said, therefore, a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, *and to return*." The nobleman can represent no one but the Saviour. The people were expecting him to commence his reign at once; they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. No, says the Saviour in the parable, I must go into a far country first, and receive the kingdom of my Father, AND RETURN, before the kingdom of God can appear. Nothing can be plainer or more decisive than this.

In the subsequent part of the parable, to which we have just referred, the Saviour gives us a detailed representation of what would occur prior to the establishment of the predicted and expected kingdom. There is not a word about the gradual spread of the truth, till the whole world are persuaded to receive Him for their King. No, there is the endowing of his servants with gifts, to be occupied and employed for him till he returns; there is his deliberate and general rejection by the world; "his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." (3) There is his investiture with the

(1) Dan. ii. 44. (2) Luke xix. 11. (3) Verse 14.

kingdom, during his absence, exactly harmonizing with Dan. vii. 13, 14. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him." *There is his return*, having thus received the kingdom; the rewarding of his faithful servants with a share in his authority, and the punishing of the unfaithful with the loss of their misapplied blessings. There is also the issuing of the fearful mandate: "But those, mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me" (1) — and this closes the scene! There is nothing beyond this but the kingdom. The kingdom was not to appear till all these events had transpired; but who does not see that if all these events *are* to occur before the establishment of God's universal kingdom on the earth, then Christ must come again before the millennium is introduced, for HIS RETURN IS ONE OF THOSE EVENTS!

2. The Apostle James, addressing the rich and powerful oppressors of God's people, says: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. *Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days* . . . . Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." (He suffers you, as yet, to take your course, and have your way.) Having delivered this solemn warning to the enemies of Christ, he turns to his afflicted followers, and says: "Be patient, therefore, brethren" — how long? — until the Gospel spreads its influence through all lands, subjecting every heart to the sway of Jesus, and gradually introducing the reign of universal righteousness and peace? Is it *till then* that the Apostle exhorts his afflicted brethren in patience to possess their souls? No: be patient, therefore, brethren, UNTO THE COMING OF THE LORD. (2) Till then, you will have need of patience. Till then, the world's affairs will be chiefly managed by wicked, covetous, grasping, worldly men. Till then, the world will say respecting Jesus, We will not have this man to reign over us; and you, his followers, need not expect kinder treatment at their hands. But be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. *That* will put all things right. Till then, be patient, brethren!" How plain is this passage! The wicked are represented as having heaped treasure together *for the last* days; and God's children are exhorted to be patient *unto the coming of the Lord.* The wickedness of the one class will be permitted to run on, and be a source of trial to the other class, until the coming of the Lord. The triumphs of the one and the sufferings of the other, both end there. How then *can* there be a millennium before the coming of the Lord?

3. In his second epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul describes the events which would occur between the time at which he wrote and the coming of the day of Christ. "That day shall not come," says he, "except there come" — what? a millennium? No: but "a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped," &c. (3) Well; but may not the apostasy come to a close, the man of sin be dethroned, and the millennium ensue, before the coming of Christ? Hear what the Apostle says: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth (hindereth) will let (hinder) until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, *and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.*" (4) Now, if the mystery of iniquity was working in the Apostle's days, but working covertly, in consequence of some obstruction to its manifestation; if, on the removal of this hinderance, it was more openly to display itself, and ultimately to assume a concentrated form in the person, or under the direction of "the man of sin," "the son of perdition," the "wicked" one; and if that "wicked" one is to remain until the coming of the Lord, and only to be destroyed by "the brightness of his coming;" then, we ask, how can there be an intervening millennium? Is it not most plain that the Lord comes, not at the close, but at the commencement of that period of universal righteousness and peace?

4. A striking confirmation of this view we have in Is. xi. 1-9: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots . . . . And with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (one.) Well, what follows? The blessed period in which "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid." In which "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain;" in which "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Just look at these two passages together. In both we have the wicked, or wicked one. In both we find that he is consumed by the spirit or breath of the Lord's mouth; but in Thessalonians, we get this additional particular, that it is by the brightness of the Lord's coming that he is destroyed; and in Isaiah, that his destruction, and therefore, of course, the coming of the Lord, by which his destruction is effected, is followed by the earth being full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (1) Thus does one portion of prophetic testimony illustrate and confirm another.

5. In Matt. xxiv., Mark xiii., and Luke xxi., we have a discourse delivered by the Saviour to his disciples respecting things to come. This discourse begins (2) with the overthrow of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the dispersion of the surviving Jews. "For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke xxi. 23-24.) Such was to be the lot of the Jews throughout the times of the Gentiles. "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be." (Mark xiii. 19.) And what is the end of this tremendous period of affliction? Hear what Christ says: "IMMEDIATELY AFTER the tribulation of those days, (not hundreds on hundreds of years after tribulation has ceased, both from among Jews and Gentiles, but *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 shaken. 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." (3) We can conceive of nothing more explicit than this. The days of vengeance begin, as we find in Luke, with the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews. They continue through the whole period of their dispersion, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled; and they end, as we find both in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, with the coming of the Lord. *Immediately after* the tribulation of those days. So that as there is to be a period of universal blessedness, and as it is impossible that there can be such a period during the continuance of tribulation such as was never known before; and as this tribulation reaches down to the coming of the Lord, and is, in fact, at its height, just prior to that event, it is

(1) Luke xix. 21. (2) James v. 1-7. (3) 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. (4) Verses 7, 8.

(1) We know, indeed, that it may be objected, that the terms, "rod of his mouth," "spirit of his mouth," and "breath of his lips," should be understood figuratively to mean the preaching of the Gospel, by which wickedness, not that wicked one, is to be destroyed. We answer, 1. If this were to be admitted, it does not affect the other expression, "the brightness of his coming." And it is by THAT that Anti-Christ is to be destroyed. 2. We do not remember any instances in which the terms mentioned are used in Scripture to denote the preaching of the Gospel, or any thing resembling that. 3. It is said, indeed, that the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God; but it is not the Spirit that is here spoken of. It is the Lord himself who is represented as destroying Anti-Christ, both in Isaiah and Thessalonians, by the rod of His mouth, the breath of His lips, the brightness of His coming. 4. A few of the passages where these and similar expressions occur, are as follows: "They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same. By the blast of God they perish, and by THE BREATH OF HIS NOSTRILS are they consumed." (Job iv. 8, 9.) "For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; THE BREATH OF THE LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." (Is. xxx. 33.) "And OUT OF HIS MOUTH (Christ's) GOETH A SHARP SWORD, that, with it, He should smite the nations; and He shall rule them with a rod of iron; and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." (Rev. xix. 15.) Now, here is the breath of His nostrils, the breath of the Lord, and the sword (if not the rod) of His mouth. In Isaiah, the rod of His mouth is to smite the earth. In Revelations, the sword of His mouth is to smite the nations; and in all these instances the expressions in question most plainly denote judgment, wrath, vengeance; and we know of no instance in which they are differently used.

(2) In the order of the events predicted, we mean—not in the order of the discourse itself.

(3) Matt. xxiv. 29-30.

most plain that the period of universal blessedness is after, not before, his coming; that the Lord's coming is not at the close, but at the commencement of the millennium.

6. "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts iii. 20, 21.) What are "the times of restitution of all things" thus witnessed of by all God's holy prophets? Surely, they are the times of universal peace and blessing for which all Christians are looking. They are the times when, Israel being *restored* to their own land and to Jehovah's favour, the kingdom shall be *restored* to Israel. They are the times when dominion over the earth shall be *restored* to its rightful Heir, when He who is not the Root only, but the Offspring of David, shall sit on David's throne, and inherit all the glories of David's royal house. Nay, more—they are the times when dominion over all this lower creation, once entrusted to the first Adam, but forfeited by his fall, shall be *restored* to the Son of man, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. Under his reign, creation itself shall be *restored*—delivered, as the Apostle testifies, from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. These will be times of restitution indeed, and ample is the testimony borne of them by all God's holy prophets. And when do these times of restitution arrive? When the Lord Jesus Christ returns from heaven. "Whom the heaven must receive *until* the times of restitution of all things." Peter does not say that the heaven must receive the Lord *during* the times of restitution, or *until the end* of them, but *until the times*, that is, simply until those times *arrive*. How manifest, then, that the coming of the Lord is at the commencement of the millennium, not at its close.—(*To be continued.*)

LIFE AND UNION.

SCRIPTURE never speaks of union with Christ while on earth.—Never. It always speaks of union with an exalted head. And it is evident to me, that when Christ breathed on them *after* His resurrection, He conveyed an accession of living power. The second Adam is a life-giving Spirit; and as God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, so here Christ breathes upon them: does not send down the Holy Ghost from heaven, so that they should be the habitation of God through the Spirit; but He does what He never did before His resurrection; and I have no doubt that this was life more abundantly. The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus it is that has made us free from the law of sin and death. He quickened Lazarus, but it was not a question of his soul, but victory over death by power, in answer to His cry to the Father, though He were in living power then the resurrection and the life. But *His* resurrection was another thing. It was according to the power of an endless life; and this was not Lazarus' case. We are quickened together with Him; and this is so true, that notwithstanding Lazarus, and other persons raised to life during the period recorded in the Old Testament, He is the *first-fruits* of them that slept. All these cases belonged to, and were brought to pass in, the old thing, through the power of God in it. If man had not been in the state he really was, totally and fundamentally corrupt, so that atonement was absolutely necessary, there was power, living power in Him (the Father had given Him to have life in Himself—in Him was life—) to restore all. But, as Adam was not, in fact, the head of the race, till fallen and in sin; so Christ is not a corporate Head till He has wrought out righteousness, and we can be made it in Him; and then we belong to the new creation. Whereas, divine and perfect as He was, He, supposing He were the new thing, was come into, and dealing with, the old—God's last dealing, we may say, with it, (save a peculiar special intervention with Israel,) and therefore abode alone till the foundation was laid of the new thing, the new creation, in His death (by which he passed out of and closed the old) and His resurrection. (by which He began in power the new, breaking the bonds of Satan, who had conquered in the old, in his last strong hold—strong by God's judgment.) And hence, when in instructing us what the Church is, the *Apostle* speaks of the new creation, he speaks of our being risen and quickened together with Christ, and set in heavenly places in Him, the middle wall of partition being broken down to make both one, making peace, and to present both in one body by the cross .... Accordingly, it is a serious thing to make the death of Christ necessary only to the ordering of the Church, and not to its founding and existence, and to make Christ alive in the earth before that solemn, and, in the literal sense of the word, all-important act, the centre of union, when the Apostle says it could not be till after—nay, when Christ says that He abode alone till then.

It has been urged, and rightly urged, that incarnation was not union. But the Lord affirms there could not be union without death: He was to die, to gather. We are baptized into one body. That life was communicated, I fully recognise; but I do not see that this is necessarily union, in the sense of forming the body, which is every thing to the Church. I find it distinguished from heavenly things in Christ's conversation with Nicodemus. He had spoken of earthly things, when speaking of regeneration; for the Jews, taking earthly things of God, must be regenerate. But with this He contrasts the heavenly things, and, when He mentions these, states to Nicodemus that the Son of man must be lifted up.

That God forgave from Adam's sin downwards, in respect of the cross, is plain, and stated in Rom. iii. 25; and that He communicated life to the old saints, I do not doubt. It is too clear to reason on it here, for, without it, none shall see nor enter the kingdom of God. But Christ is never spoken of as the head of the body, the Church united to Him, until He was Himself exalted to the right hand of God, and had accomplished the work which made the Church's whole place before God. It was not, therefore, merely arranging the Church's form that was in question; it was doing the work which could give it a place before God—lay the foundation for its existence, and make the peace, *reconciling* Jew and Gentile in one body unto God by the cross.

J. N. D.

REVIEW.

HYMNS AND POEMS. By Sir Edward Denny, Bart.—Millennial Hymns, with an Introduction—Miscellaneous Hymns—Miscellaneous Poems.

London: James Nisbet & Co. Edinburgh: Johnstone. Dublin: Robertson. Bath: Burns and Goodwin.

THESE hymns require no character from any one. Many of them are already well known to the children of God, having been printed in various collections. Here they are brought together, and, in some instances, corrected by the author, with a few additional pieces. The following extract from the author's introduction to the Millennial Hymns shows the importance of the truths presupposed in them, although to some statements one might demur: "The reader will observe, that there are here *three separate classes*, or parties; namely, the CHURCH, ISRAEL, and the GENTILES, distinguished one from the other in such hymns, for instance, as those beginning, 'Break forth, O earth, in praises!' and 'Bright with all his crowns of glory.' Now, while the *cross of Christ*, the grand foundation of blessing to man, is common and equally applicable to all, the Lord's mode of dealing with each of these classes, owing to the especial standing and calling of each, is peculiar and distinct altogether from his ways with the others. This being the case, it becomes needful here briefly to mark this threefold distinction.

"The Lord, when He came to the earth, came *only to Israel*, that people whom, in the person of Abraham, he had at the outset brought nigh to himself. (Matt. x. 5, 6.) The true Son of David, the heir of his throne, he came, claiming the allegiance of Israel, as Israel's King; (Matt. xxi. 1-11;) and had they received them as such, then the result would have been his reign upon earth. The kingdoms of this world, with Israel at their head, would at once have become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ. But, as we read: 'He came unto his own, and his own received him not.' (John i. 11.) They saw no beauty in him, that their souls should desire him; and hence, instead of his *then* taking the kingdom, he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, he died on the cross.

"This, we know, was the eternal purpose of God, seeing that without shedding of blood there can be no remission of sins, no blessing to man. But Israel, nevertheless, was equally guilty of despising his love, of hating the Just One, of cutting off their Messiah. What, therefore, is the Lord doing now? What is his present object on earth, seeing that he must have some object to bless and delight in? Not Israel, we know, seeing that they, for their sin in killing the Lord, are, for a season, cut off, and left to the mercy of their Gentile oppressors. Neither is any nation now owned by him, or called by his name. (Is. lxiii. 19.) The apostasy of Israel, the destined and only dispenser of blessing to the rest of the world, stands in the way; and so hinders the outflow of mercy, in a *national sense*, as yet, to the Gentiles. And yet the Lord has a people on earth—a people destined to far higher blessing and glory than ever Israel will enjoy, even when restored, as they will be, to his favour hereafter—'*a people for his name*,'

(Acts xv. 14,) gathered out from all nations on earth, both Jews and Gentiles. (Eph. ii. 11-19.)

"The term by which this elect body is distinguished in Scripture, namely, 'the Church of God,' is altogether peculiar, inasmuch as its calling and standing are distinct from all that precedes, or will follow it; and this because its relation to Christ is peculiar. As Adam and Eve, the husband and wife, the type of this 'great mystery,' were one in a natural way, so, spiritually, Christ and his saints, in this dispensation, are one. He, the Spouse of His Church,—she, on the other hand, the bride, the Lamb's wife. (See Eph. v. 29-32.) He the Head of his people,—they, the members, making up one mystical body in him. Then again, which is a thing altogether distinct from the earthly calling of Israel, the Apostle, in Hebrews, (chap. iii. 1) terms *us* 'partakers of the heavenly calling;' the reason for which is that *heaven, not earth*, will be hereafter our place, as well as that especially of Christ himself, in the kingdom.

"This being the case, as soon as his last member is brought in, and his body is complete, the Church will be removed from the earth, will pass away into heaven. The Lord, as we read, descending from thence with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, we, both the dead and the living in that day, will be caught up to meet him, and be for ever with him. (1 Thess. iv. 16-18. 1 Cor. xv. 51.) Thus will end the path of the Church upon earth, and for this we, the children of God, are now called to wait, even 'for his Son, from heaven,' (1 Thess. i. 10,) to take us home to himself. Such hymns as those beginning, 'Hope of our hearts, O Lord, appear,' and 'Hark to the trump, behold it breaks,' refer to this rapture—this ascension of the Church into heaven.

"And now, the Church being gone, with whom will the Lord begin to deal next? With *Israel again*. Gathered once more into their own land, in unbelief and defiance of God, it is true, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, the very tribes which slew their Messiah, will by this time have built their city and temple;* (Is. lxvi. 6. Zech. xiv. 1-3. Rev. xi. 1, 2;) and not only so, but will also have received a false Messiah, set up by themselves, one suited to meet and to please the unregenerate heart. This delusion, on their part, God will permit, in order to chasten his people for their past disobedience in rejecting his Son. They hated, they put the Just One to death, the One who came to them *in the name of the Father;* and hence he, acting on the principles of retributive justice, measuring to them with the same measure that they themselves meted to Jesus, will allow them to become the blind dupes of another, who will come to them *in his own name*. (John v. 43.)

"A *deceiver* at first, and a *tyrant* in the end; (Ps. v. 6; xliii. 1;) this fearful being, this 'Anti-Christ,' as he is emphatically termed, (1 John ii. 18,) as being thus opposed to the one whom the Father hath chosen, and at the same time Satan's grand counterfeit of their long-looked-for Messiah, will receive their blind homage and worship, in those days of their deepest delusion and ripened apostacy. And not only so, but 'all the world will wonder after *the beast*,' this being another name which belongs to this Anti-Christ. (Rev. xiii. 3.) The ten Gentile kings, who in that day will rule the fourth and last empire of Daniel, will give him their power and strength, owning him alone as their Lord, and becoming wholly subject to him as his vassals. (Rev. xvii. 12, 13.) In the midst, however, of the infidel nation, thus come to the height of their evil and folly, an elect faithful remnant, (Is. vi. 13. Zeph. iii. 12, 13. Zech. xiii. 8, 9,) hated by the bulk of the people, will be raised up, it would appear, through the testimony of two certain prophets, namely, the witnesses spoken of in Revelation xi., to look for the coming of Christ. And in answer to the cry of these sufferers, he will come. (Ps. lxxix. lxx. cxviii.) Yes, the heavens will open, and Christ, the rider on the white horse, followed by the armies in heaven, (Rev. xix. 11-21,) even his Church, which, as we have seen, will have previously ascended to meet him, and will have been with him in heaven during the whole of the above-mentioned action on earth, will descend to make war with the beast, the ten kings of the earth, and their armies; with all, in short, who, in that hour of man's perfect apostacy, will be leagued under Anti-Christ against God and his Christ. Then follows the conflict, 'the battle of Armageddon,' (Rev. xvi. 13-16,) the issue of which it is almost needless to tell.

"The beast with the false prophet, his minister, will be destroyed, cast, both of them, into the lake of fire for ever; the kings of the earth, and their armies, will be slain with the sword proceeding out of the mouth of the heavenly conqueror; while Satan, the great mover of all, will be chained and cast, for a thousand years, into the bottomless pit. This done, the Lord having gathered in his elect, namely, the Jewish remnant before named, will next take to Himself His great power, and will reign. He will ascend the throne of David his father; which had been destined for Him, as the true heir, from the outset; (Ps. lxxxix., Ezek. xxi. 25-27;) gather in, in the next place, the whole of his people, with Judah and Ephraim, and not only so, but his glory will spread through the earth. Blessings at last will flow forth in a national political way to the Gentiles, who will unite with Israel, in that day, in adoring the Lamb, through whose blood alone they will be redeemed; (Is. ii. 2-5.) The temple worship of Israel will then be revived; (Ps. li. 19; Ezek. xl-xlviii.) The feasts and the sacrifices, not pointing forward, as of old, but commemoratively looking back to the blessed work of redemption already accomplished, will be observed in Jerusalem. Thither the nations will congregate; thither they will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. (Zech. xiv. 16.) Jerusalem will be the scene of God's presence on earth—the place of his throne. There the temple will stand, there too the glory will dwell, in the light of which the nations will walk. (Rev. xxi. 24.)

"The above-mentioned conflict and victory, together with the blessings resulting from thence, are referred to in such hymns as those beginning, 'Tis He, the mighty Saviour comes,' and 'Lo, 'tis the heavenly army.'

"But, it will be asked, during this period, namely, the thousand years of Christ's reign upon earth over Israel and the nations, where will the *Church* be? Her glory, as we have said, is not earthly, like Israel's—where then, during this season of blessedness, is her destined place? *In heaven*, we answer; because, if heaven is to be the throne of the Lord, (Ps. ciii. 19; Isa. lxvi. 1,) so will it be the throne of His bride, who, as we read, is to live and reign with Him, during the thousand years of His kingdom. (Rev. xx. 4.) In the Jerusalem, the Lord will be known as King of Israel, the Son of David, Lord of the nations, while, in the *heavenly* city, which, it appears, will, as it were, rest in the air over the Zion on earth, (Is. iv. 5, 6,) He will be honoured and loved as the head of His body, His bride, the Lamb's wife. Such are the names which solely belong to the Church, the object most near and dear to His heart, the one in whom His grace will be more fully displayed than even in the elect and redeemed nation of Israel.

"But this state of things will continue only for a limited period, for 'a thousand years,' as we have before said; after which, Satan being unbound, he will stir up the nations to make one effort more against Christ and His people. But this will also be defeated. Fire, coming down from heaven, will devour the wicked, afterwards Satan, the great mover of all, like the beast and his prophet before him, will be cast, not again into the bottomless pit, but into the lake of fire for ever. Then follows the judgment of the GREAT WHITE THRONE,—the judgment of all the wicked, from the very beginning, namely, of the nations above-named, and also of those who will have no part in the first resurrection, but, on the other hand, whose bodies will lie either in the earth or the sea, through the thousand years of the kingdom. These all will be raised for this purpose, then judged and convicted out of the books, and finally cast into the lake of fire, with Satan, the god and prince of the world. (Rom. xx. 7-15.) Then will follow '*the end*,' (1 Cor. xv. 24,) when all things will be made new, when 'a new heaven and a new earth' will rise out of the fires of that day; when, too, the kingdom having been given up by the Son to the Father, GOD WILL BE ALL IN ALL." (1 Cor. xv. 24-28.)—Pages 1-14.

"The foregoing remarks, it will be seen, proceed on the principle that the book of Revelation, as to fulfilment, is *future*. To this many, we are aware, will object. But those who have considered and entered into the peculiar and distinctively *heavenly* character of this dispensation, such as we have spoken of before, will acknowledge that it cannot be otherwise. This book presents, not continuously, from beginning to end, but in so many distinct, and, some of them, coincident visions, the history characteristically of the *earth*—of nation rising against nation—of wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences, and so on; all affecting and connected with man in his social, earthly condition. Whereas, what is the Lord doing now? He is now calling out his elect Church from the world; a people not of the world, even as he himself is not of the world; a *heavenly people*, whose path here below is that of pilgrims and strangers. Therefore, quite in harmony with this, his present action, object, and dealings with man, he does not now interfere (except, it is true, so far as he is secretly and providentially working,) with the course of the world. This being the case, we might be prepared to find the Spirit of God in the Word taking very little notice of the present history of man, in a national political aspect. It is so in the book of Acts. There, from the eighth chapter onward, after the Jews had put Stephen, God's witness, to death, (thereby proving their hopelessly evil condition, as well as the hopeless state of the earth, which, as we have seen, depends on the repentance of Israel for the outflow of national blessing,) we find the Lord hiding his face from his *earthly people*, and dealing alone with the interests of the *heavenly people—the Church*. So also in the Epistles, (saving that the saints there appear as the heralds of mercy to sinners at large,) we find the Spirit of God addressing himself to the saints, and *only to them*. When Israel, the earthly people of God, shall be dealt with again, then indeed he will resume the thread of *this world's history*. This is the subject of the book of Revelation, from chapter vi. to xix., and also of Matthew xxiv. In the former, we have presented, in so many coincident visions, as we have seen, the actings of the apostate Jews of that day, with a faithful suffering remnant amongst them; together with those of the Gentiles connected in evil with Israel, just previous to the second coming of Christ; all within the *last week of Daniel*, the time of the reign of the false Messiah, 'the prince that shall come,' 'the beast' before mentioned."—Pages 16-19.

The author justly adds: "*The Cross*, it is true, is our *first lesson*. There it is we learn our ruin by nature; there our souls are first brought into the presence of God; there we find that our sin has been borne, our iniquities cancelled; there, in a word, we learn the secret of happiness. But having found peace through the blood of the Lamb, knowing ourselves accepted in the Beloved, we are invited to advance into deeper and brighter discoveries of the wondrous

* This fact, we allow, is not actually noticed in Scripture, but the passages here quoted show that the city and temple will be rebuilt at this time.

ways of the Lord. And let none say that these things are needless. If they display God as he is, this is sufficient; they cannot be needless. And if, too, in searching into these things, we discover the calling of Israel to be distinct, as it assuredly is, from that of the Church, still, at the same time, we find that their history is a *parable*, a lesson for us, through the medium of which we see the hopelessly evil condition of man, till he learns the wonderful mystery of redemption through Christ.

"These few remarks, it is hoped, may serve as a key to the following hymns, leading the reader, moreover, desirous of understanding the dispensational ways of the Lord, of which they all more or less treat, into a clearer perception thereof. Christ, as we know, is the great centre of hope and of joy, the rock on which all, whether the Church of God at this time, the Jewish people hereafter, or the Gentiles, must build; and this being the case, may his name, more and more, be as ointment poured forth, more precious, more sweet to the souls of his people. The more we know of his love to ourselves, the more must we love him in return."—Pages 23, 24.

TO A FRIEND.

I.

Seest thou yon evening star, intensely bright?
It gazes on the sun, like him it burns,
That dazzling crescent, and from him its light;*
A dull dark segment to the earth it turns.
And hence my soul a heavenly truth discerns,
A spiritual import, in yon gem of night.
Share it with me; for wise is he who learns
The mystic message of each natural light. (Rom. i. 20.)
In wisdom they were made, and all convey (Ps. civ. 24.)
Wisdom to those who read aright. Even so,
Seek thou the source of spiritual day,
Thou, formed to aid in shedding light below,
Seek it from Him, Sun of divinier ray,
Again to shine, though earth be gloomy now. (Mal. iv. 2.)

II.

How dark, how stern, the mountain-range of late,
And now how splendid! 'tis the sun shines there,
On the cold mass of earthquake-riven slate:
I hail thy presence, glorious king of air.
Man's heart is even as they, until arise
Within the day-star, holy light of heaven, (2 Peter ii. 19.)
The Sun of righteousness, who o'er dark skies
Shall pour his regal glories, clouds far driven,—
When Christ the Lord shines on the raptured soul,
All brightens, as yon purple mountains gleam,
While wreathing off the ebbing storm-waves roll;
So, at his coming earth revived shall beam;— (Ps. lxvii. 7.)
O Sun, thou giv'st a double joy to me,
For what thou art, and what thou say'st shall be!

K.

* Such is frequently the telescopic appearance of Venus.

THE LORD IS AT HAND.

Enquire, my soul, enquire,
What doth the watchman say?
To the one object of desire
Upon his way.

What doth the watchman say,
Whose cry the slumberer wakes?
"The night hath nearly pass'd away,
The morning breaks."

"The night is coming too—
A night of speechless woe,
But there shall be no night to you
Who Jesus know."

Take up the watchman's word,
Repeat the midnight cry:
Prepare to meet your coming Lord;
The time draws nigh.

Come, whosoever will
Ere God's right hand He leaves;
He waits till He His bosom fill
With all His sheaves.

Make ready O my soul,
Make ready, brethren dear;
Send up the heart's burnt offering whole,
Your Lord is near.

Be found of Him in peace
Hush'd be the sounds of strife;
Come quickly! Bring us full release
O Lord our life.

The hours with eager flight
Pass on, till Thou appear—
That moment of unknown delight
Will soon be here.

And in that blessed day
When we around Thee dwell,
It would be bliss to hear Thee say
We lov'd Thee well.

M. B.

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NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XIX. 1-9.

GLORY belongs to God, and to the Lamb. If the Church is looking for its advantages on the earth, it falls into Babylon. Jesus wills that she should have the glory that belongs to Him, and that she should with Him wait until He enters into His glory, to enjoy it with Him. If she is looking for an earthly glory, she becomes unfaithful to her heavenly Bridegroom; and that is the greatest unfaithfulness. We ought not to have any of the things which the prince of this world gives, but receive the heavenly things from the hand of God, and expect them from Himself. The Church ought to be on the earth the manifestation of that thorough detachment from the earth. She ought to be entirely independent of every thing else, and in absolute dependance on God. This is the trial and proof of faith, to refuse the possession of things before God gives them. It was the sin of Saul to have sacrificed before Samuel had come. It is infinitely better to wait for the enjoyment of every thing with Christ. "All things are yours, and ye are Christ, and Christ is God's;" (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23,) and if this link is broken, the relationship between God and the creature is broken also. The Church must wait for the epoch of Her glory—until the judgment of God be executed. Satan always tries to deceive the Church in this respect. He even endeavours to unite Christians in a spirit of human association to arrive at a spiritual millennium which is not promised, and which would exalt man and the means he has in his hand. Nothing will make the Bride happy but the presence of the Bridegroom. Upon the other hand, God will not exercise His power in the government of the world without Christ. Those who endeavour to produce a spiritual millennium, want to use the resources of men. And as they must have money, they rest on what man can give. It is a Babel, notwithstanding the excellence of the intentions; and Christians who expect the blessing before the judgment, always rest on the energy of man.

Verses 3, 4. The Church praises the Lord because of the judgment of Babylon.* The Lamb is not yet manifested. God judges corruption. The Lamb judges the beast, because it rises up against the King of kings.

Verses 5, 6. God begins to take possession of His kingdom. When God acts as King, He executes judgment. If He were now acting as a King, every soul here would be cut off; but now He is acting in patience and in grace during the priesthood of Jesus.

The seventh verse is the expression of our joy. It is impossible that Christ can take possession of His kingdom before the Church has made herself ready, and is manifested in the glory, and that having been through resurrection, introduced into the glory for the marriage of the Lamb. Jesus will have us united to Him in the glory. When Christ shall manifest His glory, He wills that the world, who has despised us, should know that we are loved even as Christ Himself was loved. The marriage of the Lamb will be to us the manifestation of that love. Babylon being judged, the Lord celebrates the marriage supper of the Lamb. We see the contrast between Babylon, the glory of the world, and the Church of God, which has suffered with Christ, which has been persecuted in the world, but which is now glorified with Jesus. We see here the entirely heavenly character of the Church.

The sufferings of the Church are absolutely necessary to her. As soon as she ceases to suffer, she begins to lose her true character, and her testimony in the world ceases. *Awakenings* have always been accompanied with difficulties and persecutions, because Satan is not yet bound. A man who cannot use arms to defend himself, must suffer. It is also very trying to live with persons around us without having one thought in common with them; and the more the natural affections are alive, the more the heart will suffer. The Holy Spirit quickens sensibility; but he gives strength to bear the suffering. At the same time, sensibility being more tender, it is wounded on every side, without meeting with any sympathy. God tries Christians thus, in order to manifest Christ in them. He cannot alter this, until He has executed the judgment. As long as the heart yields itself to the testimony God sends, it is yet the time during which God will leave His children in suffering. The power of the Holy Spirit is not of the world; it enters into the world; but it cannot accustom itself to the world, neither find there its contentment. If one considers the mission of the Holy Spirit, the position of the Spouse in heaven, all concurs to decide us to suffer with Christ, and for His name.

Is it any thing extraordinary that the Holy Spirit should attach us to heaven, and detach us from the earth? Jesus had the taste of heaven in every thing He did, and the world cannot bear this. Whatever binds the Church to the world, loosens her from Christ. Jesus cannot recognise any thing in the world; for there is nothing in the world that has not, according to its power, contributed to reject Him. *Impossible* for a wife to attach herself to two husbands. It is not only forbidden, but it is of all impossibility. As a bride, the Church belongs to Christ; and we are dead to every thing, except to Christ risen. Christ for the Church can only be a heavenly Bridegroom. As a temporal Saviour, and as an Israelite, Jesus forbids His disciples to go into the way of the Gentiles: He was a Jew, and He could only acknowledge those that were Jews. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. xv. 24.) The Church, in order to have a Christ, must have a risen Christ. The world having rejected Christ, Christ owns no fellowship with the world. The cross has put an everlasting barrier between the world, as such, and Jesus. "The world seeth me no more," (John xiv. 19,) except as a Judge. Jesus saves a soul in separating it from the world, and communicates to that soul a life capable of enjoying the world to come, where Jesus is glorified and loved. The testimony rendered to Jesus can only operate in taking a soul morally out of the world, and in causing it to enter into the Church. Could one have a risen Bridegroom in heaven, and an earthly bride in the earth? This is not possible. Having the life of Christ in a body that is still of the world, the Christian suffers, and sees himself fettered by this body of death. It is Christ alone, Christ risen, Christ glorified, who is the Bridegroom of the Church; and a church of the world, a religion of the world, is impossible. To save the Church, Christ must die; and the Church cannot possess a living

* "Thus Babylon was judged—removed out of the way—with her corruptions, which corrupted the earth; and the blood of the servants of the Lord God was avenged. This is celebrated as the work of the Lord God by a multitude in heaven, and the mystic representations of the redeemed; but the worship was of God as sitting on the throne, whose power and judgment had been thus exercised. The way was now made free; and a voice comes forth out of the throne for the voice of praise from all God's servants. His sons could always praise Him in spirit; but here, the prevalence of evil being removed and 'delay no longer,' they, in their character of servants, and all that feared God, can praise Him; for He now reigned as the Lord God Omnipotent—that character or those characters in which He dealt with the earth as God, Creator, Promiser, and Shield of His people while strangers, or the everlasting Accomplisher of all He had promised, Jehovah Elohim Shaddai. All these He now took in power and reigned. This time takes us back to xi. 17; having had in the interval the source, character, and form of evil and judgment of all but the beast and open power against the Lamb, which is earthly. All secret or mere corrupt evil, all evil that had its place in heaven being removed, it was a question of open power, Satan's last and hopeless resource on earth. The praise, accordingly, is returned to God in this character of Lord God Almighty who reigneth, and gladness and joy immediately came forth. Then His first and immediate purpose manifests itself, before even the Lamb's judgment of His earthly enemies, 'the marriage of the Lamb is come.' This is a matter of ordinance and dispensation. We are now His children; but the marriage of the Lamb is not yet come, nor is His wife made ready. It is not here, then, children with the Father; but the time for the Lord's manifest glory being come, the Lord God takes His *power*, judges and removes the evil worldly counterpart, and the Lamb's wife made ready; the time for it is come: these, however, were heavenly things, and they are passed by. The time, and readiness, and nature of her robes only are passingly mentioned as an important circumstantial, characterizing the progress of events; and it closes with pronouncing blessing on those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb; and the prophet returns to the course on the earth again, where the white robed ones are found the companions of His glory in judgment. This closed the scene of what was properly heavenly, i.e. the time during which the Lamb and His followers were not manifested upon earth. It closes with, 'these are the true sayings of God.'"—*Same author.*

Christ unless He be a risen Christ. We suffer here, because we have a risen soul in a body that is not risen, and that is in a world at enmity with God. To wish to prepare a Church here on earth for the coming of Christ, is to understand neither Christ nor the Church. It is when the Lord God Almighty has taken to Him great power to reign, when the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride hath made herself ready, that the Church knows joy. To say that Jehovah reigns now, is, in one sense, a sort of blasphemy. God does not exercise His power in direct government. Do you think that He permits sin to prosper, infidelity to lift up a high head, and that He allows that war should exercise its depredations under his own government? Does not all this prove that Satan is the prince of this world? The Lord only enters upon the exercise of His kingly power down here when the downfall of Babylon takes place. To apply the Psalms to the present time, when they say: "The Lord reigns," is to produce confusion. These Psalms express righteous judgment, and the desire to wash one's feet in the blood of the enemies. What connection is there in this with the spirit of the Christian? This relates to a dispensation of judgment and of righteousness, and not of grace. Grace is acting now, to draw the heart, and to make it cleave to heavenly things. In the reign of Christ, God will reign in righteousness; and the Spirit of Christ, in the Psalms, calls for justice in the time of His reign. The principles of the relations of God with men are quite different. The reign of Christ will be, upon the earth, a time of joy; but that joy will proceed from the presence of righteousness acting upon the earth. (Ps. xcvi. xcvii. xcviii. xcix.) When Jehovah takes to Him His power and reigns, He will execute justice and judgment in the earth. Do you believe that if He was actually exercising judgment, things would go on in the earth as they do now? The Lord is acting in grace now, and when He executes justice, the wicked will be cut off, and the righteous will then be able to live in peace, for he will be sustained and filled with joy. When Christians have chosen to sing the Psalms, as belonging to the Church, the relationship of Jehovah with Israel, and those of the Father with the Church, have been confounded, and the Church thrown into darkness and worldliness. When all this is confounded, Jehovah is not found just, and the Father does not sanctify His people. In the Revelation, we do not find the relationship of the Father with the Church. So long as the Church is on earth, God has not assumed the power of His kingdom.

In the seventh verse, the primary object of the love of God is to unite the Church to Christ. That must take place, in order that Christ may appear in glory and judge the beast. The Church is not yet the wife—she is only betrothed to Christ. The Holy Spirit can never produce the glory of the Church, nor celebrate the marriage supper of the Lamb, because he cannot be the Bridegroom of the Church. And to wish for the joy of the millennium through the Holy Spirit only, is to wish for the joy of the bride without the Bridegroom, which is a folly. There must be the personal manifestation of Jesus. The Church must be risen, to be with her risen Spouse.

What is actually the effect of testimony in the world? It is to raise persecution according to the power of the Holy Spirit, which is put forth. If one would have it otherwise, the Lord must reign and execute justice. To wish for a millennium by the Holy Spirit, is also to wish for the most violent persecution. The more the Holy Spirit acts, the hotter the persecution is.

In paradise, when God *builded* the woman, He presented her to Adam: this is what will happen concerning the Church. (Eph. v. 27.) The love of Jesus for the Church is something much more intimate, much higher than the love of God for the world. He has given His life for her; He washes her by His word; He will present her to Himself glorious with the same glory that He is Himself in, as risen and glorified. This will be the marriage supper of the Lamb. The Church is the bride, united to Jesus in glory. She is justified, purified, and glorified. A bride in a vile body is not fit for a Bridegroom in a glorious body.

The Almighty, taking to Him His power and reigning, is still a thing to come. God only reigns now through His hidden providence. In His kingdom, all shall be set in order; but He cannot make the earth and the creation happy, before that which is most precious to Christ be there for the enjoyment of it with Him. The first thing necessary to the full accomplishment of the counsels of the Father and of the love of Jesus, is the resurrection of the Church and the marriage of the Lamb. Our portion is to be with Christ, and to have the enjoyment with Him of all that He inherits, and of all that He enjoys. The principle of faithfulness in the Church is, not to recognise nor to take any thing before her heavenly Bridegroom comes. She is to live as a virgin, waiting for the return of Him to whom she is betrothed, and to keep herself in His absence from all that is unworthy of Him.*—(*To be continued.*)

CERTAIN DIFFICULTIES OF SCRIPTURE

CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT WHICH THE SECOND COMING OF OUR LORD CASTS UPON THEM.

PHILIPPIANS.

CHAPTER i. 3, 4.—Fellowship of Spirit in the Gospel of Christ, so that not only its benefits, but the very cast and mould of it was caught by the Philippians from the first day they heard it, is that which characterizes this epistle.

Christ the Sufferer, or Martyr, (*μάρτυς;* comp. Rev. i. 5,) is the type, a type caught by them; so that in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, as also in the bonds of the apostle, they were joint participators of the same grace.

This was assurance sufficient to persuade the apostle, "that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform (perfect, finish; see margin) until the day of Jesus Christ;" not merely that they would persevere, or be preserved, to the end of their lives, or to the end of the world; but that the Holy Ghost's work begun in their souls, making them already new creatures in spirit, will go on to perfect or finish the work of assimilation to Christ, until they be altogether in his likeness, both in spirit and body, in the day of Christ. Then will the work begun now arrive at perfection,—and not till then. It goes on to that time when this "our vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (iii. 21.)

How far the apostle himself was on his way to perfection, may be seen in chap. iii. One side of the likeness of Christ in him had been nearly finished, viz. his sufferings; and the other side was in progress, viz. resurrection, the power of which is in all who believe. And, therefore, although not yet perfect, the prize of the mark of the high calling not yet apprehended, still he pressed towards it, and adds: "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you;"—that is, if the leaven of Judaism still affects you, God will show you that it is of the world, and not of heaven; for the death and resurrection of Christ has done a sentence of death on the flesh and the world, and put us in a

* Verse 10. "'I am *thy* (John's) fellow-servant,' and John was the servant of Jesus, and a witness,* 'and of thy brethren *the prophets:* for the testimony of Jesus is *the Spirit of prophecy.*' This latter is what is called a reciprocal proposition, each member having the article; and, therefore, we are justified in reading it inversely—the Spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. Now, here we get the declaration, that this comparatively distant position, which is not the communication of truth pertaining to the family, as such, is nevertheless a testimony to Jesus. In Peter, I get the Spirit of prophecy, while, of course, of just as much authority, contrasted with the Gospel or Church testimony which pertained to the family. The Spirit of Christ, in the *prophets*, was testifying, i.e. *witnessing* beforehand, and ministered things which are reported by them who have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Into these things the angels desire to look; of these they are themselves the messengers, because they are not property of the family, though every thing belongs to it. A steward is for the estate—the family concerns he has nothing to do with, though the family have with the estate too. In a word, it is the *Spirit of prophecy* which characterizes the witnesses in this book, and not John's own proper place as an apostle in the family; and, therefore, he speaks of himself only as in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, and not as an apostle in the Church. Christ Himself takes no character beyond what He was, or will be, on earth, in his title in the address; namely, Faithful Witness, First-begotten from the dead, and Prince of the kings of the earth. And the celebration of the Church's association with Christ in heavenly places is in the mouth of others, and that in heaven. The opening response of the saints, i. 5, 6, and the closing desire of the bride, xxii. 17, associates the Church down here with it. The character of the witnesses, then, throughout this book, is, not a Church character, but, a prophetic angelic character, which we find in its nature contrasted with the testimony of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

"That all this was suited to a state of things when all was out of course, is most sure. That it has served in a measure of application, so far as it could be said there were no Churches on earth and that apostacy had come in, and that it will suit a time of more decided manifestation of their principles, is most true; and, so far, blessed is he that keeps the sayings of this book in all this period. But it applies to no Church condition, not to the family, as such. And it is remarkable that in the introduction and close of the book, before and after the prophetic part, where the name of Jesus is mentioned, it is always associated with this testimony, i. 2, 5 and 9, Christ Himself even becomes, so to speak, a prophet, revealing what God gave to Him."

* "This view of the character of testimony, i.e. not of the Holy Ghost in the Church, as such, but of the Spirit of prophecy, is much confirmed, if we adopt, as all critical editions do, on, it would appear, the amplest evidence, the reading 'the testimony of Jesus Christ [concerning, or even] all things that he saw;' that is, omitting '*and*' before 'all things.'"—*Same author.*

new condition. "Our citizenship is in heaven:" likeness to Christ in resurrection is our portion; and this is higher than any thing worldly religion pretends to. (Compare iii. 1, 2, &c.)

Verses 8-11. The bowels of Christ being the stimulant, *love is to abound in knowledge and in all judgment, &c.; that is,* in the knowledge and discernment of that nature of service and testimony suited to the compassions of Christ. "That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." "Good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—*ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς οἷς προητοίμασεν ὁ Θεὸς* &c. (Eph. ii. 10.) Works and fruits of righteousness, characteristic of the bosom of the Father and the bowels and compassions of Christ. Not works and fruits of righteousness such as Moses, or Joshua, or Sampson, or Elias, might have wrought, each in character with the dispensation entrusted to them, bringing *forth fruits adapted to the revelation God at the time was giving* of himself; but works and fruits of righteousness having their type in the love of the Father and humility of the Son. Each dispensation has its type at the head of it. Christ is the type of this. Hence, it is not merely in doing things for religion's sake, but the being based on the known love of God in Christ, and the being like God in Christ, that mark the good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. This is very important, for Christians are found associating religion and the world together, as if this at all had a type in Him whom the world knew not. (1 John iii. James iv.)

Verses 15-20. That Christ should be magnified in his body, whether by life or by death, was the aim of the apostle. Whatever *ministered to this end,* was hailed by him with delight. Hence, he rejoiced at whatever way Christ was preached: those who did so in contention, supposed to add afflictions to his bonds; those who did so in good-will, knew that the effects would be the same, for he was set for the defence of the Gospel. "Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, I therein do rejoice, and I will rejoice." How was it? Could he rejoice in the deeds of the contentious, equally with the sincere? Not at all. He could not rejoice in evil, that good might come. (Rom. iii. 8.) But he could rejoice at his being brought into circumstances of confession, wherein Christ could be magnified in his body, whether by life or by death; and the great result to himself would be, the prize of the mark of the high calling, or the *full salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, at the appearing* of Jesus Christ, when he would be perfected; (see 1 Peter i.) for this was always before his eyes, as it was before the eyes of all other saints in those days. (2 Tim. iv. 6-8.) "For I know that this (preaching of Christ, in pretence or in truth,) shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed; but that with all boldness, as always, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death." This lets us into the whole secret of his joy on this head. It was not abstractedly because Christ was preached even by evil men, which would only add to their condemnation; but because if it added to his afflictions, so that Christ was magnified therein, he would rejoice: and for this end he desires the prayers of the saints and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ; that is, the spirit that actuated the servant of the Father, the faithful and true Witness himself. (*μάρτυς*, Martyr, or Witness—Rev. i. 5.)

Chap. ii. 12-17. What has been already said as to the fellowship in the Gospel of Christ, presented in this epistle, clears away that which in this passage is felt to be a difficulty. "Fear and trembling" is a condition attached to fellowship of Spirit with Christ in his afflictions; and verse 12 is a kind of commentary on what goes before. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and *was made in the likeness of* men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." It is a condition implying weakness. "I determined to know nothing amongst you but Jesus Christ, and him crucified; and I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." (1 Cor. ii. 2, 3.) Christ was crucified through weakness: we also are weak with him. (2 Cor. xiii. 4.)—It is a condition of obedience, dependance, and subjection of will. "Servants, be obedient to your own masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as menpleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." (Eph. vi. 5, 6.)—It is a condition the opposite to that of Israel, who, when going to battle, were exhorted: "Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them." (Deut. xx. 3.) And the fear and trembling of which they were to be void was to fall on their enemies; (Exod. xv. 15, 16;) for the Lord was with the armies of Israel, giving them victories in the flesh. But it is quite otherwise with the Church; they who are in Christ, overcome in another style, and after another manner. "They love not their lives unto the death:" even as he, thus they overcome, or, in other words, work out their own salvation. "For thy sake we are killed all the day long." "Ye have condemned and killed the just, and *he doth not resist you.*" (James v.) "Wherefore," says the apostle, "as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence," that is, not as eye servants, but as servants of Christ, in singleness of heart, (compare Eph. vi. 5,) "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Let your state and condition, in pressing to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ, be in keeping with the estate of Christ crucified; for it is God who works in you to will and do of his good pleasure, of which Christ is the type. Do all things, consequently, as Christ did, without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. When Christ was in the world, he was the light of the world. This, it would seem, is the force of the passage.* How opposite to the present and hitherto state of the Church! "I sit a queen.... and shall see no sorrow:" this is not fear and trembling. Let her not say, when her flesh is torn, (Rev. xvii.) that she is suffering the afflictions of the Gospel of Christ.—Note also, it is a condition the reverse of what will be, when kings shall be the nursing fathers and queens the nursing mothers of restored Israel. (Is. lx. and lxiv. 14.)—It is the condition of servants in "the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" until the glory comes—of patient, obedient and wistful servants.

Chap. iv. 14, to end. Here we get the true explanation of, "The labourer is worthy of his meat," (Matt. x.) and "They who preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel." (1 Cor. ix.) The Lord says: "Provide not for yourselves, for the labourer is worthy of his meat: I will provide for you." And here we see the manner in which He does provide. He first makes the labouring servant dependant on Him for every thing, and learn of Him how to be abased and how to abound—how to be full and to be hungry—how to abound and suffer need—strengthening him to do all things.

Verses 14-16. Then He makes His people willing. "Notwithstanding, ye have well done that ye did communicate with my affliction," says the apostle. They, having the mind of Christ, caught the spirit of Christ's Gospel, and identified themselves with the afflictions of it from the first, as it is said: "Now, ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity." And in communicating with one who had fellowship in the sufferings of Christ, they communicated with Christ. "I was hungry, and ye fed me; naked, and ye clothed me; sick and in prison, and ye visited me." (Matt. xxv.) It was this which gave the peculiar value to their gift. Were it by constraint, or as a charge, that the support of the Gospel was put on them, all the blessedness of fellowship with Christ in his afflictions was lost. The use of the power of the Gospel is to make it without charge to men, that it may be more like what it is, viz. a free gift. "Freely ye have received, freely give." The abuse of the power that the Gospel gives is to make it chargeable. (1 Cor. ix.) It is ordained that they who preach the Gospel, shall live of the Gospel. "Nevertheless, we have not used this power, but *suffer all* things, lest we should hinder the

* No reference is made to the various interpretations given to this last passage, all of which seem to be more happy in showing what it does not mean than what it does mean.

Gospel of Christ." (Verse 12.)—Observe, "suffer all things"—a lesson that he learnt from Christ. (Phil. iv. 12.) It was in such circumstances that those saints communicated with him of their substance, and it was that which made it an odour, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God; terms by which the Holy Ghost marks the offering and sacrifice of Christ Himself. (Eph. v. 2.) The Spirit being in the Church, all this is natural to Christianity: any thing else is forced and corrupt—the abuse of the Gospel. The labourer of Christ is servant towards the world and the Church; but neither the world nor the Church are his masters or supporters: Christ is both. He looks to Him. When saints have learnt the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ with power, that "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich," then they bring forth fruit to abound. "Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." The conclusion, then, is:

1. That the labourer for Christ becomes poor with Him, and does not provide for his support in the Gospel, for he is worthy of his meat. This is contrary to the conclusion man would come to. (See Matt. x. 9-11, &c.)
2. A gift is not desired from any, but fruit that may abound to their account, (Phil. iv. 17,) contrary to the practice of men.
3. The Gospel is not made chargeable to any. The Lord takes on himself the charges, supplying the need of those who communicate with the afflictions of Christ and give to the poor, working in them to will and do of his good pleasure. They remember the word: "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again." (Prov. xix. 17.) The crown of life; (James i.) the crown of glory; (1 Peter v.) and the crown of righteousness to all them who love his appearing, (2 Tim. iv.) will sufficiently repay for all! May the life we live in the flesh be by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us!

Clonmel, February, 1849.

THE PREMILLENNIAL ADVENT.

(Continued from page 78.)

7. But let us also consider, specially, the "first resurrection." This topic is important in itself. But it acquires much additional importance when it is considered with reference to its bearing on the particular point before us. The Scripture testimony as to the first resurrection, furnishes a remarkable proof that the second advent is premillennial. The sum of that testimony appears to be as follows: "The dead *in Christ*" (not a word here of the dead *out of Christ*) "shall rise first," (1) that is, before the living in Christ are changed, and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. This accords with another passage: "Every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits; afterward"—who? "they which *are Christ's*," not those which are not Christ's, "AT HIS COMING." (2) And both these passages are still further exemplified by a third: "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (3) Take, then, these Scriptures in their plain meaning, and we learn that the Lord shall come at the beginning of the thousand years; that those who are "dead in Christ," who "are Christ's at his coming," and those *only*, will be raised at his coming, while *the rest of the dead* will not live again until the thousand years are finished. And the explanation of St. John himself is to the same effect precisely: "This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (4) That is, those who have part in the first resurrection, begin to live again when the millennium commences, and live and reign with Christ throughout that period, throughout the thousand years. Those who have no part in the first resurrection, "the rest of the dead," will not live again "until the thousand years are finished." The advent of the Lord, then, being at the period of the first resurrection, *must* be at the commencement of the millennium, *not* at the end.

(1) 1 Thess. iv. 16. (2) 1 Cor. xv. 23. (3) Rev. xx. 5. (4) Verse 6.

8. We have still further confirmation of this truth in two other passages of Scripture when compared with each other. "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a momemt, 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. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1) It is stated here that the dead in Christ shall be raised and the living saints changed, and both be finally delivered from mortality and corruption. All are agreed that this takes place at the coming of the Lord. But in the passage which has just been quoted, we find that when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." And where is this saying written? *Only in one place, and there it stands connected with the introduction of millennial blessedness.* The whole passage stands as follows: "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. HE WILL SWALLOW UP DEATH IN VICTORY; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it." The apostle declares that this remarkable prediction shall be accomplished when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; and thus we have the most explicit testimony of the Holy Ghost by his servants, Isaiah and Paul, that the coming of the Lord—the resurrection of the departed saints—the transformation of those that are alive—and the introduction of the millennium—all take place together. The coming of the Lord is, therefore, plainly not at the close, but at the commencement of the millennium.

9. We have still further evidence in another class of predictions. In nearly a dozen places we have a clear, express declaration that at the *commencement* of the millennium there will be a great gathering together of all nations, and the infliction upon them when so gathered, of a signal, special, overwhelming judgment. In each of these passages we have clearly and expressly mentioned, *first*, this great gathering of the nations: *secondly*, an overwhelming judgment upon them, and *thirdly*, after that judgment, the millennium. In several of these passages, and connected with these events, we have another event as clearly foretold as any of these; and that is, *the coming of the Lord*. . . . . "For I know their works and their thoughts; it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign upon them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory: and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. . . . . And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord."(2) Now here we have the gathering of the nations, the conversion of the world, and the universal prevalence of true religion during the millennium. But if you look at verses 15 and 16, you will find that at the commencement of all this blessedness the Lord comes. "For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many." Here the coming of the Lord is plainly connected with the gathering of the nations and the judgments upon them, when so gathered. In Zech. xiv. 1-9, we have the same thing. "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the

(1) Is. xxv. 6-8. (2) Is. lxvi. 18-23.

people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. *And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east.* . . . . AND THE LORD MY GOD SHALL COME AND ALL HIS SAINTS WITH HIM." And what is the result of this gathering of the nations, and this coming of the Lord with all his saints? "AND THE LORD SHALL BE KING OVER ALL THE EARTH: IN THAT DAY SHALL THERE BE ONE LORD, AND HIS NAME ONE." So in Rev. xvi. 13. &c., "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. BEHOLD, I COME AS A THIEF. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together unto a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Here also we have the gathering of the nations, and the purpose for which they are gathered,—to the battle of that great day of God Almighty; and in the midst of this account—in a parenthesis—as though the Saviour could not allow the account to be finished before he gave his people warning of his coming in connection with these events—he says, "Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." Amen. Blessed, indeed, is that servant, whom, when his Lord cometh, he shall find so doing!

In Rev. xix. 11, &c., we have an account of this great and terrible battle. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. . . . . He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. .—And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceedeth out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." What follows upon this is the binding of Satan and the reign of Christ with his risen and glorified saints for a thousand years; in other words, the millennium.

10. There is one great difficulty which many sincere inquirers feel in connection with these matters. It has sometimes been stated thus: If the living saints are changed, the departed saints raised, and all caught up together to meet the Lord when he comes, and if the wicked are destroyed, who are they that are left to inhabit the earth during the millennium? The question is an important one in itself; besides which we shall find in the consideration of it a great deal to throw still further light on the subject before us, the premillennial advent of our Lord.

In 1 Cor. x. 32, we find a distinction, the consideration of which will assist to clear away the difficulty in question. In that passage, the apostle recognizes three different classes of persons. "Give none offence, neither to the *Jews*, nor to the GENTILES, nor to the CHURCH OF GOD." Now, here we have the three classes of which mankind are composed: Jews — Gentiles — Church of God. And to trace through Scripture, from first to last, God's purpose concerning the Jews, God's purpose concerning the Gentiles, and God's purpose respecting the Church, is the surest way to ascertain the order of God's dispensations, and the harmony of all portions of prophetic testimony with each other. Let us, as the Lord may assist and our space allow, humbly and reverently attempt this.

The Jews are the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh; the Gentiles are the other nations of the earth; the Church of God consists of all true believers in Christ, gathered into him from among both Jews and Gentiles—*into him—in whom* there is "neither Greek, nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all." An attentive study of prophetic truth will shew, that at the period of the Lord's advent, the whole Church of God is caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and thus escapes all the things that come upon the earth; that a small remnant of the Jews, after enduring extreme privations and distresses, and after being reduced to the last extremity, are delivered *by the coming of the Lord with all his saints*—and that a portion of the Gentiles, too, escape the judgments which desolate the Gentile nations. These Jews and Gentiles, and their offspring, form the population of the earth during the millennium; and *over these* Christ and his glorified saints sway the sceptre of peaceful and universal dominion. Some Scripture evidence of these things we shall now lay before our readers.

(1.) To begin with "the Jews." God's purpose respecting them we have in Gen. xii. 2, 3, where God says to Abram: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Of this purpose, we have a further development in Gen. xiii. 14, &c. "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." In Gen. xv. 18, &c., we have the boundaries of this land, promised to Abraham and his seed, defined, and we have the earthly nature of the inheritance God designed for them still further exemplified in Deut. xxviii. There we have the blessings promised them in case of obedience, the curses denounced against them in case of disobedience. What were those blessings? "Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store . . . . and the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee . . . . And the Lord shall make thee the head and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and do them." Such are the blessings promised to Israel in case of obedience; and the curses denounced against them in case of disobedience were all of the same earthly character. "Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep . . . . The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto . . . . The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it . . . . Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb and a by-word, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee . . . . Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity . . . . The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low . . . . Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, &c. Therefore, shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things . . . . And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind," &c. Such were the curses denounced against these highly favoured people in case of disobedience. And how strictly and literally have they been fulfilled! The Jews proved themselves a disobedient and stiffnecked race. God exercised great forbearance towards them; but after they had rejected

and stoned the prophets, his servants whom he sent unto them, he sent his Son, the Heir of all things. Him they crucified and slew, and thus filled up the measure of their iniquities, and sealed their doom. On this account, wrath came upon them to the uttermost; their city and temple were destroyed; their country pillaged, its population put to the sword, or else carried away captive; and for nearly two thousand years they have been monuments of God's displeasure against sin, suffering the aggravated and complicated woes denounced against them.

(2.) The instruments in inflicting all these woes on this guilty and unhappy race, have been "the Gentiles." From the time that Abraham was called to be the father of God's peculiar people, God did not deal directly with any nation upon the earth, save the Jews. He did indeed occasionally use one or another of the nations to chastise his people, but still they remained under the awful sentence which we find in Rom. i. 28 .... "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." About the time when the Jews were carried away captive into Babylon, however, a distinct grant of power was made to the Gentiles by the Almighty. In Daniel, we have the account of a great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, and, in the explanation of this dream, Daniel says: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Here begin the times of the Gentiles. The power which was thus bestowed on the Babylonish king, descended to the Medes and Persians; from thence it passed into the hands of the Grecians, and the Grecian empire yielded to the power of Rome, the last kingdom, represented by the legs and feet of the image. The Roman empire was broken up into a number of separate kingdoms, but its power continued in those kingdoms, and will continue to exist till the coming of the Lord. It is by this power that the Jews have been so fearfully wasted and so heavily oppressed. It was by Nebuchadnezzar that Jerusalem was destroyed at first, and the inhabitants carried away captive to Babylon. It is true that a portion of the Jews returned to Jerusalem at the end of seventy years; but they were mere tributaries of the Persian king; they never afterwards had any independent government of their own. Their sufferings under the Grecian power in the hands of Antiochus Epiphanes, were most tremendous. They were under the Roman yoke when Christ appeared amongst them, and they had to procure the consent of the Roman governor before they could put Christ to death. It was by the Romans that Jerusalem was a second time destroyed; and it has been chiefly by the nations into which the Roman empire was divided that they have been oppressed and persecuted until now. They are still under the yoke of the various Gentile powers, and the Saviour himself declared that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke xxi. 24.) The times of Gentile power began with the oppression of the Jews; and the Gentiles continue to oppress the Jews as long as the times of Gentile dominion last.—(*To be continued.*)

REVIEW.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION, TRANSLATED FROM THE ANCIENT GREEK TEXT. By S. P. Tregelles.—1848.
London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, &c.

ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΙΣ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ, ΕΞ ΑΡΧΑΙΩΝ ΑΝΤΙΓΡΑΦΩΝ ΕΚΔΟΘΕΙΣΑ.—THE BOOK OF REVELATION IN GREEK, EDITED FROM ANCIENT AUTHORITIES; WITH A NEW ENGLISH VERSION, AND VARIOUS READINGS. By Samuel Prideaux Tregelles.—1844.
London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, &c.

IN the address to the reader, in the more recent of these two works, the editor says: "In the year 1844, I edited the Greek Text of the Book of Revelation *from ancient authorities*, with an English Translation adapted to the Greek Text so edited, and a Critical Introduction. I have been requested to publish the English Translation in a separate form, in order that it may be more conveniently used by those who wish to study this important book of Holy Scripture, according as it is given by the most ancient authorities. In complying with the request thus made to me, I have carefully revised the whole: this revision has been carried out, both with respect to the authorities on which the text rests, and also with regard to the translation into English." (Page 1.) In this republication of the English text of the Revelation, Mr. T. states that it differs from the former, first, as to *readings*, from the results of a re-examination of the uncial MSS. A and C, and of a more complete knowledge of B, (the text of which was published by Tischendorf, in 1846,) and of a personal collation of the MS. 38 at Rome, and of the Codex Amiatinus (i.e. the most important MS. of Jerome's Latin version) at Florence, as well as by a more decided carrying out of his own critical principles; secondly, as to differences in *rendering*, &c., besides correcting whatever appeared to him to admit of it, the order of the Greek has been more followed; the nominative of the personal pronouns, when expressed in Greek, is now marked by capitals; (and "I" by a black letter;) variations of *reading* are distinguished by an asterisk from those in *translation* merely; and the anacoluthon, so frequent in the book, is indicated, where practicable, by a dash (—), which here only occurs to this end.

Christian scholars are well aware that no part of the New Testament had been edited so unsatisfactorily, partly from the general indifference with which the book of Revelation had been long regarded, and chiefly from the fact that so few ancient MSS. which contain it are known to exist, and these few comparatively unavailable to editors until the last half century. The critical acumen of Griesbach, achieved not a little in the just appraisal of conflicting readings, and in many instances it appears to me that subsequent editors found it an easier matter to alter than amend the text, which resulted from his laborious researches. Still, it is certain that sources of information, unknown or inaccessible to him, have been opened to some of the labourers that followed, of whom Scholz, (1830-36,) on the one hand, and Tischendorf, (1841,) on the other, have been the most successful. To the system of recension adopted by the latter, or perhaps even more to that of Lachmann, Mr. T. inclines.

A comparison, however, of the two works has satisfied me that in the course of the last four years the judgment of the editor has wavered and changed considerably as to the text and the translation of the book. More than *six hundred variations*, great and small, I have observed—a list quite sufficient to discredit the former work, if not indeed both. For what guarantee can we have that such a degree of fickleness will not drag the editor, if left here below for four years more, into another expurgatory index quite as copious? There may be more uniformity, as well as otherwise some changes for the better in the translation; but it is much to be regretted, that while the errors of the former edition are far from being all eliminated in the present work, fresh mistakes have been added to this, from which its predecessor was free. Of this competent persons may form some opinion, even from the samples here given, which are necessarily few, because of the limited space which *The Prospect* can afford to such subjects.

In the first citations, I present to the reader some of the more obvious cases from different parts of the book, arranging his two versions in separate columns, that the reader may judge for himself.

The Rev. in 1848.	The Rev. in 1844.
Ch. i. 5, 6.—"Unto him that *loveth us, and hath *freed (*a*) us from our sins by his own blood,—and he hath made *for us *a kingdom,—priests unto Him who is his God and Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."	Ch. i. 5, 6.—"Unto him that loveth us, and hath (*a*) washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us a kingdom,—priests unto his God and Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
"*a* 'And hath washed' is the reading of some authorities, but not of the most ancient MSS."	"*m* (*t a*) freed," marked as apparently *inferior* to what is given in the text.

In the edition of 1844, λούσαντι was preferred; in that of 1848, λύσαντι, a reading which, said the editor, (Introduction, page xxxiii.) "has a good deal of probability, as the vowels might have been interchanged either way; but it is much less supported by *versions*; and also as to sense, it is the easier reading." On these grounds he rejected it from the text, though adopted by Lachmann and Tischendorf: now he incorporates it. The next change in these few words is as to the pronoun, which follows ἐποίησεν. Here the ancient MSS. are conflicting; A exhibiting ἡμῖν, and C ἡμῶν. Griesbach, Knapp, Scholz, and Tischendorf, rightly (I think) prefer ἡμᾶς, as did Mr. T. in 1844: recently, he has adopted ἡμῖν, with Lachmann.

The Rev. in 1848.	The Rev. in 1844.
Ch. v. 8-10.—"And when he took the roll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having each *a harp and bowls of gold full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying, 'Thou art worthy to take the roll, and to open the seals thereof: because thou hast been slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and thou hast made* them unto our God *a kingdom and *b* priests: and *they reign on the earth.'"	Ch. v. 8-10.—"And when he took the book, the four living creatures and twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them a harp and golden cups full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and thou hast made them unto our God kings and priests: and *they reign over the earth."
"*b* Thus in the most ancient authorities Greek and Latin; others read '*kings and priests*.'"	"*k* [they will reign]" marked as apparently *inferior* to that given above.

My object is not to point out mere trivial deviations from the common Bible and from the editor's former version—deviations, some of which add nothing to accuracy or perspicuity, if they do not impair the sense. Nor would I dwell upon the substitution in his text of βασιλείαν for βασιλεῖς; nor need I discuss here the

question of the relative claims of the readings βασιλεύουσιν and βασιλεύσουσιν.* But the change of rendering in the last clause seems remarkable. In the Authorized Translation, β. ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς is rendered "reign on the earth." So long as this was understood in a vague way, but little evil resulted; but at length some began to press the text so strongly, as to obscure and deny the proper heavenly seat of the Church, blessed in the heavenly places in Christ. This and other questions led to the careful sifting of the passage, and to the discovery that the phrase had been inexactly translated, inasmuch as it really imports not the locality in which the kings reside, but the sphere of their rule. The only precisely parallel construction in the New Testament seems to be, Matt. ii. 22, where the Authorized Version is equally loose as in the text before us, the force being that Archelaus was reigning *over* Judea. The question of his being *in* the country is not touched. It might or might not be. So it is with the passage in Rev. v. 10. Reigning over the earth (whether on it or not) is the thing which they sing.

Mr. T. knew the bad consequences which had flowed from the mistranslation of the clause, and so long ago as 1836, in a paper entitled "Connected Passages in the Revelation," he quoted these words, altered the version from "on" to "*over*," and inserted the Greek word ἐπὶ for the sake of precision. Then he adds the comment: "It has been supposed from this passage, and others like it, that the home of the saints is described as *on* the earth; and this has, I believe, very much tended to cause some to look upon the reign of Christ and His Church as an *earthly* hope." Quite true: few passages have been so perverted to this end as the present. Eight years after, the Greek and English edition appears, and the correction is adhered to—"reign *over* (not on) the earth." It is somewhat surprising to find that the present version recurs to the error which its author had long seen and repudiated.

If it be said, Does not the expression ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς mean simply and strictly "on the earth?" I answer, that this is not the question. There is no doubt that *in themselves* the words bear such a meaning naturally and fairly, and are rightly so translated in a host of passages throughout the New Testament. But the question is, whether the force be not modified by the word βασιλεύω, for, in translating, we have to consider not only the intrinsic meaning of words, but whether and how the context may affect them. Nor are any words more decidedly qualified by those associated with them than prepositions. As to ἐπὶ with the genitive, dative, or accusative, need it be proved that it is habitually used with words expressive of authority, as the link with things or persons ruled? Nay, it has even this force in itself, without an associated verb or participle, as οἱ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων, the persons set over such and such matters. There is a passage in the Revelation, (xvii. 18, ἡ ἔχουσα βασιλείαν ἐπὶ τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς,) which Mr. T. translated in 1844, "which holdeth the rule," and, in 1848, "which holdeth sovereignty;" but in both, "over the kings of the earth." There, indeed, he is forced so to do; otherwise, the passage would not be sense. Now, this clause is surely analogous, in point of construction, to that in the fifth chapter, save that the one is persons, and the other a place under rule. But is a translator to translate accurately merely where, if he mistranslated, the absurdity would be manifest? And if confessedly it be rule "over the kings of the earth" in the one verse, why should it not be rule "over the earth" in the other?

The Rev. in 1848.	The Rev. in 1844.
Ch. vii. 13-17.—"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, 'These that have been arrayed in white robes, what are they? and whence did they come? And I said unto him,* 'My lord, THOU knowest.' And he said to me, 'These are those who come out of [the] great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made *them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they in the presence of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall be a covert over them. (*b*) They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. Because the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.'"	Ch. vii. 13-17.—"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are those who come out of the 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 be the covert over 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 be their shepherd, and he shall lead them unto fountains of living waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."
"*b* No other rendering of these words is, I believe, admissible:—the expression is parallel to the Hebrew in Exod. xl. 35."	* This mark denotes that there are reasons hardly amounting to probable, for omitting the word.

My first remark is one which applies widely to Mr. T.'s work. It is, that he systematically misstates the force of the Greek Perfect—an error the less excusable, because it is in general given accurately in the English Bible, which he has undertaken to correct. He confounds the force of the perfect with that of the aorist. The latter, as is well known, is the grand tense in narrative. It simply states that events have occurred, excluding the idea of duration, whether the action was really transient, or whether, if prolonged, the idea of the prolongation was meant to be merged. The perfect, on the other hand, expresses the *settled, abiding effect of a past action*: it adds another and different idea to that of the aorist. One might have expected so fundamental a truth to be familiar to every student: it may be a nicety of the Greek language, but it is one which it is indispensable to know and act upon, in order to understand and appreciate a single sentence where these tenses occur. Experience shows, however, that professed translators and critics may overlook the simplest principles. As some may question the distinction, I delay for a moment to exemplify what has been stated, before referring to the offences against it in both editions. Let the reader who doubts take up any book of the New Testament—say the first chapters of Matthew. Of the aorist, in which ch. i. abounds, I need not speak, as the sense is indisputable. But a perfect we have in γέγραπται, ii. 5, &c. The Authorised Version rightly translates, "it *is* written." It is true that γέγραπται could not have been used, if the action were not past: it supposes this, but presents also the idea of the prediction being actually in the prophecy which was familiar to them. In other words, what was permanent is also before the mind, which, not ἐγράφη, but γέγραπται, conveys. Again, ch. iii. 2, ἤγγικε "is at hand:" "hath drawn nigh," though true, is not the whole truth: nay, it is not only weak, but it might mislead. The *present state*, (flowing doubtless from a past action and very distinct from the present tense of the same verb,) is the real thought. In ch. v. 10, 12 we have the participle of the perfect passive, and the aorist active of the same word. Now οἱ δεδιωγμένοι means, *not* "those who have been," but "those who *are* persecuted"—a certain habitual character attached to them; whereas, ἔδιωξαν τοὺς πρ. is merely the statement, without going further, that men persecuted the prophets. So in verse 32, ἀπολελυμένην is not the mere historical fact that she had been divorced, but her present condition resulting from that fact. Hence when Mr. T., in 1844, rendered οἱ περιβεβλημένοι, "which *are* arrayed," he was right, as was the Authorised Version before him: now that, in 1848, he renders it "that *have been* arrayed," he is wrong. Such inaccuracies require to be met firmly; for though, in some cases, they may not affect the interpretation of the book, in others they do, as e. g. in Rev. ix. 14 and xix. 7. The former of these texts is another instance of a change positively for the worse in the later edition of Mr. T. In that of 1844 he had rightly followed the Authorised Version "which *are* bound;" in that of 1848 he departs from it, as well as from himself, into the blunder of "which have been bound."* As to the latter of these texts, both versions agree in an untrue translation of οἱ . . . . κεκλημένοι. The real force is that which the English Bible exhibits—"they which *are* called," and not "those who *have been*," and false consequences have been built by others upon this false rendering.

Next, in the edition of 1844, "out of the great tribulation" is given unhesitatingly as the force of the words ἐκ τῆς θ. τῆς μ. Lachmann alone, I believe, reads ἀπὸ θ. μ. But Mr. T. properly adhered to the more usual and best supported text, and he translated accordingly. In 1848, he brackets the definite article, and appends a note to this effect: "The articles in this passage are of doubtful authority; but, even if genuine, little could be rested on the insertion; for θλῖψις, like ὑπομονή, and all similar words, would take the article in Greek, where we should not insert it in English." Now, first as to the doubt, is the Alexandrine MS. to invalidate the mass of consenting authority which is in favour of the received text? Does Mr. T. himself permit it to weigh so strongly elsewhere? I find, on the contrary, that he rejects its readings in about ten cases *in this very chapter*. (as in omitting τῆς before θαλ—δένδρου—ἀνατολῶν—καὶ—the omission of καὶ ἥκ. τ. ἀ. τ. ἐσφ—ὄχλον πολὺν καὶ—ἐπὶ—τοῦ θ—the omission of καὶ ἡ σ—μή.) Why should A impugn the text in the present instance? This reading is singled out as suspicious, though resting on as solid a basis as the other ten which have escaped his brackets.—But, not content with this, Mr. T. seems resolved, by his next words, to get rid of his own emendation of 1844: "Even if genuine," says he, "little could be rested on the insertion." His reason is, that θλῖψις would take the article in Greek, where we should not insert it in English. What has this to do with the question here, which is, Would *this phrase* be fairly Englished by "great tribulation?" Is there no meaning, no certainty, in the insertion or omission of the article? I answer, without the smallest hesitation, that the drift of the editor's note is clearly erroneous. That there are cases where θ, and all words capable of an abstract sense, take the article in Greek, where the corresponding English terms do not, is certain. Compare Rom. v. 3, xii. 12, where ἡ θ. and τῇ θ. mean, I suppose, the abstract thing, tribulation, and therefore the article is necessary. The only other case where the article is or can be used with θ. is when there is a reference to some tribulation, (or tribulations,) rendered specific by previous mention, or otherwise. If neither be the case, the word is invariably anarthrous, as in Matt. xiii. 21; xxiv. 9, 21. Mark iv. 17; xiii. 9. John xv. 33. Acts vii. 11; xiv. 22; xx. 23. Rom. ii. 9; viii. 35, &c. But in Matt. xxiv. 29, θ. necessarily becomes a definite object—that particular tribulation which had been named previously, as also Mark xiii. 24. In John xvi., the joy and the sorrow are special, and therefore demand the article; and so the reader may pursue the point throughout Scripture. I admit, therefore, that ἡ θλῖψις may, and in some cases does, mean "tribulation," because the term is used abstractedly in its full extent. But I affirm that ἡ μεγάλη θλῖψις, or ἡ θ. ἡ μ., does not, and cannot, mean any thing but "*the* great tribulation;"

* The evidence of the latter question is this. 1. *Externally*, the present tense is given by the Alex. and Vat. MSS. (i.e. A and B) and by fifteen MSS. in cursive characters, and by several versions. Lachmann and Tischendorf adopt it. On the other hand, Griesbach, Scholz and Knapp prefer the future following eighteen MSS. in cursive characters, and two Latin MSS. C has not the passage. 2 *Internally*, I apprehend that the harmony of the passage is decidedly in favour of the future tense.

* Perhaps no work pretending to erudition has more flagrantly confounded everything connected with the Greek tenses than the "Horae Apocalypticae." See, for instance, what is remarked on τοὺς δεδεμένους in Rev. ix. 14, and on προσεκύνησαν in xx. 4.

because the adjunct μεγάλη of necessity destroys the abstractness of the thought, and no other case of the employment of the article is admissible, save that of a certain defined tribulation—in this instance, "*the* GREAT *tribulation*."

Want of space compels me to pass over other passages, (particularly in chap. ii. xi. xv. and xxi.) which one should otherwise have felt it well to notice, but I cannot forbear saying a word on the note to chap. xx. 4. Mr. T. says: "The parallel to this sentence in Greek construction is found in Rev. i. 7. In each case, there is a *general statement*, followed by καὶ οἵτινες; not as some class *added* to the general statement, but as expressing some who, while included in the general term, are brought into an *especial* prominence." Now, all that could be legitimately gathered from Rev. i. 7 is, that καὶ οἵτινες *does not necessarily* exclude the persons spoken of from a previous *general* statement. The *grammar* of the sentence shows no more than this; so that, in order to determine whether they are or are not included, we are forced to look elsewhere. The idea I do not combat, that first we have the account of the blessed portion of saints in the millennial reign, but, besides, the prophet sees a particular class of saints, answering to those described in Rev. vi. 9, and another answering to those whom he had seen on the sea of glass, in chap. xv. 2. First, then, there is, if you will, the general statement: "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." This, if there be a parallelism in Rev. i. 7, answers to "every eye shall see him;"—both being general descriptions, the one of blessedness, and the other of judgment, at the Lord's coming in glory. But here the parallelism drops; for in Rev. i. 7, we have but *one* class of persons following the general statement, whereas in Rev. xx. 4 we have *two*. And here I have to complain of a palpable error on Mr. T.'s part; he leaves entirely out the really general statement of Rev. xx. 4, and commences with the first of the two clauses that follow, viz. "The souls of those that were beheaded".... Could any thing more pervert the passage? Let the reader turn to his Bible, and he will see that this is *not* the general term, but one of the two classes subsequently noticed: (1) "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, &c.; (2) and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God; and (3) which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image," &c.... "and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Now, while it is easy to see the point at which the editor aims, and it is vain for him to say in the face of this note, and more than this note, that he "has avoided any thing which might relate to the *interpretation* of the Revelation," is it not striking that the misconception tends only to make plainer the true scope of the passage? Still, I quite allow that in the fourth verse of chap. xx. Mr. T. has improved upon the ordinary version. From the latter, it might be supposed that the clause, "and which had not worshipped the beast," &c., was a mere added description of "those that were beheaded," &c., but both versions of Mr. T. are preferable. In 1844, it was, "and such as had not worshipped;" and in 1848, it is, "and those who had not worshipped;" but from either the reader gathers, that, though the portion of all the glorified saints is stated in the persons sitting upon thrones and judging, the next two clauses contemplate two classes, each in especial prominence, as having passed through especial trials. Not that these two classes embrace all who share in the thousand years' reign, any more than the one especial class, "those who pierced him," in Rev. i. 7, embraces all who are to see the Lord; so that the parallelism referred to, if properly stated, entirely defeats the object which is behind this note.

That Mr. T. is fitted in many respects to be a successful, as he is a laborious and enthusiastic collator of MSS. is well known; but a sound, dispassionate judgment as to different readings requires other and higher qualifications. An old uncial MS. or two ought not to overwhelm other evidence, as it has done in Mr. T.'s system of recension. What is worse, this wrong bias grows upon him. He follows the steps of Lachmann far more closely now than he did four years ago, more I may add practically than he would allow in theory. What the two books I have noticed warrant us in expecting from a work of such gravity as a new edition of the Greek Testament carried out on the same principles, Christians, qualified to form an opinion, must judge for themselves. Of these books I could not in honesty speak otherwise than I have done.—ED.

"THE COMING OF THE LORD."

LOOK, ye saints, the prospect's cheering,
  See where yonder breaks the day,
Christ the Lord, Himself appearing—
  Come to call His saints away!
Hear—Oh hear His gladdening voice—
  "Comes the Lord," rejoice! rejoice!

Once on earth, despised, rejected,
  Seeks He *now* His longing Bride;
In glory comes the Long Expected,
  With His angels glorified.
Waiting souls! no more delay,
  "Comes the Lord,"—away! away!

Triumphant Lord!—Make haste to meet Him!
  Welcome now our coming King!
Now in gladness rise to greet Him—
  Now His endless praises sing!
Hear—Oh hear His gladdening voice—
  "Comes the Lord,"—rejoice! rejoice!

THOMAS MILLS.

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THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL, XII. 23.

No. 12.] GUERNSEY, MONDAY, MARCH 19, 1849. [Vol. I.

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XIX. 11-21.

In the marriage of the Lamb, we see what Christ is to the Church; in the judgment of the beast, what Christ is as a Judge. The violence which rises against the power of the Lamb is the object of judgment. Before this, there must be the glory of Jesus with the Church, and the marriage of the Lamb.

"All was created by Him and for Him." (Col. i. 16.) Every thing was created for His glory, but men of the world do not think of this. Every knee shall bow before Him; He is the centre of all the thoughts, and of the justice of God. Jesus made Himself of no reputation—Jesus shall be glorified. Man makes use of the humiliation of Jesus in order to despise Him; but God shall glorify Him even there where He made Himself of no reputation, and in that very form which He took, and He shall glorify Him through those for whom He did thus make Himself of no reputation.

To philosophy, God is only a means man uses to extol himself; but God has been pleased to bring low the wisdom and the intelligence of man by saving, through the foolishness of preaching, all those who believe. There where the Son of man has been humbled, He shall be glorified; and man must bow the knee before the second Adam. God will have the Lord Jesus as the Lord of glory; and He will be glorified in Jesus, in rendering men submissive to Jesus as Lord. Jesus must be recognised such as God has presented Him, according to the foolishness of preaching, or recognise Him without hope of mercy when His glory shall be manifested. If one will not have a Saviour, one must have a Judge. There is no one that will not have to bow the knee to Jesus. If one does not do it now, it is ingratitude and baseness.

The second thought of God in His counsels, is the Church. As He associated Eve with Adam, so He has associated the Church with Christ. We have spoken of the marriage of the Lamb, and of the Church risen and glorified, united to Christ risen and glorified. *It is a thing quite different from the good will of God towards* His creatures. It is an intimate relationship between the children and the Father, between the bride and the Bridegroom. The Church is reckoned as being not of the world, but of heaven. Her origin is from above. Besides this, there are the relations of God with the world, the government of God. Man will not have Christ to govern the world; he wishes to govern it himself, and exclude God out of it. This is the Heir; (not the Bridegroom;) come, let us kill Him, and let us seize on his inheritance. (Matt. xxi. 38.)

As long as it is the accepted time, the time of salvation, man gives himself up to iniquity without restraint. He will have his own way, in spite of God, and be like God. In this sense, every man has the spirit of Anti-Christ, whom the Holy Spirit characterises by these words: "And the King shall do according to his will." (Dan. xi. 36.) This cannot last. Man must at last be judged of Him whom he has rejected. Is heaven to govern the earth? Yes; but man says: It is I who shall govern the world, and not God.

On four different occasions, God has spoken solemnly, or will, with man. God has spoken with man for the first time in the garden of Eden. All relation with God had already ceased then, for man never spoke with God that he was not already condemned before God had spoken to him. The second time was on Mount Sinai. Israel, dismayed, said, "Let not God speak with us," (Exod. xx. 19,) for the glory of God had inspired terror in the heart of man. The third time was in Jesus, God manifested in the flesh. Man would not have God in love—hence, it became necessary to be either a Christian or an Anti-Christian. The fourth time, is when Jesus will come again to execute the judgment on all those who will not bow to Him as Lord. Man will be found either for Him or against Him. All those who have not received the love of the truth will be condemned.

Christ and the Church appear in glory, and only in judgment. Heaven opens for their glorious manifestation.* Man being a sinner, heaven cannot open itself to him. When Jesus was on the earth, heaven opened itself; Jesus was recognised as Son of God, and the Holy Ghost came down upon Him. Through the Holy Spirit, Stephen sees heaven open. (Acts vii. 55.) But the case is reversed. He looks into heaven, and finds his portion there with Jesus, being, as He was, rejected from the earth, but identified with the glory of God. This also is the position of the whole Church. At the end, heaven will be opened to manifest the Son of man, and, when it opens thus, it is that the Lord Jesus should come Himself and execute judgment on earth. It is only when the evil forces God to notice it, that God smites it: until iniquity has come to the full (Gen. xv. 16) God has long patience.

The last beast, the Roman empire revived, comes up out of the bottomless pit and goes to perdition. This is what we have brought before us. Men's passions will be inspired and excited by Satan, "whose coming," we read, "is after the working of Satan." (2 Thess. ii. 9.) Judas is an example of this. We do not only see in him covetousness, nor the temptation of Satan presented to covetousness; but Satan taking possession of the heart, and hardening all the natural affections of a disciple towards Jesus. At that time also, Satan shall harden the hearts of those of whom he shall have taken possession, even against the manifestation of all the glory of Jesus. Some natural feelings are found remaining, until Satan has taken possession of the heart; but after that, man is capable of doing any thing. Thus the chief priests would have killed Lazarus, (John xii. 10,) because Jesus had raised him to life again, and because of this many of the Jews believed in Jesus, and left them; and they determined to put Jesus to death, because He had raised Lazarus from the dead. (John xi. 47-57.)

The man of the earth lifts his head even up to heaven. Like Adam, he wishes to be as God himself: he wishes to be so under the character of Christ, and he is Anti-Christ. He wants to possess *the earth, and to make war with heaven.* (Is. xiv. 13-14.) Endowed with all the power of Satan, all man's faculties in exercise, inspired with Satan's power, he assumes power over all, and would seat himself at Jerusalem as the king of all the earth, and extol himself like unto the Most High. It is then that the Son of man, who has humbled Himself, and whom God has exalted, shall come down from heaven, and the man of the earth, who has exalted himself, shall be abased. The question is now, and this is all the question, Whether the man of the earth is to prevail over the Man of heaven. The last beast, having seized upon the earth and being followed by the kings of the earth, makes war with Christ. We must know whether God will be the strongest, not

* "Now the heaven is opened: it is not John caught up there; it is not a sign there; it is not the temple opened to him there; but heaven is opened, and one comes forth.* Heaven opened for the Holy Ghost to descend on Jesus here. It opened for the angels of God to ascend and descend on the Son of man. It opened for the Church (to wit, in Stephen closing that period and scene) to be received into heaven, and for the unity of the body and its heavenly place to be revealed to, and preached by, Paul. It now was opened, that the King of kings and Lord of lords Himself should come forth, thence to act on the earth—to judge and make war in righteousness. It was now the time that power was to be applied to righteousness† in the earth. He came in the manifestation of faithfulness and truth—He came with scrutinizing and purging judgment—He came in the assemblage of many royalties, and in the secret of His own power, which none knew but Himself. His armies were in fine linen, clean and white—heavenly righteousness and purity—the priests of God. He came with divine vengeance—His garment was dipped in blood; and in that title of the manifestation of the power of God which was from creation downwards, 'the Word of God.' Thus He had created, thus revealed, thus judges. The armies in heaven followed. None were in this conflict with Him on the earth—His own arm brought salvation: He smites, rules, and treads the winepress of God's wrath. The power and title in which He is now publicly manifested is 'King of kings and Lord of lords:' this recals to xvii. 14.—*Same author.*

* "I have long felt, and it is clear from this passage, that the Church is actually with Christ in heavenly places before this; for they come forth with Him.

† "'Judgment shall return to righteousness, and all the upright in heart shall follow it.'" —Ps. xciv. 15.

only in the conscience, but in the world, and in glory. Jerusalem is already becoming the centre of man's thoughts in the earth, because it is there the nations are to be gathered for judgment. (Zech. xii. 1-3.) The nations appear to be beginning to burden themselves with Jerusalem. They do so without acknowledging the rights of Christ, who is alone the true King of Jerusalem; but God shall make good the claims of Christ. The nations are labouring in the fire for very vanity, (Is. l. 11,) in order that He that has been despised may be glorified.

Verses 12, 13. Jesus appears. He has His essential glory, a name known to Him alone. All He does is the manifestation of what God has revealed. He will be the Word of God in judgment, and the executor of the revelation of God against sin. Now, the Word is judging morally; then, it will be in reality.

The white horse is a sign of victory. The sharp sword is already seen. (Rev. i. 16.)

Verse 15 is in allusion to Psalm ii. 8, 9.: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." This is what Jesus shall execute at His glorious apparition. To break the nations with a rod of iron, is quite another thing than the Gospel. He has the nations, not as His *Bride*, but as His inheritance. The little stone (Dan. ii. 34, 35) becomes a great mountain, filling the whole earth. The Church (Rev. ii. 26, 27) is made a partaker with Him in His power over the nations. Jesus has received power of His Father, not merely to save the Church, but also to break the nations, and the Church shall be with Jesus. Jesus has not yet asked for the inheritance: but is praying that His own may be kept. He is the Sovereign High Priest, not of the world, but of the Church. We have a Great High Priest. (Heb. iv. 14, 15: viii. 1.) The rebellious Jews shall be judged. The judgment of the world by Jesus—such is the use of the rod of iron which He wields.

It is important to see the distinction between the inheritance of the nation, and the position of the Church. In Isaiah lxiii. 1-6, Christ is revealed to us treading alone the winepress of His wrath, and the blood (Rev. xiv. 18-20) came out even unto the horse bridles. It is thus that this awful judgment of God is depicted unto us.

Verse 16 informs us that Jesus does not take His title of *King of kings* before the kingdoms of the world, on the sound of the seventh trumpet being heard, become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ. When political attention is attracted to Jerusalem, when things are preparing rapidly for the judgment of Christ in the earth, when this judgment is going to be executed, it is just then that the nations reject Christ and harden themselves against Him.

Jesus shall appear as the Faithful, the True, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, being already the Bridegroom of the Church glorified.

It is after this that the judgment of the beast will take place. This beast* is the wicked one announced to the Thessalonians, the Anti-Christ of Daniel. The false prophet is here found identified with the second beast. The distinction between the Church glorified and the world judged, is very evident in the chapter before us. Anti-Christ extols himself, and Christ comes only to judge him. The things which God will separate in judgment are already separated in His mind, and they are as much so now as when they will be seen, the one in the lake of fire and the other in heaven. The judgment shall merely manifest this to the world.†—(*To be continued.*)

* I leave this in the text as it is, but I have made some researches in the Word which make me hesitate a little as to this phrase, as regards the special relationships of the two beasts in the Revelation xiii., and their connection with other passages. However that may be, the two beasts perish together, and the second beast supports the first. What I am doubtful of is, whether some passages which, in general, are applied to the first beast, would not rather apply to the second.

† "The ten kings were specially marked in their war against the Lamb, and they did take a lead in it; but the expression here is more general. The beast is found here, and the kings *of the earth*. Those who ruled the earth were generally found refusing to submit to this royal Conqueror—to the Lord. The beast is first and prominent; then the kings of the earth withal and their armies. It was the general character of the state of the earth then. The beast and the false prophet are *taken* and put in the lake of fire. The prophet, by his characteristics, is identified with the second two-horned beast which arose out of the earth, which has lost its secular power, but not its character as counsellor of mischief in the latter day. The remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse—it 'proceeded out of his mouth.' For, though it was the actual execution of judgment, and no longer merely the sword of the Spirit, but of the Lord, in active imperial judgment of the quick, it was according to the Word. It was the judgment of the Word which proceeded out of his mouth—they died by that. The proper application of this is to those who were against Him, as coming from heaven to judge those who were directly under the influence and power of the apostasy. Still, the *kings of the earth* is wider than the *ten kings*, and left general: I doubt, however, whether it includes Gog, whose aim is against the land rather than the Lamb, or even the Prince of princes. With Gog, it is the gratification of covetousness—the lust of possessing. He goes against the land of unwalled villages, and perishes in the mountains of Israel, after Israel is brought back and dwelling in peace."—*Same author.*

SIGNS,
AND WAITING FOR THE SON FROM HEAVEN.

In the calculations of men, events unfold themselves as the effects of causes which are known to be operating. But, while this has its truth, to faith it is God who, in His supremacy, holds a seal in His hand, to stamp each day with its character or sign.

This gives the soul a fresh interest in the passing moments. Some of them may be more impressively stamped than others, but all are in progress, and each hour is contributing to the unfolding of the coming era. Like the seasons of the year, or the advances of day and night. Some moments in such progresses may be more strongly marked than others. But all are in advance. Every stage of Israel's journey through the desert was bringing them nearer to Canaan, though some stages were tame and ordinary, while others were full of incident. And so, all the present age is accomplishing the advance of the promised kingdom, though some periods of it have greater importance than others.

These "signs of the times," or sealings of God's hand upon the passing hour, it is the duty of faith to discern. Because they are always according to the premonitions of Scripture. Indeed, current events are only "signs," as they are according to, or in fulfilment of, such previous notices.

The words of the prophets made the doings of Jesus, in the days of His flesh, the signs of those days. (Matt. xii. 22, 23.) And have we not words in the New Testament which, in like manner, make all around us at this moment, or in every century of the dispensation, significant? Have not words, which we find there, abundantly forecast the characters of such dispensation, and given beforehand the forms of those corruptions that were to work in Christendom? They have told us what now our eyes have seen. They told us of the field of wheat and tares—of the mustard seed which became a lodging place for the fowl of the air—of "the unmerciful servant," or of the Gentile not "continuing in God's goodness"—of the great house, with its vessels unto honour and dishonour, and of other like things. They told us of "the latter times," and of "the last days," and they still tell the deadly character which that hour is to bear that is to usher forth the man of sin, and ripen iniquity for the brightness and the power of the day of the Lord.

All this is so. And let me ask, if every hour be, after this manner, bearing its character, or wearing its sign, what mark are we, individually, helping to put upon this our day? Is the purpose and way of the Lord ripening into blessedness, at all reflected in us? or, are we, in any measure, aiding to unfold that form of evil which is to bring down the judgment? If the times were to be known and described according to *our* way, what character would they bear; what sign would distinguish them?

These are inquiries for the conscience of each of us. We cannot be neuter in this matter. We cannot be idle in this market place. It may be but in comparative feebleness, but still, each of us, within the range of the action of Christendom, is either helping to disclose God's way, or to ripen the vine of the earth for the winepress of wrath.

The Lord tells us that the sign on which our *faith* must rest is that of a *humbled* Christ, such a sign as that of Jonah the prophet. Our faith deals with such a sign, because our need as sinners casts us on a Saviour, or a *humbled* Christ. But *hope* may feed on a thousand signs. Our expectations are nourished by a sight of the operations of the divine hand displaying every hour the ripening of the divine counsels and promises, in spite of the world, and in the very face of increasing human energies.

These signs may be watched, but watched by the saint *already in the place and attitude assigned him by the Spirit.* They are not to determine what is his place, but they may exercise him in it. His place and attitude is beforehand and independently determined for him—waiting for the Son of God from heaven.

This posture the Thessalonian saints assumed on their believing the Gospel. (1 Thess. i. 9, 10.) The apostle seems afterwards to strengthen them in that posture, by telling them that from it they

were to be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. iv. 17.) And again afterwards, he seems to guard them against being disturbed in that attitude, against being tempted to give it up, by further telling them, that that place of *expectation* should be exchanged for the place of *meeting*, ere the *day of the Lord fell in its terrors on the world and the wicked.* (2 Thess. ii. 1.) And still further. This very posture of waiting for the Son from heaven had induced a certain evil. The Thessalonian saints were neglecting present handiworks. The apostle does not in any wise seek to change their posture, but admonishes them to hold it in company with diligence and watchfulness, that, while their eye was gazing, their hand might be working. (2 Thess. iii.)

Other New Testament Scriptures seem also to assume the fact, that faith had given all the saints this same attitude of soul; or, that the things taught them were fitted to do so. (See 1 Cor. i. 7; xv. 23. Phil. iii. 20. Tit. ii. 13. Heb. ix. 28.)

Admonitions and encouragements of the like tendency, that is, to strengthen us in this place and posture of heart, the Lord Himself seems to me to give, just at the bright and blessed close of the volume.

"I come quickly" is announced by Him three times in the twenty-second of Revelation—words directly suited to keep the heart, that listens to them believingly, in the attitude of which I am speaking. But different words of warning and encouragement accompany this voice.

"Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." (Verse 7.) This warns us, that while we are waiting for Him, we must do so with watchful, obedient, observant minds, heedful of His words.

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every one according as his work shall be." (Verse 12.) This encourages to diligence, telling us, that by the occupation of our talents now during His absence, on the promised and expected return He will have honours to impart to us.

"Surely, I come quickly," is again the word. (Verse 20.) This is a simple promise. It is neither a warning nor an encouragement. Nothing accompanies the announcement, as in the other cases. It is, as it were, simply a promise to bring *Himself* with Him on his coming again. But it is the highest thing, the dearest thing. The heart may be silent before a warning and before an encouragement. Such words may get their audience in secret from the conscience. But this promise of the simple personal return of Christ gets its answer from the saints. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Thus the Lord, after this various and beautiful manner, does the business of the Spirit in the apostles. His own voice, in these different and striking announcements, encourages the saints to maintain the attitude of waiting for Him.

Great things are a doing. The Church, the Jew, and the Gentile, are all in characteristic activity, each full of preparation and expectancy. *But faith waits for that which comes not with such things.* The rapture of the saints is part of a mystery, a part of "the hidden wisdom." The coming of the Son of God from heaven is a fact, as I judge, apart altogether from the history or the condition of the world around.

J. G. B.

REMARKS ON THE CHARACTER OF BABYLON,

AS DESCRIBED IN REVELATION XVII. XVIII.; ALSO OF THE BEAST, CHAPTER XIII.*

THE character of Babylon is that of drawing the affections away from Christ; and the great whore is in contrast with the bride, the Lamb's wife. Compare these Scriptures:

Rev. xvii. 1.—"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters."	Rev. xxi. 9.—"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."

Corrupt affection is in contrast with pure love for a bleeding Saviour—the Lamb that was slain—Christ our Sacrifice.

Blasphemy is not written on the woman: it is the beast, that carries the great whore, that is full of names of blasphemy; but her end is answered if the love of Christ is rejected, and if pleasure, riches and excitement, are found in her. In this there are three parties, the kings, the merchants, and all the nations, each class being acted on according to their circumstances. The king gets his delights; the merchant gets his riches; and the nations are excited and made drunken with the wine of the abomination. To effect all this, the proper condition of the Church is all set aside, as suffering and bearing Christ's cross, and, in place of Christ in His glory being the object of hope, and He the object of love as the Lamb who died for us—in place of this—glory is assumed now, and all the world is attracted by it.

In Babylon are gold and precious stones, which are emblematic (spuriously) of the glory of the new Jerusalem; but Babylon wants to have a millennium in the flesh now, before the time. The Church's portion is to have the glory and honour of the nations brought into it, and this Babylon claims in the flesh. Babylon rejoices in earthly prosperity, saying, I shall see no sorrow; but Jesus told His disciples that they should sorrow until He saw them again: in the time of the Church's sorrow, Babylon says, I shall see no sorrow.

In Luke xviii., Christ compares God's elect to an afflicted widow; and that they were to be delivered from their affliction when the Lord came; but Babylon says, I am no widow. She is married in the earth, not Christ in heaven.

The voice from heaven says, Come out of her, my people.

This contrast between the whore, which is great Babylon, that great city, and the bride, the Lamb's wife, which is that great city,* the holy Jerusalem, is also seen between the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, (1 Tim. iii. 15,) and the great house, (2 Tim. ii.) when they said the resurrection is passed already; then the sorrows of the cross were over, the suffering of the Church had ended, and the house got great: but vessels in it were unclean, and a man should purge himself from them, that he himself might be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

The professing Church, loving the world and seeking a portion in it, is in all this opposed to the bride, the Lamb's wife, as the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. May our affections be pure for Christ!

It is also seen that it is not the bride, the Lamb's wife, that is national, but the great whore. The kings of the earth, the merchants, and all the nations, are found connected with her. Instead of kings being the nursing fathers of the Church, they are delighting in Babylon's delicacies.

Babylon, the great whore, (as opposed to the new Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife,) is judged before the Lord's coming to judgment. The ten horns are the agents of the judgment of the whore, and then they give their power to the beast, who blasphemes, and after whom the world wonders, worshipping him and the dragon who gave him power; and then the Lord comes in judgment. The beast first carries the woman, who reigns over the kings of the earth; then the woman is judged, and the beast himself rules in blasphemy. But in all this Christ is quite left out: the glory of the woman is apart from the glory of the man.

But from this, by which the world is deluded, the saints are kept by the power of God.—How very sweet is the expression, "the bride, the Lamb's wife," as characterising those who are in contrast with the people who received not the love of the truth. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha. Such are they who wonder after the beast; but God has delivered us from this wonder, which is the witness that a *lie* is believed.

All the triumph of the beast on the earth is the result of the dragon being beaten in heaven and cast into the earth, as an important part of his defeat, while the man child is caught up to the throne of God; and all the power of the beast and the false prophet are but the witness of the last writhings of that old serpent, according to the righteous threat that the seed of the woman should bruise his head. In Rev. xii., there are the woman, the seed of the woman, and that old serpent the devil. The dragon tries to devour; but the man child is caught up to the throne of God. He accuses the brethren; but they overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. The brethren have learned how precious the Lamb is to them—worthy He is of the love of our hearts.

* Subjects at a meeting in George Town, Demerara. January, 1843.

* All the critical editors omit τὴν μεγάλην on the authority of the best MSS. and the most ancient versions. According to the right text, it would be, "shewed me that holy city Jerusalem."—ED.

The woman in chap. xvii. draws the *heart* from the *love* of Christ; and the beast in chap. xiii. blinds the *understanding* to the *power* of Christ. First, there is absence of love to Him; then there is *belief in a lie*. But the saints know Him in His love as the Lamb, and in His power as the victorious man child. All the world says, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? But there has been a war in heaven, in which he who gave him his power was beaten; for the beast gets his power from the defeated dragon. That which is the occasion of the power of the beast gives joy in heaven: "Rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.." May this be our joy!

May the Word of God be very precious to us, in reverence and godly fear!

THE WAY OF SAFETY, AND GODLY CONDUCT FOR THE FAITHFUL,

IN REFERENCE TO THE LAST DAYS.*

(Luke xxi. 34-36. Acts xx. 29-32. 2 Tim. iii.; iv. 1-5.)

In these Scriptures, the way of safety and of godly conduct for the faithful is connected with individual character and nearness to God.

When God reproves, we should accept the reproof as from God; we should bring our doings to the light, and that is, the Word of God. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light." There is danger of trying to find excuse for what we suspect to be wrong, and instead of searching the Word of God to find out the evil, searching it to defend the evil, and thus darkening the light.

In Luke xxi., when there is distress of nations, and men's hearts failing them with fear, then the disciples of Jesus should lift up their heads; and, therefore, they are warned against having their hearts overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life.

1. *Surfeiting.* The heart, when filled with engagement in circumstances, has no relish or appetite for the things of the Lord.

2. *Drunkenness.* The excitement of circumstances in the world hinders sober enjoyment of heart before God. In Isaiah xxviii. 1-7, the drunkards of Ephraim are marked as seeking refreshment in what passes away; and the effect of drunkenness is marked in error of judgment.

3. *Cares of this life.* Distressing anxiety about circumstances, in not casting our care on the Lord, so occupies the heart, that the things of God are not thought of. In reference to these things, the Lord says to His disciples: "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always:" these are the means by which we take heed to ourselves. We should watch against those evil things, and we should watch our own hearts. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. iv. 23.) We should watch in communion with God, and in the light of God's truth.

In "praying always," there is the breathing forth of dependance on God as we go on our way, not looking to channels or looking to circumstances, but in conscious dependance looking to God.

As to the expression, "standing before the Son of man," the position of standing is not like that of a soldier lying down and weltering in his blood. When the apostle speaks of our conflict, in Ephesians vi., he says, "that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand." In the day of the Son of man, while some will hide themselves in the rocks, the faithful will stand in quiet peace.

In Acts xx., the apostle warns of the danger the brethren are in. Our danger may be from *things* acting on the heart, as in the warning in Luke xxi., or it may be from *people*, as here.

1. There are "grievous wolves."
2. There are "men speaking perverse things."

In the one, the character is fierce, "not sparing the flock." In the other, the character is attractive, "drawing away disciples after them." The brethren are in danger from those who would act on their fears, terrifying them with threats; they are also in danger from those who would act on their feelings, to draw them after themselves. Here, there is double danger: first, the men; secondly, the perverse things they speak: but there is deliverance from both in God and in the word of His grace.

When there is danger from bad men, the apostle does not commend the brethren to any man, but to God and to the word of His grace. Our blessing lies in nothing short of this. The men speak perverse things; but we are commended to God and to the word of His grace; and in this we will be followers of God and not of man. Many are following men; but if the disciples of Jesus should be called on at any time to tell what they are, they should say: "We are Christians," and not name any individual upon earth, as being his followers: the weak brethren need to be instructed in this, that in ignorance they should not dishonour their Lord. Some may call themselves after a person who desires that they should not do so, as when at Corinth they said, "I am of Paul;" but if some do it, let us be cautious.

In 2 Tim. iii., the perilous times of the last days are spoken of; and the persons involved in them are described in parts of their character, in the same way as the reprobate Gentiles in Rom. i. The characters of being proud, boasters, disobedient to parents, and without natural affection, are applied to both of them. The same horrible characters found among the heathen, whom God gave over to a reprobate mind, are found also in the last days among the false professors of Christianity.

Some of the grosser evils, as in the eyes of man, which are ascribed to the heathen in Rom. i., such as murder, are omitted in the description of characters in the perilous times, where there is "a form of godliness." Some other features of character are specially found among these latter, such as "despisers of those that are good," because these were found coming more in their way, as the painful witnesses against their evil. So it was with Diotrephes, desiring to have the pre-eminence, and speaking against the apostle with malicious words.

In marking the character of a disciple, the words of the Lord Jesus are: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself;" but, in the perilous times, men are "lovers of their own selves."

The apostle says: "From such turn away," for evil communications corrupt good manners. They have a form of godliness. It may be any form; but by their fruits ye shall know them; and we must turn away on individual responsibility.

We need not only to watch our hearts against evil things, but also our communications, that they be not with evil people. The apostle directs Timothy as to his positive conduct in such times. Two things are set before him: the order and connection of these it is most important to observe. The first has reference to Timothy himself; the second has reference to others. The Lord would teach us not to be like hypocrites, having the beam in our own eye while taking the mote out of our brother's eye; and so in these two directions: the first is, "Continue thou in the things thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them:" this had reference to Timothy himself. The second is, "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine:" this had reference to others. In the exercise of individual care of ourselves, we are capacitated to take care of others; and so when the apostle spoke of one overtaken in a fault, his direction was: "Ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." Consciousness of failure and weakness makes us to sympathize with a brother in his weakness, and then consciousness of strength in God gives ability to help that brother. While Paul warned Timothy, he could also say of himself: "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience."

The apostle gave further warning thus: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables." The sound doctrine which they would not endure means *wholesome doctrine;* it is humbling to oneself, but giving glory to Jesus. This cannot be endured where one's own lusts prevail, and so they heap up teachers to themselves; these teachers may gratify their taste with learning and soft language. The danger is of leaving the truth with itching ears—trying, it may be, to get a more enlarged mind.

There is another double direction given to Timothy: "Endure afflictions: do the work of an evangelist." While troubles come upon us, blessing should flow out from us. Our ministry should take its character from what God is to us, not from what man is to us. Afflictions come from man, and we should endure them;—glad tidings come from God, and we should be His Gospel ministers of them.

* "Notes" of a meeting at Peter's Hall, George Town, Demerara. July 11, 1843.

THE PREMILLENNIAL ADVENT.

(Continued from page 86.)

(3.) But these times will not last for ever. God hath not cast off his people whom he foreknew. His purposes respecting them are purposes of mercy, and he still intends to fulfil to the very letter, the covenant that he made with Abraham their father. He still intends them to be a great nation; to be at the head of all other nations; to possess all the earthly blessings which have been promised to them, and to be the centre through which these blessings shall flow to all the other nations of the earth. The order of the events by which this wonderful change in their position is to be brought about, is very exactly laid down in the prophetic writings; and as an attentive study of those writings will prove, it is somewhat as follows.

[*a*] The Jews are to be under a sentence of judicial blindness till a certain time. "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? and he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land." (Is. vi. 10, &c.)

[*b*] After all this desolation in the land of Judea, the children of Israel are to return to it. "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers." (Jer. xvi. 14, &c.) "For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it." (Jer. xxx. 3.) "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof." (Ver. 18.) "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land." (Ezek. xxxvi. 24.) On this subject, these passages are sufficiently plain.

[*c*] This restoration of the nation to their own land, however, is not to be effected all at once; a portion of them are *first* to be restored, and *after* their restoration, they are to pass through very great and terrible afflictions.

Some particulars of this terrible sifting process by which the obstinately wicked among the Jews are purged out, we have in Zechariah, the latter part of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth chapters. "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." To such extremities are the poor afflicted Jews, or, at least, that portion of them who are first restored to their own land, to be reduced.*

* Israel—that is, the ten tribes as distinct from the Jews properly so called, —will be restored in another way. Their trial and sifting will not be *in the land* like that of their brethren, but *before they reach it*. "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain (nothing but the chaff) fall upon the earth. *All the sinners* of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us." (Amos ix. 9, 10.) "As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you; and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: *And I will purge out from among you the rebels and them that transgress against me*; I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezek. xx. 33-38.)

We need scarcely remind the reader that "the Gentiles" are those who reduce them to such extremities. Gentile power, which began at the very first to be exercised in oppressing the Jews—which has ever since trodden them down and afflicted them—will then, in one great general confederacy of the nations, be employed in a resolute, determined effort to crush them, and blot out the very remembrance of them from the earth. And they will be permitted, as we have seen, so far to succeed in their plans, as to cut off two-thirds of the Jews who have returned to their land, and even so far as to environ Jerusalem, capture it, and lead half of its inhabitants, half of the remaining third, into captivity.

[*d*] It is when "the Jews," pressed by "the Gentiles," are in this extremity of distress, that the Lord comes, and the scene changes immediately. The desponding remnant of "the Jews" are delivered, and "the Gentiles" are visited with tremendous judgments from the Lord. "Then"—when two-thirds of the Jews in the land are cut off and dead—when half of the remaining third are gone into captivity, and the other half see nothing but destruction before them,—"THEN shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the East," &c. . . . . "And the Lord my God shall come and all the saints with him." (Zech. xiv. 3, &c.) "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him" (or thee.) "Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey." (Jer. xxx. 7-16.) "Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted and drunken, but not with wine; Thus saith thy Lord, the Lord and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again: but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street to them that went over." (Is. li. 21, &c.)

[*e*] It is upon "the Gentiles," therefore, that those terrible visitations of divine vengeance fall which are uniformly represented as attending the coming of the Lord. First upon those actually gathered together against the Lord at Jerusalem, and then upon the nations to which they belong. Space will not allow of quotations in proof of this; but the reader can refer to the passages quoted in Sec. 9 on this subject, and to a number of parallel passages, which he may easily find by consulting either a reference Bible, or a Concordance.

[*f*] We must not suppose, however, that the whole of the Gentiles, literally, are cut off by these judgments. One plain passage will be sufficient to shew the contrary. "It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send *those that escape of them* unto the nations to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles." (Is. lxvi. 18, 19.) Thus we have clearly a remnant spared from the general destruction, and employed after these judgments in two important enterprises. 1. "They declare God's glory among the Gentiles." 2. "They shall bring all your brethren (that portion of Israel which had not been restored to their own land before the coming of the Lord) for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord." (Is. lxvi. 20.)

[*g*] When all the children of Israel are thus restored to their own land, the promises of temporal blessing, which are their peculiar portion, will all be fulfilled to them. The Lord shall make them the head indeed and not the tail; they shall be above only, and they shall not be beneath. Read the sixtieth of Isaiah in connection with the two last verses of the fifty-ninth, and you will find that when the Redeemer has come to Zion, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob, all these promises will be

accomplished. "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.... Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.... The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.... And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee.... The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despise thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel," &c. Let the whole chapter be read, as also the sixty-first, sixty-second, sixty-sixth, from verse 17 to the end, and these, with a multitude of other passages, will abundantly shew that, after the Lord's return, the remnant of the Jews will be placed at the head of the nations, and prosper as no nation ever prospered besides, and that the remnant of the Gentiles and their posterity will submit to God's appointment in this respect, and pour riches and honours on the once despised, and desolate, and afflicted Jews. This is what is presented to us in various aspects in almost every passage in the Old Testament which refers to the millennial state.

(4.) But where is "the Church" during this blissful period? Have we not lost sight of that? No, dear reader, no. We were wishful to present you with as full an exhibition as possible of God's purpose respecting "the Jews" and "the Gentiles," for they will be the remnants of these two great branches of society who will constitute the population of the earth during the millennium. But it is really with the destiny of "the Church" that we have most to do. "The Church" is something altogether distinct from both Jew and Gentile. Christ came to the Jews, His own people, but His own received him not. They, though at that time under Gentile power, carried their hatred to Jesus so far as to resolve upon his death. They procured the assistance of a Gentile ruler and Gentile soldiers in the perpetration of this dreadful deed. Thus Jews and Gentiles united in the commission of the blackest crime that ever man committed. But this act of highest wickedness, by which the condemnation of both Jew and Gentile was sealed, was, at the same time, overruled by God, so as to exhibit the richest display of His sovereign grace. Jesus, rejected by the earth, crucified by both Jew and Gentile, was raised from the dead, and placed by His Father at the right hand of power, where He now waits till His enemies are made His footstool. As long as He sits waiting there, repentance and remission of sins are to be preached through His name in all nations. Whoever receives this message of mercy from the rejected One of earth, but the glorified One at God's right hand, instantly becomes associated with Him;—associated with Him in all the reproach and suffering which He once endured on earth;—associated with Him in all the glory that He has at present at God's right hand, and in all the glory in which He shall be revealed when He returns to earth. Yes, the Jew receives this message of mercy, and he ceases to be a Jew. The Gentile receives it, and he ceases to be a Gentile. All who receive it, whether Jew or Gentile, die to all their former liabilities, and all their formerly cherished hopes. They have no prospect of an earthly inheritance like the Jews; they have, or ought to have, no share in the earthly power which, for awhile, is lodged in Gentile hands. They are the bride of Jesus; and that world which rejected the Bridegroom may be expected to reject the bride as well. At all events, if the bride be true to her absent Lord, she is sure to dread and shun the smiles and the caresses of that world which rejected and slew her Lord. This world has no place for the true Church. Its members have no home on earth. They are but strangers and pilgrims here. But just as they share their Lord's humiliation on the earth will they share his glory when He returns. He is not represented as reigning over them; they are set forth by the pen of prophecy as reigning WITH HIM. Truly, that shall be first which is last, and that shall be last which is first. The Gentile is now above the Jew, and treads him down. But the Jew shall be superior to the Gentile in the millennial state. The Church is at present inferior both to Jews and Gentiles in respect to earthly things; for it has no place on earth at all. Its only calling on the earth is to be counted like sheep for the slaughter all the day long. But in the state which succeeds the present, as far as the Jew will be above the Gentile, so far, and farther, will the Church be above them both. Before the judgments are inflicted on the guilty nations of the earth—before one drop from that cup which is filled with the wine of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God descends—the Church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 15.) It is after this event—after the saints have thus met their long-expected Lord, and the marriage of the Lamb has taken place—it is after this that the saints are united with Jesus in His first act of kingly power, when He comes *with all His saints* to deliver Israel, and scatter and destroy their adversaries. And after this, when Satan is bound—when creation, released from the bondage of corruption, ceases from its long-continued groans—when the remnant of Jews and Gentiles, happy in the enjoyment of all the blessings that earth can furnish, submit to the peaceful sway of Jesus—it is then that the saints live and reign with Christ a thousand years. Jews and Gentiles on the earth, under the reign of Christ; the Church, *not under his reign*, but REIGNING WITH HIM AS A MONARCH'S BRIDE, IS PARTNER OF HIS THRONE.

Let us briefly review the subject. Earthly blessing and prosperity were promised to "the Jews." On account of their wickedness, we see them at present under a sentence of judicial blindness, and enduring innumerable hardships, privations, and indignities. They are to be restored; not all at once, but partially at first. In the course of this partial restoration, they are to endure tremendous afflictions, until there is but a very small remnant left. That remnant is to be delivered by the coming of the Lord, and they and their offspring are to inherit all the earthly blessedness promised to Israel from the first. "The Gentiles" became such* when God gave them up to folly, and called Israel out from among the nations. They received power at God's hands, when that power was withdrawn from Israel. They have always used it in persecuting and oppressing Israel, and will do so to the end. It is by a confederacy of the Gentiles that the Jews are to endure their last tremendous affliction. The coming of the Lord, which delivers Israel, discomfits and scatters the Gentiles, and a remnant of them only survive. That remnant and their posterity minister to the Jews, and willingly serve those whom their forefathers had so long and terribly oppressed. These two, "the Jews" and "the Gentiles," form the population of the earth during the millennium. But at present there is a third class of persons in the world. There is "the Church of God." Its members were once, all of them, either Jews or Gentiles. They are neither now. They are "the Church," the bride of Christ. The world knew *Him* not—it knows *them* not. The world rejected *Him;* it rejects *them* likewise. But when earth rejected Jesus, heaven received him; and *they* also are raised together with Christ to sit with Him in heavenly places. When He comes from heaven, they meet Him in the air, their bodies being changed and made like unto His glorious body. When they have thus welcomed each other in the air, and the marriage of the Lamb has taken place in heaven, they return together to the earth to deliver Israel, and judge the rebellious nations. The earth being purged from the curse which man's transgression brought upon it, and being inhabited by the remnant of Jews and Gentiles which survive the battle of the great day of God Almighty, "the Church" in glory with Jesus, reigns over that renewed and happy world; and though at the end of the thousand years Satan is loosed, a rebellion takes place upon the earth, and fire comes down from heaven and destroys the rebels, "the Church" in glory are far above all these troubles; their spirits cannot sin; their glorified bodies are not susceptible of pain; they are as the angels of God, being children of the resurrection; and they share their Master's glory throughout eternity!

Thus have we feebly endeavoured to trace God's threefold purpose respecting "the Jews," "the Gentiles," and His own "Church;" and have thus met the difficulty as to who they are that will form the population of the earth during the millennium. May God forgive any thing that has been written amiss, and lead us all to search the Scriptures in entire dependance on the teachings of His blessed Spirit, for His dear Son's sake! Amen. W. T.

* That is, the distinction between them as given up of God, and those called out from among them to be God's people, then commenced.

NOTICE.

APOCALYPTIC SKETCHES; OR, LECTURES ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION. Delivered in the Large Room, Exeter Hall, in 1847-48. By the Rev. John Cumming, D.D., Minister of the Scottish National Church, &c. Sixth Edition.

London: Hall & Co., &c.

THIS work, so far as it treats of prophecy, is merely an abstract of the *Horae Apocalypticae* thrown into a popular form. The author, with the addition of a few notions of his own, which are purely erroneous, has throughout followed Mr. Elliott. Indeed, we are so informed at the opening of the "Sketches:" "I tell you candidly, that I shall beg and borrow from the book of Mr. Elliott all I can."

The general idea of this system of interpretation may be given in the author's own words: "The first six seals contain the history of the temporal glory and decline of Rome Pagan, the most illustrious empire of the ancient earth. This is my strong, and, I think, demonstrable conviction. The first six trumpets, which are comprehended in the seventh seal, contain the desolation of Rome Christian by the Goths, the Saracens, and the Turks. The first six vials, which are comprehended in the seventh trumpet, embody the events that occurred subsequent to the breaking forth of the great European revolution, in 1793." (Page 37.) From this it will be perceived, that those who hold such views, regard, by far, the greater part of the book as accomplished, chiefly in the political circumstances of the world since the time of Domitian. Speaking of the vials, the author says: "The sixth, I have told you, is already poured out; its effects are now in action. Nations feel it. The seventh is ready to be poured out; or, if not already pouring out, we are upon the very verge of its being so. It trembles in the hand of the angel." (Page 423.) In a note to page 425, it is added: "What fearful evidence of the first effects of the pouring out of this vial have we, while this sheet is passing through the press, in Paris! The great earthquake of the seventh vial seems to be now shaking the earth." Hence, it will be seen that the author entirely excludes the great body of the Apocalypse from any application still future; and though he attaches a symbolical character to all the rest of the book, chapters ii. and iii. are left out of the sketch. This is the more strange, inasmuch as it is allowed, in page 35, that "the seven churches represent the one universal visible Church." But, if this be true, all the rest of the book is future, because it consists of what shall be after these things, or after that which represents the one universal visible Church. Consistency would demand a fulfilment of ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα after the history of the Church on earth closes.

My opinion, then, of Dr. Cumming's work is, that it adds not one single fresh idea that is true, even to the narrow line of interpretation (i.e. an application almost expired) which he adopts; and that, clothed in a garb which is attractive and intelligible to the most ordinary minds, it bids fair to commend, propagate, and perpetuate a host of errors which might have been forgotten in volumes more scholastic and elaborate. Though there are statements of the Gospel interspersed, generally simple and full, which I pray God to bless to doubting souls, or to those who are still children of wrath, yet is the standard of holiness which the author sets forth so loose, so little removed from the world's level; in short, so unheavenly, as to be really mischievous to Christians who are influenced by the doctrine.—ED.

"AND LET THEM BE FOR SIGNS."

LOOK up, thou child of earth,
And mark the signs
Which gleam above,—
How read those golden lines?

Behold the sun, the moon,
The stars of light,
Those glorious forms,
And learn to scan them right.

Speak, thou resplendent orb
Who rul'st the day;
And thou, bright queen,
Bright with thy borrowed ray;

And ye, unnumbered gems,
Whose vivid flames
Declare the praise
Of Him who tells your names.

Your service is, we know,
To cheer and light
This sister-frame
With beams benign or bright;

Thus sense and reason teach,
And from your rays
We learn the name
Of Him ye ceaseless praise.

But have ye nought to show
To those whose eye
Is purged to read
Your notes of minstrelsy?

Great Sun of Righteousness,
Reveal Thy rays
Whene'er I look
On Thy bright creatures' face.

'Tis night, and Thou art hid,
Hid, but not lost;
Nor hid from faith,
Nor from Thy heavenly host.

Faith's eye discerns Thy form
E'en in the night;
And on the world
The Church reflects Thy light.

Thy light! But, ah! how paled!
Yet till the day
Shall break, enough
To guide the pilgrim's way:

But, yet not always so;
For, oft concealed
By mists from earth,
She shines, but scarce revealed.

And how! how faint her aid
When she doth turn
Her face from Thine
She loves, yet seems to spurn!

How changeful too her mood;
With varying phase
And varying beam
Guiding through earth's dark maze.

Now with her well-trimmed lamp,
Pouring her light
In glorious streams,
She brightens up the night.

And now, as though her oil
Were spent and gone,
Her wick consumed,
She leaves the world forlorn.

Nay, not forlorn.—Though dark
The night, and drear,
The moon though vailed,
Bright stars do yet appear.

Ye angels of the Church,
Held by His power,
Confess His Name
In midnight's darkest hour.

Friends of the Bridegroom, rise,
Ye know His voice;
It bids you point
The Bride to heavenly joys;

And, when the night is passed,
Ye then shall shine
In heaven's expanse,
With radiance all divine.

The night is darksome now—
The sky is drear—
The moon how dim!
Few guiding stars appear.

But morn comes on apace,
And such a morn
No eye hath seen!
Fill! fill thine empty horn.

Thou, sickly moon, shine forth
Thy Lord to greet—
The Bridegroom comes;
Haste! haste! His car to meet.

The sun no more goes down,
Nor thou thy light
Again shalt hide—
Day comes—day without night.

The sun, the moon, the stars,
Their beams shall pour
Full on the gladsome earth,
Exulting in new birth;
And morn, without a cloud
One heavenly form to shroud,
Shall smile for evermore.

Oswestry. C. S.

THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING.

I.

One golden flower, the morning star of spring,*
Within its mossy bower deep sheltered lies;
One golden cloud, like feather from the wing
Of some colossal bird of paradise,
Fit dweller of the vast o'er-arching skies,
Floats swiftly by, as it might tidings bring
Of light and life returning. Yonder flies
One gilded insect; as in haste to sing,
One thrush from flowering hazel-copse we hear;
Enough for hope—yea, more, enough for faith,
One promise of the glories of heaven's year.
Storms yet may rise; but what God's promise saith
Shall come, and will not tarry. Haste, ye days,
When Christ our Sun shall shine with world-pervading rays.

II.

One flower! Look round—they open as we rove,
And that one bird has waked response afar:
One promise! Search again—abundant love
Has given abounding store. Our morning star,
Herald of brighter than Hyperion's car,
Rises in silvery dawn, dark clouds above;
Full oft foretold these future glories are;—
From Midian's heights proclaimed by him who strove
Not to declare;—to Abraham's joyful sight,
Messiah's day, in amplitude of noon,
In yet unrisen affluence of light.
It comes! it comes! We shall behold it soon;
Death cannot blind us to its beams intense,
Nor the grave hold us when *He* calls us hence.

K.

* The Star Wort, or Celandine.

ERRATA IN PRECEDING NUMBERS.

Page 4. *For* t, *read* it.
" 5. *For* Fathers, *read* Father.
" 7. *For* its, *read* the.
" 9. *For* classes of *High Priests*, *read* priests.
" 12. *To be omitted*, and especially who will have gone through the
" " *For* take care of, *read* take of. [events.
" 17. *An asterisk at* world, in the text.
" 23. Note, *for* in, *read* is.
" 24. it *omitted*.
" 27. *For* drawn, *read* draw.
" 28. *For* He, *read* ye.
" 29. *For* litterature, *read* literature.
" 37. *For* will, *read* wills.
" 40. In "The Coming of the Lord," &c., *for* that His love, *read* His love.
" 45. After Acts x., *for* St. Paul, *read* Peter.
" 46. time *omitted*.
" 49. *For* They Red Sea, *read* The, &c.
" " *For* judments, *read* judgments.
" 54. of *omitted*.
" 63. *For* alone, *read* above the heights, &c.
" 78. *For* biefly, *read* briefly.
" 80. In the first sonnet, *for* natural sight, *read* light.
" " *For* To the one point, *read* Is the, &c.
" 81. *For* ye are Christ, *read* Christ's.

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"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL xii. 23.

No. 13.] MONDAY, APRIL 2, 1849. [Vol. I.

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XIX. 11-21.

There are three characters* of the beast and of Satan's power.

1. The Roman empire in its eighth head, the chief of the last form of the beast at the time of the Gentiles.

2. This chief does his own will, and will establish his throne at Jerusalem.

3. He is the wicked one; iniquity has reached to the full.

The false prophet is the second beast in the thirteenth chapter, which had horns like the lamb and spoke like the dragon. Babylon has disappeared from the scene.

Verse 17. The supper of the great God is a very strong figure of the destruction of kings, captains, powers, horses and their riders, free men, slaves, of small and great, and of all those in short whose bodies are given to the birds of prey. The angel, standing in the sun, acts in the power and supreme authority of God, in judgment against him who stands in opposition to God. Daniel vii. 7, 8 shows to us the fourth beast, the fourth monarchy, as a blasphemous power, which God judges and totally destroys.† The description of this destruction is given to us in the Revelation.

Daniel vii. 17, 18. The saints of the Most High not only take the place of authority instead of the beast which uttered great things against God, but also that of the four beasts. In the twenty-first verse, the horn which uttered great things makes war with the saints. But if God permits the beast to overcome the saints, it is until Christ, the Ancient of days, comes, until judgment be given to the saints of the Most High, and until they obtain the kingdom. What puts an end to the authority of the beast, is the coming of the Ancient of days, and not the preaching of the gospel. This is the character of the beast and its end.

In the Revelation and in Daniel there are ten kingdoms.‡

The beast has a mortal wound, but comes out of the bottomless pit. The ten kings give their power to it, and the dragon his throne; but it goes into perdition. The kings associate themselves with it; and this satanical power, which at all times has overcome the saints, and which has been set up again, goes to perdition. It is the apostasy and antagonism of power against God. The eighth head is the beast. All its power is concentrated in the head, in the chief of the Roman empire. This is not yet manifested. Antichrist, who is the chief of the iniquity of the human heart, fills up the measure of the rebellion of the Gentiles, to whom God had entrusted power when He removed His throne from Jerusalem, at the time of the Babylonish captivity. Instead of glorifying God in His kingdom, man rejects Jesus, and in the end is found making war against Jesus.

2 Thess. ii. 1-12. In the third verse antichrist is the son of perdition. He goes to perdition. Antichrist, the wicked one, has brought the iniquity of man to its height. To have sinned against God, violated the law, and rejected Jesus, although nothing morally was wanting to the sin of man, all this was not yet the height of iniquity. The mystery of iniquity is that evil which acts in a hidden manner in the bosom of the Church, as a germ destined to grow until the revolt—a revolt which will pursue its course till it rises up openly against Christ manifested in glory. While men were slumbering, the enemy has sown the tares. The mystery of iniquity, which had already begun at the time of the apostle, ends in the revolt of Christianity, the professing Church. God does not judge what is only yet in a state of mystery. The mystery is that which is known only by its revelation, and without it it remains hidden to all human intelligence. It is the same also with the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, and with the mystery of the union of Christ and the Church. What is a mystery of iniquity is, that the Church should have been made the nest where Satan has begun and brought forth the fulness of the iniquity of man. Jude wished to write of the salvation common to them, but he could not. The evil had begun, and he urges them to contend earnestly for what they had. The evil had begun. He warns them, "for certain men have crept in among you unawares, who have turned the grace of God into lasciviousness," and who end in denying the Lord Jesus. Those were the same of whom Enoch had prophesied. It is the denial of the Saviour recognized according to the testimony given by the Holy Ghost, and to revolt against Him.* That will be the fulness of iniquity; after that the judgment.

To the Thessalonians Paul explains the progress of the mystery of iniquity, until that which is now an obstacle to it be taken away. When that is taken out of the way, then shall the wicked be revealed. He is the representative of the iniquity, and he will be manifested when that which restrains iniquity shall be taken away. His character is to be without law, to do his own will, man's will. The word rendered by *the wicked one* signifies *he that is without law*. Christ, the man of God, says: "Here I am, O God, to do thy will." (Ps. xl. 7, 8; Heb. x.) He has been as a servant in every thing. He gives the kingdom to those for whom the Father has prepared it. His only will was to do the will of God. "Not my will, but thy will." "By the obedience of one, many are made righteous." (Rom. v. 19.) He has not in anything done His own will.

What characterises this age, and what this age is boasting of, is the right of doing its own will. It is also what characterised the sin of Adam, before evil concupiscences came into the world. The character of Christ, the true elect King of God, is OBEDIENCE. "But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." (John xiv. 31.) Jesus was obedient unto death. The power of God was thus acting in Him, to render Him, notwithstanding the difficulties, so obedient as to make Himself of no reputation in the sight of God, and to do all things for God. The character of the wicked is to be without law, to do his own will. Then comes the contest between the man of God and the man of the earth, to know who is to succeed. The principle of evil is to have a will. For a long time God restrains and confines the evil. When He takes away that which now letteth, then shall the wicked, who does his own will, manifest and exalt himself even against the manifestation of the glory, as he did exalt himself in the mystery of iniquity; so now

* But see the note in page 90.

† "The character of the little horn—the last evil form of presumption against the Most High in the beast—we have in verse 8; that is, its character before God. The prophet saw this till the thrones were set: in verses 9, 10, judgment set and books opened—not now the time of testimony. Then again he beholds till the beast was slain (verse 11), because of the little horn's great words. After this the Son of man's kingdom is spoken of as given; this in connection with the Lord. The saints, whether of the heavenly places or simply saints, are introduced in the explanation (verse 21); the character of the horn, as to the saints, is given—saints, whether of the heavenlies or not—it is the horn's character. Then this is till, first, the Ancient of days *comes;* then judgment is given to the saints of the heavenlies; thirdly, the saints, heavenly or on earth, possess the kingdom. As to the actings of the little horn explained, we hrve, first, his presumption against the Most High; next, he wears out the saints of the heavenlies, and takes providence into his hand, and this is given him for a prescribed period; then the judgment sits, as in close of verses 10, 11. The twenty-fifth verse seems to me then properly the three years and a half antecedent to the commencement of the judgment or the judgment-sitting, though after that there is a process goes on to take away, to consume, and to destroy; and then the kingdom, under the whole heaven, is given to *the people of the* saints of the Most High, thus connecting the earthly people at Jerusalem, the city of the great King, with the heavenly people.

"The eighth chapter I conclude to be an entirely different and opposed enemy; and I believe the confounding the Assyrian and antichrist has much tended to obscure prophecy and embroil the mind as to the simplicity of its statements. One is the enemy of Christ as coming from heaven with the saints; the other His enemy, as associated with the accepted remnant of the Jews at Jerusalem."—*Same author.*

‡ But in Daniel we have the details of the history, and consequently three horns fall before the little one. Whereas in the Revelation this is omitted; for there we have rather what characterises the beasts than their history on the earth.

* The final apostasy, or the revolt, will at the same time go still further. It will be the denial of the Lord thus known (as outward profession)—the denial of the Messiah by the Jews, who will give themselves up to antichrist—and of God by man, who will extol himself in pride against Him. It will be the full result of the work of Satan, the corruption of the Church, or the substitution of his works to the Church, in borrowing her name, and his masterpiece in subtlety and artifice.

against the manifestation of grace, as well as when Jesus was here below. There is no independence for man; he must either be subject to God or subject to Satan. He alone is independent who can secure himself from death. God permits Satan to act with efficacy. They would do their own will. They will work signs, wonders, and miracles of falsehood. The wicked one will be the expression of the iniquity of man without restraint, who will have no law. He will put himself under the influence and bondage of Satan, who will give him all his power. It is in its full power the principle of the first Adam, but with a decided will, knowing it and wishing it, and acting after the thoughts and according to the power which Satan inspires him with. The question is, Who is to succeed, the man of God or the man of the earth who will do his own will?

Dan. xi. 36, 45 show to us that antichrist, the king, shall do according to his will. As king, he will reign over the Jews at Jerusalem. He shall exalt and magnify himself above every god; he shall speak marvellous things, and shall prosper till the indignation against the Jews be accomplished. He will be king at Jerusalem, the chief or the head of the beast; in him iniquity has come to its full. Afterwards he is destroyed. This is the end of the times of the Gentiles.

The beast and the false prophet are, before all the others, thrown into the lake of fire and of brimstone. It is (at least as to them) the judgment of the living.

The beast, as antichrist,* denies the Father and the Son. (1 John ii. 22.) He denies Jesus Christ come in the flesh, and he denies that Jesus is the Messiah. It will be through this last means that he will attach to himself the infidel Jews. He denies Christ come in the flesh, and he gives himself for the Christ.

The false prophet (verse 20) is the second beast of chap. xiii. 12. He has the form of the power of Christ, and the voice of Satan. He performs prodigies. (Compare xix. 20 with xiii. 12–14.) These passages show the identity of the second beast with the false prophet.

This character of the beast is that of an empire. In losing its character of beast it ceases to be a secular power, and becomes a power only through its doctrine. It exercises the power of the beast, and causes it to be adored. It is judged as a false prophet. We see in this false Christianity,† which, after having lost its worldly and terrestrial dominion, has retained the power of its doctrinal influence. The temporal power of popery, or rather of hierarchy, including the pope, is to a certain extent destroyed; but it subsists as false prophet, and it always is more evidently this, and with more influence.‡—(*To be continued.*)

* While associated together in their work, some question would arise in my own mind here as to the repartition of the work between the two beasts.

† I do not alter any thing here, because I do not doubt of its being true; but the relations of the second beast with the state of Palestine in the last days are not mentioned here.

‡ "Chap. xix. closes the war judgment of the Son of man, come forth as Word of God, King of kings, and Lord of lords. Chap. xx. 1-3 gives the angelic binding of Satan. Chap. xx., verse 4, begins *session* in judgment and reigning (not coming in judgment, as in 'He doth judge and make war'). And though this be interrupted by the loosing of Satan, it is then fire from God out of heaven settles it, not the coming or warring of Christ; and judgment in session is resumed only above on the great white throne, and of the dead.

"This is the real division in sense. The truth is that, though convenient for reference, any division in chapters is an evil as to the connection of the meaning, because the Bible was not written in chapters. Thus the three verses of xx. are to themselves as a subject, and yet follow on xix. They belong rather to xix. than xx.; and yet I judge xix. gives a very complete view of one subject, the double relationship of the Church with Christ, so that it makes a very good chapter. Chap. xx. 1-3 is connected historically, and not in subject. It is a separate act. Verse 4 resumes the subject of chap. xix., *i.e.* the relationship of Christ and the Church—they live and reign—but does not follow historically on verse 3; but after treating of the same period as 1-3 in another point of view down to the end of 6, the chapter pursues then the history farther on. What I have said would easily show the natural distribution into paragraphs; xix. 1-9, 10, 11-21; xx. 1-3 (4-6), 15; xxi. 1-8, 9-27; xxii. 1-7—the eighth verse beginning evidently the apostle's remarks on the visions and communications which were now closed."—*Same author.*

A SHORT AND PLAIN

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF THE APOCALYPSE,

INTENDED TO SECURE THE IGNORANT AGAINST GAINSAYERS.

THERE is a proverb in a classic author which is most just, and it is of this tenor: "*Homine imperito nihil injustius.*" In English, "No man is so unjust as the man ignorant of his subject." This is particularly true in the things of God. So much the more are things out of the reach of men, so much the more do trifling and inexperienced judgments work a wrong—a wrong to God and His goodness, and wrong to men as well, for they are thereby taught to disregard His gracious warnings given of His divine foresight to save them from an evil day. The present age is a philosophic age. Its character is a sense of sufficiency to itself without God. It has its web of words and imaginations in which its mind is entangled, or it goes no farther than the natural facts that everywhere are the object of sight. It refuses everything beyond itself. The godly man laments this refusal, and would fain hope that some are yet only accustomed to the mode of speaking of such persons, and are not really perverted by the depths of this self-deceit.* Judgment will unveil the folly of such as love their self-deceiving, of those who are indeed the dupes of Satan, the adversary of themselves and God, yet left to put to proof to whom men will cleave. But what is left for us to do but still pray with earnest entreaty to the Author of light that the word applied in wisdom may yet deliver them? I invite therefore all who will to listen to the consideration of prophecy as given in the Apocalypse of St. John. And whatsoever God has given me on this book I desire to communicate; and as I have found consistency in it, why should not I expect that others, with the help I can afford, though trifling, should also find this help and be delivered? for the time is at hand. The apostle may be called, in all that was given to him of God, the prophet of the last time, and this book places him in this character.

The Book of Revelation is a book of judgment, and a book of which the character is rather descriptive than historic, though the objects of history necessarily find a place in it; but we do not, as some do, think to prove prophecy by history, but history by prophecy; for prophecy stands first in authority. As this book is rather descriptive than historical, it applies to the conscience rather than to knowledge; and therefore we hear of the blessings, not of those who understand, though much apprehension may be had of it, but of those who read it with an ear attentive to its sayings.

When failure in the Church had been manifested, and the fallen Church rejected, as stated in the end of the third chapter, the confidence of saints (for this is a title given in Scripture to believers, for by an act of grace were they made partakers of life and glory) in the faithfulness of God was assisted and maintained, and the promises of God foreshown and assured by the manifestation of the Church symbolically in twenty-four elders, associated with the throne of God in heaven, and, if assured to them, who should in due time be brought to stand before the Lord. Such a circumstance now left the earth to be described as subject to other dispensations, and to a course of judgments which, from after the fourth and fifth chapters of this book, begin to be developed.

From the sixth chapter the course of judgments continues to be described till the end of the nineteenth chapter, and then follows to the end the restoration of all things promised since the world began, after death had entered and death by sin, and all creation suffered, and which continues to groan, and will so suffer till that day shall restore it to more than pristine beauty. And He that bears the character of the second Adam shall rule over all in the majesty which the first Adam proved unable to keep, and lost through weakness, but which the Son of man, Jesus, coming down from where He now is waiting the time of the Father, shall hold by divine and infallible power, to the glory of God.

But sad is the picture earth presents when left of that divine seed which is taken up to God. Their trial may have been severe, for Jesus Christ is ever the same, and a true confession brings the same burden at all times, and the righteousness of God is displayed in His dealings with the world, when this divine seed (taken

* He does injustice to God and himself, but more particularly to the sacred Scriptures, through his ignorance, and then through his prejudice against it. Let me produce (I speak now as to fair men) another book, with but half the evidence that can be afforded to the authenticity of the Bible, and of its early authority, and with the connection of the actings therein that exist in the Bible; and if things of mere modern interest did not absorb his whole attention, I should be sure of its reception, enough at least to cause its study and its admiration. Or is it grown stale through the mutability of man? Or let me produce a book of half the sublimity; but of the clearest imposture, as the Koran or Indian Shaster, rendered accessible to readers in general, and passages be quoted for the soundness of their moral inculcation, how unexamined is it compared with it!

Or if I produced a book with high-wrought images, how would the learned pore over, and expatiate on, and realise these things! Well then may we say no one is so unjust as the man unacquainted with his subject, and what is now under our hand, more particularly the Scriptures of God. We can but refer all this to disbelief in God. Let Him be but acknowledged as God, either in His glory or attributes, it would bring in the acknowledgment of His high purposes to men, revealed in His word; and what agrees more with the subject of this prophecy, judgment (for He is God) on those that lift themselves up against Him.

to heaven) leaves it to the preparation which God instantly begins for the regeneration of the earth, and the destruction of those that destroy it.

How different is this account in the Apocalypse from the self-complacency of the religious systems of the world, which, partaking of the general declension, and whose untruth is often so perceptible to the eye of the natural man, promise the renewal of the world by the means they are exercising, and, offering a sad spectacle of men with the name of God as their banner, are but rivals of those who promise, even without God, the regeneration of the earth, may be by political institutions alone. But *God* has His own work in hand, and minds neither of them in this respect; but the former are the more guilty, because they say they see, while, with the word of God in their hands, they hide the truth. Something far otherwise than what they hold out is to take place; but so perverted is man, and so blind to the vanity of his own pretensions, that as God is more and more left, and His obedience found irksome, these pretensions are but the occasion of the disaster, and the objects of unheeded chastisement, till, as their boastings and blasphemies rise, judgment comes on to the uttermost. The nations, in their civil and ecclesiastical DEPARTURE FROM GOD (for that is always the measure by which they are to be measured), are displaced from the charge and rank God gave them, and the earth recommences anew under the authority of God, delegated to Jesus, again sent, not to suffer, but to reign.

In the beginning of the sixth chapter, the purpose of the judgments that are to follow is set forth in the first symbol, but the day of grace, as manifested in the preaching of the Gospel of grace, is past; it is now correction and judgment—a farther application of merciful appeal (because promises and the inducements of mercy had failed), but against which hearts are hardened and eyes blinded by the self-sufficiency, nay, arrogancy, of every class of civilised mankind.

There is one thing to remark which may not have received attention in the measure it should, but is a key to the understanding of much of Scripture, and full of instruction to the conscience. God had removed a *self-sufficient* and stiff-necked people from His favour, and dispersed them; for they owned Him as God, and refused their obedience. Their trial given of God was in the acceptance or refusal of the mission of His Son. On His rejection, and re-offer, and their final resistance, the trial was closed. The Gentiles were now put into the position of Israel, though not after the same manner. Out of the Gentiles God would now gather a people to the acknowledgment of His grace and dominion, to a reception of a portion in that which His grace and goodness bestow; having reversed the decree of death by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God having too brought in by Him clearness of revelation of life and immortality in HIMSELF, and after the same order, that is resurrection (which is the reversal of the judgment of death) with heavenly glory.

From an early period of the Revelation this is presented as already complete, as regards those destined to the peculiar glory of Christ as head of the Church; and we find a people characteristic of something peculiar to them, and elect according to the mercy of God. The middle wall of partition, existing as between earthly races here, no longer found place. Not that Gentile Christians may not exist after these are taken from this earth, but they are not the main subject of the history.

When unbelief has stamped the dispensation afforded to the Gentiles, God begins to act again for Israel; and the nations, in all their turmoil, consequent on their desertion by God, turn back into their own misery and the obduracy of apostasy, while their boastings and defiance of God ill maintain them against His current judgments, which are meanwhile proceeding.

On the verge of such times are we now come.

In the seventh chapter, before the judgments of this portion close, a certain number of the nation of Israel (for, as I said, a renewed interest commences with God for His people) are sealed in the knowledge of God, to be kept free from the coming evils. The judgments then proceed, but without any result in repentance. Man is coming up to the summit of his pretensions in *unbelief*, or pertinaciously sunk in superstition, which God never characterises as less than declining from worship of Himself to idolatry.

To this last men pertinaciously hold, either exercising it or asserting an infallible authority from God, and think they keep close to God in keeping close to their sin, as an avoidance of the free-thinking and rationalism to which, nevertheless, speaking of them as a body, the mass of their own members are attached.

The eighth and ninth chapters are but the description of judgments always on the increase.

By the time we come to the tenth chapter, we find God declaring that there shall be no longer DELAY—not, as many translate it, "*time*," but *delay:* that is, the dealings of God in judgment are now to close, and He will bring in the fulness of His purpose.

The eleventh chapter is a peculiarly Jewish chapter, after the mystery of the introduction of the Gentiles has been accomplished, and the saving of them that believe. Now, let us hear the words of God, and no one need think of mystery in these plain words: "And the twenty-four elders" (a symbolic company) "fell on their faces and worshipped God, saying, We give 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." See that in which Heaven takes glory, and observe the contrast! Would it not be so, would it not provoke hatred on EARTH! Ah! let some bethink themselves of this! And the Scripture proceeds: "*And the nations were angry*" (there are yet nations in the judgments) "and thy wrath is come." Who is so besotted by the world he lives in to think that politics can be rule of his judgment, if these things be so; or, is it the only reason he refuses to listen to the call of God? Man is a vessel in the hand of the potter. "What is he to be accounted of?" "The earth is the Lord's."

What is described in this portion of the book is not the end of the world; but rewards are assigned to some. There is no final judgment of the wicked—that is to come. Oh that the words were as a knell sounding in the heart of some, or that thoughts of such a season would awaken quickly their hopes, for the time of these things is at hand!

The twelfth chapter is a great division in the book of Revelation. It is a short summary we can hardly enter upon, but from this onwards we obtain the farther developments of God's actings, *and we learn what He acts on;* and it should be observed, that here follows, as before was the case, a frequent recapitulation of the same subject in different points of view, or in more extended description.

It will be useful here to enter on some historical matter not found in the book of the Revelation. The book of Daniel * is historical, and we read the history of the time to come more clearly than the history of the past from man. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men."

It is a matter of knowledge, even among profane men, that four great empires are spoken of in the prophetic books of Scripture; Assyria—Media and Persia jointly—Greece succeeding, and then the Roman empire. The little horn is found in Daniel as an historical description, which we do not find in form in the Apocalypse. All this was written from the time of the first of these powers, and every day—if God wanted man's assent to His divine foreknowledge imparted to man for man—every day brings its manifest fulfilment. As a salient point of prophetic symbol, read the judgment of Cain for the murder of his righteous brother, and you read the judgment daily under your eyes in the Jew! And we read, when these things took the form of prophetic warning in the Mosaic history, the express denunciation of their present fate of being scattered among the nations. Their fate, moreover, is not yet full.

By the book of Daniel also we have the history of the time when God trusted to the nations the kingdom of the EARTH, after He took away from the Jew His presence and blessing, in the capture of Jerusalem and in their captivity by Nebuchadnezzar.

His presence and blessing were never restored, though the people returned, in His mercies, after the appointed duration of their chastisement, to their native home. The kingdom is yet the Gentiles'; but they have departed from God—"have not abode in His goodness," saith the Scripture: they too shall be broken off.

In the succession of the empires, Assyria lost her dominion; Media and Persia lost theirs; Greece also, and, when full, was divided into four. The Roman empire succeeded, and yet exists, and will exist, and will be found in its nearly completed tenfold division, noted also in *both* of these prophetic books. It exists in a foretold form, which will receive its manifold development, now daily becoming plainer. Rome, as a CITY, shall by its power rule over the power that sustains it, and itself be destroyed by those it

* See a publication, entitled "Etudes sur Daniel," printed at Jersey.

rules. The empire and its sovereign, then lifting themselves up boldly against God and the Lamb, go into perdition. The glory of kingdoms has from the first belonged to Babylon—she is a city—and this glory will belong to her that has represented her, till destroyed. It matters not the invasion and dominion of the northern nations, nor her ecclesiastical power, nor change of manners, nor civilisation, nor corruption, nor change of constitution. We have in the sure eye that has all before it without distinction of time, that we in our mortal condition are versed in, that the glory of Babylon and its characteristics before Him are *invariable*. Babylon the city—Babylon Pagan—Babylon Christian is identical. There is no distinction in it in respect of these states. Her fruits in the course of all her time—her sin against the living God and against His, is identical from first to last, and in the principle of her reign everywhere.

Many a one thinks he has no choice between the various lies in the world; but God is in heaven as a refuge and the source of spiritual power, to which the admission is ever Jesus, the Lord, for a good confession of a hope resting on unseen things, yea, even to death, and those holding this confession will be overcome to death, to receive a crown of life according to promise. Such will be received to peace, and kept to the day of deliverance and till the judgment comes, and the Lord will reign. But there are those who precede them, as we have said above, and to this let *us* pay a full attention, that we, to whom the door of such things is open, find ourselves behind the fulness of Christ.

Babylon, its glory and idolatries, seems to some to have promise in it. Its overthrow seems to others to emancipate men. But God is dishonoured in Babylon, and in every part of the affiliation she has in the earth. On the other hand, He is defied in the spirit of the beast (the empire) and of the nations; so that all is wrong. Worse, however, will be worshipped than has been worshipped. Man will glorify himself to this point—he will accept adoration, and his claims be forwarded by worldly prophesying power, which wields the power of the second beast, and perishes as the false prophet attached to the glory of the empire. Man does not fear to go much farther than expressions of sovereignty, and even we hear dropped the expression of almightiness.* Can man do any thing by his own power? The false prophet subsequently, as in his former character, will work miracles in the presence of the first beast, to deceive men into subjection to him. But this is to determine a judicial delusion on those that have loved this lie; but by the present power of man, he can do nothing beyond his natural powers. Can he bring down fire from heaven? Can he even judge the proud? Let him deck himself with majesty. Will he judge himself?

Let us not forget, then, that the whole characteristic glory which belonged successively to these empires descends from the first down to the last of them, that is, to the last symbolical beast of Daniel, which last is the Roman empire and is *the beast* of the Apocalypse, and which is to be for a short time in the hand of one yet to be made apparent. Babylon, which was once the real name, is now the symbolical one of another city, and which rules without its necessarily being the capital, and is trodden down without revival under the foot of men, as is the declared fate of corruption in this estate, and it falls just before the final apostasy, and this final apostasy brings in the judgment of the power that makes war against the Lord.

This is not judgment of the world, as in common expressed, as I have before said. He whose right it is takes great power and resumes the dominion given to man, which he has abused to the full measure of usurpation and rebellion.

The various characteristics of these transactions we find more distinctly set out subsequently, with more or less extension, and in variety of relationship after the twelfth chapter of the book of Revelation. If I have in some things anticipated the order, it will not hinder the general understanding of its purport.

The thirteenth chapter is the personal character of the last representative of human pretensions, with his second, of whom we have above spoken, and their tyranny. The seventeenth is a repetition of description, under new relationships, of the same persons. The eighteenth contains the characteristics of the city of Babylon more particularly, and what she promotes.

The fourteenth chapter (to resume the order) is peculiar by the company who are redeemed from the earth, and are the first-fruits to God and the Lamb, and accompany Him who stands on Mount Zion (who is the Lord), and not, it is to be observed, in heaven. This chapter contains a warning against subjection to the beast and his blasphemy, and a mention of the torment of those who submit, concluding with the harvest and vintage of the earth, which are symbols of dishonest things in the Word.

Protestantism is not accounted of in the book of Revelation at all, nor Roman Catholicism as such. It is not the scope of the book. Protestantism bears too much the characteristics of the world, that it should escape. Whichever truth it holds (when it holds it), takes its own place. But the great city—Pagan or Christian—(it matters not which) is throughout the course of time *accounted of* as ONE, without any distinction or change of circumstances. She in the last times rides and rules the power, to which she has brought the nations of the empire into subjection. She was a power (the second beast) even when ecclesiastical, but, as I have before said in the course of this analysis, and here again to be particularly remarked, ends in its head as the false prophet, who has successfully served the great Sovereign that is yet to rise. As a city and power she is taken vengeance on by the nations for the bitterness of the subjection she has brought them into; and the GREAT ONE, magnifying himself exceedingly in all the power of the arch-enemy, remains the sole object of the world's wonder, until the words of God be fulfilled. The time is at hand. On this fulfilment follows the restitution of all things, of which no trace is to be found but in the Word and in the faith of those that have believed on Jesus.

The victories of Jesus are described in the nineteenth chapter, and the full session and completing of glory follows. The division of the remainder of the Apocalypse is not easy, but the highest thing mentioned is an entirely new heaven and earth, of which there is seldom mention in Scripture. We have set forth the heavenly Jerusalem, the members of which have their glory in a city proper to themselves (superior to and above the earthly city), which needs neither sun nor other light, for God and the Lamb are the light thereof. The glory of the nations are brought *unto it* (not into) and thence proceeds their healing and blessing. There is also mentioned that final catastrophe which works the close of all things. And let each one who reads observe the holiness appointed to these things, *and the exclusion of unholiness*. As far as the Lord has been pleased to help me, I have given in plain language a plain analysis of the thread of the actings of God in this book; first, of God acting for Christ, and then, Christ Himself being the actor.

It is a book many have stumbled at; man's uncertainty, however, touches not the sure standing of God. It must have been seen how much this book is in substance future. But what is man's future? Does he not hope in some future or other, however vainly? Shall not God in mercy reveal His future, that those that are His may have just warning? It is a book that embraces the fulness of the dispensations of God, and begins when they are far advanced. We hear not in it of a Gospel of grace, such as under the blessing of God may touch, by its sweetness, the conscience and hope of the sinner; but a Gospel of warning against worshipping the idol of the day—that God's promises and threatenings have a far nearer connection with what is acted in the world than to unbelievers is daily apparent in the history of it. It is through unbelief that man fails to see the connection between the obedience of faith and its reward, or its escape from judgment; but God makes it sure. The Revelation was of things that are (or were), and of things that were to come. The searching into the state of the then existing assemblies of believers (for that is the meaning of churches), to whom also the rest of the Revelation was sent: and the discipline applied to their condition, is contained in the three first chapters. This condition of the churches was, it would seem, from many internal marks also, a chronological history of the Church in an after period; but how can any one read this portion, even though it were with little attention, and not find his conscience exercised by the searching eye of God? And it is ever to be remembered that God in His sovereignty requires submission of heart to Himself, and therefore we find guidance in judgment in the things of God promised to the meek. *We find intelligence given to faith and not faith to intelligence;* they worship not the power and the representative of the power of the empire, having Satan's seat and great authority. God is yet in heaven. Jesus is at the right hand of glory. God's word and

Volks Allmacht used in the national assembly at Frankfort. Vox populi vox Dei—a banner the author saw carried after an election for Middlesex.

throne are settled in heaven! Exclusion is not yet the word, but INVITATION; but the day is far spent, and the night is at hand!

It is a mistake to think the Apocalypse a sealed book. God forbids what He says to be sealed. And again: "Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of it."

"SO MUCH THE MORE AS YE SEE THE DAY APPROACHING."

IN the epistle to the Hebrews, an epistle peculiarly applicable to the saints nowadays,* the apostle warns us against a practice even then not without followers. And if in his day, when only the habit of "some" called forth a censure, how much more in this day, when not only "many" adopt the practice, but there are found among them advocates of it, "who seemed to be somewhat." It is evident from the context (chap. x.) that the subject is connected with the care and service every soul which has drawn near to God must have for his brethren, followers with him in the same grace. We are not asked of God to serve others until we know how He has served us; for it is only as we learn of His service and grace to us, that we shall be able usefully to serve and care for others. "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought to wash one another's feet." "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." The Lord is no hard Master. He expects not usury where He has not given the principal. He looks not for grapes from His vine till He has removed every impediment to its growth. He fenced it and gathered out the stones thereof, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein, and then He looked for it to bring forth grapes. God brings me into the circle of His own light and glory to meet my brethren. In the region of the mercy-seat, where my own soul sits happily before the Father in Christ, do I learn to care for my fellows in the same blessing (1 John i. 6), and know them as members of the body of Christ. The moment the soul gets into a lower region than this, that moment your service and care for the members of Christ must assume a lower character, for all my love for them I must acquire in Christ. The more I know that I am set *in* Him, the more I am *for* them. Religiousness apart from Him—even devoted religiousness—is but Cain's, and the brother is neglected; nay worse, for he that gatheroth not scattereth.

Here the apostle had reached the climax, or rather result, of all his teachings in the preceding chapters. The soul has been carried through, and made acquainted with, all the services of Christ, and is now placed through the new and living way within the vail, in the bright and wondrous sphere of glory—in the holiest of all—in the presence of all the revealed majesty of God, fearful in praises, doing wonders. Yet it is from this height of bliss and wonder we are called to consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works, and, as a means to this end, "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Now that the day approaches nearer, there is a manifest disposition to undervalue the custom of assembling together; at least, such an indifference to it as if it were but of secondary importance. It has been such an acknowledged custom for the people of God to meet together in all ages, that many have pursued the habit, not because they had learned it as imperative on them, but following the example of others; consequently there is no principle in their conscience for doing so, and therefore necessarily no responsibility following them as to the observance of it.

Let us therefore inquire into the value and importance of assembling together. The Church is constitutionally an assembly, as the word in the Greek (ἐκκλησία) denotes; and if there be no assembling together, there would be no composition of the Church *here*. There is no question but that the Holy Ghost sets all the living members of Christ in Him in heavenly places; but also He fashions us for our place there by varied exercises here. After we have suffered awhile, He perfects or matures us. Here the talent is to be put to usury. How, *where*, and in whom, death and the power of Satan were dominant, must life and the power of Christ be manifested; and this not by one witness, but by many, in one strict unbroken testimony, which was at first exhibited, and produced such blessed results; "the people magnified them;" the power of evil was suppressed and overawed for a moment. But though that may be passed, yet by the Church *now* the manifold wisdom of God is learned by the powers and principalities in heavenly places. I err much if I consider myself individually apart from the family of God. All saints *now* are baptized by one Spirit into one body. The moment I become alive to the glory of my position in the body of Christ, I seek not the desert, like John the Baptist, taking a position peculiar and uncongenial to all, but, like the regenerate Saul of Tarsus, I assay to join myself to the disciples. Vitality demands sympathy. Relationship, even without acquaintance, has its charms and its claims. In nature, a brother I had never seen has a ready passport to my affections. The Church I am in is not one member, but many; and as in our natural body power redounds from the harmonious adjustment of all the members, and from the happy consent of each to its peculiar office, so is it in the spiritual body; and the readiness of a member to engage or return to its place, nay more, *to seek its place* in the body, must be sought more earnestly and strenuously where there is spiritual life, inasmuch as the spiritual exceeds the natural, and what is true of the natural must, after all, be but a faint representation of the spiritual.

Well, then, the principles of life draw us together. There is an immediate and necessary impulse to be in association with saints; for our life, and power, and joy, are identical. But more than this, our benefits are contingent on one another. I am not only impelled to association from the power of a common life, but I find that in this association the varied powers of usefulness of the members towards one another are alone evolved. I cannot merely feel that I must associate with saints (which must be so, and could not be otherwise if I have any *energy* of life), but that my place is to receive blessing as well as to impart any. To every member there is given a gift of grace (Eph. iv.), not so much for himself, but in his relation to the Church, "for perfecting of the saints." Where then can he exercise this gift, or be profited by another, but in or towards the assembly? If I sanction individuality, or even partition or multiplied sections, I must undervalue the gifts and services, through them, of those from whom I license myself to be absent. In the first enunciation of the Church, the blessing of Christ's presence rests on two or three meeting together in His name. Now those who argue for individuality, or practice it, either disbelieve this or undervalue it—either bad enough. But it is with His gifts through the Holy Ghost that His presence is known, so that even the unlearned may acknowledge that God is in you. He now is the messenger of Christ, the gift of the Father, giving power to one after this manner, and to another after that, to perfect the Church unto the stature of Christ, of gifts for the perfecting of the saints. I shall not particularize any; but if gifts for this especial purpose are denied, then there must, as a necessary consequence, be a cessation of the perfecting of the saints; or let such a one say how is the perfecting to be accomplished otherwise. Is any bold enough to say he wants no perfecting, and that he derives no blessing from others of God's people? Supposing for a moment (which we must) that his heart is deficient of that quality in life which, like light, blends with all parts of itself, no matter how disproportionate the amount from any source; but then it will be allowed that gifts did at one time exist for the perfecting of the saints, and then there was no doubt of the blessing of assembling together that each might learn and be comforted, and then it was culpable to forsake the assembling of ourselves together; but now it is not so, for gifts are so weak and profitless that the benefit is not proportionate to the sacrifice. But, says the apostle, you are to be more careful not to forsake assembling, &c., as you see the day approaching. So that the darker grew the night (the more, as some would say, that the gifts decline, the less the personal benefit there would be attendant on association), the *more necessary* that we should observe it. We must not relinquish that the saints are to be exhorted in the assembly the more the day approaches; and let us put the question—Is it the more spiritual, or the less, who are unedified by a small amount of gift in the assembly? I think it is always the less spiritual. The more spiritual, of course, can see and feel

* It is evident that the Hebrew saints were suffering, not from ignorance of Scripture, but from wrong and imperfect interpretation of it; so that the apostle had to contend with errors both in doctrine and hope—nay, even as to the assurance of salvation, which are not alluded to in the epistles to the Gentiles. So much for learning Scripture imperfectly. Easier to instruct the entirely untaught than to correct the self-sufficient master of inaccurate theories, however extended his knowledge.

irregularity or want of power more acutely, but I submit that they bear with it better than others, as the cruse of oil and barrel of meal which God increases. Healthy men may require much food, but they can endure with a very little longer than the weak. Jonathan but tasted the honey on the end of his rod, and his eyes were enlightened. The hungry soul closely hunts for food where it *ought* to be found. The keenness of need sharpens his scent for it. A jawbone of an ass refreshed Samson.

Thus, then, if I depreciate the assembling together of the saints, I am disregarding the warning of the apostle, proving my little sympathy with the members of Christ's body; decrying, or at least undervaluing, the gifts for edification bestowed on the assembly, whereby the presence of Christ is known amongst them—not only thus injuring myself, but also an injury to the Church, for they lose my services; and finally, I am unhesitatingly declaring that my spirit little blends in happy fellowship with saints around the throne, when I am so indifferent to them, and they so unattractive to me down here.

On the other hand, let us enumerate the blessings of assembling together. I am obedient to the word of the Lord, and obedience is greater than sacrifice, for it is the yielding of myself to His will. If Thomas had not absented himself from the first meeting of the disciples, He would not have been eight days behind the rest of the apostles in faith and knowledge. I am seeking the place where Christ meets with His people. At the supper table (John xiii. xiv.) He opened out the treasures of His grace to His disciples—the Church in type—and where now, by His servants, He edifies, exhorts, and comforts His saints, for that assembly is the proper sphere of the gifts of His grace. (1 Cor. xiv.) I am joining with many witnesses to show forth His death till He comes; and the very act of my going to "one place," in company with others, is not only an evidence of my own appreciation of Christ in contrast to all around, but I am an example to others to do likewise. I go to feast, as well as to present myself before the Lord. Lastly, the more my heart rises into the glorious scene of the family group around the throne—ever praising, ever exulting in the Lamb that was slain, and yearning to take my place there—the more shall I value every even faint shadowing of it in this wilderness of sin and sorrow.

In conclusion I shall add but one word. Practically it will be found that the most spiritual are always less absent from the assembly, and that the one who begins to absent himself seldom ends well. Oh may we all be admonished! for surely the day approaches!

PROOFS FROM SCRIPTURE OF THE PREMILLENNIAL ADVENT,

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

My dear Brother,

The desire you have evinced to inquire impartially into the subject of our Lord's second advent, combined with the truly Christian kindness and courtesy you have invariably manifested in our recent conversations on this subject, emboldens me to address you thus, in the hope that by the Lord's blessing we may further prosecute the inquiry in such a manner as ultimately to see eye to eye; and not only so, but likewise to see what the mind of God on the subject really is. Unity of judgment, to be desirable, must be unity in the truth. Diversity of sentiment is better than unity in error. Better one have the truth than neither; best of all, for all to see alike by all seeing aright. Never may we forget, however, that sweet and reconciling word in Phil. iii. 15, 16: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." Practical union of heart and life, as far as we are agreed, with patient forbearance of one another wherein we differ, is the course in which we may look to God to reveal to any of us that of which we are ignorant. *It is His* to reveal His own truth to His own children; still, brotherly intercourse is what He often uses for this end. Oh that we and all God's children might feel that we have no end to gain but to glorify Him by learning and doing His blessed will; and would that we all had more confidence in one another, as heirs together of the grace of life—members of the same family of love—learners in the same school of holy, gracious discipline and instruction!

Our last conversation was on the parables in Matt. xiii., more particularly on that of the wheat and tares. As to the interpretation of that parable, or rather the sense in which we are to understand *our Lord's* interpretation of it, we are agreed in the following particulars:

First. That the parable represents the state of things in the present dispensation.

Secondly. That good and evil, the wheat and the tares, continue to be mixed together to the end of this present period or dispensation.

Thirdly. That the harvest *is the end* of this age, period, or dispensation.

Fourthly. That the period which follows, when the Son of man has gathered out of his kingdom all that offends, and those which do iniquity, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, is the millennium, that period of universal holiness and happiness *on the earth* which all Christians are expecting.

Fifthly. That the offenders are gathered out *at the harvest* and cast into a furnace of fire, and that this terrible judgment on the wicked is executed at that crisis by the instrumentality of the angels.

If I remember aright, you distinctly stated your concurrence in the above interpretation of the passage; but you objected to it, as a proof of the premillennial advent, that the advent is not mentioned in the passage. Had time permitted, I should have rejoiced to have gone with you into the consideration of several passages which indisputably refer to and describe the same era or crisis as in this parable is termed "the harvest," and in which it is distinctly stated that the advent or coming of Christ will then take place. Lack of time hindered this at our last interview; and as it may be that another may not take place soon, I am desirous in this communication to draw your attention to this point.

I would first explain a little the kind of proof which is gathered from thus comparing one part of Scripture with another. No one passage of Scripture contains all that is taught in Scripture. If any one verse, chapter, or even book of Scripture contained all that is revealed in Scripture, the rest—that is, all the other verses, chapters, and books of Scripture—would be superfluous; and that I am sure you would be very far from saying. Indeed no one could say this who believes the Scriptures to be the word of God. So as to any given subject treated of in the Scriptures. It is not usually in any one passage of the Word that we can learn every thing that relates to the subject. On most topics of importance we have instruction in many different passages, one affording light on one part of the subject, another specially treating of some other branch of it; and yet there must be marks of identity between the passages as to their general subject, or else we could never understand that they are different branches of the same theme, and therefore could not receive from them the instruction they contain. To illustrate this: We have not one account only, but four accounts of the crucifixion of Christ. Had these accounts been perfectly identical *as to all their details*, three of them would have been superfluous, except indeed as distinct testimonies to the fact; though even in this light they would have been of little value, but for their characteristic differences in detail. And yet if there had not been marks which infallibly identify them *as to their general subject*, they would have been equally unavailing. Nay, they would have tended to mislead; for we might have supposed that they spoke of different persons, or of different eras in the life of the same person. But as it is, in the provident wisdom and goodness of God, they have enough *in common* to show that it is the same event, viz., the crucifixion of Christ, which they narrate to us; and yet *they differ so much in detail*, that one informs us of circumstances in that event of which the others had left us ignorant. And it is only by a careful comparison of all that we can learn all the circumstances of that solemn and important crisis in the history of our Redeemer. Thus, if I open John xviii. 6-8, I find a fact stated which is recorded by none of the other evangelists. If some one (acknowledging of course the authority of Scripture, and therefore of all the four gospels) should dispute this fact, and allege that Matthew says nothing of it, and Mark says nothing of it, and Luke says nothing of it, how should I have to answer him? Clearly by proving to him that John is speaking of the same blessed Person, and of the same

solemn period in His history, and that *he states it*. I should have to remind him of the features common to all the four narratives, which identify them as to their general subject; they all speak of the same persons—Jesus, His disciples, His betrayer, and the officers and others into whose hands He is betrayed. They all lay the scene in the same place, the garden of Gethsemane.* They all speak of the same period, that immediately succeeding His conversation with the disciples during and after supper, and immediately preceding His examination before the high priest. They all relate other circumstances which occurred to those persons in the place and at the time specified, such as the cutting off the ear of the high priest's servant by Simon Peter. Can any one doubt, who considers these things, that the general subject of John's narrative is the same as that of the other evangelists? And if so, it proves that when John tells us that the officers went backward and fell to the ground, this circumstance did actually occur *at* that time, *in* that place, *to* those persons; and it does not in the least invalidate this proof to say that the other evangelists do not record the circumstance. I give this illustration as a very simple one, and yet most conclusive as to our title, nay, our duty, to compare Scripture with Scripture; and where the same subject is treated of in different passages, to receive the testimony of each, not only to corroborate the rest, but also to gather from one those details of instruction which are not afforded in another. I have not selected the above example as the best, but it was the first that occurred to my mind, and I think you will yourself allow that it is sufficient.

It may be said that great caution is needed in examining Scripture thus. This is admitted at once; but it is no reason for neglecting to search the Scriptures in this manner. We do need the utmost self-diffidence in searching and handling the word of God; we need, too, the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit; but depending on that light and guidance, and sincerely distrusting ourselves, we have every encouragement to expect that we shall be kept from the paths of error, and be led into all truth. Let due care be taken that the passages referred to are really identical as to their general subject. Let them be thoroughly and patiently examined before we conclude that this is the case; but if they have so much in common as to put this beyond doubt, then let us not fear to regard the details of one as equally belonging to the subject with all that is contained in the others.

As to the passages I have now to bring forward, I have two things to prove: first, that they relate to the same subject as the concluding part of the parable of the wheat and tares; and secondly, that they state that the Lord will come in connection with what is there termed "the harvest."

How is it to be determined that any other passage speaks of the period termed in this parable "the harvest"? There can be but one way of determining this; that is, to ascertain what distinguishes "the harvest" in this parable, and then inquire whether the marks by which it is distinguished are to be found in the passages in question. Of course, when I speak of its distinguishing marks, I mean those which *essentially* distinguish it from every thing besides, and not any minor circumstance. If these be found in another passage, though some of the minor circumstances be wanting, we should certainly be authorized in concluding that the subject treated of in both passages is the same.

Does not the following definition of "the harvest" embrace all that essentially distinguishes it from every thing besides? *It is that solemn act of judgment by which the righteous and the wicked are separated from each other at the close of the present mixed state of things, and at the commencement of the millennium.* There are three distinguishing marks of "the harvest."

1. It is at the end of this present age, in which the wheat and the tares grow together. "The harvest is the end of the age." "So shall it be in the end of this age." †

2. It is at the commencement of the millennium, the period of universal holiness and happiness on the earth. "Then"—when all things are gathered out of the kingdom that offend, and they which do iniquity—"then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

3. It is the time at which the righteous and the wicked are separated from each other by destroying judgment on the wicked. "As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this age. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

In whatever passage of Holy Scripture we find these three things, there we find "the harvest." There cannot be more than one end or close of the present age; there cannot be more than one commencement of the millennial period. And the judgment, which separates the wicked from the righteous at the close of the present age and introduction of the millennium, is "the harvest."

One word more before quoting the passages we are to consider. As to those quoted from the Old Testament, we must not expect to find in them what is the special subject of Matt. xiii., viz., "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." It is during "this age" that these mysteries have their existence; and "the end of the age" is a great public crisis, spoken of in the Old Testament as well as the New. But in the Old Testament it is spoken of more with respect to Jews and Gentiles than with respect to true and false professors of Christianity. In Matt. xiii. the wheat represents true Christians; the tares, false professors. The great fact is, that they grow together till the end of the age, *i.e.* till "the harvest." Evil exists till "the harvest." But it exists in other ways as well as the mixture of false professors with true Christians. It exists in the unbelief and sufferings of God's ancient people Israel, and also in the oppression of that people by the Gentiles. But "the harvest" puts an end *to all evil of all kinds*. It is then that *all* things which offend, and *all* which do iniquity, are gathered out and destroyed. And in many passages, both in the Old Testament and New, is this harvest spoken of—this judgment which terminates the present mixed state, and introduces millennial blessedness. And in those which I shall now adduce it is stated that at that time the Lord will come.

I. Let us look at Isa. xxvi. 20; xxvii. 6. Here we have a fearful, desolating judgment, "to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity," when "the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more conceal her slain." This judgment is a separating or discriminating judgment between the righteous and the wicked; for while the wicked are thus punished and overthrown, to the righteous it is said: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." This solemn judgment, which thus severs the righteous from the wicked, is at the commencement of the millennium. "In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." Now, whatever may be said of the dragon that is in the sea, and which is slain, we know who the crooked, piercing serpent is. Gen. iii. 1, 2 Cor. xi. 3, and Rev. xii. 9, make that plain enough. And we all know too that it is at the commencement of the millennium that Satan, that old, crooked, piercing serpent, is punished by being bound and cast into the bottomless pit. (Rev. xx. 1, 2.) So that this judgment is in the day when Satan is bound, which we are all agreed is at the commencement of the millennium. But there is further evidence in the passage that this judgment is succeeded by the millennial period; for it is said: "He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." Verses 12 and 13 also connect the whole with the restoration of the children of Israel, "who shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem."

We have, then, in this passage a terrible judgment on the wicked; the righteous preserved from that judgment; and consequent upon it, "in that day," the punishment of Satan, the restoration of Israel, and Israel caused to blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit; in other words, the millennium. The passage does not say that all this is at the end of this age, of the present mixed state of things; but then a moment's consideration will satisfy any one that as day cannot begin without the ending or passing away of the night, so the millennium or state of universal blessedness cannot begin without the present mixed state of good and evil coming to a close. So that we have all the marks

* As to Luke's account and John's, however, I should have it to prove that it was Gethsemane, for the name is mentioned in neither gospel. Yet who doubts it?

† There are two words translated *world* in this passage. The field is the *world* (κόσμος, or world literally). The harvest is the end of the *world* (αἰῶνός—literally, *of the age*). Κόσμος denotes this material world; αἰὼν denotes an age, or period of duration.

of "the harvest" *expressed* in this passage, except one, and that one evidently and necessarily *implied*. And what else have we? *The coming of the Lord.* "For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." If it should be said that this is figurative, I ask for the evidence of this. Should it be urged that the Lord is everywhere, and everywhere alike, and that therefore it must be a figure to say that "the Lord cometh out of His place," my answer is, that the objection proves just the contrary of what it is urged to prove. *As God* the Lord is omnipresent, and so to Him *in that sense* all places are alike, He fills both heaven and earth. But the Lord Jesus Christ *is man* as well as God. And it is specially as "the Son of man" that He is spoken of in many passages with respect to His second coming. And is there not *a place* where the glorified humanity of Christ now dwells? And will He not *come out* of this place whenever He comes to judgment, whether at the commencement of the millennium or at its close? I conclude then, from the very language employed, that the coming here spoken of is a real personal coming, a leaving one "place" and coming to another; and the whole context proves that it is at the time of "the harvest," at the close of the present age and the introduction of the millennial period, that this coming takes place.

II. Let us now turn to Isa. lix. 16, lx. If you glance at chap. lix., down to verse 16, you will see that it describes an evil state of things. I have no doubt myself that it is the Jewish nation during this their long dispersion that is thus described; but the passage is only too applicable to a vast number of professing Christians. We are all agreed, however, that evil continues up to "the harvest." So we are taught here. In verse 15 the Lord is displeased because there is no judgment. In verses 16, 17 He undertakes the work Himself in the garments of vengeance. In verse 18 we read, "According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompence to His enemies; to the islands He will repay recompence." And is this action of His in judgment and vengeance at the time of "the harvest." Let us see whether the distinguishing marks of that crisis are not found here. The first we have already seen. It is at the close of the period during which evil is permitted to remain. But is it followed by the millennium? Let us examine. What says verse 19, the verse immediately following the one last quoted? "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." And the whole of chap. lx. follows on in the same connection, and it has long been known to the Church as one of the most magnificent predictions of millennial blessedness to be found in the word of God. Thus have we the three distinguishing marks of "the harvest." It is at the end of this age. It is at the commencement of the millennium. It is a desolating judgment inflicted *at that time* on the enemies of God. "According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompence to His enemies; to the islands He will repay recompence. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the sun." But have we anything of the advent here? Yes; for it immediately follows: "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." The apostle quotes this passage in Rom. xi. And with what period does he connect it? Any past period? No; but with the future conversion of the Jewish nation. Is that at the consummation of all things? No; all agree that it is at the commencement of millennial blessedness. So that in this passage, applied and interpreted by the apostle in Rom. xi., we have a plain proof that the advent of our Lord is at the time of "the harvest"—that it is in connection with the judgments which close the present period, in which good and evil are mixed together, and which introduce the period of universal holiness and joy.

DIFFERENCES OF DISPENSATION.

THESE differences of dispensation are the displays of God's glory, and therefore of all importance, and most essential, because a positive part of His glory. The law maintained His majesty and title to claim obedience, as the gospel displayed His grace, and gave the obedience of a child. To say that the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, and the accomplishment of the glorious work by which it was effected, produced only an official difference, because man had life, and man was forgiven, or forborne with in view of it, is to say that the display of God's glory was an unessential thing—the display of all His glorious wisdom, power, and love, in that mighty work which stands alone in heaven and earth, the object of angels' research. Was it unessential to them, who found scarce even an official difference, though doubtless it affected their position, to see Him who had created them nailed to the tree in that mighty and solitary hour which stands aloof from all before and after? Let us only remember that dispensations are the necessary displays of God's glory, and we shall soon feel where we are brought by what makes mere official difference out of them.

Besides, the difference is very great as to man. Indeed, it is everything as to his present affections, as to his life, because God puts forth power—power too which works in man through faith, according to the display He makes of Himself. And therefore the whole life in its working, in its recognition of God, is formed on this dispensational display. And this is the field of responsibility too. Thus, if God reveals Himself to Abraham as Almighty, Abraham is to live and walk in the power of that name; and so of the promises given to him. Israel is to dwell in the land as the redeemed people of the Lord—their affections, ways, responsibility, and happiness, flowing from what God was to them as having placed them there. So to us, the presence of the Holy Ghost Himself being the great distinguishing fact, with the knowledge He affords. Because all this is what faith ought to act upon, and the life which we live in the flesh we live by faith, for the just shall *live* by faith. Hence the Lord does not hesitate to say: "*This is* life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." That could not have been the life of those before. Had they then not life? Nay, but it could not be stated in that way—their life was not that; and to undo these differences is to make a life without affections, character, responsibility—in a word, without faith. You cannot do it; for *to us*, to believe is to live. The more you succeed in calling them to one thing, the more you succeed in stifling divine affections, and active human responsibility—destroying, as far as may be, divine communion, and frustrating divine grace—the more the glory and energy of faith is null, and hence God's glory in us.

THE PROSPECT.

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND, AND THE EFFECT OF EVERY VISION."—EZEKIEL, XII. 23.

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NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GLEANED AT LECTURES IN 1842.

CHAPTER XX. 1-6.

WE have seen the judgment of Babylon by God, and that of the beast and of the false prophet by Jesus. We find now the judgment falling on Satan,* the spring, the power, and the strength of all this iniquity. The heart of man was the soil in which all this was sown. Satan, nevertheless, was the author of it.

Verses 1-3. The fact that Satan shall be bound is of the greatest importance to the world. One can hardly form an idea of the difference it will produce as to the world; we have very little idea of the corruption, the subtlety and wickedness of the heart of man, and of the power of Satan. One of the principal characters of the dispensation to come is, that Satan is bound. That is quite a new thing for the world. As wicked, and the seducer, Satan is the serpent; as having power, he is the dragon; as adversary, he has the name of Satan; as accuser, that of the devil. (διάβολος.) Satan, in causing Adam to fall in sin, had taken away all the creation from him, and thereby from God. Adam, as the image of Him that was to come, had the possession of all the earth. Satan seduced him. Adam and Eve fell, and with them the creation. This link being broken, the whole falls—all is ruined in its head, and separated from God—and Satan figures as prince of this world. God intervenes in many ways; among others, by the deluge; the world, notwithstanding, plunges into idolatry, and by this falls more than ever under Satan's power. In the Word, no mention is made of idolatry before the deluge. Man, as man, has adored Satan, and in many places is still adoring him. The philosophers of antiquity have adored him themselves, no less than the pagans of our days. God has proved in His wisdom that man by wisdom did not know God; and this is where man's wisdom has led him. In order to destroy idolatry, God separated to Himself a nation, manifested His glory to it, spoke to it, and made Himself known to it. Nevertheless, before Moses had come down again from the mount, Israel had already made the golden calf, and had thus put himself under Satan's power, in spite of the barrier that God had raised around His people.† God sent afterwards His own Son, the second Adam, although not yet manifested as such. Christ is, in fact, the second Adam, and the Father of the spiritual race, only after His resurrection; as Adam, on the other hand, became the father of the fallen race after his fall. Satan addresses himself also to Jesus, led into the desert by the Spirit, to tempt Him as he tempted Adam, but in vain. Jesus, having bound the strong man, casts out the demons, showing thereby what power Satan was exercising in those that were possessed. In order to show that it is not the iniquity of man that is called the demon, the legion enters the swine, and acts in those animals. The demons ask that they may not be sent into the bottomless pit,‡ the time for them to be sent there not having come yet. Seeing that he could do nothing more to seduce Him or to destroy the effect of His power, Satan raises the whole world against Him. And as Jesus had made Himself surety for our sin, Satan, who has the power of death, uses this right of death against Jesus, § made sin for us. All that man was, was ruined and under the power of death; and it is in the resurrection of Jesus that the victory is found again, and the proof of the judgment of the prince of this world.

In the meanwhile, the time for the execution of the judgment had not yet come, and Satan is still dwelling in the heavenly places; not in the heaven, which God inhabits in light inaccessible, but in the created heavens. The death of Jesus has not expelled him thence. Nevertheless, when, in the name of Jesus, the disciples cast the demons out of the creation, Jesus saith: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." He foresees the downfall of Satan by the power of the name of Jesus. Actually, Satan acts still in the creation, as we see in the case of Job. Jesus is now absent—in heaven. Not being bound, Satan tries and tempts man, and man falls. He is busy about the Church; he sows tares there, and spoils the work of God upon earth. He cannot spoil it in heaven.

We see in this recapitulation of what Satan accomplishes upon the earth, how he spoils every thing until he is bound. God, it is true, watches over the faithful; nevertheless, Satan is in the world, and spoils there the work of God; and if our salvation was resting on man's own responsibility, there would be no salvation for us. Men of the world can form no idea of the manner Satan is blinding the heart, Before God gives them up to it as a chastisement, Satan is already using his power in blinding men, and in making them fall into error. From the beginning, to the period to which this chapter of Revelation brings us, all that God has done upon the earth, in the world, and in the Church, has been spoiled through Satan. Satan has influence over the world; he blinds the heathen and the christianized world. Alas! he also blinds God's children, as to their inheritance and as to the coming of the Lord Jesus. Satan endeavours to rob the Church of this truth, and to make her say: "My Lord delayeth His coming." He will not have it that one should believe that his dominion is going to be overthrown; but at the same time, truth is professed and maintained even by unconverted persons, and subsists as given of God amongst men. But now, in the time of judgment, this is no more so; God gives men up to an efficacious error, that they may believe a lie.

We have seen, in the twelfth chapter, Satan cast out from heaven. He will never enter there again. He falls upon the earth, and causes Anti-Christ to revolt against Christ. Then Christ comes down from heaven, destroys the beast and the false prophet, and binds Satan himself. All that Satan did to the first Adam disappears. Creation ceases to be under his dominion, and man, delivered from Satan's power, passes under that of Jesus. Evil may remain in man's heart, but Satan is banished from the scene of this world. The Judge, the second Adam, comes down from heaven in the power of the victory He has already gained in the resurrection. This is not yet the state of eternity. These are things manifested upon the earth where Jesus shall reign, after having bound Satan and delivered the creation from the bondage of corruption.

Why not bind Satan immediately? Because the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. (Rom. viii. 19.) Christ cannot manifest Himself in the glory and in the judgment, nor deliver the world without having delivered and raised the Church, nor before the judgment be given to the Church as well as to Christ. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. vi. 2. Dan. vii. 22.) "Until the Ancient of days comes, and judgment be given to the saints of the Most High." Therefore it is that creation is not yet delivered from the yoke of corruption. The Church risen must judge the world with Christ.

The world to come is also to be subjected to the same trial. This does not take place during the continuance of the thousand years of Christ's reign, only at the end of that reign, when Satan comes up out of the bottomless pit. Then, as always, man fails immediately.

While Satan is bound, there is no seduction; and, consequently, no combat, no suffering, no victory. God permits these things to

* The warrior judgment by the Lord ends in the destruction of the beast and of its armies; xx. 1-3 brings before us Satan bound after this judgment. Fourth verse begins again, and we have to the end of the chapter sessional judgment—sessional judgment on a throne, whether it be at the beginning of the millennium, or during its duration, or after. The third and fourth verses are not historically consecutive, although generally, in point of the subject, they are so.

† It is remarkable that, while relating how they had rejected all God's appeals to them to return to Him in repentance, Stephen, in making mention of the actual captivity of the Jews, speaks of their sin in the desert, specially of that of idolatry, as the cause.

‡ That is to say, where we see them shut up in this chapter.

§ This is very far from being all that is in the blessed Lord's death; but I confine myself to this point here.

take place now, that we may have the glory. The most ordinary precepts of the Gospel suppose the superiority of the enemy as to this world, and command not to resist evil; they suppose, therefore, a state of suffering. If the world was really Christian, these precepts would not be applicable, because there would be nothing to suffer.

Verses 4-6. There are thrones. Daniel says, (vii. 9,) "I beheld till the thrones were cast down," or rather, placed. Daniel only sees the thrones; here we see those that are seated on the thrones. Now, there is suffering; then, we shall reign with Christ, and we shall be on Jesus' throne. (Rev. iii. 21.) "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." (John xvii. 22.) The world will see this glory, and will know that we have been loved as Christ has been loved. When Christ shall sit upon the throne of His glory, we shall be seated on thrones. This mediatorial kingdom, in which Christ is seated on His throne, will at the end be given up to God the Father. (1 Cor. xv. 24.)

The beheaded are those who have suffered for their testimony during the course of the events which we have seen in the Revelation.

Besides those who are seated upon thrones, and those that were beheaded, one perceives here a third class, that of those who have not received the mark of the beast: negative faithfulness, it is true, but which is not forgotten.

These three classes, those that are seated on thrones, those that were beheaded, and those who have not received the mark of the beast, have equally part in the first resurrection, which takes place a thousand years before the resurrection of the dead who are dead in their sins.

There have been those who have wished to make of the first resurrection a resurrection of principles; but the triumph of principles, mine or those of others, cannot be a personal reward for having been beheaded for those principles. To use a figure of language, one might strictly say that principles are reigning; but how could one say that they shall be priests? Those that rise reign a thousand years with Christ, and shall be made kings and priests; and this cannot be applied in any way to principles, but only to the persons of the risen saints.

We see then here Satan bound, Jesus reigning over the earth, and the faithful reigning with Jesus Himself. It is necessary to understand well that Satan spoils all the work of God in the earth; the death of Jesus banishes Satan from the conscience indeed, but does not banish him from heaven.

The power of Christ destroys the power of Satan; but this power will never be so much manifested as in the person of Anti-Christ. We have to contend until Satan be cast out from heaven.

CHAPTER XX. 5, 6.

From the fourth to the tenth verse, we have the whole of the thousand years. It is the reign of Christ with His saints who govern, and Satan is bound.

The whole state of the world depends on these two things, the reign of Christ, and the prison of Satan.

Now, on the contrary, Christ is hidden, and Satan is acting unbound. The reign spoken of here is so distinct and so positive, that those who are in heaven say: "And we shall reign on the earth." * (Rev. v. 10.) Their power is from heaven; they shall reign over the earth according to that power. The glory of Jesus is the object of the counsels of God. Every thing in the Word and in the ways of God is directed towards that end; without this, we cannot get the intelligence of the Word. Christ is the great object of God. God would have that His whole being should be evidently manifested, and this manifestation is seen in Jesus.† No one has seen God; the Son has revealed Him to us. God manifested in the flesh has made Himself known to us. God is only "seen of angels" through the manifestation of God in the person of Christ. The knowledge of God in Jesus gives intelligence to the most simple Christian. God did manifest Himself to man as He is, and placed Himself at his level. The simple can apprehend and understand God. He hides these things from the wise and prudent. Jesus is the object and the thought of all the counsels of God.

This glory, which God has given to Christ, God has manifested in Jesus, as man. Already, in the creation, the divine glory of the Son has been manifested, and His right of possessing all things established. Jesus created every thing. He has title over creation, which can only be blessed under Him, and during His reign. God has willed that every thing should be made subject to man. Adam was the head of the creation; he failed, and all failed in him and with him. Satan having gained the victory over Adam, all has fallen under the dominion of Satan, who fills the world with evil, and rules over it through the passions of men.

The question is not merely about salvation in God's counsels, but of the restoration of all things. God re-establishes every thing, and man too, in introducing into the world Jesus, the second Adam. The sons of men are not forsaken in this. God unites the Church with the second Adam. All the creation fell in the person of the first Adam, and it is the second who becomes the object of the counsels of God. God does not restore the first Adam; He introduces a second, the spring of life to all those who are redeemed.

The Word was made flesh. God became a man, in order that all things might be made subject to man, and this man is Jesus.* (Heb. ii. Psalm viii. 1 Cor. xv. 27. Eph. i.) The man Jesus is set over every thing.

The first Adam and the second Adam cannot subsist together. It is impossible that Christ and Satan can be both at the same time the princes of this world. Christ is not yet seated on His throne: He is on His Father's throne. (Apoc. iii. 21.) Now, it is the presence of the Spirit of Christ in the hearts that renders them faithful. In order that Christ may reign as the second Adam, Satan must be bound.†

The question is not to know whether Christ's reign is a spiritual or a personal reign; for the Holy Ghost does not leave us, and therefore the reign is spiritual as well as personal. But to say that Christ will not be there, is to deny the reign of *Christ*. The Holy Ghost has not been made man, and He is not the Bridegroom of the Church, and the Church desires the Bridegroom. The Spirit and the bride say: "Come." The Spirit does not say that to Himself; He says it to Christ. A reign of Christ without Christ, is a reign without a king. It is limiting the Church to the desire of what she has already, that is, the Holy Ghost. It is to confound every thing in the relations of Christ as King of the earth and as Bridegroom of the Church.

Acts iii. 19-21. That of which the prophets spoke is the glory at the end, the restoration of all things. The heaven must receive Jesus (not the Holy Ghost, who had already come down,) until the times of the restitution of all things, and until the times of refreshing. It is Christ who, as man, is to reign. God has willed to subject all things to man, (not to Christ, who does not come, but) to Christ, who shall be *sent from heaven*, and who is now preached. It must be the man Jesus manifested in glory.

Jesus is moreover invested with the judgment. He judges, because He is the Son of man. (John v. 27.) The Holy Ghost is not the Son of man. Besides, the judgment precedes the millennium, and cannot be conceived before a millennium brought by the Holy Ghost, and by the preaching of the Gospel.

The promises made to the second Adam, the hopes of the Bride-

* It appears that the best MSS. read here: "They shall reign;" but this does not make any alteration in the argument of the text.

† Not only did God manifest Himself in Christ, but Jesus gave Himself even unto death, in order that all that God is should be manifested in all God did with regard to Him, and for us through Him, and that all the glory of God, all the truth of His character, should be vindicated and established by that which came upon Jesus.

* It is interesting to see in the two first Psalms the rights of Jesus as the righteous man according to the government of God, and His rights according to the counsels of God, as the Anointed, the Christ. In the following Psalms, one sees clearly that nothing of all this is yet accomplished, as is well known. But Christ having suffered, we have in the eighth Psalm the great result on the earth of His position as Son of man explained in Heb. ii. Compare Eph. i. 20-23; iv. 9, 10; and see Luke ix., where He forbids His disciples to announce Him as the Christ, substituting for this title the sufferings and the glory of the Son of man—the portion of the Church. Compare also John xi. xii., where His rights as Son of God, son of David, are set in evidence; and as soon as His right as Son of man begins to dawn, the sufferings present themselves to the Lord, and our participation in those sufferings.

† "The reigning on the thrones *actually* is consequent upon the removal of the deceiving power of Satan. And so with Christ: He comes first, and then actually takes the throne of the world. His companions have been hidden with Him meanwhile; and though glorified, (so I speak of them now,) the thrones were not seen till the war ended. The title was full—they were gone to Him; but they did not before that actually possess the kingdom, nor did He Himself. The horse and the throne are distinct things—imperial, active, subduing power, and full, peaceable, judicial power, as King. For Christ's act of so coming is not a mere passing act; the throne of His glory continues till, as mediatorial King, He gives it up. On this throne of the Son of man the saints will sit, occupying thrones with Him, and judging the world. And this is a reign of peace, but of righteousness withal; this latter, Jewish properly; for heaven and earth meet in peace now—peace on earth—because the face of heaven, in its own character through Christ the Mediator, and the saints with Him, shines on it now."—*Same author.*

groom, the judgment, all is personal to the Son of man. Jesus is coming in person. All this is connected with the glory of Christ. One cannot be in the truth if one rambles from the person of the Son of man. The Holy Ghost acts but to magnify and glorify the Lord Jesus.

The reign of a thousand years is a reward. Men may say sometimes, that they are principles which shall reign, that it is a question about a resurrection of principles. But it is said: "They shall reign *with Christ;*" and I cannot thus confound principles and persons. If we suffer, we shall reign: *we* are not principles. When we suffer, it is in order that the principles may reign; and it would be for me a singular reward when I suffer, to say, it is in order that my principles may reign a thousand years.

The apostle speaks of the first resurrection, as if all knew that there are two resurrections. In the Word of God, two resurrections are always spoken of, and never one general resurrection, of which one finds neither the expression nor the idea. God does not thus confound the just and the unjust; and nothing will separate them more than the resurrection. *Now*, they are mixed and confounded in the world; but the resurrection shall separate them. There is a resurrection from amongst the dead; therefore, there are some dead that do not rise in that resurrection, whereas others do rise.

How can principles be priests? It is nonsense. Those who will reign will be priests. He has loved us, and has washed us, and made us kings and priests. One can neither wash principles nor make them priests. If the person of the Lord Jesus and the persons of the saints be taken away from the glory, one cuts off the root of every affection, and one has a millennium without Christ and without affection.

The first and the second resurrection manifest the glory of Christ in two very different ways. The Church glorifies the Lord in being with Him, in serving Him. Jesus shall be glorified in the judgment of the wicked, who shall acknowledge, in spite of themselves, that He is Lord. And for this reason, the resurrection of the just completes their life and their glory. The power of the life of Christ is applied to their bodies, whereas the resurrection of the wicked is a resurrection of judgment, and not of life. The resurrection of life does not in any wise belong to the wicked. "He shall also raise your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. viii. 11.) The life of Christ and the Spirit of Christ are not in the wicked; therefore, the cause of the resurrection of the just is not in the wicked. By the resurrection, the just are conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. (John v. 25.) In Luke xiv. 14, the Lord Jesus saith: "These shall be recompensed at the resurrection *of the just.*" If all rise together, one could not hold such language, nor that of Jesus in Luke xx. 35, where He speaks of those who shall be counted worthy to obtain "that age, and the resurrection of the dead;" for if all rise together, some cannot be distinctively counted worthy of the resurrection. Thus far as to the resurrection of the just. The resurrection of the wicked is for the judgment. It is not contemporary with that of the just. In order that the just may reign, they must be risen. They shall bear the image of the heavenly. "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John iii. 2.)

We read in 1 Cor. xv. 23: "But every one in his own order: Christ, the first-fruits; afterwards, they that are Christ's at *His coming.*" The thought of a general resurrection is traditional, and comes from having lost sight of the perfect salvation of the Church. Those who have believed are already justified, and have part in the resurrection of the just, which accomplishes their glory and their happiness. The dead in Christ shall rise first, and those that are alive shall be changed. (1 Thess. iv. 13-17.)

There is an infinite happiness in the thought that we shall be conformed to the image of Jesus, and that we shall have the same portion with Him. If we were not kept of God, even the sight of the glory of Christ could not prevent us from falling into the hands of Satan. May this encourage us and keep us humble!

CHAPTER XX. 7-15.

The seventh and eighth verses contain a very important and humiliating principle. It is impossible, in whatever position man may be, that he should not fall if he is left to himself, and if he has not communicated to him from God a life of which the grace of God is the strength. Jesus manifested in glory does not change the heart. This change is a work of grace. As soon as those even who have seen the glory are no more kept from temptation by the power of God Himself, where they are subjected to temptation, they fall, and Satan makes them at once his slaves. Satan, being loosed, comes up out of the bottomless pit upon the earth, not into heaven, where he re-enters no more. When at last banished from the earth, Satan will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are since the beginning of the millennium, and shall never come out of it.

This is a proof that the judgment of the wicked [dead] does not take place at the coming of Christ. When the great white throne is there, the earth flees away, and this is not the return of Jesus.

In the present dispensation, God visits the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. (Acts xv. 14.) Satan is opposed to this people in whom the Holy Ghost dwells, and who have the foretaste of the glory and the joy that belong to the people of God. The consequence is, that they are a separate people, who fail in rendering testimony if they enter, however little, into the ways of the world.

Already, in Abraham, God takes out of the world a people to Himself, whom He leaves in the world. Israel was, as a nation, separated from the world. An Israelite could not espouse a Gentile. This separation was according to the flesh, not the result of faith.

In the Church, it is individual faith which causes this separation. All the precepts of the Gospel suppose a state of persecution. (Matt. v. 38-48; xx. 16.) Every thing supposes opposition. (Luke xiv. 25-32.) If there was a Christian world, the precepts of the Gospel would not have any application.

During the thousand years, on the contrary, Jesus shall be the Prince of this world, of which Satan is now the prince. Now, all those who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. (2 Tim. iii. 12.) We are called to suffer; and if the world were really Christianized, we should be called to run with the tide instead of contending against it.

When Satan shall be bound, all that will be changed, and this opposition of the world, will cease. The Lord Jesus shall reign in righteousness; there will be no temptation, and the mass of people will be really governed by Him. If this took place in the present dispensation, all the precepts of the Gospel would become useless and out of place. Under the reign of Christ, the Church, which has already suffered, will be seen glorified and the world blessed, without Satan's temptations, living in peace and under the government of the Son of man. It does not follow that every soul on earth shall be converted.

If the reign of the thousand years was a spiritual millennium, it would not be possible that Satan could be loosed to seduce all those who would have the life of Christ in them. Instead of that, it is a government without temptations; and when Satan is loosed, he carries man away with him in spite of the sight of the glory of Jesus; and this is the final trial which displays how impossible it is for God to trust in the creature.* (John ii. 24.) We are called to trust the faithfulness of God, because we have learned that God cannot trust us.

It would be extraordinary in a dispensation for man not to be subject to trial and temptation in the ways of God. Those of the millennium are to be tempted like others. The consequence of

* "When the nations form the body of hostile agents, we have Satan's actings in them; but it is no revival of the beast, nor anything in that character. Blessed be God, there was a final ending of that dark and subtle apostasy which resulted from Satan's being in heaven; but this is a mere exhibition of open hostile enmity, in those whom he has been able to deceive here. We must on no account, therefore, lose sight of this character of present evil and rebellion and apostasy, that it flows from Satan's being in heavenly places, though the Church in the knowledge of Christ's exaltation, may know His and its entire victory over him. The wrestling, however, is not now with principalities and powers, with spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. In chap. xii., Satan is cast down from heaven; but here, all that he raises on earth against the Lamb is cast into the lake of fire, and Satan himself is bound in the bottomless pit, the history of the earth not being yet finished. The coming of Jesus, whose judgment acts on the beast and false prophet is not the same as the angel of God's providence and power, casting Satan into the pit. The glory and reigning of the Son of man seems to vindicate God as regards the failure of the Noah world. The blessing of the second Adam, as the head of a redeemed race, takes the place of antediluvian evil and wretchedness, in which the children of fallen Adam displayed their character; *this* closed by the judgment of water, *that* commenced by that of fire. In the reign of the Son of man with His saints, 'a King shall reign in righteousness.' In the blessedness of the second Adam, as head of the new race, when God's tabernacle is with men, therein 'DWELLETH righteousness,' its peaceful and constant habitation, without force maintaining it. Partially the principles of these two states mingle, by virtue of the power and influence of the heavenly Jerusalem and its great bridegroom, and so we have Psalm lxxxv. accomplished; still are they different."—*Same author.*

it is the same—man falls. Even the presence of Christ does not prevent it; and the heart is so irremediably wicked and evil, that in the presence of Jesus it will yield to its passions and lusts, and please himself instead of pleasing Jesus. Innocent man fell—still more so when he is no more innocent.

During the manifestation of the glory of Christ, the revolt cannot be hidden. Man may see the glory of Christ, be convinced of it, and oppose himself to it! Lazarus being risen, the Jews wish to put him to death with Jesus, because of the testimony rendered to the power of Christ.

If the heart of man is not converted, renewed and kept of God, it is capable of any thing.

Verses 9, 10. They will make war with the saints and with the city beloved of God.

At that time, the whole world shall be the sphere of the judgments of the prophecy. With the Jews, the promises and the ways of God are circumscribed in the land of Canaan, which is simply also called the earth. Later, this sphere extends itself, and the four monarchies, then Christendom, become the prophetic earth. Jesus shall reign over the whole inhabited earth, and prophecy shall then extend over all its surface. If, when Christ is manifested in glory, the world opposes the people of God, it is not surprising that the same thing should happen now that Christ is hidden. To think otherwise, is to be in illusion.

To understand the glory of Christ in the Church, the Church must be separate from the world. When the Church is mixed up with the world, this only spoils the Church and Christians. The world never draws towards Christians, and it cannot do so, for its own nature cannot allow it, but Christians may to their own loss draw near the world, because the old man is still in them.

Verse 10. The beast and the false prophet are in the lake burning with fire and brimstone since the judgment of the earth. Satan is not yet there. He reigns in a public house, in balls, in the opera, at the theatre, in concerts, &c., and he rules in the hearts of men, in presenting to them things pleasant to their lusts. When Satan shall be in the lake burning with fire, he will not reign there; he will be there as the most miserable being. At the beginning of the millennium, the beast and the false prophet will be thrown there alive. Satan is only bound in the bottomless pit, from whence he shall come out again to tempt man.

As long as Satan is in heaven, he is the prince of this world. There are idolaters, a Babylon, and that secret influence which deceives the heart of man, so as to make him look at a piece of wood as a god. These are the effects of the deceits of the enemy. What has become of the greatest part of the human race? It is plunged in idolatry! Civilisation does not draw man out of it; the people of antiquity, whose civilisation has been transmitted to us, did not through it come out of idolatry; and the most enlightened men submit themselves to things which their own reason rejects, because they are under the influence of Satan. When Satan has come out of the bottomless pit, he can no more exercise this influence, because he cannot go up into heaven again and present himself out for a god before men. He can only excite them to an open revolt.

Verses 11-15. Satan being set aside, here is the judgment of the dead.* The judgment of the great white throne only applies to the dead. Then it is that the resurrection of judgment takes place; the resurrection of life is for those only who shall reign. The effect of judgment is: "For in thy sight shall no man living be justified." (Ps. cxliii. 2.) It is only those who have the life of Christ in themselves that will escape from the lake burning with fire and brimstone. To be judged after our own works, is to be condemned.

One thing that will prove that the question is not here concerning the coming of Christ is, that the place of the great white throne is not condemned, whereas Acts i. 11 announces the return of the Lord Jesus to the earth, and Zech. xiv. 4 shows Him to us on the Mount of Olives. It is from that mountain that He was taken up from the midst of His disciples, and it is on that mountain that He will again set His feet.

That is not at all the great white throne. When this appears, heaven and earth flee away from before His face. This is not the coming again on the earth. The dead appear before Him. For the judgment of the living, He must come again where the living are to be found. In the other, it is all over with the present heaven and earth.

CHAPTER XXI. 1-8.

An event of all gravity is here mentioned;* Jesus gives up the kingdom to the Father. (1 Cor. xv. 24.) He has taken the kingdom as a man. He who became a man, and made Himself of no reputation, has been highly exalted. The question is about His humanity, not about His divinity, properly speaking.

Jesus, as a man, intercedes now for us; as a man, He shall reign also. This is infinitely precious to us. Jesus is not an unknown God, but a man sitting at the right hand of God. As a man, He shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, which as a man He received. (1 Cor. xv. 22-28.) As a man, the Son shall be subject to God and shall no more reign, although as God He shall reign eternally. There is no more intercession when all the saints are happy, nor any government when all the wicked have disappeared; and God shall be all in all.

Justice shall not *reign* then, it shall *dwell*. (2 Peter iii.) Perfection will not exist until God has made all things new. There is here no distinction made of a people of God amongst men. The tabernacle of God is *with men*. All is peace. God is all in all. All those who remain after the judgment are blessed together. But we have to consider whether what is called the Church now shall not also be a special blessing, whether it will not be the tabernacle of God amongst men. (See Eph. iii. 21.)

Jesus is here the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of the counsels of God. He is God Himself. When all shall be accomplished and made subject to God, then there shall be an eternal blessing. Since the fall of Adam until this day, it is the manifestation of the grace and of the patience of God.

We have in one sense come to the end of the book of the Revelation. Here it is that the events of the prophecy are closed.† What follows is a description of the new Jerusalem, of the joy of the saints during the thousand years, and of the relations of the heavenly Jerusalem with the earth. Every thing is centred in Christ. The smallest, the meanest of those who attach themselves to Christ, who love Christ, shall shine in the glory of Christ, and that one shall be found wise even by the wicked who despise him now.

* "The judgment of the beast and his armies, it appears to me, is not the judgment of Matt. xxv., nor is Matt. xxv. the judgment of the great white throne. That judgment in Matthew appears to me to be the judgment of the nations at large, when Christ is not making war, either as coming from heaven, or as going forth in connection with Jerusalem; but when He is sitting on His throne, having come, and judging the nations for the manner in which they have treated the preachers of the Gospel of the kingdom, in that going forth which shall specially take place at the close.* It is not 'He shall send forth His armies,' but the calm and solemn session of the throne on those who have despised Him in His messengers.

Although the fact of the resurrection of the just is mentioned here, to separate them out of the judgment; the millennial state itself is little dwelt upon, the chapter being properly the account of the *session of judgment*. From this we see the partakers of the first resurrection entirely exempt; then Satan's actings, as introducing the first millennial judgment are mentioned, and that judgment itself. On the great white throne (for there were no thrones now) sat One, from whose face heaven and earth *fled away*. This, therefore, was no *coming* at all. No judgment τῆς οἰκουμένης, of the habitable world as a scene, nor a judgment of the quick. The dead, small and great, stand before God, and *they* are judged out of the books, according to their works. We have therewith a general statement of the portion of those not written in the book of life. Whatever differences there may have been in measure, they were all cast into the lake of fire. This was not a place now merely *prepared for the devil and his angels*. The devil was there; the false prophet and beast had been there long before; now, all those who were not written in the book of life."—*Same author.*

* If any ask what becomes of the living saints as to their change at the close of the millennium, the answer is, Scripture says nothing, save that from other passages we know, on principle, they will have incorruptible natures in that scene, when all things are made new.

* "There was now not merely an economic change. The great white throne had no reference to any dispensation, but to the dead. There was an actual physical change, a new heaven, and a new earth, and no more sea. And here John sees a new object, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. This general fact, I conceive, is presented here to give the objects. Its bearings are taken up apart, and first the historical progress or result is stated; and we find the tabernacle of God, not the throne or heavenly dwelling of God and the Lamb; but God all in all,—the tabernacle of God with *men*. The race, man, now are blessed with God's presence, and grace had provided a way, in the which with no desolating enquiry of, "Where art thou?" God could visit, yea, have His tabernacle among men, now headed up in the blessed second Adam—the risen and glorified man, not in the first fallen one. The millennium, as we have said, is the contrast to Noachic failure, when Satan is cast out of the heavens, and government comes in, righteous and effectual for blessing and peace. To man's fall, the reign of the first Adam, is here contrasted the perfect, unfailing, and new and durable blessing of the second—all things made new—no more death—all evil put in the lake of fire. Chap. xix. 9 is the special recorded blessing of the former state—the marriage of the lamb: xxi. 5, the blessings of this. The condition of the earth during the millennium is more properly the subject of the Old Testament prophets—the restitution of all things spoken of by them. The connection of the heavenly blessings with it, during the millennium, is, however, taken up in what follows to complete the picture, and give the saints the joy of their own portion in it, which, in its own proper and intrinsic character, moreover, is eternal. This account is from xxi. 9 to xxii. 5, 6." * —*Same author.*

* xxi. 8, closes the historical statement: what follows is description, and that of the millennial effect of the city, as well as of the city itself.

† See Appendix C.

May God render us faithful to the glory of Christ while the world is despising this glory, and we shall be made partakers of it when it shall be manifested!

CHAPTER XXI. 9-27. XXII. 1-5.

In comparing the ninth verse with the first of the sixteenth chapter, you will find this likeness, that it is one of the seven angels, who have the seven vials, that gives the description of Babylon, and that it is one of them also who describes the bride of the Lamb, the holy city, with the whole of the prophecy from the ninth verse. The historical unfolding of the mediatorial service of the Lamb is already contained in this book.

What is found in chap. xxi. 9-27 and xxii. 1-5, does not form a continuation, either historical or prophetic, of what precedes. It is a description of the new Jerusalem, and there are many circumstances which precede what is in the beginning of the chapter. The angel, in the same manner, describes Babylon after having given her history.

Verses 9-13. It is in heaven, in the glory only, that the bride, the Lamb's wife, is spoken of in the accomplishment of God's ways concerning her.* The present dispensation is only the assembling the living stones of this city, the assembling of the saints, the Church. Through the resurrection, we shall all be placed without sound (see 1 Kings vi. 7) in the glory prepared for us.

This is the bride of the *Lamb*, not of the *King*, as in the Old Testament. The Church has part in the sufferings, as well as in the glory of Christ; and to her Jesus is the *Lamb*, and not the King, the manifestation of the heavenly, and not of the earthly, righteousness of God, for in the last case Christ ought not to have died. This heavenly righteousness is hidden in God, unknown to the world, but known of faith. Before the world, the death of Christ is the greatest injustice of man. The Lamb is also the manifestation of the patience and of the goodness of God. But as to the accomplishment of righteousness with regard to His death, no true estimate could be made of its value, except in heaven. No reward on earth could have been worthy of what Jesus has suffered. The manner in which Jesus glorified the Father could not be worthily recompensed but in placing the Son at the right hand of the Father. To suffer for having well done, and to submit to all, that is the part of a Christian. It is better to keep Christ's character than one's cloak. The Church has part in all this. She has the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ and of His resurrection. She becomes the Lamb's wife in His glory, as in His rejection: she had part in His sufferings. We cannot have a portion with Christ above, without having it with Him here on earth. Christ is one whole.

The spouse of the *King* is the spouse on earth. The bride of the Lamb is the Church in glory. She has the enjoyment of the ripe fruits of the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. Even in the glory, *grace* is the portion of the Church. Government in justice characterises Jerusalem on earth. The *city* comes down from heaven. The city, which comes from the earth, is Babylon. Here, it is the holy Jerusalem. She comes from heaven. She is not found on the earth; there is no thought even of her there. It may be manifested to the earth; but in its origin it is a heavenly thing, also in its character, in its nature altogether.

What comes from God is holy. Jesus, the only man who really came forth from God, was perfectly holy. He was not of the earth. It is impossible that any thing could stain the origin of the nature of what comes from heaven. "He *cannot* sin, because He is *born* of God." (1 John iii. 9.) Our risen body is a house of heaven: it is a glory reserved in heaven. What is truly of God abides in God, and cannot fade. In its nature, life, essentially divine, is not only pure, but it cannot fade, nor become corrupt.

There is still something more, "the glory of God." Then the city has the form and the beauty of what God manifests in the glory. God is glorified there, all shines with His glory, all relates to it, bears witness to it, and is clothed with it. "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. v. 2.) Christ shall come to be glorified in the saints, and the Church is clothed with the glory of God Himself. It is precious to have always God's true object in view, which cannot stop on this side His glory. If one would get at the bottom of the counsels of God, one must look to His glory. What makes me, in travelling, pass through such and such a place, is not the desire of seeing that place, but of getting to a farther end. The sight of the glory sanctifies truly, and gives an object far above all that could be prepared to stop us here on earth. We shall never walk well here below, even in the smallest details, if the great end is not constantly before our eyes. If I have any object on this side the glory, even the welfare of the Church in detail, my soul will suffer from it. There is that which elevates all the Christian does, if in every thing he has the glory of God in view.

The *Father*, we have seen, is never mentioned in the Revelation; nor have we here the children of the Father, but the bride of the Lamb. This book speaks of government and glory; and God, in this book, takes all His titles, save that of Father.

The apostles of the Lamb, (verse 14,) not the twelve tribes of Israel, are the foundations of the city. The prophets knew that these things were not for themselves, but for us. (1 Peter i. 12.)

There is a perfect order. *The golden reed*, (verse 15,) the exact righteousness of God, measures all, and judges of all. The result of the work of God is perfect. Nothing is wanting. Nothing is too long; nothing is too short. All is perfectly regulated. Not a stroke of the hammer remains to be given. All is perfect—God is the Architect.

Verse 18. God Himself is the building of the wall. Jasper represents God. Christ is girded with pure gold, and it is said: "Righteousness is the girdle of His loins." It is the divine righteousness accomplished in Jesus, not the earthly.

Verse 21. There is also purity, *transparent glass*, the perfect purity of God, which can no longer be defiled. (Chap. xv. 2.) The purity is no more of water, but of glass; it is consolidated, and rendered firm. The Church, one with Christ, is seen there having the righteousness of God, His purity, His holiness. The justice of man does not become a Christian. One cannot mix together the earthly justice, which says: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth," with grace. The righteousness of Heaven can ally itself with grace, and the only righteousness that becomes a Christian is a heavenly righteousness. It gives, and no longer exacts. God having communicated His nature to the Christian, he is raised above sin, and is made partaker of God's holiness. (2 Peter i. Heb. xii.) The true character of the Christian is that of divine righteousness and holiness, and that of grace, what becomes God, when He is manifested as man. We want faith to lose our fortune and to forgive; but if it is coming out of the society of man, it is entering into that of God. What a portion for us, and how it does elevate our souls! This righteousness, this holiness of God, cannot be fully manifested until the Church is seen in glory.

The difference of the stones, (verses 19, 20,) contains details which are above my knowledge. It is said of Satan, that before his fall he walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire; that every precious stone was his covering. (Ezek. xxviii. 14.) The precious stones were on the breastplate of the high priest. These stones are not pure light, but the reflection of the divine glory, where the most elevated creature walked before its fall. It is in that position that Christ places the Church on His heart, as high priest, and in the full manifestation of which He places her in the glory. The Church is in that glory. It is what is nearest to God when the question is about the glory. It is the radiancy of the divine glory reflected, and manifested in its varied beauty in the creature, and this in its most immediate relationship with God, a radiancy of divine light on and through the creature. In Ezekiel, this is the case in creation; on the breastplate of Jesus, in grace; here, in glory. In the first case, the creature could not maintain itself there. Christ maintains the Church there in its weakness. He places her there in the strength He has Himself in the glory. The point here is the right of the sovereignty of God, who places the Church in this glory; and not the affection of the Father to His children.

Verse 21. The twelve gates are twelve pearls; that is, what is beautiful, the perfection of moral grace in the Church, a pearl of great price: (Matt. xiii. 46) it was what Christ had looked for. The street of the city is of pure gold, as it were transparent glass;

* I hardly need say here, that this does not mean that there has not been a Church on the earth during the ages which have elapsed since Pentecost. I have insisted enough upon this in other writings. There certainly was a Church, and in the relation of a bride with Christ through faith. But the marriage was not come, and it is equally evident that the whole of it is not formed before she is in the glory. Her *characteristic place* is in heaven. She belongs there. What else is here, is only the general principle of what God will accomplish in the glory. God wills that man should manifest this before the world, in the power of the Holy Ghost, until Jesus returns; and she is here, consequently, the habitation of God *through the Spirit*.

no defilement is any longer possible. Jesus will no more have to wash our feet in order that we may enter into the presence of God for our worship. In the glory, we shall be standing on purity. The more we walk there, the more we shall get into purity, without having the need of conscience to be on our guard. The more we then let go our affections, the more we shall praise God. It is great rest this to Him who loves holiness. The precious stones express the solid basis of our glory, and we shall walk on purity. This is heavenly rest.

Verses 22-27. There is no more *temple;* that is to say, nothing that contains and hides the glory of God. God is the temple. He receives and encloses His people. If one came out of the temple, one found the world. Then, we shall be shut up in God. He is the intimate centre of every thing, as also the circumference of our happiness. If we would come out of purity, we must come out of God, who is infinite. All God's names in this dispensation, save that of Father, are here. The Lamb, He who has suffered, and in whom our affections are concentrated, is also the temple. God shall be the *Sun* of the city, (verse 23,) and we shall know as we have been known. This has consequences. The nations upon the earth, spared in the judgment, walk in its light, the light of the city. Jesus saith: "The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them, that the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." (John xvii. 22-29.) There will be a world which shall know it and see it, in the manifestation of that glory. The affection of the bride delights in the glory that belongs to the Lamb, and the bride is manifested in that glory. The Church, which is the manifestation of the goodness and of the glory of God, shall be the light of the world. It is in our glory that the world shall understand what a Saviour we have had. What joy for us, in whom will be seen, in the ages to come, the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus! (Eph. ii. 7.) When the world shall see us there, it will then understand that God has loved us as He has loved Jesus. Every thing corresponds with our portion here below. The earthly Jerusalem will take vengeance (shall execute the vengeance) on God's enemies. We are here on earth the instruments of the grace and of the glory of God. Sinners may speak of it from the heart. This will continue in heaven. The Church shall be, in the glory, the testimony rendered to grace, and the earthly Jerusalem shall exercise the severity of justice against sin. God is now rejected and despised in us. He shall then be glorified in us.

Isaiah lx. shows that the earthly Jerusalem has the earthly government and the rights of the justice of God. "The nation that will not serve her shall perish." (Verse 12.) As to the heavenly Jerusalem, the nations of those who are saved shall walk in her light. All that God shall perfect in the glory ought to be manifested through the Holy Ghost here on earth. By anticipation, the Holy Ghost gives us the foretaste of this glory. And the knowledge of that glory is a principle of action which the world can never understand; but it can see the fruits of it. The selfishness of the world understands the grace that is in the Christian, which can forgive; but, in principle, that grace is foolishness to him. Yet, although the world does not understand our motives, it sees the faithfulness, which is a testimony rendered to grace. May God be sanctified in us by the sight of that glory!

The beginning of the twenty-second chapter shows us the relations of the heavenly city with the earth and the world. The world will see that we have been loved, and will know how much we have been loved, when at the appearing of Jesus we shall appear also with Him in glory. When He *appears*, it must be before some one. His appearing is the manifestation of His glory in the world where He has been rejected, but which God made the theatre of all that He manifested of Himself. It is there that sin entered, that Satan reigns, that man has lived in open revolt against God, that angels have served, that Jesus has suffered, that He has conquered *hades*, death, and the prince of this world. Nothing is more simple than God's manifesting the glory of Jesus and that of Christians in this world, where they were despised.

We shall now see the great principles of that glory.

The earthly Jerusalem has almost all the characters of the celestial one. Yet there is an essential difference. It is in the heavenly Jerusalem that the glory is, and it is from thence that it shines upon the earthly Jerusalem. Our Christian discipline here in the earth enables us to manifest this glory.

The earthly Jerusalem is upon the earth the seat of the government of God in justice. The glory requires that all the nations should be brought low. (Zech. i. 21.; ii. 8-13; viii. 22, 23, &c.) Under Israel, we see the patience of God in government, with the incapacity of Israel to profit by it. Under the government of the new Jerusalem, the law will be put in their heart, (Ezek. xxxvi. 27,) and will enable them to answer to this government of God, and God will manifest His glory there, "and my people shall be all righteous."

In the heavenly Jerusalem, there is a display more complete and more intimate of the resources that are in God to bless if there are any miseries, and not obedience. In heaven are the fruits thereof continually presented in all their richness and in all their variety. At the same time, there are also on the tree of life the leaves destined for the healing of the Gentiles. In Eden, man's innocence was put to the test. There were the two trees, the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The life without which man can do nothing, and responsibility, such are the principles of all religion.

As to responsibility, man found himself in two positions, in innocence and in sin;* that is, in Eden and under the law. The law requires obedience after the knowledge of good and evil is entered; and if there is evil, the only effect of the presence of God is to make us haste away as fast as possible. The law acts on the responsibility of man who has the knowledge of good and evil, and brings it to bear on him, but does not give life.

Christ has taken up man when hopeless on the ground of his own responsibility. He took the responsibility on Himself, and has given life. He becomes thus every thing to man. He comes as *expiation* and as *mediation*, puts Himself under the responsibility according to all the requirement of God, gives full satisfaction, takes upon Himself all the result of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and takes the place of the other tree, and imparts life. Man eat, not of the tree of life, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When man places himself under responsibility, he is surely lost. To recognise that Christ is the source of life, and yet to keep the responsibility of one's own salvation, is to be in confusion and in fear. Christ must answer as Mediator, and be the source of life. Thus it is that pure grace is the only way in which we can have to do with God. We shall even see traces of these things in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Every thing concerning ourselves is accomplished. Life and responsibility being united, it is a joy for us, as well as for the angels, to do the will of God. May God enable us to understand and to apprehend well these two principles, life and responsibility! If we take the responsibility upon ourselves, it is all over with us—we are undone.

Life is represented here under two figures.

A river of living water. We have not only the life in us, but we are drinking for ever of that life which proceeds from the throne of God, and flows in abundance through the city.

A tree of life. One might have eaten in Eden of the tree of life, but in that tree there was no principle of healing. Here, this is not the case. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the Gentiles. This tree of life is more blessed. Those that are in the city find *food* in its fruit, and from its leaves proceed the resources of life for those who are still on the earth. There is the joy of communion; we drink of the river of living water. Although this is the highest joy, yet it is a joy also, even for God, to do good to those who are in want. It is grace, it is goodness. We are made partakers of that joy in the holy city; we shall enjoy there the grace which healeth, as well as the grace of drinking in His holiness. There is joy in heaven for one sinner that repenteth.

Thus in the heavenly Jerusalem, there is neither the innocence without the grace, nor the responsibility and the law without the life.

Verses 3, 4. There is the centre of all authority; the throne of God and of the Lamb. The rest there shall not be a rest of idleness. His servants shall serve Him. Nothing shall separate us from God, and we shall see His face; and in our foreheads, (verse 4,) nothing will be seen that is not the expression of God. All that God is, His name, shall be in our foreheads; that is to say, manifested in us in the most visible manner. Slaves had the name of their masters marked in their foreheads. We shall see the

* In either case, made subject to a law.

face of God. The pure in heart shall see God. The whole world shall see that we are the servants of God. All this is even before the world, a plain manifestation of what God is.

Verse 5. All that is here is an eternal state for the Church.

CHAPTER XXII. 6-21.

Verses 6, 7. Here terminates this description. When the second Adam shall have exercised His power to re-establish all the things mentioned by the prophets, then shall be the end. He shall be Priest after the order of Melchisedec, Priest seated on His own throne, to praise God and to bless the world. This rebellious world shall then be made subject to Him. This is the form that the mediation will take at that time; not hidden, as it is now, but with His people.

Verse 10. There is here a remarkable expression: God had told Daniel to seal the prophecy. (xii. 4.) Here, on the contrary, for the Church, He says not to seal the prophecy. It is not denied that Jesus is coming again, nor do men intend to deny the coming dispensation; but its power over the conscience is avoided by saying: "My Lord delayeth His coming." But Jesus says: "Behold, I come quickly," and He delays not, but is patient, willing that all should repent. Therefore it is that God would not that the Revelation should be sealed. He says: "I come quickly." In principle, nothing between the present moment and the coming of the Lord prevents the believer's laying hold of His coming. God will have the coming of Jesus to be a thought dear to my heart and nigh; therefore, He will not seal any thing. God will not have any thing in the heart of the believer which separates between the time when the prophecy was given and the coming of Jesus.

At the epoch of the Reformation, it was the explanation of this book (see Luther's work, entitled "The Captivity of Babylon,") that gave power to come out of the iniquity and the corruption of the professing Church. And if it was not the accomplishment of the thing itself in full, yet the principle was apprehended, and its application to what was displayed in his time.

Verse 16. In the beginning of the Revelation, Jesus is set forth as the root of David. Here, He calls Himself the root and offspring of David, because He has taken His place of King, as Son of David. Here it is that the Church on the earth comes again on the scene, as vessel of the testimony; that is to say, the prophecy is ended. In the prophetic part, the Church is not seen, unless it be in heaven prophetically. But *He*, who has borne the testimony, presents Himself here in person. This awakens the affections of the spouse, and the Church's desire that He would come.

We may see also how the coming of Jesus is addressed to all classes of persons.* First, (verse 7,) "Behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he who keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." I have no doubt but that this is a warning to us, and to any one else, for the Church is instructed in this book of all that is going to happen, and of the fruits and principles of the world, and of the world which calls itself Christian. But this exhortation applies to those that shall be found here when the Church is gone, in the circumstances of which the book treats.—(Verse 12.) The coming of Jesus is addressed and presented to *all*, as bringing with itself the consequences of their works, and then, prophecy being at an end, Jesus presents Himself personally: "*I*, Jesus, I am," &c. This is that which awakens the desire of the Church, who is his already, and who knows Him, and upon this He declares in answer: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly."

Verse 17. This verse gives the normal position of the Church while waiting for Jesus.*

It is not the bride only who calls for the bridegroom; it is the *Spirit* and the *bride*. This desire of the bride is authorised and sanctioned by the Spirit Himself. It is not any thing from the Spirit that one expects. It is the Spirit which desires, and he cannot desire the Spirit. The bride desires, and she desires the Bridegroom, and not the Spirit. "Come quickly, Lord Jesus." If I desire a millennium without Christ, it is not saying, "Come quickly," but it is saying, Delay at least a thousand years. The Church says naturally, "Come," if she has apprehended her privileges. There are souls who have not apprehended these privileges of the Church; therefore, He says: "Let him that heareth say, Come." The Church has already the river of life; and so she says: "Him that is athirst let him come," for I have the river of life; and whosoever will, let him take of the living water freely; (for I have it,) let him take of it freely. The Church presents grace while waiting for the Bridegroom; it is her duty and her privilege to invite those who are athirst to take of the water of life that she possesses. Having the Holy Ghost, the Church invites to drink of this living water. Come and drink. The betrothed of Jesus, she says to the Bridegroom: "Come." How desirable is her position here! As for herself, her affections are fixed above on Christ, whom she is expecting, and whom she desires. Meanwhile, she is depositary and witness in grace of the grace she enjoys. She does not say, If any one is athirst, let him come *to me*, as Jesus could say; but it is her place, through grace, to say: "Come and drink." Nothing urges more to the plainest and most faithful evangelisation, than the thought that Jesus is coming quickly. On the other hand, if you are wishing for money, or seeking to make provision for placing your children in the world, or if you have any plans for the future, you cannot wish for the Lord Jesus to come; and if you cannot, then your hearts are not right with Jesus. For Christians, it is a melancholy state. And if any one does not own the Lord, nothing is more awful than the coming of Jesus. It is judgment for such an one.

May God purify our hearts, in order that we may desire that Jesus would come quickly! Amen.

APPENDIX C.

It is an ancient and well known remark on the Apocalypse, (and other prophecies,) that blessing is mentioned first, prior to the events of evil and judgment by which it is preceded and introduced. This the author does not contest, but has shown elsewhere, in words which are cited and subjoined, that the use made of it to deny narrative order is entirely unfounded. "How does it militate against any orderly narration if I say, See the happy and blessed

* "As there were many Anti-Christs, and the Churches had begun to fail in their testimony, *nothing now* remained but the interference of His own almighty hand. So that, whatever might happen to Jews or others, the Church might look for the close of its history at once. For it is evidently to it that Anti-Christs and failing testimony apply here. The truth is, there are three statements, at the close of the Apocalypse, of Christ's coming quickly: two in connection with the topics of the book more or less, and one after they are quite closed, and the Church is on the scene in its ordinary hopes and character. Chap. xxii. 7, a general statement connected with the blessing of minding the warnings given in this book;—verse 10, where, contrary to the direction to Daniel to seal his prophecy, the prophet is forbidden to seal it, for the time is at hand. And then it is stated that, (not the general aspect of mankind,) but the personal condition of individuals was to remain unaltered. And this connects the coming of Christ, not with the blessing of minding His prophetic testimony, but with the individual judgment of men according to their work.—Then, after a closing address to the Church, and the answer of the Spirit thereon, His quick coming is affirmed, and the apostle answers in his own person in desire by the Spirit that He should. I should say in reading these passages, that first there were those separated in testimony to blessing,—not the Churches now, they were done with as things 'that are,'—but such as give heed to the prophetic testimony, and that then, subsequent to that, it was solely judgment; that men would be left in their then condition to be judged, in two classes on either side, unrighteous ones, and filthy ones, and righteous ones, and holy ones; and then the statement closes with saying, that He is Alpha and Omega. The subsequent part is composed of closing remarks about the book."—*Same author.*

* "The person just spoken of is the bright and morning star, the joy of the bride's soul. I believe the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come,' to the Bridegroom, to Christ. Christ having spoken of His coming, the moment that He announces Himself in the character in which He is associated with her, the morning star, (for He gives to them that overcome the morning star,) she does not wait till He says He is coming. Her desires, sanctioned and inspired by the Spirit that dwells in her, demand His coming. The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And to whom does the bride say, Come, but to the Bridegroom? It is not as bride particularly she calls sinners. As the bride, she longs for the Bridegroom. But this desire is not a mere gracious but unsanctioned affection. That Spirit, whose mind He knows, who searches the heart, moves and thus sanctions the cry in her. It is a cry 'according to God.' The passage shows the whole position of the Church. Where there is the understanding of her privilege as bride, the presenting the thought of the morning star at once awakens this cry of the Spirit in her. The next thought of the Holy Ghost is to summon those whose ears were opened, who heard, to join in the cry, to say, Come—not to preach. It is not calling every one that hears to preach, but to join the bride in the cry of, Come. Then, indeed, the Spirit turns round, not to urge others to say, Come, but inasmuch as the Church possesses, even before the Bridegroom comes, the rivers of living water, the Spirit turns round to those athirst, and says to them, Come. The Church can look up and say to the Bridegroom, Come: she can look down or around her, and say to the thirsty soul, Come; yea, to whomsoever will, to come and drink of the water of life freely. It is a most lovely picture of her whole position. Longing for Christ herself, she stands for Him towards thirsty souls the happy instrument of the grace which she enjoys, and of which she is conscious in all its freeness and refreshing power; for the stream of eternal life flows in her. Such is her position. Let her know what she will of the counsels of God about beasts and judgment, it is Christ Himself, the morning star, that awakens her desires, and unlocks her tongue; and the coming of the Lord is to her not a warning, as to the others, but an answer of the heart of Jesus to her affection. *He which testifieth these things*, whatever He may have said about them, answers her desire, *Surely*, I come quickly. *Amen.*—May our hearts be enabled to join in what sprung forth by the Spirit from the apostle: *Even so, come quickly*, Lord Jesus."—*Same author.*

order and prosperity of that family, and now I will show you all the discipline and trial they went through in order to arrive at it—and then give their previous history in orderly narration? It would be a very simple and consistent method. The question is a question of fact. The reasoning to subvert it, à priori, is perfectly futile. That God, who knows the end from the beginning, may encourage the saints by showing the result, before He makes them go through the difficulties of the way, is most possible, and I believe constantly true. He stated that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Yet, I suppose, we have an orderly narration of what passed from that day out in Scripture until it be accomplished. Nor does this declaration militate against its historical order. As I have said, there is not the slightest force whatever in the reasoning: its aim is evident, but it has no force. Then as to the facts by which it is sought to prove it. The seventeenth chapter, we are told, is earlier than the thirteenth. Now, let me put this case. I am giving the history of all the revolutionary war. I give a long account of all that passed in France—Buonaparte's victories in Italy, &c.; I come at last to his subversion of the Romano-Germanic empire, by his victories over Austria. In order to make this understood and its importance appreciated, I give an account of the origin and formation of this system, its place in Europe, and in general history; and having brought it down, together with perhaps a similar account of the Italian states, to the period at which I had arrived in the general history, I resume the thread of the narrative, and complete what referred to all thus brought under view. Would it be said, because of this, that my narration was not orderly? Is it not the universal practice, when a general history bears on particular subjects? Can it be otherwise, if a history is complete? And as 'we know in part,' is it not the way to be expected, though the writer be the Spirit of God Himself? And it is just what is found in the book of Revelation . . . .

"I surely do not believe that the reward given to prophets and saints precedes the destruction of Babylon and the mission of Christ. But that does not hinder my finding orderly narration. Let us examine the facts.

"I have a succession of events: seven seals, one after the other, and seven trumpets in order; and before the last of these, I am told, in connection with a parenthetical little book which is opened, of which the close is clearly marked, that in the days of the seventh angel, who is about to sound, the mystery of God should be finished. The seventh angel does sound, and the time for closing the mystery is come. Hence the voices in heaven celebrate all connected with closing the mystery, and the orderly narration is interrupted, the general scheme of the history being complete. A vast power, as important as all the rest of the history, and whose parasitic roots, as we learn from 2 Thess. ii., had been planted in Christianity from the days of the apostle, (at least what prepared its way,) was to be unfolded as that on which the judgments, celebrated in general at the close of the eleventh chapter, were especially to act. Hence the importance of this, as a distinct power in all its bearings, is given, and the historical order of narration, of course, interrupted.

"The twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth chapters, give us this history complete, and the dealings of God in the world connected with it. It is a distinct vision, and hence the order of date must be confined to the subject treated, and can at most only be compared with what is in another vision. But it has its own order within itself, closing with the vintage of God.

"Then we have *another* sign in heaven, introducing the seven vials, which are the wrath of God on the earth—not the history of the beast, though the beast be found there. This was needed to complete the materials of this history. Just as I might relate the state of the provinces of France in the history I have supposed, after giving the public European history of the revolutionary body.

Lastly, as chapters xvii. xviii. do not profess to be history or narration at all, but description of a particular object of judgment, whose details were not yet entered into; only the fact of its judgment had been mentioned in its place in the two previous statements of the course of final events. *Now* the details are entered into, of what it was, its relationship with other objects of judgment, and the circumstances of the judgment itself. Just as I might describe Paris, its circumstances, vanity, objects of art pillaged elsewhere, and its siege, in the history I have supposed. The same thing occurs after the completion of the history of, and subsequent to, Christ's coming. After the marriage of the Lamb,—the coming of the King of kings,—the destruction of the beast,—the binding of Satan,—the millennium,—the loosing of Satan,—the judgment of the dead, and the close of all things; in a word, after the series of events given from xix. to the end of xxi. 8, inclusive, a *description* is given of the heavenly Jerusalem and its relation with the earth, as before of Babylon and her relation with the beast, and in the same manner. But all this does not touch orderly narration, where orderly narration is professed to be given, as it surely is, as description is professed to be given in another part; and to take events out of the descriptive, *professedly descriptive*, part, in order to compare them with others in the narrative part, to disprove the order of narration, because the chapters of description come after the narrative ones, is simply confusion, and nothing else . . . .

"There is this peculiar to the Revelation, and this only: that the subjects being moral, the descriptions and account of judgments are of as great consequence as all the history; and we may almost say, of even more importance than the narrative part. But this changes nothing of what I have said. On the contrary, it is very important to have the narration; to give the order; put each thing in its place, and show the general relationship of events. This is the division I should make in the book. First, in general, chap. i.; then ii. iii.; then iv. to the end. Then, in detail, iv. v. Then vi.-xi. There the general history closes,* but none of the facts of the seventh trumpet are given in prophetic vision. Then xii.-xiv.; then xv. xvi.; then xvii. xviii. Thereon the *scene* changes, but the *event* is taken up, and we have xix.-xxi., to the end of verse 8. Then xxi. 9 to xxii., to the end of verse 7, when the closing remarks and testimony commence and complete the book."

PROOFS FROM SCRIPTURE OF THE PREMILLENNIAL ADVENT,

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

(*Continued from page* 103.)

III.—Let us now turn to Is. lxvi. The fifth verse shews us that the events spoken of are at the end of that state of things in which the righteous and the wicked, good and evil, are mixed together. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." The result of this appearing is the thorough separation of the righteous and the wicked. "The hand of the Lord shall be known toward His servants, and his indignation toward his enemies." (Verse 14.) It is by terrible judgments on the wicked that God thus discriminates between them and the righteous. "For by fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many." (Verse 16.) This terrible judgment which thus concludes the present state or age, is also introductory to the millennium. (See from verse 20 to 23.) And have we not also in this passage a most distinct prediction of the coming of the Lord? Of His coming too in connection with this judgment which terminates the present and introduces the millennial age? Not only are we told in the verse already quoted, "He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed," but in verse 15 we read: "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with His chariots, like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire." You may say perhaps, as has been said, that "any signal and evident interposition of Christ, as Governor of the world, for the accomplishment of His purposes, is called *His coming*, and *His day*," and you may thus seek to evade the force of all the passages, however plain, which may be brought to prove the premillennial advent. But ought we not to beware, dear brother, how we thus set aside the plain and evident sense of Scripture? Let me ask you, if the coming of the Lord here spoken of is not a real, personal coming, where is there a passage which can prove a real,

* I believe there is consecutive order in xi. and xii. in this way: xii. takes up from its origin, and pursues in its conduct, what becomes the object of judgments which happen under the seventh trumpet, and so falls into the general narrative. But then it was quite important enough to give it a history apart, as it was of Babylon afterwards; because these evils and judgments at the close, and which take place under the seventh trumpet, forming the latter part of the Revelation, (beginning with chap. xii.) are really the most morally important of the whole book.

personal coming at any time? Take the passages uniformly brought to prove it, and place this, and others like this, beside them, and say whether the one be not as plain and literal as the other. I will place, on one side, two passages universally understood to refer to the real advent of Christ, and which, you would say, will be at the consummation of all things. On the other side, I will place the passage we are now considering, and another of like import and standing in a similar connection, and you shall judge yourself, whether, if the one be figurative, the other is not also; whether, if the one be literal, the other is not so likewise?

All Christians are agreed that the following Scriptures speak of the actual, personal coming of Christ to judgment.	*The following passages are proved, by their contexts, to be at the harvest—the end of the present, and the commencement of the millennial, age.*
And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. (2 Thess. i. 7—9.)	The hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. (Is. lxvi. 14, 15.)
Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (Jude 14, 15,)	Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives .... And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. (Zech. xiv. 3-5.)

Consider these passages, dear brother, and say if these in the one column can be proved to be mere figures, whether those in the other are not mere figures also? And if all these be figures, where can you find a passage which speaks of a personal advent of Christ at all? Is the Lord Jesus to be revealed from heaven *in flaming fire*, according to 2 Thess. i.? The passage in Is. lxvi. declares that the Lord will come *with fire*. Is the Lord Jesus to be attended by *his mighty angels*, in 2 Thess. i.? In Is. lxvi., he comes with *his chariots*, like a whirlwind; and we are told in Ps. lxviii. 17, that "*the chariots of God* are twenty thousand thousands *of angels*." * Do we read in 2 Thess. i., To you who are troubled, rest with us? In Is. lxvi., we are told that the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants; and in a former verse, "He shall appear to your joy." Does he come, in 2 Thess. i., to take *vengeance* on them that know not God? In Is. lxvi., he makes known his *indignation* toward his enemies, and renders his *anger* with fury. Does he, according to 2 Thess. i., punish the wicked with everlasting destruction? In Is. lxvi., he renders his anger with fury and his rebuke with flames of fire. And in the last verse of that chapter, after describing the state of universal blessedness which is to succeed this terrible judgment—after speaking of all flesh coming to worship before the Lord—it is said, "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." These are the words employed by our Lord himself to set forth the eternity of the punishment of the wicked. So as to the other two passages. Does the prophecy of our Lord's second advent, recorded by Jude, speak of His coming with ten thousands of his saints? And all acknowledge this to be his real, personal advent. We read in Zech. xiv.: "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." And in this passage the very spot of earth on which he shall stand is specified; the very place where the angels said to his disciples: "Why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." This very place is here named as that on which he shall again appear on the earth. "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives." And how any one who reverences the Word of God can attentively read this chapter, and not see that the judgment therein described is identical with that termed "the harvest" in Matt. xiii., I cannot tell.

IV.—But let us examine this chapter, Zech. xiv., and see whether the three marks by which "the harvest" is distinguished are not to be found in it. Is it not at the end of the present age or period, during which the wheat and the tares grow together, the period in which good and evil, the righteous and the wicked, are mixed together? Verses 7-9 of the preceding chapter, which are evidently connected with this, treat of a period commencing with that all-important transaction in which the sword of Jehovah's justice awoke against the man who is Jehovah's fellow; in which the Shepherd being smitten, the sheep were scattered. It speaks of fearful sufferings on the part of the guilty nation who were the instruments of his death, and of a remnant being brought through the fire. "It shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein." Chapter xiv. opens with the circumstances of this remnant, this third part, just prior to their deliverance. "Behold, I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." Here I pause to make two remarks. 1. This cannot be the assault of Gog and Magog on the beloved city, in Rev. xx., just prior to the consummation of all things. There is not a word there of the city *being taken;* but as soon as the nations of the earth *came up against* the camp of the saints and the beloved city, fire comes down from God out of heaven and destroys them all. Besides, the Gog and Magog of Rev. xx. make their assault after the loosing of Satan at the end of the millennium. The conflict here, in Zech. xiv., is, as we shall see, introductory to the millennium. 2. Much less can it be any past event that is foretold in Zech. xiv. The only past event which any have supposed to be indicated by it, is the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.—I would put it to any simple-minded Christian, who, when he reads God's Word, trusts in God to teach him by His Spirit what it means, *whether this passage can possibly be made to mean the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.* 1. It is well known that when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, the city was completely demolished; a plough was passed over the foundations, and the miserable residue of the Jews, who were spared from the sword, went *all of them* into captivity. But Zech. xiv. speaks of a siege of Jerusalem, in which the city shall be taken indeed, and *half of the city* shall go forth into captivity, *but the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.* Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the residue—that is, *the other half*—shall not be cut off *from the city.* Was this the case, I ask, at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus? 2. When Jerusalem was taken, and pillaged, and destroyed by the Romans, the victors returned in unmolested triumph to Rome, and the Roman empire continued to flourish for centuries afterwards. But in Zech. xiv. all nations are gathered against Jerusalem to battle; the city is taken, half of the inhabitants go into captivity, and the other half are not cut off from the city; and "then"—while half of the inhabitants remain in the city—"then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." Did this occur to the Romans at the destruction of Jerusalem? In verses 12-15, where we have a more detailed account of the judgment on those nations, what do we read? "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague." Was all this fulfilled on the Roman armies which destroyed Jerusalem? Did they, and their horses, and camels, perish by this plague? Did their flesh consume away from their bones, and their eyes from their sockets, and their tongues from their mouths? Were the Jews also instrumental in destroying the Roman armies, after those armies had completely vanquished *them* and reduced their city to ashes? "Judah also shall fight *at Jerusalem.*" In chapter xii., where the same events are unquestionably treated of, we read: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, *when they shall be in the siege*, both against Judah and against Jerusalem. *And in that day* will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stare for all people: all that burden, themselves with it, shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." (Verses 2, 3.) "In that day will I

* So that if the expression "his chariots" be figurative, we have an inspired explanation of what the figure denotes.

make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem." (Verse 6.) And if any one should call in question whether these are the same events as are foretold in chapter xiv., the ninth verse is a full answer. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." Compare this with verses 3 and 12 of chapter xiv., and I think you can hardly have a doubt that they both treat of the same events. And were all these predictions fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? 3. But again, it is not only said, "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle;" but also, "and his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley." Now, *did* this take place at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? It avails nothing to say that Christ sat and taught his disciples on the Mount of Olives. This was forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem. And how could Christ sitting on the Mount of Olives, telling his disciples that Jerusalem should be destroyed, be the same thing as Christ standing on the Mount of Olives *to fight against those nations who took Jerusalem?* Besides, *did* the Mount of Olives cleave in the midst and form a valley, either when Christ sat upon it teaching his disciples, or at the destruction of Jerusalem forty years afterwards? Has this disruption ever taken place to this day? 4. Did the Lord my God come, and all the saints with him, at the destruction of Jerusalem? The literal coming of Christ in humiliation was seventy years *prior* to this event. And should it still be said that his coming here is a strong figure of speech, or that it was his coming to set up his spiritual kingdom, I ask, in what sense did all his saints come too? Is that a figure likewise? And as to his coming to set up his spiritual kingdom, did he do that at the destruction of Jerusalem? Was not his spiritual kingdom set up long before? At least, so long before as the day of Pentecost? The living waters flowing out of Jerusalem are often explained as the going forth of the Gospel from Jerusalem. But was it never till Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans that the living waters flowed out in this sense? Nay, did they ever, in this sense, flow out of Jerusalem *after it was destroyed?* 5. Finally, did the millennium commence at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? Has the Lord been King over all the earth since then, and has there ever since been but one Lord and his name one? (Verse 9.) Was all the land turned to a plain from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem? Has it been lifted up and inhabited in her place, ever since that time, from Benjamin's gate to the place of the first gate unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's wine presses? (Verse 10.) Have men dwelt in it, and has it been *safely inhabited ever since its destruction by the Romans?* Has there been no more utter destruction since then? (Verse 11.) Alas! what else has there been from that day to this? And what is it now? A scene of desolation and ruin, as all bear witness who have beheld it. And yet to suppose, as some do, that this chapter begins with its destruction by the Romans, and that the remaining predictions find their fulfilment in the course of the present dispensation! Has it been ever since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans that every pot in Jerusalem has been holiness to the Lord, and all they that sacrifice and seethe therein? Has there been since that day no more Canaanite in the house of the Lord? (Verse 21.) Alas! my brother, the fulfilment of these predictions is not to be found in the past or present, but in the future. It is not the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, but "the harvest," the end of this age, that is pointed to in this prophecy; "the harvest," which ends the present period of evil and of sorrow, and introduces the millennial age, when all the blessed things here foretold shall be actually fulfilled. And if language has any fixed, determinate meaning, we are told in this chapter, that at that time, "the harvest," the end of this age, the commencement of the millennium, "the Lord my God will come, and all his saints with him."

V.—Let us now turn to Dan. vii., and see if we shall not there also find all the distinguishing marks of the crisis termed "the harvest" in Matt. xiii., and whether we have not there a distinct prediction of the coming of the Lord. Daniel sees four great beasts, which are interpreted to him as follows in verse 17: "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth." The fourth beast, as he describes it in verse 7, "was dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly . . . . and it had ten horns." I am not aware that any sober-minded Christians, who have considered these things at all, doubt the general meaning of this to be, that these four beasts represent the same four empires or kingdoms which, in chap. ii., are represented by the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. That the fourth kingdom is that of Rome, and that the ten horns of the beast, like the ten toes of the image, represent the division of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms or states. But here we read of a little horn who does great things; and the divine interpretation of this, in verses 24-25, is as follows: "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." All who pay any regard to the prophetic Scriptures are, I suppose, agreed that this little horn is Anti-Christ, whether, as some believe, that be Popery, or, as others believe, that Anti-Christ is a person yet to come. This little horn is Anti-Christ. And what does the apostle John say? (1 John ii. 18) "Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Anti-Christ shall come, even now are there many Anti-Christs; whereby we know that it is the last time." So that the period had commenced in John's day of which the distinguishing mark was, that Anti-Christ should come in it. The great Anti-Christ had not come, but there were many Anti-Christs, many enemies similar in principle and working to him, whereby, says the apostle, we know that it is the last time. Just as Paul, speaking of the same subject—the coming of Anti-Christ—says, the mystery of iniquity doth already work. And just as in the parable of the wheat and tares, the tares are sown by the wicked one, they were to grow on till the harvest, thus characterizing the whole period from the moment when they were sown to the harvest, when they are gathered in bundles to be burnt. Well, it is of the close of this period that Dan. vii. 26 treats. After speaking of the actings and blasphemies of the little horn that should arise, and of its continuance through a certain specified period, the passage thus proceeds: "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Can this be any thing but "the harvest" in Matt. xiii.? Is not the judgment here spoken of at the close of the present age or period described by John as the last time, and known to be the last time by this very mark, that in it Anti-Christ has his existence and reign? And this judgment is to destroy Anti-Christ. Is it not followed, too, just as "the harvest" in Matt. xiii. is by the millennium? Read verse 27: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Surely, this is language too plain to be mistaken. Even to minuter details there is a most marked parallel between the judgment in this chapter and "the harvest" in Matt. xiii. What becomes of the tares in the latter passage? Are they not cast into a furnace of fire, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth? And what becomes of the body of the beast in Dan. vii.? "I beheld then because of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." And what occurs besides at the time of this judgment? "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Verses 13-14.) This passage is quoted by our Lord himself in Matt. xxiv. 30, and xxvi. 64. It is evidently referred to by him in Luke xix. 12-15. It is quoted in Rev. i. 7. And in every one of these instances it is his coming that is spoken of.

VI.—But let us examine Luke xix. 11-27 a little more particularly. The three marks by which we have seen that "the harvest" is

distinguished from every thing else are, that it is at the end of this age, that it is at the commencement of the millennial period, and that a destroying judgment is at that time inflicted on the wicked, by which all who offend and do iniquity are gathered out of Christ's kingdom. Have we not all these marks in the passage before us? Have we not the end of this age or period? The disciples thought that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear, and our Lord spake a parable to correct this idea: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." And what occurs during his absence? His servants occupy, some faithfully, others unfaithfully, till he comes; his citizens hate him, and send a message after him, saying: "We will not have this man to reign over us." Can any thing be more evidently descriptive of the present period, during which the tares and the wheat grow together? What takes place at the close of this period? The unfaithful servant is punished, the faithful are rewarded, and the enemies of Christ, who would not that he should reign over them, are slain. Is not this just what takes place at "the harvest?" And what follows? Clearly the time when the kingdom of God appears, for it was to shew what must occur up to that time that the parable was spoken. Yes, the kingdom,—not in mystery, as at present, with tares and wheat growing together, but in open manifestation, according to the testimony of Dan. vii., already considered,—is what follows upon this judgment. And it is worthy to be observed, that while Dan. vii. gives us the general fact that the saints shall possess this kingdom,—not Christ only, but his saints along with him,—Luke xix. shews us that the degree of authority and honour which each one shall have in the kingdom, is in proportion to the faithfulness with which he now occupies in the Master's absence. And when is it that the judgment takes place? When is it that the faithful servant is made ruler over ten or five cities, as the case may be? When is it that the enemies are slain? It is when the nobleman returns. It is when Christ descends from heaven with clouds, as all the passages we have considered with one consent declare. And thus is it indubitably established that the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is at the time of "the harvest"—at the end of this age—at the commencement, not at the close, of the millennium.

VII.—Many other passages might be brought forward in addition to those which have been adduced. But let me solicit your attention to one point in the parable of the wheat and tares. You distinctly allowed, the other evening, that the kingdom of the Father, in which the righteous shine forth as the sun, is the millennial kingdom. But have you considered the meaning of those words: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun?" If Scripture is to be the interpreter of Scripture, where must we look for the meaning of this passage but to such other passages as the following? Matt. xvii. 2, where we read of the Saviour that he "was transfigured before them, *and his face did shine as the sun.*" Also Rev. i. 16, where we read of the same blessed Person, when he appeared in his glorified body to John in the isle of Patmos, that "his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." And is it not said, "that when he shall appear we shall be like him?" (1 John iii. 2.) Is it not said, that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly?" (1 Cor. xv. 49.) Nay, are we not told that Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself?" (Phil. iii. 21.) And when is it that we shall thus be changed into the image of our glorified Lord? All Scripture declares, and all Christians agree, that it is when the sleeping saints are raised, and that both the resurrection of those who sleep, and the transformation of those who are alive and remain, take place at the coming of the Lord. "When he shall *appear*, we shall be like him." "Every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's *at his coming.*" (1 Cor. xv. 23.) "For our conversation is in heaven; *from whence* also *we look for the Saviour*, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body," &c. (Phil. iii. 20, 21.) "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we be ever with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) And how exactly this harmonizes with Rev. xx. 4-6: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 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; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years." How simple and conclusive is the testimony of God's Word, when we allow it to speak for itself, and compare one part of it with another! And who does not see that if it is in the sense these passages point out that the righteous are to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, (which you allow to be the millennium,) then Christ's coming must be at the commencement of the millennium? for it is *at his coming*, and *by his coming*, as all allow, that the saints, whether asleep or awake, are changed, and made to resemble Him in the radiance and incorruptibleness of his glorified body.

VIII.—But there is one more passage on this subject which I must touch upon, and it will shew you that the proof just advanced does not rest *merely* upon the sense attached to the words "shine forth as the sun," in Matt. xiii.; no, nor even on the plain statements of Rev. xx. These are certainly sufficient, amply sufficient, to support the argument based upon them. But, turn for a moment to 1 Cor. xv. 51-54: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; 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. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Now, let me ask you, where is this saying written, and in what connection does it stand? It is only in one place, and that Isaiah xxv. 8, that this saying is written. The context proves beyond controversy that the fulfilment of it is in connection with what is called "the harvest," in Matt. xiii. Isaiah xxiv. contains throughout predictions of a most awful, desolating judgment, such as has never been inflicted on the earth from that day to this, and such as answers to nothing but "the harvest," as pourtrayed in the several passages we have been considering. It concludes thus: "Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." I suppose it will be allowed that this is the millennium. Chap. xxv. 1-5 seems to be a song or strain of thanksgiving offered up by the prophet in anticipation of these wonderful events; verse 6 resumes the prophecy, where it breaks off at the close of the former chapter. There we read of Mount Zion and of the Lord of hosts reigning there, and here the prophecy proceeds: "And in this mountain (Mount Zion) shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." The swallowing up death in victory is thus connected here with the removal of the vail that is spread over all nations—the making a feast for all nations of fat things, &c.—and with the taking away the rebuke of God's people Israel from off all the earth; in other words, with the introduction of the millennium. And the apostle tells us when this prophecy shall be fulfilled. "So *when* this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." And it is only at the coming of the Lord, as all admit, that this corruptible puts on incorruption and this mortal puts on immortality. How then can the conclusion be evaded, that it is at the commencement of the millennium that the second advent of our Lord takes place?

I have thus, my dear brother, referred you to eight distinct passages of Scripture, in which I have shewn you every distinguishing mark of what is termed "the harvest" in the parable of the wheat and tares; and in every one of these it is connected with a plain prediction of the second advent of our Lord, or, as in the last case,

with events which we all know and agree will take place at his coming. And it was admitted, when we last conversed, that "the harvest" is at the end of the present age or period, and at the commencement of the millennium. If so, the coming of the Lord is at that crisis also. Let me entreat you to weigh these passages. Let me remind you, too, *that there has not been one single passage adduced to prove that the Lord will not come then, or that the world will be converted before his coming.* The passages last touched upon may serve also as one answer to the question you proposed, What good would the Lord's coming do? Surely, the resurrection of all who sleep in Jesus, the change into his glorious image of both them and the living saints, to say nothing of the restoration and conversion of God's ancient people, and the filling the whole earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, are events desirable enough to make us long for the coming of Him at whose coming all these things will be accomplished. But I hope to answer this question more at large in another communication, as also to furnish further proofs from Scripture of the premillennial advent.

Meanwhile, with sincerest respect and affection for you as a brother in the Lord, I remain,

Yours in Him, W. T.

THE JUDGMENTS ON THE WICKED WHICH ATTEND THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

IN A SECOND LETTER TO A FRIEND.

My dear Brother,

I have to thank you for your kind note of the 1st instant, in which you express your intention "prayerfully to weigh over the passages referred to" in my last. I would beg to remind you that each of these passages is a separate, distinct proof of the coming of our Lord at the commencement of the millennium. If I connected them all with "the harvest" in the parable of the wheat and tares, it was only because on that we were pretty nearly agreed. Leave that out altogether, if you choose, and the passages * adduced in my last are still as good proofs of the premillennial advent as they are when viewed in connection with that parable. My remarks in this communication may perhaps be of a more desultory character; still, I hope you will find them bearing strictly on the question before us.

If I recollect aright, while you admitted that "the harvest" in Matt. xiii. is the end of the present age or period, and that the righteous and the wicked will then be separated from each other, the latter being destroyed by the angels, who gather them together and cast them into a furnace of fire,—while you admitted this, I say, you still suggested a doubt whether there would be any great destruction as to the number of those cut off, and intimated also that the wicked, being destroyed by angels, might simply mean that they would be taken away by death and cast into hell, as each impenitent sinner now is, when his mortal career is run. I would now solicit your attention to several passages which shew: first, that a great number will be destroyed; and, secondly, that the judgment by which they are cut off is a great public event; not the unnoticed death of individuals in the common course of things, but a calamity so fearful and notorious, as to be the object of universal attention, both in heaven and earth.

Let me here ask you to remember, that I am not now proving that the second advent will take place in connection with this judgment. Passages in proof of this were adduced in my former letter, and I may bring others forward, if space allow, in this; but what the following passages are alleged to prove, is, that the judgment on the wicked at the period termed "the harvest," in Matt. xiii., is terrible in extent as to the number of those involved in it, and that it is public, moreover, beyond any thing which has occurred since the days of Noah or of Lot. If there be such a judgment impending, it is surely to be desired that neither saint nor sinner should be unapprized of its approach.

I.—Joel iii. 9-16. "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel." This passage is so plain as to need no remark; still, just by way of setting down *what is in the passage* rather than giving any interpretation of it, I would remind you: 1. That the period is the same, and described by the same terms as that in Matt. xiii.: "Put ye in the sickle, for 'THE HARVEST' is ripe." 2. It is followed (as any one may see who reads from verse 16 to the end of the chapter) by the millennium. 3. The angels, who are the executioners of vengeance in Matt. xiii., are here also spoken of; "thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord." 4. It is not the unnoticed removal of wicked men by death, in the ordinary course of things, but a gathering of God's enemies into one place, and judgment executed upon them there; "assemble yourselves, and come, *all ye heathen*, and gather yourselves together round about.... Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: *for there* will I sit to judge *all the heathen* round about." Just as in Matt. xiii., the tares are *gathered together* and *bound in bundles* to be burnt. 5. It is not a small number of wicked persons who are thus judged. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. 6. It is the abounding and overflowing of wickedness which brings on the judgment. "Come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great." 7. Every variety of expression almost is used to shew the publicity of the event. The assembling of the heathen, the darkening of the sun and moon, and stars, the Lord roaring out of Zion, the shaking of the heavens and the earth—*can* all this be the mere removing by death, in an ordinary way, of a few wicked persons? Impossible! If language can pourtray scenes of universal interest and observation, both to heaven and earth, surely it is the language here employed. And can any thing be clearer than that all this is at the commencement of the millennium? "For, behold, in those days, and in that time WHEN I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, *and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat*, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." (Verses 1, 2.) Now, is it at the commencement or at the close of the millennium that the Lord brings again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem? Ponder this question, beloved brother; and remember that the Lord, the faithful witness, says: "In those days, and *in that time when* I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat." What takes place here we have already seen; and what follows, any one may see by reading the remainder of the chapter. Would you not yourself say that it was a prediction of millennial blessedness? And, if so, is it not most evident that "the harvest," which, as you admit, closes the present period and introduces the millennium, is a period of judgment, desolating and terrific beyond expression, and involving in sudden, unlooked-for destruction, not a little few, but vast multitudes of the human race? I would only ask further, whether such declarations as the following do not imply that the Lord is *personally present* amid these scenes of solemnity and terror? "For there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about." "The day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem." If language like this does not imply that the Lord will be personally present amid those scenes of judgment, I am at a loss to know by what language this could have been expressed.

II.—There is one point in the passage just considered which has not been noticed. It is this: *the vintage*, as well as *the harvest*, is used to represent the judgments foretold in it. "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great." This evidently connects the passage with others in which the vintage

* Of course, it will be understood by this that I mean each passage *adduced in proof* of the premillennial advent.

and the treading of the winepress are spoken of. These passages, as we shall see, treat of the same period of judgment as this in Joel iii., and their testimony is in fullest harmony with what we have seen above, as to the character and extent of the judgment; and this, be it remembered, is the point to which our inquiry at present relates.

1. Let us consider Isaiah lxiii. 1-6. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore, mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth." One remark here in passing, as to the amazing accuracy of Scripture. In chap. lxi., we have the memorable passage quoted by our Lord in Luke iv., and which he applied to himself in the synagogue at Nazareth. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings .... to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, *and the day of vengeance of our God.*" When our Lord quoted this in the synagogue at Nazareth, did he quote the whole of it? Read the passage in Luke iv., and you will see that he breaks off in the middle of the sentence, leaving out the clause which I have underlined, "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord;" and he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down .... And he began to say unto them: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Now, could he have said that, if he had read the whole passage? Did he come then to proclaim the day of vengeance of our God? No, he came then, not to judge the world, but to save it. To *endure* the wrath of God *for* sinners, not to *execute* the wrath of God *upon* sinners. But this latter is as much a part of his commission as the former. And though, when he was here before, it was but to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord; when he comes again, it is to usher in "the day of vengeance of our God." And this is what we have in Is. lxiii.: "The day of vengeance," he says, "is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." And what is it, let me ask, that is here described? The unnoticed removal by death, in an ordinary way, of some few wicked persons who have failed to be converted by the Gospel? Is this what we have here? No one can suppose so. The prophet beholds in vision a mighty warrior returning victorious from the slaughter of his enemies, his garments red with their blood, and he asks, astonished at the sight, Who is this? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Can that be any but Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah? Could any other use such language, and not blaspheme? Hear him further. "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." Some would interpret this of the sufferings of Christ when he was here eighteen hundred years ago. But could any thing be more unlike a fulfilment of this prophecy than the sufferings of Christ? He was crucified through *weakness.* (2 Cor. xiii. 4.) Here he travels in the *greatness* of *his strength.* It was *his own* blood (wondrous grace that was thus displayed!) which was shed for sinners, and by (!) sinners when he was here before. In Is. lxiii. he says: "I will tread *them* in mine anger, and trample *them* in my fury; and *their* blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." He says further: "I will tread down *the people* in mine anger, and make *them* drunk in my fury, and I will bring down *their* strength to the earth." How any one can look one moment on Jesus suffering without the gate at Jerusalem, like a lamb led unresisting to the slaughter, and the next moment look on this prophetic vision of the vengeance he will yet execute upon his enemies —how any one can look on these and say that they are the same, I cannot understand. And I am as completely at a loss to imagine how any one can read this passage in Is. lxiii., so evidently descriptive of the same scene of judgment as Matt. xiii. 40, 41, and Joel iii., and yet maintain that it is only the quiet, unnoticed removal by death of a few wicked persons that we are to understand as foretold in these passages!

2. Is. xxxiv. is a very solemn passage, identified as to the general subject with the one just considered and with Joel iii., by several marks too plain to be mistaken. We have been hearing the prophet ask, Who is this that cometh from *Edom?* with dyed garments from Bozrah? And in chap. xxxiv. 56, we read: "For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon *Idumea,* and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord hath a sacrifice in *Bozrah,* and a great slaughter in the land of *Idumea.*" In chap. lxiii. the Lord says: "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."—In this chapter, verse 8, we read: "For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion." In Joel iii. we have read: "The sun and the moon shall withdraw their shining." Here we read, verse 4: "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree." And what do we learn here, as to the character and extent of the judgment we are considering? Is it a mere taking away by death, in the usual way, of a very few wicked persons? Is it thus undistinguishable from what is passing around us continually? Read the first verse of the chapter: "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people; let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it." Surely, it is no ordinary event to which universal attention is thus solemnly called. Then, as to the extent of the judgment, see verses 2, 3, 7, and 9: "For the indignation of the Lord is upon *all nations,* and his fury upon *all* their *armies;* he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood .... And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness .... And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch." With such predictions as these before us, of wide-spread terrible destruction on the ungodly, it does appear to me, my dear Sir, a serious thing to solace our own minds and the minds of others with the idea that there may perhaps be but a very few cut off at the end of the present period or dispensation. This seems so like saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace; but sudden destruction is coming upon the world of the ungodly, that I should tremble to hold out such a delusive prospect. God, who knows the end from the beginning, has not overstated the horrors of that day of darkness and destruction which is hastening on; and any one seriously examining the Word of God will be amazed to find how large a portion of prophecy relates to this subject, and pourtrays in colours so dark, that their gloom could not by any means be deepened, the sudden, overwhelming destruction which shall overtake the wicked in that day. A few passages have already passed in serious review before us. Many more remain; so many, that all I can do is to select some of the principal among them.

3. Rev. xiv. 14-20. Here we have this solemn judgment represented both by the harvest and the vintage. "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap: for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by

the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." It would be superfluous to point out in detail the identity of this prophetic scene with that pourtrayed in the other passages we have been considering. It is obvious enough, on the very surface of them, that they all describe the same period of judgment. Each one, it is true, presents this general subject in some particular phase or aspect, which distinguishes it from the rest. Still, the general identity of subject, I see not how any one can doubt who reads the passages with ordinary attention. The analogy between the one just quoted and that in Joel iii. is most striking. And what is the testimony of the one just quoted, as to the character and extent of the judgment? Need I give any other answer, than simply to refer you to the passage itself? The last verse, be it ever so figurative in style, surely indicates a most fearful slaughter of God's enemies. The bare reading of the verse is enough to make one's ears to tingle. And, be assured, the God of truth gives no false alarms: the event will not be found less terrible than the prediction.

I would just remark besides, in passing, that the coming of one like to the Son of man, seated on a cloud, is a part of this prophetic vision, as it was beheld by the beloved apostle.

4. Rev. xix. 11-21, is another passage in which this treading of the winepress is brought before us. St. John sees "heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." From the entire description of this heavenly Conqueror, there can be no doubt as to who it was that the prophet of Patmos saw. "He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." He is followed by his saints. "The armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." The fine linen has been explained, in verse 8, to be "the righteousness of saints." Can any one fail to be reminded by this of a passage referred to in my former letter?—"The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." What is the object for which this Rider upon the white horse and his heavenly armies appear? "Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Need I ask here what is the character and the extent of the judgment foretold in these solemn words? Do not the words themselves supply the answer? If any further be needed, you have it in what follows: "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all, free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." Make what allowance you please for the figurative language here employed, you can never persuade yourself to believe that this is the quiet unnoticed taking away by death, in the usual course of things, of a very few wicked persons who had failed to be converted by the Gospel. Here is war, with mighty preparations for it on either hand, issuing in the utter dismal overthrow of the congregated enemies of Christ, who, like grapes in the winepress, are trodden under his feet, "he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." This is the end, beloved brother, of all this world's greatness and glory; this is the event which is hastening on, and which must surely come to pass before the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

We have now examined five passages, viz. Joel iii., Is. lxiii., Is. xxxiv., Rev. xiv. 14-20, and Rev. xix. 11-21, to ascertain the character and extent of the judgment spoken of in Matt. xiii. as "the harvest," the end of this age, and which, as you allowed, is succeeded by the millennium. Two of those passages, Joel iii. and Rev. xiv., speak of it in the very terms of Matt. xiii.; they describe it as "the harvest." Another representation is used besides in those passages, viz. the vintage. This connects them with Is. lxiii. and Rev. xix., where we have the treading of the winepress. The distinct mention of Edom and Bozrah in Is. lxiii. connects that passage with Is. xxxiv., where we have more in detail the judgment on Idumea or Edom, and on Bozrah. It is connected with it by other marks as well, which have been pointed out. We thus have the testimony of five passages clearly speaking of the same general period of judgment, as in Matt. xiii. is termed "the harvest." And what is their united testimony? Verily, it is of such scenes of slaughter and desolation as exceed in horror nearly all besides. I might easily have quoted as many more passages. Indeed, all those (or nearly all) quoted in my last, are as full and plain to this point as any others. Surely, it is not for us to be lulling the Church and the world to deeper sleep with dreams of continued peace and increasing blessing, when a crisis like this is to terminate the present age and introduce the period of millennial blessedness and joy. Bright days there are in prospect for this earth, and never would I forget the testimony of God's holy Word to this. But a dark and dreadful day must intervene; and they entirely mislead the minds of men, who teach them to look for the peaceful spread of truth and holiness till all, or nearly all, the human family are converted. No: the harvest, which, as you admit, is the end of the present period or age, is itself a period in which Christ comes to execute vengeance on his enemies, and those enemies are at that time so numerous and stout-hearted as to be gathered together to battle against the Lion of the tribe of Judah. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." (Rev. xvii. 14.) And this is the scene towards which the course of this world is fast tending. Surely, it must be a matter of no small importance for our souls to be awake to this, that we may be enabled, through grace, to stand apart from all that which is hastening on this final crisis, and on which the judgment of that great and terrible day will fall. The Lord grant us, even now, to act as becomes those called, and chosen, and faithful ones, who are to be with him in that day!

III.—We come now to a very important passage, which, with those inseparably connected with it, I have reserved for distinct consideration. I wish now to look at it, both as to the evidence it affords of a premillennial advent, and as to the light it throws on the character and extent of the judgment by which that advent will be attended. I now refer to 2 Thess. ii., and request your patient consideration of the following suggestions:—

1. It is worthy to be noted, that, in the first epistle, the coming of the Lord is named *in every chapter;* and so named, that no doubt can be entertained by any one as to what coming is spoken of. It is, confessedly by all, the second personal coming of Christ, which is so often referred to in the first epistle to the Thessalonians.

2. The apostle returns to the subject in the first chapter of the second epistle: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," &c. This, I suppose, all will agree, is the second personal appearing of Christ. "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." This also, none will deny, refers to the second personal coming of our Lord.

3. The second chapter begins thus: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him." Is not this the same event that he has been speaking of throughout the first epistle, and the first chapter of the second? No one questions this, that I am aware of.

4. He goes on to speak of the idea that the day of Christ was at hand, and assures them that there must be a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed; he reminds them of what he had before told them, that there was something withholding or hindering the revelation of this man of sin, and that what was then letting would let until it was removed; "And then," says he, "shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of *his coming*." Now, is it another coming that he speaks of here, distinct from that of which he has spoken so immediately before? Throughout the first epistle, and three times already in this, he has spoken of the coming of Christ. In all these instances it is confessed he speaks of the actual personal advent of our Lord. He has not changed his subject; so far from this, he begins this second chapter by beseeching them, by the coming of Christ, and our gathering toge-

ther to him; and then, in the same paragraph, in the unfolding of the argument which he thus introduces, he speaks of "that wicked whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy *with the brightness of his coming*." Now, can it be another coming, and another kind of coming, he speaks of here? Would it not be doing the utmost violence to Scripture to suppose such a thing? Could we understand any other book, if it was to be interpreted on such principles as would lead us to an interpretation of Scripture like this? Suppose a mere human author to write two treatises, the latter intended to throw further light on the subject of the former. Suppose that there is a certain term or phrase which occurs more frequently in these writings than in any other, and that this phrase is always used in one fixed determinate sense. Suppose that it has been thus used twelve or thirteen times without one exception, and that this is acknowledged by all who read the writings in question. Here is, however, a fourteenth instance in which this phrase occurs. There is no intimation on the part of the writer that he uses it in a different sense; there is nothing in the immediate context to require that it should be understood in any different sense. Nay, so far from this, it is used in the usual sense at the commencement of the paragraph in which it again occurs in the instance supposed: now, what would you think of any one who would contend, in a case like this, that the phrase is to be understood in a different sense the fourteenth time of its occurrence from that in which it is used in all the other instances? Would you not say that his mind was warped, and that, for some reason or other, he did violence to the sense of the writer? And if you would shrink from thus reflecting on the consistency of a mere human author, ought not reverence for the Word of God to make you shrink from attributing such obscurity and inconsistency to it?

5. The case before us is even stronger than that just supposed. And it is stronger as read in the original than in our translation. The word translated "coming," in 2 Thess. ii. 8, is παρουσία, and the sense of this word will best appear from the invariable rendering of it in those passages where it is not *the Lord's* coming at all that is spoken of, but where it is used in reference to others.

The following is the list:

1 Cor. xvi. 17...I am glad of the *coming* of Stephanas.
2 Cor. vii. 6.....God.....comforted us by the *coming* of Titus;
——— 7.....And not by his *coming* only,
———x. 10.....But his bodily *presence* is weak.
Philip. i. 26.....That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my *coming* to you again.
———ii. 12.....As ye have always obeyed, not as in my *presence* only, but now much more in my absence.
2 Thess. ii. 9.....Even him whose *coming* is after the working of Satan.

Is it not manifest that in every one of these instances the word means an actual coming or presence? This word is used seventeen times in the New Testament, with reference to the coming of the Lord. It is the word translated "coming," in 2 Thess. ii. 8, the passage under consideration.

But this is not the whole of the case. There is another word used in this passage. It is not only said "whom he shall destroy by *his coming*"—but "by *the brightness* of his coming." Now the word here rendered brightness, is ἐπιφανεία; it occurs five times besides, in the New Testament, and its force you may judge of from the following list of the passages:

1 Tim. vi. 14...Until the *appearing* of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2 Tim. i. 10.....By the *appearing* of our Saviour Jesus Christ.
——— iv. 1.....At his *appearing* and his kingdom.
——— 8.....And not to me only, but unto all them also who love his *appearing*.
Titus ii. 13.....Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious *appearing* of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Can any one doubt, who calmly and prayerfully considers these things, that the coming, the appearing of Christ, spoken of in 2 Thess. ii. 8, is a real actual coming or appearing? It does seem to me that, if evidence like this is to be set aside as inconclusive, we have no marks left by which, in any case, the meaning of the sacred text can be determined; or, indeed, the meaning of any writings or any subject whatever.

6. Leaving this point then, and henceforth assuming it as settled that it is the second personal advent of Christ which is spoken of in this passage; I proceed to inquire, what is the testimony of the passage, as to the period of the advent, whether it be before or after the millennium? What says the apostle? "Now, we beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." The Greek word ἐνίστημι, here rendered "is at hand," occurs in six other passages of the New Testament, and in five of these it is rendered "present." * This, I have no doubt, is the proper rendering of it here. We know from 2 Tim. ii. 18, that there were some who said that the resurrection was past already, and overthrew the faith of some; and it would appear that some person or persons had been endeavouring in like manner to trouble the Thessalonians and overthrow their faith, by teaching them that the day of Christ was "present," that it *had* come. The living saints were still in unchanged bodies, and the sleeping saints were still in their graves, and yet there were those who taught that the day of Christ had come, that it was "present." This is the error which the apostle opposes. He proceeds thus: "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what witholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Now, is there here any opening for a millennium before the second advent of our Lord? The apostle speaks of the commencement, progress, and close of a certain period. It had commenced when he wrote. Its close is at the second advent. And what is it that intervenes? A period of universal and long continued blessedness? A millennium? No; he speaks only of the continuance of evil, of its progress from the incipient state in which it existed even then, to that maturity of daring wickedness which is exhibited in the man of sin, the wicked one, and this wicked one is to be consumed by the spirit of Christ's mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming. The day of Christ cannot come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed. Well, but may there not be a millennium brought about by the gradual spread of the Gospel, and this falling away come after that,—the man of sin be revealed after that. No; for he says the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth will let till he be taken out of the way. And then,—Yes, what then? A millennium? No, *then* shall that wicked be revealed. Well, but may he not be revealed, and have his day, and the millennium follow, and then the Lord come at the close of it? No; that cannot be, for it is by the second advent of our Lord, by the brightness of his coming, that that wicked is destroyed. Thus are we guarded by the apostle, as to both ends of this period. The millennium could not be at the former, for the mystery of iniquity was working then, and was to work till it issued in the revelation of the man of sin, the wicked one. It cannot be at the latter end of the period, for the wicked one, the man of sin exists to the end, and the period closes with his destruction by the brightness of Christ's coming. Thus are we shut up to the conclusion that there can be no millennium between the time at which the apostle wrote and the second coming of Christ. The mystery of iniquity, the falling away, the revelation and blasphemies of the man of sin, fill up the whole period; and if there is to be a millennium, it must be after the second coming of our Lord. It cannot be before. The only way of evading this conclusion, is to say that the coming of Christ, by the brightness of which the wicked one is destroyed, is not his actual second, personal advent. But this I have already shewn to be doing violence to Scripture, and adopting a principle of interpretation which, if carried out, would rob all language of any fixed, determinate meaning, and render it impossible to decide what was

* They are: Rom. viii. 38. 1 Cor. iii. 22; viii. 26. Gal. i. 4, and Heb. ix. 9. In 2 Tim. iii. 1, it is rendered "shall come," but there "shall *be present*" is evidently the true rendering.

the import of any statement made by any writer, on any subject whatever. Surely, we cannot adopt such a principle in the interpretation of God's holy Word!

7. One remark more. If it should be said that "consumed by the spirit of his mouth" means a gradual weakening of the Anti-Christian power by the spread of truth: I answer, If this even were so, it does not affect the conclusion in the least. The man of sin must not only be *weakened*, but *destroyed*, before there can be any millennium. And he is destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming. But then, further, to consume is not to weaken. Ἀναλίσκω, the word here rendered "consume," strictly means to take away, to destroy. It is the word used in Luke ix. 54, where the disciples ask our Lord if they may command fire to come from heaven and *consume* the Samaritans. Surely, it means no gradual weakening there, but utter and sudden destruction. There is another word, δαπανάω, which is once rendered "consume," (James iv. 3,) and it does signify to devour, to spend, to waste, and is so translated commonly. But it is not this word that is used here, but another, signifying to take away, to destroy. Neither does the expression, "spirit of his mouth," signify the Gospel or the influences of the Spirit. Πνεῦμα, the word translated "spirit" in the New Testament, has for its primary meaning, as you are doubtless aware, wind, air in motion, a breathing, breath; and this is marked in the Lexicon before me, as the meaning of the word in this passage. "Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." For the force of this phrase, "the breath of his mouth," in the Old Testament, see Job iv. 9, xv. 30; Is. xxx. 28 and 33; also Is. xi. 4.

8. I would consider this last passage a little more particularly. The prophet is speaking of the rod which was to come forth out of the stem of Jesse, and the Branch which was to grow out of his roots. It is of Him he says: "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, *and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.*" This is obviously the passage which the apostle quotes in the chapter we have been considering. And what follows this destruction of the man of sin, the wicked one, by the breath of Christ's lips and by the brightness of his coming? Read the remainder of the chapter, Is. xi., and you will find that this overthrow of Anti-Christ is succeeded by the millennium, when "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Where is there a child of God who has not rejoiced in the prospect of all this quietness, and harmony, and blessing, which are yet in store for this miserable world? But, how is it that this season of universal blessedness is introduced? "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." When does He thus overthrow his daring and blasphemous enemy? The apostle gives the answer. "Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy WITH THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS COMING." Yes, it is the coming of our blessed Lord which destroys the man of sin, and which introduces that blissful period, of which we have such a glowing description in Is. xi. Thus do the prophet and the apostle confirm and illustrate each other's testimony. We begin with the apostle in his day, and he tells us that the mystery of iniquity was working then. He speaks of some hindrance to the full display of this mystery of evil, and of its continuance up to a certain time. He tells us of its being taken out of the way, and of that "wicked being revealed, and of his destruction by the breath of Christ's mouth and by the brightness of his coming." And there he pauses. It is at this point the testimony of the prophet begins. He also tells us of the triumphs of Jesse's Offspring, that "he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked." But he leads us onward, and shews us, as the fruit of this victory, a peaceful, holy, happy earth, reposing beneath the sceptre of Him who is Jesse's Root as well as Jesse's Offspring. Can any thing be more conclusive than the combined, harmonious testimony of these holy men, who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?

9. I would notice, too, the harmony between all this and some of the other passages which have been considered. In the parable of the wheat and tares, we are told that he who sows the tares is the devil, and that the tares and wheat are to grow together till the harvest. In 2 Thess. ii., Paul tells us that the mystery of iniquity was working then. The tares had been sown. Were they to be plucked up? Was the mystery of iniquity to cease from working? No: it was to work on, and in the end, when the hindrance was removed, it was to issue in the revelation of the man of sin, and he was to continue till his destruction by the brightness of Christ's coming; in other words, till "the harvest." In my former letter, it was shewn from Dan. vii. how the blasphemies of the little horn, or Anti-Christ, are the occasion on which the thrones are placed—the judgment set and the books opened; and how, because of his great words, the beast is slain, his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame; and how all this is connected with the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. So, in 2 Thess. ii., it is to consume Anti-Christ with the breath of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming, that the Lord appears. All this is followed in Dan. vii. by the millennium. The kingdom, and glory, and dominion, are given to the Son of man, and with him his saints take the kingdom and possess it. So, as we have just been seeing in Is. xi., when Christ has smitten the earth with the rod of his mouth and slain the wicked (one) with the breath of his lips, he reigns in peace over the whole earth. So also in Rev. xix. and xx. What shews that these together form one strain of prophecy, is this, that the destruction of the beast and false prophet in chap. xix. 20 is spoken of in chap. xx. 10 as a past event. Let any one read from the beginning of chap. xix. to verse 8 in chap. xxi., and he can hardly doubt that it is one unbroken strain of prophecy, and ought so to be read. And when thus read, how marked the coincidence between it and all the passages we have been examining! As has been already pointed out, we have the coming forth from heaven of the King of kings and Lord of lords, followed by the armies which were in heaven. Then we have the overthrow and destruction of the beast and the false prophet, and their followers. Then follows the binding of Satan and the reign of the risen saints with Christ a thousand years. And when is it that the saints rise? All Scripture answers what all saints subscribe to, *At the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.* And then, to show that this is not the final judgment, the judgment of the great white throne, it is said, "the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished." The thousand years expire—Satan is loosed from his prison—he deceives the nations of the earth—they gather together against the beloved city—fire comes down from God out of heaven, and destroys them—Satan, who deceived them, is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are—(observe this, *where they are*, for they had been cast there a thousand years before,) a great white throne appears—heaven and earth flee away—the rest of the dead are raised, and all whose names were not in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. I can conceive of nothing more plain, more straightforward, and more entirely harmonious with all the Scriptures we have been examining, than this comprehensive portion thus read. I say *read*, for I have not been interpreting or explaining it, but simply pointing out what it contains.

10. There is another point on which I cannot enlarge. A remark or two must suffice. It is allowed by all students of prophecy that the beast and the false prophet, who meet their doom amid the scenes pourtrayed in Dan. vii., 2 Thess. ii. and Rev. xix., are more largely described, as to their character and power and the number of their adherents, in previous passages of Revelation. And what is the testimony of those passages, as to the number of the followers of Anti-Christ? "And it was given him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Chap. xiii. 7, 8.) So much for the beast. As to the false prophet, which is spoken of in chap. xiii., as another beast with horns like a lamb, and speaking like a dragon;* it is said of him that "he exercisetb all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which

* False prophets are spoken of, by our Lord, as wolves in sheep's clothing.

dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed, and he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he has power to do in the sight of the beast . . . And he had power to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark, &c." Verses 12—17.

And it is this beast and this false prophet, that wrought miracles before him, that perish by the hand of Him who comes forth out of heaven on a white horse, in Rev. xix. And when they thus perish, they are at the head of the kings of the earth and their armies who perish with them. See the passage. Surely, dear brother, this is not *a few* wicked persons cut off by death in the usual way! And depend upon it, with scenes like these hastening on, and the whole course of the world, *the religious* WORLD, as well as the civil and political, tending towards this point, it is a dangerous delusion to suppose that the world is improving and will improve, till only a few wicked persons are left who have to be taken away by death, and that then there will be none but the righteous on the earth. No; what God has revealed of the closing scenes of the present age, shews clearly enough, if we have but ears to hear, that his enemies will then be congregated in immense multitudes under one daring and impious leader, with a false prophet as his ally and his tool, who, according to 2 Thess. ii., as well as the passage we have been glancing at, will be permitted to deceive them by the miracles and signs he will be able to produce, they being given up to strong delusion, to believe a lie that they all may be damned; and on this assembled host, gathered together in haughty defiance of God Almighty and the Lamb, will the thunderbolts of his vengeance fall; the two chiefs in iniquity will be cast ALIVE into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone, and the rest will be slain with the sword which proceedeth out of the mighty conqueror's mouth. If, instead of believing God's testimony and anticipating those dreadful scenes, we are filling our minds with visions of continued and increasing peace, and blessing and prosperity, we shall be, doubtless unconsciously, yet not less surely, helping on those principles and systems which are preparing the professing church, as well as the openly unbelieving world, for this maturity of wickedness and this ripeness for destruction. Let us remember that the mystery of iniquity precedes the manifestation of the man of sin; and if Satan, disguised as an angel of light, can persuade us that the spreading of the mystery of iniquity is the success of the Gospel and the prelude to millennium blessedness; it is easy to see how, with the very desire to do good and to help onward the conversion of the world, we may be unconsciously promoting the designs of Satan, and preparing the way for the open manifestation of the man of sin. The question before us is thus seen to be a solemn, practical question; and it is only as our expectations of the future are regulated by simple faith in the testimony of God, that our conduct in the present will be in harmony with God's mind. If I see where this world's course is tending, and what the end of this world's boastings and exultations will be, I shall not be found sailing down its smooth and rapid current, but in holy separateness from it; separateness from it which will seem madness to any one who is deceived by its fair appearances; I shall be found waiting and longing for *His coming*, whose return is as full of joy to those who look for him, as it will be of dismay and horror to those who have despised the testimony of his grace, and are found amongst his enemies when He comes. It is not at all, dear brother, that we are to be always pondering on the gloomy side of the subject, and thinking of the thickening darkness and the approaching judgment. No; but, knowing this to be true, because God has said it, we are to wait for him whose coming shall dispel every shade of darkness; and while he executes these terrible judgments on the wicked which we have been considering, will do this, that he may purge the earth of its destroyers and corrupters, gathering out of his kingdom all that offends and them which do iniquity, that in the peaceful days of millennial rest and blessing which succeed, the righteous may shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. And it is this, the light and joy and blessing of the age which follows, that should be uppermost in our thoughts; and yet the joy of anticipating this, chastened and sobered in our souls by the certain knowledge afforded us in Scripture of the dreadful events which intervene. There is a passage in Rom. viii. with which I would close this communication. We have seen in Is. xi. how the overthrow of the wicked (one) is succeeded by those blessed days in which the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, &c. In Rom. viii. the whole creation is represented as groaning and travailing in expectation of this. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." And when will the sons of God be manifested? "Beloved," says St. John, "now *are* we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear (it is not yet manifest) what we shall be; but we know that *when he shall appear*, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." It is when Christ appears that the sons of God will be manifested. And it is for this that the earnest expectation of the creature waits. "For the creature (creation, literally) was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Is. xi. is the exposition of all this. When the destroyers of the earth have been themselves destroyed, and Christ and his risen, glorified saints reign over the earth a thousand years, the curse will be removed, the bondage of corruption cease, all things, both in heaven and earth, be reconciled, and none shall hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus the Spirit of God in the saints makes them groan for the adoption, the redemption of the body. That takes place when Christ appears. It is then and *thus* that the sons of God are manifested. All creation waits for that. Why? Because creation itself shall then be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Blessed, joyful period! What effect has the anticipation of it on our souls? Does it give joy and gladness? Yes, verily. But the contrast of all around us and *all before us till Christ comes*, with that blissful age,—the contrast, I say, seen in the light of that glory, makes us groan. That we may all know more of those exercises both of sorrow and of joy, and that by the Spirit, and be more separate from all that will not bear the light of the coming day of Christ, is, dear brother, the prayer of yours in Him, W. T.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.*

I.—XIII.

It is seldom that a chapter of the Word is so isolated that we can give the exposition of it without taking account of the connection with what precedes and what follows. There are some which contain a single subject developed enough for us to be able to consider it separately. Sometimes, even a single verse presents some feature of the precious Saviour which may supply matter for meditation during many blessed hours. But to unfold the ideas which are presented in a chapter, it is always necessary to consider it in relation to those things with which, according to the intention of the Spirit, it is connected. This is what I shall endeavour to do with regard to the chapter before us.

This gospel may be called the gospel of the kingdom. That is, it relates the history and discourses of Christ, specially with a view to the establishment of the kingdom of heaven. This thirteenth chapter reveals to us the mysteries of the kingdom.

Let us consider the position in which the revelation of the kingdom was found when the Lord pronounced it; in other words, what were its relations to the Jewish people at that time.

With this object, let us review a little the contents of this gospel.

In the first chapter we find, after the plan of Genesis, Numbers and Chronicles, the genealogy of the royal family, and the two great stems with which the promises were bound up, and from which Christ descended: David and Abraham.

The promises were made to the seed of each. The miraculous

* [The first part of these notes was originally given as an exposition of Matt. xiii., and was so published, translated from the French. But as even here the exposition gives a general sketch of the preceding chapters, and as I am enabled to add a version of the notes on the chapters which follow, I have ventured so to modify the title as to suit the paper as a whole. The early part dwells only on chapter xiii.—Ed.]

conception of Jesus, according to the predictions of Scripture, is then related. Next, we are told of this royal birth; a subject of alarm to Herod, who was in the enjoyment of the Jewish royalty, as well as of testimony and joy to the ends of the earth. The flight of Jesus into Egypt and his return, and in all these circumstances the fulfilment of the prophecies is established.

In the following chapter, the approach of the kingdom of heaven is announced. The prophet warns the people of the wrath to come, from which it was necessary to flee; of the axe which was laid to the root of the trees; then he announces that God was seeking fruits, and that it would be useless to boast of being a child of Abraham, if one produced none.—Jesus subjects Himself to the condition of the Jews and receives at the same time the testimony that He is the Son of God. His subjection and humiliation, and the testimony thereupon rendered, and rendered to Himself respecting the glory of His person, are here profoundly instructive.

In the fourth chapter, Jesus, thus identified in humiliation with the Jews, and owned as the Son of God by the Father, undergoes the temptation of the enemy who must be conquered and bound, as the strong man, if one would spoil his goods; a temptation suited to the circumstances in which the Messiah stood. Satan seeks to turn the Lord aside from the path of obedience, by urging Him to make use of His glory, or to take it according to His will, and as being Himself in subjection to Satan: by His natural wants, as hunger; by His privileges, that is to say, the promises which had been made to Him (His Jewish privileges or those of Messiah, according to Psalm xci.;) and by glory in the world, a glory indeed which he will really possess as the gift of God hereafter, even "all the kingdoms of the world;" and all this by prevailing upon Him to deviate from the path of obedience on which He had entered. But in vain. Then Jesus begins, after John is put in prison, to preach the approach of the kingdom, his abode in the place described in the eighth of Isaiah giving place to the foretold difference between the last afflictions of the Jews and all those which preceded the manifestation of the light of Messiah. (1) He preaches the gospel of the kingdom and confirms His doctrine, and gives testimony to the glorious truth of His presence, by miracles of goodness which announced the visitation of the God of Israel.

Having thus attracted the attention of the multitudes, He unfolds the principles of the kingdom and the effects of the testimony which was to be rendered to Him.

Observe, there is no question here about redemption. There is the spirituality of many parts of the law, or rather the application made by Jesus of His ordinances to the heart as well as to acts, and the introduction of the name of the Father as the motive, principle and rule of conduct. Israel is here, as it were, on the way, in danger of being given up to the judge if he agrees not with his adversary. It is the light of heaven which shines on the conduct of men, by means of Him who came from heaven.

In the ninth chapter He continues to labour personally in the ministry of the kingdom. Acknowledged as the Son of David by the blind men, and received by the multitudes with admiration, He is accused by the jealousy of the Pharisees of casting out devils by the prince of the devils; but the time of grace towards this poor people was not yet over. When Jesus sees the multitudes, He has compassion upon them; they were as sheep without a shepherd; and at chapter x. He sends His disciples to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," to declare to them that the kingdom was at hand; a prefiguration (so to speak) of the transmission of this ministry to His disciples, when He should have been Himself rejected. But there is no question of any but Israel. They were not to go into the way of the Gentiles. Nevertheless, on account of this general mission, the Lord, in His directions and encouragements, expresses Himself in a manner which might serve them as a guide in all circumstances wherein they might be found, whether in their actual mission, or during His absence from the earth: still, He regards their mission simply as a mission to Israel, whether then, or even at the last times. They were not to have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man should have come. The capture of Jerusalem has deferred that event until God resumes His labours towards Israel.

Chapter xi.—The Lord, resuming His labours of love, recounts, on the occasion of the arrival of the disciples of John, all the history of that work among the Jews. John Baptist himself takes the place of a disciple instead of that of a prophet, and the Lord bears testimony to him, instead of receiving testimony from him. The kingdom of heaven, instead of being established in power, being rejected, is invaded by violence only, in defiance of difficulties and the opposition of men; for the Jews, whether one had lamented or piped to them, had not responded to the testimony of God. The rejection of Jesus, a rejection which He accepts with entire submission, is explained by this: only the Father could know the Son, and only the Son could reveal the Father. The Messiah disappears, so to speak, in His glory too pure for man to receive. But grace only springs up in greater abundance, *and all things having been delivered to the Son*, it is no longer a question about the Messiah of the Jews. He invites all those who are "weary and heavy laden" to come to Him. It is a chapter of the highest interest.

Hereupon (chap. xii.) the Lord breaks with the Jews decidedly. He is Lord of the sabbath given as a sign of the covenant with them, the Lord in grace, but still Lord. The Pharisees seek to kill Him. He hides Himself, and the light of the Gentiles begins to dawn in the testimony of God. Acknowledged anew by an astonished people as the Son of David, the Pharisees put the seal to their iniquity and their condemnation, in again attributing His works to the power of the prince of the devils. Thereupon Jesus pronounces their judgment: the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is not pardoned. The sign asked for by the perverse generation is refused them: there shall no other sign be given them than the sign of the prophet Jonas. Even the people of Nineveh and the queen of the south shall condemn them, and at last the unclean spirit that had gone out of the people shall return into them with other more wicked spirits, and its last state shall be worse than the first. (1) Such will be the end of the generation that rejected the Saviour. Thereupon He renounces the ties of nature which connected Him, as the Messiah after the flesh, with this people, and acknowledges no other relationship than obedience to His Father.

This rapid sketch of the contents of these twelve chapters of the precious revelation of God will show us the importance of the position of the thirteenth, at which we are now arrived, and which is to occupy us more particularly. It is based on the rejection of the Son of Man, the Messiah, by the self-righteousness of Israel; and, in fact, on the judgment passed on the latter in consequence of this rejection of the heir of the promises.

Wherefore, addressing Himself the same day to the multitudes, Jesus appears as no more seeking fruit. It was no longer a question of His vine or His fig-tree. He sows—He is a sower. He finds nothing: He brings with Him that which by His grace may spring and produce fruit. He fully distinguishes His disciples; to them it is given to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, which is not granted to the multitudes whose heart is made fat. He speaks to them in parables—a precious light for the remnant led of God; darkness to the people led of their own blindness.

Here, then, the Lord takes the place of a sower, and the word falls, here and there, on every kind of ground. But, having taken this character, it is no longer a question about the Jews merely, (there one would have sought fruit,) but, in principle, about every hearer of the word. However, we have not here the unity of the Church, the body of Christ, in heaven, but His work on earth; and then, after that, the forms which the kingdom and the judgment connected with it, on the earth, should take. I would not say that the consequences of that would not go farther, but herein is contained the subject of this chapter. It was sowing time, because there was nothing. Every individual that heard bore fruit according to the nature of the ground where the seed fell. For here we have, not the secrets of the efficacy of the grace of God, but the responsibility of man, and the outward effects that would follow in consequence of the work wrought in this world. Thus the word was "the word of the kingdom,"—the testimony borne to the rights of Christ by the grace of God,—the proclamation of the establishment of the authority of God on the earth,—in grace it might be, but still requiring the subjection of man. The kingdom thus proclaimed had a moral character, because it was the kingdom of God, having precious promises and a security which was beyond all price. But it was, at the same time, the kingdom of the heavens whose authority was to be established over the earth, the

(1) When Satan cannot prevail to withdraw the believer from the path of obedience, he begins to act upon his adversaries, and to excite them to opposition and persecution. Jesus retreats before this rejection thus began, and hence becomes the centre of light and blessing, in the midst of the distress of Israel, according to the passage quoted.

(1) I believe this will be verified in the idolatry of the Jews under Anti-Christ, in the last days.

government of God here below, and his work in respect of this government; and not the Church united to Christ in heaven. Still, in this first parable the Lord does not present a similitude of the kingdom of the heavens, although the word was "the word of the kingdom," because here the question is not about the effects and results of the seed generally, under the government of God, but about the fact of the sowing and the individual result, according to the ground where the seed fell. As far as the work of the sower was concerned, it was an affair of individuals. The result would be a whole, which would indeed require a work of separation, but which was nevertheless meanwhile a whole. The work did not adopt the Jewish corporality as its ground; it did not acknowledge the ancient vineyard. A sower sowed, and each grain, so to speak, had such or such an effect in the heart where it fell. Herein there was an important point in the work, or in the preaching of the kingdom; individuality and individual responsibility. (1) This was a principle, moreover, always true, but which the work itself brought out,—which was at the root of the work, because *God* and *man* were fully manifested. It was not merely a question about the government of a people; but the first principle, the basis of Christianity, was to be that each one should bear his own burden. Grace unites those who have received this seed with good effect, for the life is common and the Spirit is one:—still, each one receives for himself, and cannot withdraw himself from his own responsibility in that respect; a responsibility which has reference, not only to his moral conduct as a man, but to the reception of the testimony which the activity of the love of God comes to scatter, like seed among men, upon the heart. The principle of individual responsibility was ever true for the purpose of eternal judgment, and must be so, if God is judge! He will judge every man; nevertheless, it was not the principle on which the Jewish system was based here below; but, after the rejection of the Messiah by this people, this principle was brought out, and connected itself with the only thing which remained as a ground of relationship between God and man; namely, the testimony of His love and the revelation of His claims upon the heart.

I forbear to enter deeply into the meaning of this first parable, not because it is unimportant, (far from it,) but only because I think it must have been so often dwelt upon, both in public and in private, in the presence of the readers of these pages, that it is hardly necessary.* The only thing that I will repeat here is, that what we have presented is not a doctrinal explanation of the origin of good, but the actual work, and its actual result under the responsibility of man,—the facts of the new dispensation, and not the counsels of God.

That which distinguishes the good ground, as far as the reception of the word is concerned, is a man's understanding the word. In the contrary case, strictly speaking, he does not understand it: in the two other cases, there is the appearance of it, but no fruit: here one regards nothing but fruit.

Thus far, we have only "the word of the kingdom." In the six following parables we have similitudes of the kingdom itself, or the forms which the kingdom takes after the rejection of the King on the earth, and in consequence of the word being sown. It is easy to distinguish them into two parts; namely, the three first and the three last with the explanation of one of the first. The former are addressed to the multitudes; the latter, to the disciples apart. The former, it seems to me, present to us the exterior of the kingdom in the world, its state such as the world views it, without absolutely pronouncing the judgment of God thereupon. They are historical, as we have already seen. The latter give us the thoughts and intentions of God in the kingdom which exists here, and the result of this external whole. The efficacy of grace is never touched upon in this chapter; it is a history and not an explanation of doctrine. (2)

It will be remarked that we find here, as in many other places, when the Spirit would present to us some general view of the thoughts of God, the perfect number of seven, divided, as is generally the case, into four and three,—four parables addressed to the multitudes, and three to the disciples.

I have said that the three first parables present to us the exterior, the aspect, of the kingdom towards the world; but that does not prevent a spiritual man discerning the principles which are there at work, nor his judging them according to the mind of God; on the contrary, it is what we ought constantly to do, in order to walk rightly according to the wisdom of God.

However, I shall chiefly concern myself with the explanation of that which occurs in the parable itself. The first idea which is presented to us of the kingdom thus described in these mysteries, is a work done in a field by its owner; but all that he does now is to sow the good seed there. The work which he has wrought may fail in its general result, in the field, although the seed cannot be changed; and this is what comes to pass.

While men sleep, the enemy of Him who sows the good seed and to whom the field belongs, comes to sow tares; and the field, or the beauty of the harvest, is spoilt. The owner of the field leaves those two things to bear their proper fruits. He to whom the field belonged had done His work; the enemy had done his, while men slept; then he also went his way: the effect was a sad mixture in the world, of which men might accuse the owner of the field; but the thing being manifested by its effects (for it had been done in secret) the servants discover it when it becomes public. The master explains to the servants who come to Him and receive their instruction from Him, that it is the work of the enemy, and that the harvest, as far as the world is concerned, will be spoiled. At the time of the harvest He will apply a remedy, that is to say, at the time of the judgment, which will make a distinction in the field between the good and the bad. It was not the servants' business to destroy the tares. They were not the executioners of the world's judgment, and the time itself was not yet come.

The kingdom only being established by sowing here below during the absence of the king, and not in power, and consequently by judgment, the confusion resulting therefrom would be the sad character of the kingdom, until it should be established in power, and the judgment should put an end to the disorder produced by Satan.

Compare here the manner in which the Lord presents His ways with the account of the seed in Mark iv. 26. The kingdom of God is as if a man, after having cast seed into the ground, should sleep night and day, and the seed should spring and grow, he knows not how; for the earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear; and when the corn is ripe, immediately they put in the sickle, because the harvest is ready.

During the time of the mixture, and while the corn is not yet ripe, no judgment takes place; if it did, it might root out of the world the unripe corn.

An attempt has been made to confound all this with Church discipline; but the subject is different. The question is not about the Church or discipline, but about the kingdom and about judgment to be exercised on the evil which Satan has introduced among the good corn. (1)

As for discipline, properly so called, that is always exercised on corn, and that not with a view to rooting it up, but curing it and even restoring it here below, if possible. The incestuous was given up to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord. In fact, he was restored on earth, because he repented. It is not my intention to pursue this subject,

(1) It is a principle which Popery completely destroys, by putting the Church and the acknowledgment of its authority *before* the reception of the word under individual responsibility, while still, in the end, it leaves to every man his own burden. It is the Church making war against God, and not the fruit of the blessing to which man is called.

(2) In the three first, it is the actual result of the seed in the world. In the three last, it is the powerful motive which governed the heart of him who was led by this motive according to the secret of God.

* [Nevertheless, a few remarks upon this parable from the same author, written many years since, which are given under note A, at the end, may prove acceptable to many.—Ed.]

(1) My object is not controversy, but exposition of the parables: nevertheless, I must here add a word on the value of an interpretation often put upon this parable. That there is a mixture of Christians with the world is a matter of fact.

Many take advantage of this parable to justify themselves, or at least to say that we cannot root up the tares or exercise discipline. In the World-Church this may be all very true; but in the first place, if any one would reason thus to prove that this World-Church system is good, (for its existence is allowed as a matter of fact,) such an one professes as a Christian to be willing to bring down the Church on earth, in principle, to the level to which Satan has reduced it in fact; which is enough to convince me that one who has the glory of Christ at heart will not lend himself for a moment to such an idea. Again, when I find the whole is bad, I do not begin by rooting out the tares from this evil system; that is what they would do who stay there and would try to purify it. I do not quit the field; I cannot do it, for "the field is the world;" but the evil which I did I cease to do. I am still corn in the tare-field, I have not touched the tares, I have only as a Christian, corrected my individual walk in some respects, and am thus separated by the fact itself from those who persist in the evil. If I can unite myself in peace with others to find the presence of Jesus according to His promise, so much the better; it is a great blessing. But I do not enter upon that question. My object is only to expound the parable, avoiding what is a mere sophism.

but to expound the parables. I have only referred to it for the purpose of saying, that the two subjects have *not one idea in common.* We may here observe also how the Lord regards the kingdom and everything in it as a whole, from the beginning to the end of it.

In fine, that which we have revealed is, that the effect of Satan's work where Christ had sown the children of the kingdom, i.e., this state of things on the earth, must remain till the harvest. The tares are not simply unconverted men; they are persons whom Satan has brought in, under the form of Christianity, to spoil God's harvest in the earth—in the place where Christianity was established. It was not the Church in heaven, it was not Churches gathered in certain localities: these ideas are not found here. They are the children of the kingdom, regarded as plants of God in this world, but who are found in the place where Satan had power to sow his own seed. The effect, apparently not to the honour of the owner, is explained for those who learn from Him. The judgment will explain it to such as will not be taught.

As regards the judgment, the parable states that there is a time of harvest, and not the harvest merely. At that time the tares are first gathered and bound in bundles *for the purpose* of being burnt, the corn is laid up in the granary. (1)

Generally speaking, the judgment or the harvest, such as it is presented in the parable itself, does not go beyond that which is manifested in this world. The tares are gathered for the purpose of being burnt, that is all; this is what is proper to the earth. The only thing which goes beyond what is external here below, is the fact that the wheat is gathered into barns. It is a negative fact—the wheat no longer belongs to the field: that which takes place in the barn does not appear. God interposes by means of the reapers to bind the tares in bundles (not heathen or unconverted men as such, but the wicked ones of Christendom, at least of the place where the good seed was sown) and He quite removes His own people from the scene.

The natural state of the tares is destroyed, but it is not removed from the field. This then is the result in this world, the field which belongs to Christ, the sowing which He has performed.

The second parable presents to us the kingdom during this period; of the small grain of seed, such as it was at the beginning, there is formed a great power in the earth, so that men seek its protection, they shelter themselves under its branches.

For the explanation of this symbol, compare Ezek. xxxi. also xvii. 23; Dan. iv. 10, 12, 14.

The third presents it to us, not in its outward, secular power, but as a principle or doctrine which spreads and completely pervades that which is submitted to its influence. It is not here the heart, or the world, but the kingdom established in this world.

The idea of the authority of Christ, in other words, His name, must spread.

A certain definite sphere is submitted to its influence and entirely filled with the profession of the name of Christ. I see here that the particular subject in hand is the existence within certain limits of the external profession of the doctrine or the name of Christ. These parables, as it seems to me, have no reference to spiritual good, neither is it the purpose of them to present the dark side of that which has come to pass. They are, as we have said, historical. A spiritual perception, perhaps cultivated and improved by other passages of Scripture, may enable me to see that a secular power, like Nebuchadnezzar or the Assyrian, is not a good thing, when the question is about what Christ has established and about my spiritual standing; but here the matter is presented to us as an historical fact: the kingdom was to receive such a character.

The word *leaven*, in general, does not suggest the idea of good to one who is familiar with the Scriptures; but the purpose of the parable is to state the fact of the general existence of the external profession of the name of Christ, leaving it to the spiritual discernment of the child of God to judge of that which so exists.

We now come to the explanations given to the disciples, and to the parables which were for their ears only. Here the seed is not properly the word; it is the children of the kingdom brought into the world by Christ, who have their life—their moral existence—from Him. We sow the word; but here the great fact is, that the Son of man brings His own into the world; it is a work which He begins. The vineyard being rejected, He does not look for that in the world which was not found in Israel. He introduces, but in the world, His own, because it was all over for the time, at least with Israel. When he has done that, Satan does the same; active in evil, on the ground where good has been done.

Israel, the people of God, is become wicked, and, led by the prince of this world, they reject their Saviour, their Messiah. God being thereupon active in good in the world, Satan assumes an attitude of active hostility. To spoil the effect here below, is all he can do. But the judgment takes effect upon it: the harvest is the end of the age, the reapers are the angels; for the question here is about the government of this world by God. As to the expression "*this age*," we are accustomed to apply it to the Church; but it is not here a question of the Church, but of the introduction of the kingdom of heaven, Messiah being rejected by the Jews. What was the age in which the Lord was found with His disciples? Was it the Church, or the dispensation of the Church? By no means. It was a certain age of this world, which was to end by the reception of the Messiah, and the re-establishment of the law as a rule by the government of this Messiah. The people of Israel having rejected Him, this age becomes purely and simply *this present evil world*, (*age*,) from which Christ delivers us, but in the course of which God has set up His kingdom, in the way we have just spoken of.

The final close of the age is suspended while these acts are in progress, but at last its end arrives. Then the Son of man (for here the world is concerned, not merely the Jews and their Messiah) will purge His kingdom of all things that offend, and of them that commit iniquity, and they shall be cast into the furnace of fire. That will be the judgment of every thing that is opposed to the glory of Christ, when He will execute it. But here He appears as the Head of the providential government of God, not as the Bridegroom coming to seek His bride, nor as the King coming to reign in Israel, or over the Gentiles in immediate relationship with them. It is the Son of man, supreme Head of the government of God, who sends the angels of His power to purge His kingdom, long defiled by the presence of the children of the wicked one, of every thing that offends. (1) It is an act of His own power, acting as from on high; it is not the servants who will execute it. He sends his own messengers to gather the tares and cast them into the fire. He does not Himself enter into the earthly kingdom already established. He acts as from on high by His messengers, and the righteous are not established and blessed in the marred kingdom, but they shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. (2)

This, then, is the result of the kingdom having been defiled by means of the work of the enemy; the judgment is the answer to the absence of all judgment in the kingdom, in the interval between the sowing time and the harvest. It is neither the joy of the Church nor the establishment of the throne of judgment over the earth, but the purification of the kingdom, the general idea of government from on high. The servants had thought of re-establishing here below, by rooting the wicked out of the world, the order of things which existed then at the commencement, that the field here below might be in accordance with the intention of Him who had sown; or, in other words, that the field that He had sown should be a just representation of His labour and His thoughts; but this was not what was to take place there—that was no longer possible.

It is a matter of farther revelation, that then the righteous (and it seems to me that the term is not necessarily limited to those who had lived after the seed of the kingdom had been sown) will shine as the sun in the kingdom of the Father. This then is the reason why there was no question in the meanwhile of purifying the fields here below. God had better counsels in store for us. It is a revelation which belongs to the disciples. The rest was the public government of God, intelligible, or what ought to have been intelligible, to a Jew.

(1) The rapture of the church belongs to this age, to the harvest, to the end, but—to this age, as to its time. It seems it will *appear* in another age.

(1) The first act here regards the wicked, the tares. In the case of the net, the first step was to separate the good. Because, in the case of the tares, it is the exterior of the government in the world, the present result; in the latter parables, the motives and the spiritual discernment; although the judgment arrives at last afterwards.

(2) The righteous shining as the sun, shows us how these parables apply at the same time to Christ and to believers. He gives up his earthly glory, despises the shame, and endures the cross, in view of the joy that was set before him; but this necessarily involves the Church seen in glory according to the counsels of God:—the righteous will shine. We see our own glory in the sun to which we shall be like. In the two cases there is the glory. "The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them," so that He, while yet looking forward to it for Himself, gives up all His Jewish and even personal glory, in a certain sense, as of right, to bring the Church in there; in a word, He gives it up for the Church. We seeing that glory as ours, see it in Christ; and so in the application of the parable, we may say, Jesus has done it for the Church as His treasure—we do it for Christ as our treasure. The counsel of God is, that we should be together in that glory.

The succeeding parables present to us rather the secrets of the kingdom—that which only concerns the initiated, the disciples. It was no longer that which was merely external for the multitudes which surrounded Him. In what was said to the multitudes, every thing took place in the world, that is to say, in the field, with the exception of the one fact that the good seed would be taken from it and hid in the barn. All belonged, properly speaking, to this age, unless we may except the existence of the barn. But in the explanation of this first parable, the Lord goes beyond what He had said, passes the limit, so to speak, and shows us the terrible result of the judgment of the tares in the weeping and gnashing of teeth: then He raises the curtain on the other side also, and the righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. But this throws an entirely new light on the principle of the kingdom. It is a motive to action wherever this revelation is understood, and wherever we act according to the understanding of this purpose of God.

It is no longer a question how to establish clearly the relations between the old system and the forms which it took after the rejection of Christ, or on account of the barren state of the vineyard; but how to comprehend the effect of the counsels of God, which went much farther. There was something there to influence the heart. We have had before, the effects here below of the sowing: the fact of the mixture, and the separation, and the form which in consequence of that the kingdom took in the world; here we have the revelation to the disciples of the effect outside the world, and consequently the motive which directed him who had understanding in the kingdom; (it was this that characterized the kingdom in this respect;) lastly, the discernment which knew how to act, even in the circumstances of this confused state of the kingdom, and not only the fact of this confusion in the world. That explains the order of the parables. In the two cases, the historical part for the multitude gives the sowing and the divine judgment at the end; (this is all that the mind of the multitude takes notice of;) and after that, the great historical facts, the tree and the leaven.

But here we have the motive which governs and influences the man who has the mind of Christ—in the first place, Christ Himself and us by His Spirit—in regard to that which has been revealed within the veil; then the separation made with discernment when the net is full. It is not a case of sowing seed, which issues in a mingled crop left in its natural state till the time of God's acting. It is an activity, the result of understanding and motive, based on the discovery of a hidden thing, or on the perception and search of a loveliness that is appreciated, and which is worth the giving up of all; or on the need of having separated, and so united together, those who constituted the sole object of all the toil, and who previously had been mingled in the net with that which was worth nothing to the fishers.

The one part presents the exterior, on which God will certainly act at last, but which is left as a picture in its complete character before the eyes of the world: a great tree, a leaven which leavens the whole mass. The other, the intelligence and activity of the Spirit of Christ, which gives up every thing, and perceives good things to seize upon them in giving up all else.

Now, the first principle, the general principle of the two first of these three parables, based, as I have said, on the revelation of the glory of the righteous, made in the explanation of the first of the three former, is the energy which renounces every thing on account of the discovery of that which becomes of inestimable value to the soul. This would not have been the character of the kingdom, if it had been established among the Jews; there were principles and a conduct which would have suited it: Its authority would have been exercised for the maintenance of good and justice, and great happiness would have been the fruit of its establishment. But the kingdom, once rejected by those who were the children of it, was no longer of this world, and it became necessary for one to give up every thing that he possessed, according to the discovery made of the glory, which thereupon belonged to the faithful in the kingdom of their Father. This glory causes a renunciation of every thing in order to possess it, according to the counsels of God, of which He has made a discovery in the revelation of this treasure—the Church, properly so called. Christ Himself did so, and even in two different ways.

He gave up every thing, He emptied Himself to accomplish this work and buy the Church. But again, of how great value to Himself and for God must the Church, thus brought to glory before Him, have been, that He should quit the glory of His Father, His bosom, to have and to bring back His Church with Him! In effect, it was because it was infinitely precious to the Father, and because He wished to have it before Him holy and without blame, that the Son, according to His love for the Father, gave Himself for it, the Father having entrusted to Him this work, and the Church itself, that He might bring it to Him; for if the Father loves the Son, and has delivered all things to Him, so also the Son has given His life, that the world may know that He loves the Father, and that as the Father has given Him commandment, so He does. For He came to do His Father's will. Still, as Royal Heir of the Kingdom, lawful and perfect head, according to God, of the Jews, the people of God, and heirs of the promises according to the flesh, it was necessary for Him to give up all that, even this peculiar height of exaltation. He could weep over Jerusalem, whose children He would so often have gathered. He could understand the value of whatever was glorious in that situation. He could feel all the force of those words: "Because thou hast taken me up and cast me down." Nevertheless, for the joy of possessing the Church, this fair and precious creation of the Father in grace and light, this jewel of the light of God, this expression of the thoughts of the Father in grace, witness during the ages to come of the grace which it has received, (and that because it is the reflection of it)—for the joy, I say, which followed upon the discovery of this treasure which was not of the world, but of God, in the light, He gave up all He possessed among the Jews; He looked upon all else as nothing.

Answering perfectly to the thought of God His Father, in regard of that which was the glorious object of the love of God, a creation not external to Himself as Creator, but formed to be before Him, according to His nature which He had communicated to it as far as was possible, Christ, who had emptied Himself indeed, but who answered not the less on that account, but so much the more to the whole thought of the Father—gave up every thing to fulfil the will of the Father and to possess Himself of this treasure. So the kingdom takes this character. It is in *Christ* that *we* see it, even this reflection of the nature of the Father, for He is not only by grace (a creative and communicative grace) but essentially the reflection and the image of the glory of the invisible God. He is morally the manifestation of it in all things, and beyond that, inasmuch as all the Godhead dwells in Him bodily. Thus we also, for the sake of Christ glorified before the Father, for this glory which we shall have with Him, when we shall be like Him, seeing Him as He is, but which henceforth we see in Him—we also renounce every thing now; compare Phil. iii. 7, 8. Still it is Christ who has given us the example of it, by devotedness to His Father; Paul was only a weak imitator of Him who inspired him, and had supplied him with the perfect model of that devotedness. But then Christ, however He might renounce His earthly glory and rights, could not yet possess the Church all pure and glorious, as being His peculiar property, separate to Himself. He must take it in the world; but that does not hinder Him. He places it there and buys the whole field. But the treasure is His object, and is sufficient to engage Him to take the whole field; for the subject here is not the beneficent government which shall be established over the world, when the judgments which will have purified it will have been executed, but of something which He takes for the sake of the treasure which is hid there. Elsewhere, in the prophets we see all the blessings which will flow from His reign, (the Church, the new Jerusalem, being glorified, so that the nations will walk in its light,) blessings which will be the effect of the public administration of the kingdom of the Son of man. But here we have the mysteries of this kingdom presented to a spiritual understanding. But, first of all, let us notice here: *Where* these revelations of the secrets of the kingdom take place; *Where* this joy which is motive sufficient to cause him who possesses it to give up all, which causes him to feel that all is loss in comparison with this glory; *Where* this discernment which can so perceive the beauty of the pearl of great price, as to enable us to understand that we gain every thing in giving up every thing;—this discernment, whereby the spiritual understanding which can judge all things, perceives that to keep any thing else is only to hinder the possession of that which this divine intelligence tastes and appreciates, and which decides thus in the full knowledge of the case. The choice is made, the nature which seeks pearls has found the pearl which suits it. Where is the place, I say, that

these revelations, which excite and satisfy this divine nature, takes place? It was "in the house" they were made known to the disciples who followed Jesus, who were attached to Him. They followed Him already, they followed Him in separation; in separation they received that which belonged to Him, as being Himself in separation from the world. The multitude does not receive them.

Let us come to the application, or rather to the explanation, followed by the parable of the treasure hid in the field. We have here the secret thought of God. The subject is not properly that external character of the kingdom, but the inward thought of Him who is acting there. Christ Himself has taken to Himself a field, but for one who understands His thought—is the field His object in taking it now? No; it is the treasure in it. *There* is that which fills His heart, and which was the motive to that which He did. God gave Him power over all men, that He might give eternal life to all those whom the Father had given to Him. I would not be understood by that to say that all men are the field, but only to show how there could be two thoughts in the counsels of God.

In the kingdom of heaven a field has been purchased. In appearance perhaps, the field is the object which the purchaser had in view. Christ has the right of possession over this field; His authority should be acknowledged there, because He has purchased it; but the joy of His heart, His object in all that, is the treasure (the Church) which is hid there. That which was purchased by Christ and which belongs visibly to Him, there where His name is externally acknowledged in the times of the mysteries of the kingdom, that which is His right, and which the understanding of *man* might recognize as the purchase which He made, that which is as a field which a man bought, is not what He has at heart, for He thinks of the treasure which is hidden there. It is the form which the kingdom has taken.

He cannot yet possess the Church, all pure, removed to heaven to reign with Him. In the meanwhile, it is in the world; and the kingdom takes the character of a whole which, in appearance and by right, is a Lordship, a possession which belongs to Christ, but of which the secret and the real object is only known to those who have the mind of Christ. He has taken the field for the sake of the treasure, (1) but it is the treasure quite pure as it is known to Himself that He has at heart. The ministry of Peter did not yet distinguish the two, although he and all the saints after him made part of the purchased treasure. Paul scarcely speaks to us of anything but the treasure. Peter had the keys of the kingdom. Paul was converted by the doctrine of the union of Christ and the Church attached to Him in glory: He did not know Christ after the flesh.

This is what His disciples must understand, when they see that which is as a possession that has accrued to Christ, that which belongs to Him. His disciples would understand what was the real object of His heart, and would clearly distinguish between the field and the treasure which it contained, although the treasure or the Church being for the time hid in the field, the administration of the government of God must take this outward form. (2) Moreover, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchantman seeking goodly pearls.

(1) Although the great principle of giving up all for Christ is a true one, (and we have already spoken of it,) we cannot apply the details of this parable to the history of an individual soul. A soul is never called on to buy anything to have the treasure; but to seek to have nothing but it. In fact, in the history of souls, something similar often occurs, that is to say, one embraces Christianity, true Christianity, with a joy which seizes all in an indiscriminate manner, so to speak. The soul possesses in effect the true treasure, but has not yet at all discerned the whole beauty of this exquisite pearl. The joy then becomes in appearance more subdued, but the spiritual perception of the thoughts of God is far more real and deep.

(2) All this does not by any means affect the question of the conduct or the duty of a saint in these circumstances. The parable only presents the thoughts of God in regard to facts. This was the form which the kingdom would take, or rather a figure which represents it. The purchased field is quite an abstract thought; we are always in danger of confounding it with the actual state of things, while the parable only presents to us the principle. I have endeavoured to avoid this snare; I am not sure that I have succeeded. In principle, Christ has bought the world, the Church is *in it*. His authority only extends to a very small part of the world; and one part, formerly subject to His authority, has now even revolted from it; but the parable does not at all touch upon these facts. It only presents the principle, that is to say, that there is a treasure hidden, which was not even bought but found, and something external was bought for the love of this treasure, thus hidden there, necessarily, and as a matter of fact; whether the treasure exists as an individual whole, or in several pieces, is not the question here. The purchaser takes the whole such as it is, for the sake of the treasure. The delight which he finds in the beauty of it (the Church) is the subject of this parable. Here it is the fact of the field purchased as a whole, that He might possess the treasure that was dear to Him. Neither is it a question of the establishment of the authority of Christ in blessing in this world, nor of His joy in the deliverance of the creation itself. That will take place in the world to come, when there will no longer be a question about the mysteries of the kingdom. This mystery of God will be finished, the natural results of the reign of the Saviour will be manifested, also the beauty of the Church will be manifested on high; and its glory will shine everywhere.

Here we see the Lord judging, according to his perfect intelligence, the moral beauty of that which He would have for Himself at any price. It is not here merely the joy of possessing a treasure, but of discriminating and valuing the treasure which He sought and which He was able to prize and distinguish from every other. Thus the Spirit of Christ in its actual operation only rests definitely upon the Church, and that not in the joy of possessing it only, nor of that of accomplishing salvation in the redemption of it, but in the accomplishment of all the thoughts of God, of all that moral beauty which can have its source in the heart and reproduce itself for Him in that Church which He gave to Christ. The epistle to the Ephesians in particular presents to us this thought: the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we might be holy and without blame *before Him* in love. This is its reproducing itself in grace. And what is the calling according to which we ought to walk? It is that we are "the habitation of God by the Spirit." He has given us a place which is to the praise of the glory of His grace.

The more we examine this epistle, and the more we comprehend the thought of God which appears there, the more we shall perceive the pearl which is of great price in the esteem of the merchantman who alone is capable of estimating it. The repetition of the emphatic word *Himself*, His *own* will, &c., which occurs in the Greek, gives additional force to this remark. (1) What thoughts, then, ought we to have, my brethren, of such a calling of the Church, and of the Church itself, thus before God, such as He can have before Himself, and find satisfaction therein, and find again His own thoughts in it, that it may be the delight of Him who is Himself the only source of that which can be suitable to Him, and that it may be fit to be ever before Him! But, in order to receive it, in order to give it to Christ, it was necessary that He should make it such. What a thought for us! In order that we might enjoy it, He gave us the Spirit itself, and of His own Spirit. Compare Eph. iii. 16, 21; see also 1 John iv. 13. In this latter passage, the subject is an individual—his state, and the practical proof resulting from it. But there is yet another idea for us to bring out, and which causes this to explain the state of the kingdom; it is, that Christ stripped Himself of every thing, in order to possess this treasure. Where is His glory, His kingdom, His judgment, His power? The kingdom has not one of these characters; but we, disciples, we know Christ, who, though He was rich, became poor for us, that we by His poverty might be made rich. He is hid in God. The epistle to the Ephesians speaks of these counsels of God in regard to us, of these counsels so precious for us. Here we have the same idea, but the idea of the kingdom lost in that of grace. Christ loves the treasure, He prizes the pearls. He is Himself not merely the reflection, but the perfect expression of what the Father was. He knows how to present to Himself the Church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. The pearl is in His thought before He finds it as the object of His love. But then He is presented here as a man who finds, not as God who creates and who is the source of the beauty of the object found, as His thoughts are the prototype of it, of the beauty which suits the finder and the Creator.

Although the Church is of God in its existence and its beauty, we must also take account of that which Christ has done, according to the counsels of God, according to the fulness of His desire, and the delight which He takes in these counsels. He gives Himself up to that, and strips Himself of every thing, in order to possess the Church, such as it is according to the thought of God; and, to the disciple who has understanding, this is the character which the kingdom takes. It is Christ's treasure in this world, in the field which He buys; it is the pearl quite pure, out of whatever shell it may have come, which answers to all that His heart seeks.

Hitherto we have the spiritual intelligence, in order to the understanding of the principle which characterizes the kingdom in the thought of Christ, upon which, in consequence, the believer acts, according to the measure of his intelligence. But there is, beyond, an actual separation of the elements which are mingled within it. In effect, the net has gathered all kinds of persons out of the sea of peoples. When the net is full, those who have drawn

(1) I give these expressions here according to their force in the Greek: "Accordingly as he has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we might be holy and without blame before Himself, in love, having predestinated us to the adoption *to Himself* by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of His *own* grace." Again, verse 8, "having made known to us the mystery of His *own* will, according to His *own* good pleasure which He purposed in *Himself*," and, verse 11, the "counsel of His *own* will."

it, the fishermen, sit on the shore; they gather the good into vessels, and throw aside the bad. Here let us pause a moment, because important principles present themselves to our thoughts. The fishermen are occupied about the good: they put them into vessels. As for the bad, they only reject them, and put them aside: there is the effect of the understanding of the fisherman. What is his object? with what does he concern himself? — the good fish. To have them according to his desire and purpose, he must, in passing, reject the others, but it is only that he may have the good. Except in this respect, he has nothing to do with the bad—they are not his concern—they are only an encumbrance to him—the net was not cast for them. He gathers the good into vessels. Neither is their ultimate destination his concern: his business is to catch them, and gather them into vessels apart. In this his capacity, his diligence, and the success of his toils, appear. Without that, he could not do it. All this is addressed exclusively to a spiritual mind, without which we cannot understand these instructions. But there is one work, the effects of which will be of necessity intelligible, and as in the exposition of the parable of the tares, we have the additional fact of the glory of the righteous in another sphere—a fact which represented in a good light the seeming negligence that had taken place in the government of the kingdom;—so in the explanation of the net, we have a fact which is not in the parable; namely, the judgment of the wicked.

The angels will come forth at the end of the age, and will separate the wicked from among the righteous, (they who do not here concern themselves with the righteous, as the fishermen did,) and they will cast them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. It is quite clear that this is a procedure quite different from what is related in the parable, and which goes beyond the contents of it. The subject is not the net merely, it is a general and definite separation of the wicked from among the righteous at that time. The fishermen were only concerned with the contents of their net, and with the good found in it. The angels, at the end of the age, separate the *wicked*; it is a general work; and in this world, where they are mingled, neither is it the angels that have to do with the net. The two things, we should remark well, take place in this world. There is nothing about separating the good and bad in heaven. Neither is there any thing here about the great white throne, but about the end of this age. The good which are found in the net will be separated and put in vessels by those who have drawn the net to shore, according to their discernment of the good and bad; then the angels will take the bad in this world, and separate them from the righteous who will be found there, and will cast the former into the furnace of fire. This was not the affair of the fishermen. But the two events take place in the world, at the end of the age. The angels have nothing to do with the good, but to leave them; while the fishermen occupy themselves with the good, to dispose of them, in rejecting and leaving the bad.

The disciples here are supposed to understand all these things; the Lord looks upon them in this light; they are wise, the understanding ones of Daniel. Wherefore, says He, every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven, is like a householder, who brings out of his treasure things new and old. We see by these words the character of the instructions which the Lord has just given; there is no question about the Church *as* the Church. It is true the disciples became part of it afterwards, but he does not look upon them in that character. What we have here is the application of lessons on the kingdom of heaven to knowledge acquired as by scribes in the Old Testament. There is nothing about the mystery hidden and afterwards revealed by the Holy Ghost to the apostles and prophets, but we have light thrown by the kingdom and its mysteries on the promises and the government of God, which a scribe would have found in the law and the prophets. These were new things, but they were connected with the old things; they did not set them aside. If Paul had known Christ after the flesh, he did not know him so any more. In his case, the subject was things altogether heavenly, even Christ Himself. He notices, it is true, in some digressions, in the way of argument, that which relates to the old things; but as far as his direct ministry is concerned, he knows them no more.

Having completed what I had to say on this chapter, I pause. Others may probably add much to what I have communicated. In every passage of the word there is always the germ of that which is infinite. I only bring forward a general explanation, but I have no doubt of its being of God, certainly mingled with imperfection, but still *of God*. Another time, if God will, I may send a continuation of the summary of this Gospel.

APPENDIX.

Some think there is an historical order in the parables, an order which I proceed to state without making any comment upon it, as a thought upon which every brother will form an opinion according to the light which he possesses. First, the general fact of the sowing of the word, begun by Jesus Himself; then, as we have seen, the beginning of the mysteries of the kingdom: the Son of man sows the good seed, the enemy does his own work there. The first effect: the hierarchical or ecclesiastico-secular power in the world. Second effect: nominal Christiany, a leaven which only corrupts the whole lump. Then comes the discovery that it is the treasure hid in this field which is precious; those who have spiritual understanding distinguish this treasure, although it is hidden in the field. This would be the Augustinian and protestant doctrine of an invisible Church. But, beyond that, there is the perception of the beauty and purity which become this treasure, and they are sought by those who are led by the Spirit of Christ. Lastly, there is the practical separation of the good fish put into vessels by those who are concerned with that work. This is the idea; each Christian, I repeat, will judge of it, according to his measure of spiritual understanding. However it may be, there is yet something to be said on the subject of the great tree and the leaven, in reference to what may be discovered in them by a spiritual mind. The difference between that which is described in these parables, and what is said in the three last, is very remarkable. Here there is no trace of spiritual affection, nor of a taste for divine things, nor of distinction between good and evil. The love of the Spirit is completely missing, and is even lost. I say lost, because at the beginning the servants distinguished between the good seed and the tares, and that perfectly well, and were astonished to find tares in a field where their master had been sowing, although it did not belong to them to execute the judgment on the tares. They were employed near the master, attending to the good condition of the field which belonged to him, but the field could only be cleansed by judgment. Didst thou not sow good seed in *thy* field? (that was their question) from whence then hath it tares? Afterwards, a spiritual understanding perceives that the field is only a secondary object, fully admitting that it was bought; it seeks for the pure and precious pearl, and also separates the good fish and puts them into vessels.

But here it is not that; it is a picture of a dark worldly and outward effect. The attachment to the interests of Christ fails; it is an external matter, a common condition, where nothing appears but what the world can see. We do not say that there are not children of God hidden in this system, or such as have been separated from it; but the Spirit of God takes no account of them in these parables, nor of any spirituality which perceives them, or which distinguishes between that which is agreeable to Christ in His kingdom and the contrary: the result of the work exactly corresponds with the world. We could not (according to these parables) distinguish them: it is "a great tree," a symbol, throughout Scripture, of human power and pride, the objects of God's judgment.

It is only when Christ will establish His own kingdom in power, that this kingdom will become a great tree in the earth, according to the counsels of God in righteousness. See Ezek. xvii. 22—24. Meanwhile, the event takes place, but as we have seen, with a total absence of spiritual discernment, which contrasts with what precedes and what follows. Also observe, with respect to the leaven; this is not external and earthly power; it is the universal diffusion of a doctrine within certain limits. Here we must remark that it is not the Son of man who sows the good seed, that idea is lost: it is the state of the kingdom which will bear a resemblance to the effect of a woman's deed who acts thus. Thus there is not any distinction made here between the sowing of the Son of man, and the work of the enemy. If there is good seed; it is quite lost sight of. The parable of the good seed and the tares proves to us that this distinction had been made by the servants of Christ, but all appearance of it is lost; we cannot say that all is good, for the tares must grow till the harvest. All spiritual discernment is therefore completely excluded from this state of things; all true testimony to the work of God is lost; for one cannot say that all is good, that would be

the testimony according to the heart of God. All distinction between the good and evil is destroyed; it is one lump, so that this testimony to the difference of good and evil is also lost; so that evil under the name of Christ is that which presents itself as a uniform mass. I would not here say that the Holy Spirit designed to present this idea to the multitude. I have already said that these parables speak of what is outward, of the external aspect of the kingdom; but he who studies the word judges according to the mind of Christ of that which is presented thus to the world. *There* is that which distinguishes the true Christian,—the spiritual man discerns all things. He does not think that the lump will be changed, for the spiritual man distinguishes and loves what is good; but the state of the mass does not govern him; he knows for himself that everywhere else the great tree is the symbol of exalted man. Ought man to be exalted before the manifestation of Christ? He knows that leaven everywhere else is the symbol of that which is bad. Has not the history of Christendom supplied that which fully corresponds to such a symbol? If it is so, it is that which, according to the Lord, characterises the state of the kingdom. In that case, what ought the Christian to do? Ought he to be contented with bearing such a testimony as being Christ's?

NOTE A.

"It is most important for us to remember, that all that, which is the power of death in the unbeliever, is the hindrance and blight of the fruit-bearing power of the believer's life, to which the energies afforded us in the Divine Persons apply themselves. This is brought out into full light, with its specific remedy, in the graciousness of God in this parable. There is the case of the fowls of the air, the stony ground, the sowing among thorns, and in the good ground, thirty, sixty, and a hundred fold. The first of these we know is the power of Satan—the power of death. There is no life in the soul. When the word of it is sown in the unbroken heart, the devil takes it away as soon as it is sown. He holds it in unremoved death—the word is the power of life. 'Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we might be the first-fruits of his creatures.' It is indeed *the lie* of the devil, by which he brought in death, and holds men in it, in which he is a murderer; so on the other hand, by the truth of God are we made alive. But there is one, (Himself indeed *the* WORD,) who is specifically the quickening power, even the Son of God. 'The second Adam is the quickening Spirit.' He then who vindicates from this state of death, and makes alive, is the Son of God. The Son of man sows the seed, but it is the Son of God which quickens;—'for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.' It is the special, distinctive character of His Sonship, that He quickens with divine power, as indeed none else could. (Compare John v. 21, 24, 26.) This is most explicit, and no one acquainted with Scripture can have failed to recognize this power of life in the Son of God, as distinctly representing His power and character. He declares Himself, 'I am the resurrection and the life;' and this by His word, 'Lazarus, come forth.' The results of this we shall not now follow, but we have the Son of God, by the word, destroying the works of the devil in the state and power of death. This is the first case of the parable. That which is in him, is the opposite power, which overcomes the evil case mentioned, and a man brings forth thirty fold, for being really alive he must increase and bring forth fruit.

"But there is another case put, not so apparently desperate, but equally destructive—the receiving the word into shallow ground. There was no root. It was received superficially;—speedily 'sprang up, *because* it had no deepness of earth;' it had no searching process of power in which it entered into the conscience and quickened the inner man. It rested in the natural affections and understanding which are after all—*the flesh;* it is received merely by the natural feelings, and therefore immediately acts, and with joy, since it reaches not the conscience; and the same natural feelings were of course as speedily acted on by trouble and persecution, and 'immediately they are offended.' (Compare Mark iv.) This, then, is all merely the flesh, and comes to nothing.—To this we know how uniformly the Spirit is opposed. 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.' 'They that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.' 'If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds,' &c. It needs not to multiply passages of Scripture to show the opposition of these two. But, we must observe that we have *here* in the Spirit the antagonist power which overcomes the flesh, and assuming a man to be alive, still does so. 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit;' hence we know that this case is still the natural man, and that the things of the Spirit are what he has never received, though affections or intellect may have been moved or delighted with the marvellous plan of redemption. But the same point holds good in a believer; that is, we find when men do not walk in the Spirit, of course they are profitless and low in their estate. It is in mortifying the flesh by the Spirit, that the fruits of the Spirit find comparatively free growth—it produces sixty fold. This, then, is the contrast here—the flesh and the Spirit; and we find in it, that the fairest form of the flesh, the apparently joyful reception of the word of the kingdom, whether it be in affection or intellect, comes to nothing; whatever it be occupied on, it is but 'the desires of the flesh and of the mind.'

"The third case, compared with other Scriptures, is equally, I think, clear. The hindering power is declared directly, 'the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things.' (Compare Mark iv. Luke viii.) Now, the world and the love of it, we continually find opposed to the Father. 'All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world.' 'Love not the world, neither the things of the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' The hatred of the world to the Son, shewed that *it* was not of the Father; and the children were not of this world any more than the Father, as allied to Him, even as Christ the Son was not of the world.

"Every one familiarly and spiritually acquainted with the Gospel of St. John, must have noticed the opposition between the world and the Sonship of Christ; one being associated with the Father, and the other directly opposed to the glory of the Father, in the great question of that Sonship in which alone it was known. Our Lord thus concludes the whole presenting of His work and His people to the Father: 'O righteous Father, the *world* hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these *have* known that thou hast sent me.' The whole chapter illustrates the question. Now we shall hence well understand the opposition between the two, and how 'He who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil world,' closes that statement by saying: 'and I have declared unto them thy name and I will declare it, that the love,' &c. But, in the believer, even when not only quickened, but *in* the Spirit exercising himself to mortify the deeds of the body, who recognizes at once the evil of the flesh, (though we are little aware how subtilely and widely its beguiling and deceiving influence is spread, how fair a form inbred selfishness may assume,) and in whom, in an ordinary sense, the flesh is habitually in a measure mortified; how often do we find the world holding a prevailing power and recognized title over the judgment or habit, and the fruitfulness, comparatively speaking, utterly marred? 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, *so* shall ye be my disciples.' Let us then recognize, à priori, that is, from Scripture, (excluding the consideration of the circumstances in which *the lie* of this world has power over our mind,) that the world is a positive hinderer of fruitfulness, the much fruit in which the Father is glorified; and for this plain reason, that our sonship, our inheritance, the kingdom is not recognized. The devil, as he acts on us by the flesh, 'the lust of the flesh,' 'good for food,' or 'of the eyes,' and the like, is the god and prince of this world; and the Spirit in them that are quickened, where not dimmed and darkened by the spirit of this world, is not only the power of the difference of the carnal and spiritual nature, but bears witness that we are sons and heirs. Thus at liberty, we cry by it, Abba, Father; and the fruits are an hundred fold, where we are free from the system in which we are fettered. The energy of the kingdom is there, the Saviour of the kingdom is there, the stamp of the Father of glory, and hence in deadness to the world, power over it. The whole stamp of nature is different; we are not of the world as Christ is not of the world. Accordingly, as we find the Lord the true vine, so we find the Father the husbandman, purging the branches, that they may bring forth more fruit. We may be isolated indeed, but isolated *sons*, upon whom the glory of the Father shines in hope and the power of inward association; the sons of God, though in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation. In a word, the children of God, the God who hath called us to

'His own kingdom and glory,' the living God, is our distinguishing title; and as the Jews were affianced to Jehovah, we are called to be 'perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect.'

"I cannot pursue this subject farther here, though I may touch on it, with the Lord's permission, at a future time. As regards the explanation of the parable, I would say a very few words more.—The inseparableness of the evils, as well as of the gracious agents of covenant remedy, is not in question; the devil, the world, and the flesh, are too intimately associated to need explanation of our distinct consideration of them; and I believe more intimately than people are commonly aware of. Of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, I need not speak; but while we have spoken of them in operation as to profit, we must not forget their unity in every act, whether of creation, or any thing else; they invariably act in one, and as invariably, as far as I see, in the same order, that is, by the Son, through the energy of the Spirit. Another remark is necessary. Although we have looked at the love of the world, as hindering the full characteristic fruitfulness of the children of God, and the knowledge and love of the Father as the contrasted character, we must remember that this knowledge in principle is the position of every believer. 'I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father;' nor could we otherwise put all believers under this responsibility. But I believe it will be found that the measure of the fruitfulness of the life that is in them, much depends on their exercise in the truths here noticed and dwelt on; and that the character of their fruitfulness also much depends on their fuller and deeper apprehension of the one or the other; and that the apprehension of the Father in the full development of the Sonship glory, attaches quite a new character on the whole course of the Christian's life. This is our proper calling; and, while we must watch against the neglect of distinct reference to the Son, as administering the power of the kingdom against the 'wicked one'—to the Spirit, as overcoming or detecting the workings and deceitful power of the flesh—to the Father in contrast with the love of the world, a defective apprehension of the principle of heavenly glory will somewhere or other break down the efficiency of our Christian service. The fulness of all was in our Lord; the fulness of all help in them is our practical responsibility; the enjoyment of fellowship with them our privilege. Ill-proportioned Christianity, I believe, continually springs from the power of Satan, through neglect of, or hindering the special power of one or another of the persons, while indulgence of any of the evils is apt to throw us into the hands of Satan; and here is the wisdom of ministering to sick souls, for the source of the evil may be one, its manifestation may be another. How blessed to be able to refer to covenant assurance of a three-fold Almighty help for the several difficulties one evil may bring! A believer will be healthful and strong against the enemy, in proportion as he has just reference to all. I do not say that a believer's progress is from knowing the Son, to the Spirit and the Father—far from it; but I believe the manifestation of the power and glory of their work will gradually unfold itself, even as the quickening by the Son will make the believer discern well the operations of the Spirit against the flesh, and both of these find their full development in the manifestation of the Father's glory, in the consciousness (if he grow healthfully) that His kingdom is not of this world. In some cases of unusual energy of divine life, we see by God's calling, all these apprehensions promptly developed, and the man consequently abundantly exercised, and his service great, corresponding to the knowledge received of the Son in the kingdom, as in the apostles Peter and Paul; but I must not outstep the practical part of the subject.

"I am quite conscious, indeed particularly so, of the imperfection of these remarks; but I feel the importance of the subject deeply, and the basis of the view has been given: they are open to the correction or fuller application of those more versed in divine life. The wondrous and blessed grace of a developed covenant, the bright witness of the Son, and of the Father, and of glory: the grace in which they minister to the necessities of those who have no help in themselves, while they are the growingly understood and adored objects alike of communion and worship, separating from all that is not of themselves. I feel too, that in speaking thus, I am treading on holy ground, but ground which our God in His mercy, has opened to us, and on which we are set to walk; freed from every fear, unless of not justly estimating it, by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; cleansed from all that could offend them, by His blood, and acquainted with the boundless love which has brought these by it, while never reaching it, never able to be filled with it, knowing that it has reached even to us and filled us into its own fulness.

"Let us also remember, that in the indulgence in one of these seemingly remote evils, brings in the power of the others; for God is not there. Thus Solomon's indulgence of the world brought in the indulgence of the flesh, and the consequence was, the direct power of Satan, in the idolatrous worship of his wives. We might mention similar instances; but I close for the present. Only one thing it is important to remark.—It is not either by speculation or knowledge these things are obtained, though they may be ministered. 'We are sanctified unto obedience.' The spirit of obedience is the great secret of all the present and practical blessings of the believer; for the Spirit is not grieved, and so becomes the minister of the grace and knowledge both of the Father and of the Son; and the poorest, simplest believer, walking thus, enjoys the blessings of the covenant faithfulness both of the Father, and the Lord, and the Spirit, to the blessed purposes of love in which we stand, and of divine glory."

We have only spoken of the parables which are found in this chapter. There remain still some verses which close it: they contain the judgment formed about the Lord by the unbelief of the Jews.

He was in His own country; His works were not denied; but the Jews stumble against the stone of offence. He is the prophet without honour in His own country and in His own house. He is the son of the carpenter. In a word, He is judged even in Israel, according to the flesh.

XIV.

But this carnal and blinded judgment of the people was not the whole of their history. The passions of the false king push him on to destroy the testimony of God, and Jesus withdraws. He shews, nevertheless, by acts marked in the Psalms, the presence of Jehovah who healed them, and all His compassion and His tenderness toward His people; (Ps. ciii. 3; cxxxii. 15;) but, having borne this testimony, He sends His disciples alone in the ship. He Himself dismisses the multitude and goes up towards God—the present position of Christ: having fully borne this testimony to the multitude in Israel, He separated His disciples from them and went on high to pray. His disciples are found alone in the midst of the tempest; the Lord rejoins them, and all again becomes calm. (1) It is ever here, it seems to me, the disciples viewed as Jews, though in principle Christians of all times ought to have identified themselves with them, and to take this position. A remnant of those who expect Him (among the Jews) would also go out to Him in the midst of this tempest of peoples, before He enters into the test bark of the heirs of the promises, and the Lord agrees to it; but their steps totter because of the trouble: the Lord sustains them, and, calm being restored by His presence, all those who are in the ship recognize Him as the Son of God. Thus will it be with Israel. In Peter, we have the remnant which goes before Him; and in those who leave not the ship, we have the type of all those who remain in the ordinary course of Judaism until Christ is there Himself.

XV.

Having given this sketch of the position of the Jews, as the result of their rejection, as before had been given one of the kingdom of heaven, the Lord pronounces His moral judgment upon the religious forms and pretensions of the most religious among the people. It was only outside and hypocrisy, a walk already condemned by Isaiah: their worship was vain, their doctrines were but the commandments of man. God wished realities.

Thence he passes to a more general thesis. Out of the heart of man (and the Jew was but a man, as to his heart, before God) proceed evil thoughts. Such is man, alas! whether Jew or Gentile; but let him be of the cursed race of the Canaanites, and from among the cities whose repentance would have been as a miracle, he who, owning his misery, should rest by faith upon the superabounding mercy of God, would be heard according to his wish, for God is there, and He is love. Here it is not precisely the

(1) In chap. viii. 23-27, where the state of the Church rather is marked, Jesus goes into the ship *with* His disciples. Apparently He pays no attention to the danger; but their unbelief makes them afraid, as if Jesus, who had identified Himself with them, could perish, and with Him all the counsels of God.

Church. The rights of Israel, at least of its lost sheep, are owned; but that cannot hinder the grace and nature of God; far different from the selfishness and the ennui of the disciples, which attaches no value to the privileges of God's people. The Lord avows His special mission; but He cannot deny what God is, when faith penetrates to that point. Having thus shown (all the while recognising Israel) that the poor Gentile is to be delivered, He returns to Israel, healing the people and refreshing them with bread. He feeds the poor of the flock.

XVI.

These views of the kingdom and of the ways of God toward Israel having been given; the uselessness of a religion of forms by ordinances, however privileged, having been declared; the principles of man's heart, and the impossibility of closing the heart of God having been shewn; the Spirit of God enters, in this chapter, upon another ground. The existing generation is abandoned; there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. It was not so difficult to discern the times. Thereupon, the Lord, amidst the uncertainty of the masses, on the answer of the faith of Simon Peter, reveals what is to succeed this generation, viz. the Church, never named before. Here it is not Christ who sows, but the faith of another, faith given to Peter, which discerns in Jesus the Son of the living God. The Jews had only the sign of a risen Saviour; the generation was then rejected, and *nothing* built upon the first mission of Jesus; (the Messiah should be cut off and have nothing) (1) but the Son of the *living* God—here is a power and a strength which the energy of the prince of this world could not overturn, against which evidently the gates of *hades* should not prevail; for in His resurrection, on the contrary, they should be broken by Christ. The resurrection of the Son of God, according to the power of life which was in Him, the foundation and measure of the life and security of the Church, was sheltered, and the Church by it, from all the attacks of him who had the power of death. In vain the tomb shrouded itself in darkness, out of the midst of which came forth the life more powerful than ever. Simon makes this confession by the revelation of the Father, and it is upon that the Church is founded. Indeed, Peter is the only one who adds this word "living" to the expression "Son of God." Nathanael just owns Him as the Son of God and King of Israel; but Peter has the secret of the immoveable security of the Church of God. It will be found in his epistles that this idea of "living," associated with the resurrection of Christ, forms their basis and ruling thought.

Moreover, not only the Church, more powerful than death, like its divine Founder, should be based on the confession of Peter; but the administration of the kingdom here below should be entrusted to him. Not he, but Christ builds the Church upon the foundations which the Father Himself had laid in the revelation of His life in the Son; but the keys of the kingdom are entrusted to Peter. This administration was to begin among the Jews, and Peter was specially their apostle.

Here the Lord forbids them to announce Him as the Christ—that is no more the question, and from this time He speaks to them of His rejection and death; but the heart of Peter, favoured as he was, answered in no wise (for he was still in the flesh, not having received the Spirit) to this revelation which had been made to him. He opposes himself to the cross, and the Lord treats him as being identified with Satan and doing his work. Such is the flesh; whatever may be the revelations enjoyed by him who is not yet set free. On this occasion the Lord presents the cross as the portion of all those who followed Him, but He supports them in difficulty by the revelation of His coming in glory, and there were even some there who should see before their death the Son of man coming in His glory.

The Church is built upon this confession of Jesus, the Son *of the living God*, manifested in resurrection; that supposes the death and cross of Christ; but one is sustained in cleaving to the good of the soul, even though life should be lost; for the Son *of man* will come in the glory of His Father. Here we may remark that (verse 21) it is Jerusalem, the scribes, the chief priests who alone are presented as culpable. It is not the question yet of the Gentiles; but their very guilt puts Jesus in the position, not of Messiah only, but of Son of God in power, and of Son of man, coming in the glory of His Father with His angels, with a view to judging all men.

(1) The true translation of Dan. ix. 26.

XVII.

The immediate answer to this revelation which the Saviour makes of His glory as Son of man, is, in the three first Gospels, the transfiguration, compared by Peter himself to the power and coming of our Lord Jesus, (2 Peter i. 16-18:) the future glory of the Son of man, such as it will be manifested to the faithful remnant of the people, is revealed to the astonished eyes of the poor disciples. The risen and the changed are in the same glory as the Saviour, they are with Him, and hold converse with Him; the law and the prophets give way to the glorified Son of God, who alone is to be heard.

From this moment Jesus speaks only of suffering this faithless and perverse generation, but He is unwearied in doing them good. He shows to His disciples the part that men (not the Jews only) would have in His death. The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of *men!* The point for the disciples is the power of faith; nevertheless, it was needful to live near to God in withdrawment from all that belonged to the flesh, in order to conquer and cast out the power of the enemy.

At the end of the chapter, the Lord takes advantage of His rights as Son, to identify His disciples with Him in this same privilege; but still, not to offend, He submits to His position as a subject Jew, which Peter was forward to attribute to Him. In this beautiful passage, He shows His divinity in the two-fold respect of knowledge of the thoughts, and of power over creation; but at the same time, He identifies Himself with Peter, (who had made of Him a Jew like any other,) saying "lest *we;*" and if a fish is made to bring the money needed for Him, it is for His poor disciple as well as for Him,—"for me and thee." He places them with Him in the position of children, and places Himself with them in theirs, though He was the God of all knowledge, whom every creature, save man, was eager to obey. He puts Himself on the same footing with them, where love and humility were happy in grace towards the poor, the poorest of all Himself!

XVIII.

It is upon this basis of the humiliation of the Saviour, a principle which is linked with grace and is its perfect manifestation, that all which follows here is founded. Jesus would have his disciples to take this place, and identifying themselves with what is least, as He had done Himself, to act also in grace; for He was come (a position infinitely more glorious than that of the Messiah, whence the Jews repulsed Him, because He spoke the truth) to seek and to save that which was lost. And such was the case with all men, children as well as others; for the Lord applies here to a little child the principles of Luke xv.; but if they were lost, it was not the Father's will that they should perish. Even so in the Church (for it is founded upon the rejection of the Messiah) His own ought to act in grace towards a brother, come what will.

Here is the rule, his brother must be *gained;* self-humiliation raises us to this elevation, and permits us to act in grace toward all. But this grace, pursued even to the end by the care of the congregation, and rejected by him who was the object of it, would place him (whether Jew or Gentile) in the position of a publican and a pagan. On the one hand, grace becomes the principle of action; on the other, the Church, established and acting on the principle of grace, becomes the enclosure with reference to which one should speak of the without and the within of a publican and a pagan; for all that the disciples should bind on earth should be bound in heaven. Such is the marvellous effect of the rejection of the Messiah and the position of those identified with Him in this rejection; for now, where two or three are gathered in His name, Jesus is found in their midst. There has he put His name for a blessing. (Ex. xx. 24. Deut. xii. 5, 11, &c.) Thus the effects of His rejection on the power of this accomplished work before the Father are unrolled (though this was as in a shadow) before His eyes.

In answer to Peter, who asks how far this walking in grace ought to be carried, the Lord shews that, as it was a principle essential to the nature which acted in grace, there was no limit; it would be a limit to the privilege of man and to the nature of God. In the kingdom of heaven, mercy triumphs over judgment.

The Lord gives, notwithstanding, not only a principle, but a similitude of the kingdom, which applies, it seems to me, historically. The Jews being guilty of ten thousand talents by the crucifixion of the

Son of God, God acts in grace by the preaching of the gospel to the nation, in virtue of the intercession of Jesus, to which answers the preaching of Peter on the testimony of the Holy Ghost; (Acts iii.;) but they refuse the grace to the Gentiles, much less guilty toward them than they themselves toward God, and the wrath came upon them to the uttermost. (Luke xxiii. 34. Acts iii. 17. 1 Thess. ii. 16.)

XIX.

The Lord pursues the principles on which the relationships of the people with God subsist. He does not weaken those that existed: on the contrary, he confirms them; but he advances now and leaves the people under the consequences of the violation of the covenant under which they were found, and without the enjoyment of the new blessings into which He introduced those who accompanied Him in His rejection.

In answer to the Pharisees, who tempted Him by questions of their schools, where the fear of God was not—He traces things higher up than the law. He speaks as the Son of man. He confirms, in all their extent, the ties that God had formed; the ordinance of Moses did but suffer the hardness of their heart. The law just recognised the relationships which preceded it; what was more than those relationships, was only for a time.

The second principle He enunciates is the humility, the teachableness and the confidence of a little child: such is the principle whereby one enters the kingdom.

Thirdly, all goodness in man is denied; God alone is good. (See the position that Christ takes at the beginning of Ps. xvi. He has said to God, Thou art my Lord; my goodness extendeth not to thee, but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.) Then the Lord, repeating and taking up the word of the young man, confirms the law as a condition of life, and says to him: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." There was the principle of the law, and it is also what the young man had done outwardly.

On his answer to that effect, the Lord goes farther: Give up thy heart then—I myself am the touchstone for that—and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: other hopes are open through my rejection.—The young man went away sorrowful. The only answer to this difficulty, insurmountable for sinful man, the only key which opened the door of the kingdom of God, was: "With God, all things are possible."

The chapter is remarkable in this respect, that is to say, for the manner in which Jesus confirms for the Jews that which was fundamental in the law: "These things do, and thou shalt live." He maintains the everlasting righteousness of God as regards the ties of nature; He founds all this upon that which preceded even the law, and (since the relations on which the law was based preceded the law) He appeals from it to what was of God at the beginning. He also goes beyond the law for him who observed it in his ordinary relationship, and presents Himself as the true touchstone for the heart—Him, the rejected One, who was not of the world. What is the only means of arriving at it? The answer is: "With God, all things are possible." He recognises all that God had put in Judaism; but he ceases to be a Jew: the young man could not live on such a footing. These words of Jesus excite in the spirit of Peter this question: What shall we have therefore—we who *have* forsaken all and followed thee? The answer, founded on the glory already revealed on the mount of transfiguration, is, that when the Son of man shall return in His glory, in the regeneration, the twelve shall be in their place on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

This answer leaves all aside, until the restoration of Israel, and places again the disciples in connection with this principle, omitting what, in the interval, was for the Church; but it is also wholly outside the legal relationships of the people with God. If the law were accomplished, life would be the result. Those who followed Christ, when the Jews under the law rejected Him, should judge Israel in the day of the glory of the Son of man. They had followed the Lord in His rejection by Israel; they should participate in His glory when He should be the glorious Head of His people and of the entire world. Moreover, whoever had acted faithfully in this relation and taken Christ for his portion, should receive an hundred fold here below, and besides, life everlasting. Nevertheless, one can judge nothing before-hand as to the relative degree of glory of individuals by their present position.

XX.

The kingdom was established by the sovereignty of grace, and if God called the labourers at the eleventh hour, He could reward them as He pleased. Thus the last should be first, and the first last. On one side, then, there was the encouragement of the reward of labours and sacrifices; but, on the other, if one lost sight of the principle of grace, with a view to demanding this reward as of right, and so that others should not have it, then here is the answer: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" Cheered by the prospect of an unbounded reward, we are wholly upon the principle of grace.

Having thus set forth the motives of labour in the kingdom of heaven, after having explained the transition, from obedience to the law, in order to have life, to Christian devotedness, the Lord puts clearly before the eyes of His disciples the path here below which conducts to glory. The Son of man should be rejected, delivered to the Gentiles, and crucified; but here still the Lord shews His profound and entire submission to His Father; His disciples shall drink, it is true, of His cup, (it is His answer to those who asked of Him the first places,) but as to their reward, He left it with His Father; He pretends not to assign it to others. An entire dependance on His Father—such was the position of Christ. He had not even, so to speak, the patronage of His kingdom.

This desire of the two disciples was in itself only a manifestation of the spirit of the flesh; the Gentiles so acted. Jesus speaks of the Gentiles, for He recognizes the remnant of *Israel* in His disciples, a remnant which, apparently, lost its place in following Him. It is in glory that their relation with Israel should be manifested; but let him who would be great among them be a servant. It is what the Son of man had done; He was come to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Since the transfiguration, the Lord acts according to principles which go beyond the law, while recognising its force according to what God had said of it,—principles which assert a rejected Messiah, and shew where it is necessary to come, that is, to accompany Him without the camp. It was the Son of man ministering and giving His life as a ransom, and not the Messiah crowned with the glory of Israel: they are chapters of transition. (1) The Church is not there. They are the relationships of the Son of man, rejected by the Jews and taking another place, but assuring, to those who followed Him, their true position in glory in the age to come, when the Jews should be restored; but, referring to the Father, being subject, and having only to suffer Himself. It was the Father who should glorify them; then those who followed Him now should act anew on the Jews, and that from the bosom of glory.

At the close of the chapter, the Holy Ghost resumes the thread of history: Christ presents himself for the last time to the people, as such; and, owned as Messiah, the Son of David, He acts in power, in favour of those who owned Him, namely, two blind men; and in chapter

XXI.

A public testimony is borne to Him, as the Son of David; then comes the judgment of all the people in his presence.

In the gospel according to St. John, the testimony is borne to the glory of Jesus as Son of God, by the resurrection of Lazarus; to His glory as Son of David, by his entrance into Jerusalem, which is also recounted here; and to His glory as Son of man, by the arrival of the Greeks, who ask to see him, which gave him room to announce his death. But here, in this gospel, which is occupied with the Messiah and his relations with the Jews—relations interrupted by their sins, and resumed later in glory — the question is only of His Messianic glory, to which God bears a testimony according to the word of the prophet.

And, first, it is the Lord who announces himself; all is at his disposal. He sends to seek the ass, and commands his disciples to reply to those who asked why they acted thus: "The Lord has need of them." Mounted on the ass, he enters Jerusalem as a

(1) The transition from the position of Messiah to that of the Son of man is very striking in this Gospel, and this last title has always in view the future glory of Christ, though He was the Son of man in humiliation already. The province of His rule, and all the thought which is bound up with it, are of a far larger extent than that which is bound up with the title of Messiah. We have seen the Church founded on the confession of the Son of God, because there is found the life whereby it lives and the principle of its relations with the Father; but, as Son of man, Christ is the heir of man, and that according to the counsels of God as regards man, and not only according to the extent of the dominion of Adam. It is quite another idea and another position from heir of David, whatever may have been His glory in this character. (See Ps. viii.)

King, according to the prediction of Zechariah. The multitudes salute him, according to Psalm cxviii., and announce to the excited city that it is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, that they thus receive as King.

Jesus, having entered into the temple, executes judgment, purifies the house of God, denouncing the iniquity which had defiled it, and heals those who could neither see nor walk: he recalls to mind how the Psalms shewed that the Lord would vindicate his rights by the mouth of little children, and leaves the city in order to repair to Bethany. He enters as Lord, King and Judge; but he is no more of Jerusalem. By the curse of the fig tree, he shews the condemnation of Israel, full of appearance, but without fruit, and declares to the disciples, astonished at that which had happened to the tree, that, if they had faith, they should cause the mountain which was before them to disappear: all the stability of the nation which should be cast among the peoples.

The next day, as they demanded by what authority he did these things, he returns the point of the question upon the conscience of those who addressed it to him; a conscience too little upright to answer, and which, hiding itself under a pretended ignorance, left him by that very thing the liberty of refusing to answer them. Also, it was evident that they would not avow that which they knew well; to answer would have been impossible, and only a sanction given to iniquity. Besides, the Lord sounds their conscience in place of recognising their authority; it is what was then fitting. He is the Messiah in spite of them, and He judges, and thereupon He presents them, commencing with themselves, with the true picture of their conduct, worse than that of the publicans and of the harlots. Then He describes all the conduct of the nation toward the messengers that God had sent them, even to His own Son, and He makes them pronounce their own sentence, which He supports by a citation of Psalm cxviii. 22; finally, He announces to them, alluding to this Psalm, the consequence of stumbling on this stone, and the still more terrible lot of those on whom it should fall in judgment. (1)

XXII.

Up to this point the Lord had taken them on their own ground, as Jews, citing their own Scriptures, and judging their state, considering them as the vineyard of the Lord; it was the Son of the King himself who sought fruit in the vineyard which he had entrusted to the husbandman. But there was another point of view, the activity of the love of God and his counsels on the subject of his Son; and the kingdom of heaven is presented as the marriage-supper of the King's Son, to which they had been invited and would not come: upon that their rejection and the call of the Gentiles, but, consequent upon that call, the judgment of those who had not really put on Christ. The nation, in general, had then been judged according to its actual position, and in view of the grace which it had rejected, grace which invited it to the wedding of the King's Son, where it was going to be succeeded by poor wretches collected from all sides, but received of God. The different classes of Israel are presented now in their blindness for judgment. The partisans of the law and of the rights of the Jews, join themselves with the impiety which sold them to the Gentiles, and ask Him if they should own this dominion of the Gentiles over the people of God. The Lord leaves them where their iniquity had placed them, demanding that they should render to God his true service. After that came the Sadducees, who are judged by the simple but powerful testimony of the Word. The Lord Jesus gives the great fundamental principles of all the law and the prophets; principles which, moreover, should be realized only in the Gospel and in the renewed man. Then he presents the enigma of his own position, according to Ps. cx.: the Jews were entirely incapable of resolving it. From that moment, no man durst ask him any more questions.

XXIII.

The Lord, while quite owning the judicial authority of that which existed among the Jews, an authority based upon the law, pronounces a judgment, levelled at all those who administered that authority, insisting that the form even of it should no more subsist in the midst of his own, and that the greatest among them should be servant, for he who exalted himself should be abased. (1) What was yet wanting to fill up the measure of the Scribes and Pharisees was to imbrue their hands in the blood of God's witnesses, from which they boasted that they were pure. They were about to be put to the proof, and all the blood shed should be required of that generation. Finally, the Lord, moved with affection for the city beloved of God, declares that their house should be left desolate, and that those to whom he was speaking should see Him no more till they would say: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" according to Ps. cxviii. already cited twice: testimony of their restoration in peace at the time of the coming of Christ and of the preparation of their heart before his advent.

XXIV. XXV.

The nation was judged, and its restoration foretold, when its heart should be prepared to receive Him whom God had sent; but the disciples were not yet instructed in the circumstances which should take place in the interval, nor was their heart separated from the glory of the former order of things. This chapter brings us to the communications of Christ on this subject, and furnishes the warnings necessary to the faithful remnant.

The first thing that Jesus announces to them, is the judgment of God upon that which existed at that time before their eyes, and of which the disciples had such an exalted idea. There should not remain there one stone on another.

The Lord being seated on the Mount of Olives, his disciples come to him. That which the Lord had said to them had suggested this question, or rather, these questions: When will these things take place, namely, the destruction of the temple? What will be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age?

We must remember, that the age was not for the disciples Christianity, but, on the contrary, the state of Judaism, until the coming of the Messiah; so that these things were connected in their mind. The Lord had spoken of the destruction of the temple, which has more or less connection with the same thought; nevertheless, it is rather the revelation which the Lord had made thereupon that gave rise to the questions which had already preoccupied their mind.

In his answer, he does not touch upon the first of these questions, namely, the era of the destruction of the temple. In fact, that did not concern them; for that temple was as nothing for them now in the eyes of the Lord. He considers their position in two points of view, namely, the *general* point of view, according to which they found themselves in a position of witness; and the *special* point of view, when the abomination of desolation would be at Jerusalem. The first extends to the end of the thirteenth verse; the second from the fifteenth verse to the twenty-eighth.

The first thing that the Lord points out is, that the ruin in which his departure was to leave Jerusalem would give place to many false Christs, which would come in his name. The disciples must not suffer themselves to be deceived by them. There would be also wars and rumours of wars, (2) but they must not be disturbed by them; these things must take place, but the end would not be yet. For nation would rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there would be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places, and all these things would only be the beginning of sorrows. Such is the outside, the providential events of which they would have knowledge.

Such would be the state of the world, and what would happen there in this time of waiting for the Lord and for the end of the age; when the time would draw near, and that those who should have intelligence must await His coming on the earth and for the earth, a waiting which identified itself with the interests of the Jews in a manner, it is true, more or less clear, nevertheless according to God. He speaks of his disciples as of the Jewish remnant; but, though they were surrounded by Jewish circumstances, the hatred against them, while having its source among the Jews, would extend still further; they would be hated of all the Gentiles for the name of Christ. There would be also treasons, many would be offended,—false prophets among those who pretended to have the same hopes, and the excess of iniquity would chill many of them. But, whoever endured unto the end should

(1) This beautiful passage, from xxi. 28 to xxii. 14, depicts with astonishing exactness all the ways of the Lord with respect to the Jews and their ways. The second invitation to the Jews, after the death of Jesus Himself, is there presented. When God could say in all its force, "All things are ready," it is then that they killed the messengers, as the Lord predicts to them lower down, chap. xxiii.

(1) But this passage is remarkable in shewing how little, in this Gospel, the Lord withdrew His own from the position of the Jewish remnant. Among them this direction had no place; to them there were neither Scribes nor Pharisees nor Moses' seat; but he desires to view them in this Gospel also, as a Jewish remnant, having, as such, relationship with the nation.

(2) Here commences, it seems to me, the bearing more properly historical.

be saved. All this supposes the disciples in Jewish relations; not that the testimony of God was limited to that; but, whatever may have been elsewhere the extent of the testimony, the Lord speaks here of those who were connected with the hopes, the thoughts, and the circumstances of the Jews. The testimony of the Gospel of the kingdom would be borne effectively in all the extent of the habitable world, (οἰκουμένη,) to all the nations, to all the Gentiles. It is not a question here of salvation and of the union of the Church in a single body with Christ, but of the Gospel of the kingdom: "this Gospel of the kingdom" (the Gospel which Jesus preached to the Jews; not his death, which was not a Gospel to the Jews, for it was an effect of their unbelief with regard to the Gospel which he preached; but the testimony that the kingdom was at hand) would be announced to the Gentiles.

If the ground of all that abides for the Christian, there is a speciality which is proper to the testimony of John the Baptist, of Christ on earth, and of the disciples in the latter days.

This fourteenth verse, is taken quite alone as a fact which is to happen before the end of this age is there on earth. Here then the Lord, though he may have given warnings useful for the disciples, as Christians, in those days, takes the same starting point as they take in their questions, and returns to the point whither their thoughts tended, without correcting any thing as to this tendency. He interests Himself as to the same things; He does not own, it is true, the nation and the temple as they then existed; but He does not seek to raise their hopes to heaven. He supposes that their connections always subsist with the earth, with Israel, but, according to God; as a remnant, and as having the testimony of God in the midst of all that. It is that which happened during part of their life; then that was, as it were, eclipsed by the Church, but that will be fully accomplished in the latter times, at the beginning of the travail of bringing forth, which will introduce the end of the age. Therefore, at the fifteenth verse, the Lord determines the thing plainly by a date, or at least by an event which is local, and which has a known relation with the end; and here is the second part of His discourse, where all is marked with precision. The abomination of desolation, *of which Daniel* has spoken, will be placed in the holy place; and here we must refer entirely to Daniel, ("whoso readeth, let him understand,") that is to say, that that has reference to what will happen at Jerusalem and in those countries, in this locality definitely, and to nothing else, and that in the latter days. When that will happen, the disciples, instructed by the prophecy, are to flee. Here the hope is entirely Jewish. It is evident that it is not for me to save my life in flying from Jerusalem; that the aim of the Christian is no more that flesh should be saved, that is to say, that his life here below should be spared. In a word, they are Jews, having faith, but in Jewish circumstances, thoughts and intelligence. They were to pray to God that their flight might not be on the Sabbath day, &c.

Meanwhile, dear reader, see what tenderness of God in the midst of these scenes of horror, which, if the hand of God was not extended in grace, should spare no flesh! See the majesty of the heavens, which deigns to think of the time that He will provide for the flight of His poor creatures and of the Sabbath which might shackle them! But here there is a very important remark to make, which is that the Lord says, *Your* flight, and When *ye* shall see, that is to say, that, although the circumstances might alter, he always regards his disciples under their Jewish character.

From the fifteenth verse, it is evident that the Lord addresses Himself to them as to the same as those of whom the question is in the preceding verses: "Take heed that no one (verse 4) deceive *you*;" "when *ye*, therefore, shall see;" (verse 15) that is, He views His disciples as Jewish disciples, in connection with the nation, as He had done towards the nation itself, in the preceding chapter, verse 37, where he identifies it with the nation in the latter days: "*Ye* shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Nevertheless, there is in the circumstances a sufficiently important difference. He supposes the death of many during the first period without date. When the abomination is there, it is a question of saving one's life. In these beginnings of sorrows, which have no fixed date, but which suppose Jewish disciples in Palestine, betrayed by one another and hated by the Gentiles, the hope of many is to be founded still more upon the resurrection than upon the deliverance wrought by the advent of the Messiah. The Psalms (which present to my mind the relations with the Jews, of Christ considered whether as the just man, or as the King on Zion) speak either of Himself prophetically, or of the faithful remnant, animated by His Spirit with more or less intelligence, and of his circumstances in the latter days.

Now, the book of Psalms is divided into five parts, which treat each of a different subject. In the first, the hope of resurrection is very frequently found there; in the others, almost more; in all is seen the expectation of deliverance; but in the first this expectation is passed beyond, which has hardly place in the others. Now, from the beginning of the second part, the Spirit of Christ, in the remnant, speaks as having been forced to abandon Jerusalem, of which the remembrance is precious to him. He appeals from it to God against the Gentiles (Ps. xlii.) and against the ungodly Jews. (Ps. xliii.)

It is very evident that the disciples, to whom Jesus addressed Himself, while they had, at the moment of His speaking with them, Jewish hopes, enjoyed at a later period the hope of the resurrection, and more beyond; but He speaks to them here according to their actual position before Him, and, as Prophet, He declares to them what concerned the *faithful remnant* of the people *called to bear testimony*, as in the preceding chapter he had shewn them the fate of the *nation*. The disciples were those "of understanding," of Dan. xi. and xii., who are called here to understand that of which the intelligence is promised them in those chapters.

The warnings for the time of testimony are then given to the end of the thirteenth verse, and, having announced the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom among all nations, at least among all those of the prophetic earth, (οἰκουμένη,) we have from the fifteenth the instructions of Jesus for the time of the last 1260 days. Then will the false Christs seduce, if it were possible, even the elect; but the coming of the Son of man will be like the lightning, for where the carcase is, there, as the flight of the eagle, will fall the judgment of God.

Here ends the second part, which treats of the great tribulation at Jerusalem, and of the dangers which accompany it even for the very elect, dangers to which the advent of the Son of man puts an end. The circumstances of that time, when it shall come, will furnish a date and signs. Moreover, and as a general result, immediately after the tribulation of those days, all the powers of heaven shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven. Many warnings had been given to the disciples, but no sign to the people on earth; it had even been refused; the sign of the Son of man would now be in heaven at His coming. The generation having been already rejected, it would have been out of place to have given it a sign; it was too late, for it was about to be judged: as the tribes of the land (of Israel) shall mourn, (according to Zech. xii.) and shall see the Lord come in the clouds of heaven. Every eye shall see him; but here I believe that Jesus restricts himself to Israel, I do not say to Jerusalem: they are all the tribes of the land of Israel who are called to mind here. But this will not be all: He will gather together the elect (1) of this people from the four winds, from all the countries where they will be scattered in those days. Two things, as to the epoch, are here distinctly marked by the Lord:

First, the circumstances of which he has just been speaking. When all these things shall come to pass, his coming and the end of the age will be at the door;

Secondly, the *actual generation* of the Jews should not pass away till all these things should be accomplished.

There are circumstances for them that understand. As to dates, if the day or hour be enquired of, the Father alone knew them. (2)

As to the generation, I doubt not but that the Lord uses this expression morally, which is constantly done in the Word. "The generation of the wicked shall not see light." "A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." (Ps. xxii.; Ps. xlix., 19, 30, 31. Heb.) See specially Deut. xxxii., which precisely treats of this subject, in verses 5 and 20; the word translated "*race*" in this last verse is the same translated "*generation*" in the fifth verse, and by *age to age* [in the French.] (Ps. xxii. 30.)

(1) See Is. lxv. 22—passage, however, which seems to confine itself to th elect already in the country; here they are sought from afar. I only quote i for the force of the word "elect" here.

(2) For my part, I believe that all the calculations that have been made are without foundation—there may be many very interesting things in the works in which they are found, as I have often found—but the calculations themselves are baseless. I believe there have been analogous things, wherein the principles of evil, which shall break out in the last days, have been more or less developed; but as to exact calculations, they are based on a false principle, because these dates, in their exact application, apply to the Jews of the last days.

If the day is not known save to the Father alone, that accords, I think, with what is said in Psalm cx.: "Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." The Lord, who expects all here below as servant of his Father. has received but this word at his mouth, "until." Nothing shall fail, no uncertainty in the events, not one word that has proceeded out of his mouth shall fall to the ground. As to the moment, it should be as in the days of Noah; that is to say, a sudden judgment, and unexpected on the earth; they should be overtaken by it, when they should least expect it. Yet the Lord will know how to distinguish them, and to leave those whom He should think worthy, even though two men should be in the same field, or two women at the same mill.

It was then for the disciples, instructed beforehand, to watch, for they did not know in what hour their Lord would come.

But it may be asked, how it is that the Lord identifies his apostles with the rebellious Jews, who will be overtaken by the judgment, and since the Church is to ascend to Him in the air, how can it happen that two shall be found in the same field in the day of the Son of man? It is true, that will not happen for the Church, as it *is very certain that it did not happen for the apostles to whom these words were addressed;* but in this discourse the Lord speaks to no one individually, but to classes, to certain categories of people. We have an evident proof of it in verse 39 of chapter xxiii. touching the Jews, and in verse 15 of chapter xxiv. touching the disciples. "When *ye* shall see the abomination of desolation," &c. It is certain that the disciples had never seen it; it is even certain, from the book of Daniel, that it refers to the last days—the comparison of the twenty-first verse with the commencement of chapter xii. of Daniel, then the date attached to this event at the end of this last chapter, demonstrate it with the plainest evidence. Thus then, in the twenty-third chapter, as here, the Lord speaks of certain classes of persons; and here, of the faithful remnant of the Jews. It is true that those who composed this faithful remnant at that time were in the enjoyment of privileges far superior to the position here in question, but the Lord is not speaking of this now. He is occupied with the remnant, and he could speak to His apostles under this aspect, because they were in that moment this remnant, and put by the nation in the presence of the rejection of the Messiah, whatever may have been the superior privileges which afterwards they may have individually enjoyed.

All this supposes a Gospel of the kingdom, specially preached in the last times, as moreover it supposes persons who will be persecuted for Christ's name' sake, but who, at the same time, will be more or less identified with Jewish hopes, who will even be of the Jewish remnant; and I believe the Word tells us so. I see, at the end of Isaiah and of Daniel, chosen ones distinguished from the mass of those who shall be spared; but they are Jews, they occupy themselves with Jewish interests, and they will enjoy the deliverance of this people and the blessings which will result from it on earth. (See Dan. x. xi. xii. Is. lxv. lxvi.) It appears that some will be put to death, whether during the period called the beginning of sorrows, or during the last tribulation. It is evident that these two classes will have part in the first resurrection; which is also what the Apocalypse, chapter xx., shews clearly. Also, as a principle, that ought to be sufficiently clear. We have said that the same thing is repeatedly found in the Psalms, only much more (at least as a hope) before the great tribulation of the last half-week. But that changes not the destiny of the greater part of these saints. It seems to me (but here I do not go further than that) that those who have been at this epoch faithful witnesses, but without being put to death, will be particularly identified with the Lord Jesus, as King of the Jews upon earth. They will have been, according to the measure given them, that which He Himself was upon earth; that is, a witness in the midst of a people who rejected Him. Of this the Psalms bear the imprint. Only we must add, as a fact, the testimony of the kingdom to the Gentiles, for, if there is place for mercy, the Lord could not strike without a testimony having been previously borne. Until now this preaching has not been assigned to the remnant; it was given only as a sign, as that which is to happen before the end of the age comes, and the Son of man comes down upon the earth; but it is not said that it should be the work of the Jewish remnant. It is a sign which is given them.

Definitively, we have the commencement of the sorrows, and the counsels and warnings proper to this period; the time of the great tribulation when the abomination of desolation should be set up in the holy place, and the special dangers of that terrible moment; the overthrowing of all the powers of the heavens, the appearing of the Son of man, and the gathering together of the Jews dispersed in all the world. Or, if you will take the thing further back: the Jews put aside, and the principles on which the relations of God, whether with them or with the Gentiles, should be renewed, chap. xiv. xv.; then xvi. the Church; xvii. the glory of the advent of the Son of man. The position of grace and lowliness that Christ took, and that His were to take in the meantime, end of xvii. and xviii; and in general all the principles of the kingdom established by faith, and the ways of God in this respect, to the twenty-eighth verse of chapter xx. It is in this part (and therefore I have made this summary) that we have the individual portion of the apostles, that is, at the end of chapter xix.; then the judgment of the nation, or, if you will, of that generation, xxi. to xxiii. The exposition of all that concerned the remnant, xxiv.

But this leads our divine Master to consider the remnant under another aspect, that the disciples scarce understood then, that is, its relations no longer with Israel and the hopes of this people, but with Himself; in other words, to consider this remnant as charged with his service, as the retinue of his joy, come forth to await his return, or finally, as charged with his interests here below in his absence. This is what follows from xxiv. 45, to xxv. 30. In the first case, it does but present the position and the effect of fidelity during his absence, and the manner in which unbelief would identify itself with the state of heart which puts off the thought of his return. If, during the absence of the Master, a true service is yielded by the wise and faithful servant (it is not a question here of "good") who keeps his place, to accomplish, in care bestowed upon those who compose the household, (1) that which was entrusted him in the house, blessed is that servant; at the time of the return of the Master, he will be made ruler over all his goods. Here this is a great principle of service to which the apostles were called,—true for their service in Christianity, and applicable also for each of us in his place. But the position and the principle only are laid down here. If there was infidelity, if the servant put off the thought of the return of the Master, and went on his way with those who made themselves drunken in the world, he should be counted among the hypocrites, and taken in an hour when he least expected it. But the Lord pursues further this general principle, and brings us back to the kingdom of the heaven. In that time, here is that to which it would be like. It is not here the Church, properly so called, for the Lord could not present the Church as the Church in this manner; that is, he could not, in presenting the Church as such, compare it to virgins who were in the attitude of waiting, as the retinue of the marriage supper of the Lord, with a Bride quite different from the Church, and the latter acting no other part than that of the companions of the marriage supper. But the state of the kingdom at this time may very well be compared to such circumstances: in effect, when the Lord will come as Son of man, to execute judgment against the wicked servant, and against Israel, and to receive Jerusalem and the Jewish people as his own, then the kingdom of heaven might be regarded in this point of view; there will be persons who will go out to meet him; *there* was that which represented the kingdom. It was not a question of sowing, nor of buying fields, nor of separating good fish; nor was it any more a question of the activity of the kingdom, but of the conduct of those who, having been called, were gone out to meet the Bridegroom. The matter in hand here is not a Bride, but the condition of those who wait for the return of the Bridegroom. (2) And this is what had become of it; the expectation of the Bridegroom was lost; the virgins, at first, had acted after this principle; they could not abandon this position, however unfaithful they might have been to that which they had taken.

Here it will be asked, Does the Lord speak of the Church? Is it meant by that, Do these exhortations and these parables apply to you who are members of it? I answer, assuredly so. But the explanation of the word does not stop here. *Church* is a word which is of all importance. If we search out the use of it in the epistles, we shall see that it is not found in those of Peter, and only

(1) We may remark here that the service refers to the house or to those who compose the Master's household, and the care which ought to be bestowed on them. If it is to those who formed the Church, it is at least to them and to their service in its Jewish character, whether as to a body, or in an interior appropriated to the Lord, as this people was in the world.

In the parable of the virgins, it is the expectation of grace, the state of those who went forth to meet Him.

The third parable is the activity of service with His goods.

(2) I believe that if one absolutely wishes to introduce the Bride here (and the Lord does not) it is a question about Jerusalem on earth,

accidentally in that of James, and once in the third of John, in speaking of the conduct of an individual here below. In the Apocalypse, it is a question of particular churches, but never of the Church, save in the expression of: "The Bride says, Come." In a word, Paul alone treats of this subject and employs this word, applying it to the unity of the members of Christ, to one only Church, or to one only body. Here we have: *The kingdom of heaven* is like, &c. The Church presents always the idea of a body, on earth during the period of her trial, but united to Christ on high: entirely for Him alone, separated to be His, as a wife to her husband. The kingdom of heaven supposes men on the earth, the government of God exercised over a certain state of things, the reign of heaven which continues the course of government of things here below, although in new circumstances; not in the same manner as in Israel: a government limited in its application, which puts on a particular form, until Christ comes, because he does not yet judge; and this is what gives place, He having been rejected, to the specialities contained in these parables. Nevertheless, all those who recognise the authority of Christ are here under their responsibility. Perhaps, in certain cases, they are the same persons as those who compose the Church; but they are looked at in another point of view. Here then the kingdom would be like virgins gone forth to meet a Bridegroom who comes to the house of his Bride. He supposes them gone forth; but, alas! while the Bridegroom delays His coming, they sleep, and are awakened at midnight by this cry: "Behold the Bridegroom." What characterised the state of the kingdom, is, that *all* had forgotten their vocation; it was not that there were no faithful ones; the wise virgins had their oil in their vessels. But all, wise or foolish in the kingdom, whether the sincere and pious, or whether they deceived themselves, all had lost the sense of their vocation. This great truth, the coming of the Master, had its influence; they are awakened, but to be separated by the arrival and the judgment of the Master. Time enough had been given for the trial of their state, but it was no longer the time to get provided with oil. The return of the Lord, as to our service, is always judgment, and not grace. And here we see that it is not the Church as Bride, for he takes us with himself at his advent, as his Bride; crowning the work of his grace in power of life and fulness of acceptance.

But we shall find that the return of Christ *here below, his manifestation*, is always matter of judgment and responsibility for Christians as for others. Our rapture, whensoever it may come to pass, (I am not discussing that now) is always grace and full favour common to the whole Church. And it is because his return is judgment, that he adds: "Watch;" for when He shall be there, it will no longer be the time of grace.

In the first parable, we have the contrast between him who served the master humbly, and the *heart* which said: He delayeth His coming; in that of the virgins, the effect of this delay which should eventually take place, an effect which should be manifested even with the faithful; namely, that the kingdom should be characterized by the complete forgetfulness of the Master's return. However, the great difference was the possession of the oil of grace hidden in the heart, the Spirit of God.

For, in fact, all this would be like a man who, going to a distant country, trusts his goods to his servants, according to their ability; then, after a long interval, returns; that is to say, that the question is as to the fidelity of the servants, when they are left (to outward appearance) to themselves, and that during a long time, so that their heart is put to the proof to see whether it is truly the Master's, if they identify themselves with His interests when there is no appearance of his return; or if they forget Him, as Israel at Sinai, who believed that it was all over with Moses. But here pay attention, that it is not simply the fact of being ready in grace, but the activity which confidence in the Lord inspires, the activity of service in love of persons identified with the interests of Christ, seeking but that, and seeking it with the zeal imparted by that love, not in his presence directed by his eye, but in his absence; in the intelligence and activity which the Spirit gives, and with a knowledge of his thoughts sufficiently intimate to be able to act in his absence. The servants are left to themselves; I do not mean by this that they can do these things without grace. The contrary is sufficiently demonstrated by the case of the wicked servant. But they are placed under responsibility; their condition is put to the trial; all that the Master does is to trust his goods to them. We shall see what they *are* by the result. Moreover, the question here is not of the moral conduct of the servant, as in the first parable, chap. xxiv. 45, nor of fidelity to a position in which he was actually placed; but of intelligence, of activity, of the good-will of a servant, who has, for his spring of action, nothing but the mark of confidence which his Master gives him in committing his goods to him. (1)

Let us say a few words more on the parable of the talents. Here the servant is called "good and faithful." It is that which occurs during the absence of Christ. He has delivered his goods to his servants; if they have understood his grace, if they have been touched by this mark of his confidence, they will have laboured with that which was given them, or else they will have wronged the character of their Master, not to have had an entire confidence in him. There was only faithfulness, it is true, in the conduct of the two who had traded; for, why commit goods to them, if it was not to improve them? But the Lord keeps account of it; what He had confided was but a little thing in his eyes; but they had known him, and had been faithful. There was but one heart into between him and them, and now, at his return, they must enter his joy: one heart in service and one heart in joy. Also, "many things" were confided to them in his kingdom, at the hour of his glory. It is a sweet picture: the heart of the Lord trusts in them for his glory in his absence, and their heart trusts in Him for the result, and at His return their hearts are united in the joy. The heart of a servant on one side, and that of a master on the other, doubtless, yet of a master one-hearted with them, whose joy was to bless them, and to extend the sphere of their confidence according to the glory which He will have then acquired. As to His joy, they are to share it. The third servant does not lose the inheritance only; he is cast outside; he had never known his Master. This is what was wanting to him. The circumstances of the service might be the means of proving it, but there was the ground of the affair. Alas! for the details, it is that which happens too often to real Christians, and there is always the history of our failures in our service: we have not known the Master. Confidence in Him was wanting; now, can one know Him, without confiding in Him?

Nevertheless, to have to do with Christ takes away even the intelligence of ordinary duty from those who do not love Him, because the heart is soured by the consciousness of ill-will, and only regards Jesus as a severe judge. He will have acted toward us according to our faith. Alas! how little it is; but at least the Master is good.

In these three parables, we see the history of what occurs as regards those who profess to be His, during His absence and at the time of His return, with respect to their responsibility. Next, I will only add here, that I do not believe that these three parables can be applied to the special testimony of the kingdom which will be borne at the end. The first only speaks of the charge and responsibility in the house, towards the people whom the Master had left there. The second does not at all speak of this activity of grace, but of the condition of persons already called to wait for the Lord, the Bridegroom, who was to come. The third speaks of those to whom the Lord delivers his gifts when he goes away, telling them that he will return after a long interval: then they will enter into the joy of their Master Himself. This last is not a likening of the kingdom of heaven, because it is not a state of things, a complete whole, the object of the care of the judgments of God, but an individual responsibility, according to that which had been entrusted to each, and in which each also received according to what he had done under this responsibility, and according to the confidence that his Master had in him, and that which he himself had in the goodness of his Master.

There is no more a question here of the Jews in the latter days, at least in these two last parables; in the last, above all, that is evident; for it is about those to whom Christ entrusted his goods on his departure, and during the long interval which elapses before his return. As to the second, it is a likening of the kingdom of heaven, and the Jews will not go out with intelligence to meet the

(1) The difference between this parable and Luke xix., which in the main is the same, is, that there, the principle of man's responsibility is brought much more forward; here, the sovereignty and the wisdom of the Master. There are other things which pertain also to the character of this gospel, but that is the principal. In Luke, each receives cities according to his work; here, all enter into their Master's joy. That is necessary where individual responsibility is in question. What was important here, was to shew that disciples left as Jews, would be in the same joy as their Master, when He should return in glory as Son of man, being no longer a Jew, though fulfilling the promises made to the fathers. But His servants should be in the same position as Himself, not as He had left them when He went away, and His joy would be the glory. Yet it would be found also in accomplishing His promises to His people, however it might have been. But the question was not exactly about possessing cities.

Lord, and afterwards slumber in the midst of affliction, forgetting—even the wise—that He may come. Such is at least what it seems to me to be, and its connection with the parable that follows confirms this thought.

That there is something analogous, in certain respects, I believe; that is, there will be those of greater intelligence, who will be morally separated from the others, and who will understand. But I do not think that the conditions of this parable can be coherently applied to them. Their state had already been the subject of the Lord's instructions, in speaking of Jerusalem and of the latter days.

We come now to the third part of this discourse: the Lord arrived. This is what our precious Master announces. When the Son of man, (1) (for it is always in this character that He is presented, when He speaks definitely of his presence here, and not merely in that of Messiah, a title in which he had been rejected,) when the Son of man, I say, shall come in his glory, (2) it will not merely be an instantaneous act of appearing. "He will sit upon the throne of his glory;" there will be something permanent there; "and before Him shall be gathered all the nations, and He shall separate them, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." The Gentiles will be thus judged. I do not believe that it is necessary to prove at greater length that what is called the last judgment is not the question here. The Son of man is *returned* in his glory; he is not sitting on the great white throne, from whose face the heavens and the earth flee away. (Apoc. xx. 11.) He is King now; he is about to reign, and not to give up the kingdom. He judges only the living Gentiles, for here there is no question of resurrection. He judges them on a principle inapplicable to the immense majority of those who will appear when God will judge the secrets of the heart; namely, according to the manner in which they shall have received certain messengers of Christ whom he calls his brethren. It is clear that does not apply to those who have lived in paganism before Christ, nor to the immense majority of those who have lived between his advent and his death. In a word, it is Christ who, as King here below, judges the Gentiles, who shall be then on the earth—the nations.

Let us observe by the way here, his tenderness to the Jewish nation. We have trouble to find the judgment of this nation in these chapters! (3) He speaks indeed of the end of the age, but rather of tribulation than of judgment, of shortening those days for his elect. At his appearing all the tribes of the earth mourn, and he gathers together the elect (Jews) from the four winds. There is chastisement, it is true, but it terminates in blessing: the heart of Christ is busied with the remnant. He had said to the Jews: "Ye shall not see me henceforth until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." His heart turns in blessing towards the chosen people. Ungodly Jerusalem had filled his eyes with tears, but here he puts an end to her chastisement. There is one who has known to say: "How long?" (4) (compare Ps. lxxiv. 9.) The fact is, that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, that is to say, that God does not change in his counsels with Israel. "In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it; he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind." Read the whole passage, Is. xxvii. 6-9; for "this is all the fruit to take away his sin." Will there then be no cutting off? Not in the absolute sense. This is what will happen, as may be seen in the last chapters of Isaiah and elsewhere: (compare the end of Zech. xiii.) the majority of the nation will join itself to the Gentiles and will be idolatrous. The unclean spirit which had gone out will return with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and the last state of that generation shall be worse than the first. They will be joined with Anti-Christ and will receive him who will come in his own name. They will thus be the cruel nation (and not the godly or holy nation) of Ps. xliii., and they will perish with the apostate Gentiles. The indignation and the chastisement having, along with the testimony of God, separated the remnant, they will no more be counted as the nation, and He will make of a remnant a strong nation. Where then, in that which the Lord says here, is found positive judgment? It is contained, almost concealed, in these words: "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered;"—a passage which makes allusion, I think, to an expression of the book of Job xxxix. 30, and treats the Jews, who have thus united themselves with the enemies of God, as lost and dead, without wishing to name them anew. It is but a corpse united with the Gentiles, who, haughty as they are, will be judged on earth; for as it is said elsewhere of Babylon: "Strong is the Lord God who judgeth her," likewise strong is He who judgeth *them*, however they may have despised Him. Here, in order to make the application of the passage precise, Christ does not merely come, but it is told us that, when He will come, He will sit upon the throne of His glory; whilst it will be as lightning that He will come to put an end to the tribulation and the desolation which the abomination has caused. He had set the faithful servant over all His goods: those who have their portion with the hypocrites, the wicked and slothful servants have been cast outside when they waited not for Him; but here Jesus takes his place upon his throne. There is no more a question nor a doubt about his rights nor about the submission of all to the ends of the earth. He is now King, verse 34.

There are in that scene three classes of persons: the goats, the sheep, and his brethren. The judgment of the two first classes depends on their conduct toward the third. To have done these things to one of his brethren is to have done them to Himself; not to have done them to one of the least of these is not to have done them to Himself. The brethren, I have no doubt, will be the remnant who will have preached the gospel of the kingdom among the Gentiles; the reception given to those messengers decides the lot of those who appear now in judgment. No more do I doubt that they are Jews who will bear this testimony, and that Jesus calls his brethren, at this time, as those to whom He spoke, and that, after His resurrection, He calls His brethren, according to Ps. xxii. I know very well that the Gentiles were grafted in later, but the Lord speaks according to that which resulted already from the fact that the disciples followed Him at that time rejected; and he employs this expression to mark those who among the Jews should be in the latter days in a kindred position of testimony. In principle, the disciples might apply it to themselves, and the Lord would have them know well that one day He should be King, and all the Gentiles should be forced to appear in judgment before Him, the rejected Messiah, and that they should enjoy all that which the Jews hoped as to the glory of their Messiah.

The brethren of Jesus, according to the constant language of the passages where this expression is employed, are the believing Jews, the remnant that believed in the Messiah; (it is clear that all the Gentile believers have been admitted to the same privilege;) but in this passage, Jesus occupies himself with those who surrounded him, to encourage and direct them. As King, He judges on earth. Those among the Gentiles who received well the brethren of Jesus

(1) Perhaps I have not sufficiently brought out this distinction. As Messiah, He came into the midst of the Jews to accomplish the promises made to the fathers, to the family of David, and to the Jews therein; but later on he takes the kingdom in all the extent of his rights as Son of man, to whom the Father had subjected all things. The transition from the one of these positions to the other is often perceptible in the gospel.

(2) All the verses, from the thirty-first of chap. xxiv. to the thirty-first of chap. xxv., are a parenthesis, and contain moral instructions, based upon preceding revelations: the history, or the continuation of the prophecy, is resumed at verse 31: "When the Son of man shall come," &c.

(3) In Luke, which is not so much occupied with the Jews, the Lord shows clearly the judgment which will come on the nation and which He Himself will execute. (Luke xix. 27.) The truth, as a warning, had been already given in this gospel, xxi. 44.

(4) It is not that he indicates the day. As Jehovah had said to the Lord, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool," so the Lord said, "Ye shall not see me henceforth until," &c. The repentance of the Jews is for his heart the sign that He can see them again and that they also can see him again. Peter gives them the same sign, (Acts iii.) "Be converted. . . . *that* (ὅπως ἂν, *that*, and never *when*) the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ."

We see here the importance of the repentance of the Jews as a nation, for thousands since that time have repented as individuals. This repentance is to have respect to the Sent One of God, for it is to be a repentance for the sin which has caused their ruin and their rejection. They will say: "Blessed is he that cometh!" a word which follows these: "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head-stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes." (Ps. cxviii.) This explains also, why the Lord at his coming has yet a great deal to do to place the Jews in full peace and prosperity, according to the figure of Solomon. This is because He takes up the Jews where he left them, not such as they were in the days of Solomon, or onward to the captivity of Babylon as to Judah. But He can identify himself with them; that is what He could not do at his first coming, because they would not. He had besides other things to accomplish according to the counsels of God. Now when they have repented of their last national fault and they say, "Blessed is He that cometh," He can *undertake their cause*; and this is what he does, and it is not a small thing. The indignation has ceased, but the thing is to put the remnant-nation in possession of all their privileges and all their country. It is the work of Messiah when He is there, and of none other. Zechariah, Joel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, speak of these things. There is then the action of the Word of God by the Spirit, on the heart of the Jews, as Jews, before the appearing of Jesus, which action will leave them Jews; and on the other hand, the acts of power, He having recognised the nation, to put them in possession of all their privileges, after the appearing. Read Is. l. and li. for the first of these things and the transition; (see Ps. xlii. to xlix. and Zech. ix. The moment of transition is found in chapter xii. See also Jer. li. 20; Is. xli. 15, 16; Mic. iv. 13, v.; Is. xl. 10-14.

enjoy, as blessed of the Father, the kingdom He had prepared for them from the foundation of the world: having received the Gospel of the kingdom, they enjoy the effect of their faith; namely, the kingdom itself. Those who preached it, having been in the position of Jesus in testimony, will be recognised as his *brethren* in the blessing. But He is now King come on earth, so that his brethren are recognised here below; those put to death will have part in the first resurrection, but such is not the subject treated here. The King is on earth, the nations on earth; so that there is nothing which can make it supposed that the brethren spoken of here are of heaven. (1) There will be those, but here it appears to me that they are rather the messengers of the kingdom, who have been preserved in spite of all the difficulties of the time.

This kingdom is in the counsels of the Father from the foundation of the world; the Church is chosen to be the spouse of Christ before the foundation of the world. The sheep are not called children, but only blessed of the Father. They enjoy eternal life, as those who refused to receive the brethren suffer everlasting pains. It is the *final* judgment of the Gentiles who will be on earth when Christ shall have established his throne there. Once more, it is not a question here of the resurrection.

XXVI.—XXVII.

After having given us the future prospect of the remnant in all respects, the Spirit resumes the history of the events, and presents us with the recital, at once painful and touching, but for us infinitely precious, of the sufferings and of the resurrection of the Saviour. I do not think, dear brethren, of entering into many details of these chapters, because that which is here demanded is adoration, is the heart, rather than exegesis. I will only point out some particular points which belong to the character of this Gospel. And, first, some words on what the Lord says in giving the cup.

It is good to remember that we eat the *broken* body of Christ. One with Him in His glorious state, it is not of that we partake in the supper. Enjoying vitally this position infinitely exalted, we *remember* the sufferings which have purchased it for us: our hearts, our consciences, our souls, are nourished with the broken body; it is to Jesus dead that our thoughts recur, and to a love more powerful than death. If the body had not been broken, as Gentiles we should even have remained strangers as regards the promises, and sinners destitute of all hope.

A living Messiah was the crown of glory for the Jews; but, if He is lifted up from the earth, He draws *all* men. His broken body is the door for sinners from the Gentiles. On this the heart of the Christian is nourished, not merely as on manna come down from heaven, which typifies Jesus, a man upon earth, nor on Jesus in the heavens (where we are one with Him)—it is there the hidden manna; but on this devoted victim of propitiation which I see brought to the altar, and there broken, slain for us—a victim full of love and of devotedness.

I pause before this mysterious scene, where He all alone, (for no man could be there save to bend his head and adore,) where the victim of propitiation, the man Jesus, presents himself before the face of Him who, in His offended Majesty, comes out to take cognizance of sin, in order that we might find on the tracks of the righteousness of God, which has burst forth and is accomplished, nothing but an infinite and immutable love: the love of the Father, enhanced by the accomplishment of the eternal righteousness to his glory. It is then the precious Saviour, humbled to death, that we have here, his body broken, (and one could not go lower down,) and his blood shed out of his body. In that manifestly it is not a question of Jesus, such as He is at the present time; for He is glorified. This natural life He has left for us. He only presents it to God as a thing already given elsewhere; but he speaks here of a double effect of this blood which he has shed; first, he speaks of it as the foundation, or at least the seal, of the new covenant; and, secondly, as the foundation of the remission of the sins of many; that is, the basis of the new covenant is now laid, and, moreover, it is not a question of an act which relates to Jesus only to shew his obedience: this blood is efficacious for the sins of others. That does not merely secure new privileges, which one enjoys as a Christian, but procures the pardon of the sins of many of the Jews—not only so, but, in a general manner, of many. As to the new covenant, I will say some words here.

The old covenant, it is clear, is the covenant made with the Jews at Sinai. The Gentiles are not there for any thing. The new one refers to the old; it will be established really with Judah and Israel, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah (xxxi. 31-34.) What then have we to do with the new alliance, we other Gentiles, may we ask ourselves? This is the answer: It is clear that the covenant itself treats with the Jews and with Israel, but upon principles of grace, and based upon blood of perfect efficacy before God. Now, for the moment, Israel is put aside as a nation. It enjoys no covenant.

What then is the state of things with respect to the covenant? It is that the Mediator of the covenant has shed his blood, and thus the basis of the covenant is laid: it is confirmed and established immutable before God. Christ is ascended on high, and we are one with Him, enjoying all the effect which is essentially attached to His person and to His position. We have the blood of the covenant. Those who are called to it exercise the ministry of the new covenant. Our position is to be united with the Mediator of the new covenant, and to enjoy all the privileges which He enjoys Himself, as having it established in his blood; though the covenant is not treated with us, it is established in Him before God, and we, we are in Him here below. What is the consequence of it? We drink of blood. If a Jew had drank of blood under the old covenant, it was death: could a man be nourished on death? It is the fruit of sin, it is his condemnation, it is the wrath of God, and the blood in the body was the life; and a Jew had no right to that. But Christ has suffered death. And can the Christian be nourished on death? Yes; it is salvation, the death of sin, the infinite proof of love. It is his life, the peace of his soul, the deliverance from sin, before God. What a difference! We drink of this blood, the proof of salvation and of grace, and the source of life. Nevertheless, it is Jesus dead, of whom it is a question here.

There is (Heb. xiii. 20) another expression to which allusion may be made; He has "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant." Which shews us that Christ Himself is above, and has been raised according to the efficaciousness of this blood that He has shed to satisfy the glory of God. He, the only and beloved Son of the Father, charged Himself with our responsibility and our sins, and thus with the glory of God in this respect; and if this glory had not been completely satisfied, He could not, evidently, either rise again, or appear before Him whose majesty required that nothing should fail to the work. But He accomplished this work gloriously, and in that the Son of man has been glorified, and God *glorified in Him;* and He is ascended on high, not only as Son of God, but according to the efficaciousness of His work, in virtue of which He appears before the Father, the everlasting covenant being thus established in His blood. The question here is not of an old or a new covenant, which refers to particular circumstances, but of the intrinsic and essential worth of the blood of Christ.

But perhaps I go too far away from our gospel; I allow myself to be drawn away by the importance of the subject, and also by the precious worth and glory of the work of Him who has so much loved us.

I return now to the more humble precincts of my labour. We see here that the Spirit declares the value of the blood in a general way; it is shed for many for the remission of sins. The Gospel which treats of the Kingdom and of the Messiah in the Jewish point of view, must necessarily shew that the death of Christ had another aspect.

In Luke, where this distinction was not obligatory, because of the non-Jewish character of this Gospel, it is said: "My blood which is shed *for you.*"

We have then the blood of the new covenant and the remission of sins. The disciples were to drink of it, as they were also to eat of his *broken* body. Such is their portion: to be nourished on the death of Jesus, and to show it till He come.

Until then, he would drink no more with them of the fruit of the

(1) There will be heavenly brethren, our hope and joy: if men will insist on the idea that it is they who are in question here, I contest it not. I express my conviction, formed on the study of all the chapter, and of all the Gospel itself, with the instructions which refer to it; but since there is but the word *brethren* here, and we all admit that the members of the Church bear this name in principle, and that thus it depends on spiritual discernment to apply it, each will judge of it according to what is given him; it is not that I doubt; but I do not insist on the thing in comparison with others. (See the last chapter.)

vine. They would be nourished on Him, but He would not be nourished with them. The fruit of the vine is the sign of social joy, "wine which cheereth the heart of God and man," which they continually sprinkled in the burnt-offerings and the peace-offerings, that is to say, of a sweet savour. (See Numb. xv. 5, 7, 10, where the question is not of offering for sin.) Now, of this fruit of the vine He would drink no more, whilst His disciples should drink abundantly of his death, the true drink, but a drink of separation from sin, and of Christ also, as regards His personal presence; the heavens must receive Him until the time of restitution of all things of which the prophets had spoken. Thus His social life with His disciples here below was closed; it would no more even be renewed after the same manner. They would enter spiritually into the power of his death, and would be one day anew with Him in joy in the kingdom of his Father.

In Luke, this is expressed in a manner a little different. It is said: "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come;" and of the passover: "I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Here the things are much more left in general forms, because it is not occupied with the order of the dispensations of God on earth, but with the moral principles which are bound up with the introduction in grace of the new man.

In the fifty-third verse of Matt. xxvi. we have a circumstance which belongs particularly to this Gospel; it was just the right of Jesus, as Messiah, the Son of God, to have angels at his disposal.

In chap. xxvii. 25, we have the solemn and frightful execration which this poor blinded people pronounces on itself, and which still weighs upon it to this day,—an execration which will nevertheless be blotted out by grace, and the power of this same blood which they shed in their blindness, and which refers specially to the subject of this Gospel: "His blood be on us and on our children!" Terrible words! O what then is the heart of blinded man! Their entire apostacy from their position is more plainly delineated in John, who, besides, always presents them thus: "We have no king but Cæsar," say they. Here it is their chastisement, as a nation, from the hand of God, which they invoke upon their head. They are owned in chastisement. (Compare Is. xl.)

If the reader compare the account Luke gives us of this moment so solemn to us all, he will find that there they are the moral circumstances which are related; here, those which refer to the degradation of the Messiah. The daughters of Jerusalem lament over Him; His prayer for His murderers, the conversion of the thief, are found in Luke. If we examine John, we find the details of the sufferings omitted. The Spirit has there kept that which brings out the dignity of Him who traversed in grace, and according to the glory of His person, whatever might be otherwise His humiliation, those painful but precious moments, (1) precious for the present, as well as for eternity; for it is with the glory of His person, as Son of God, that the Gospel of John is specially occupied.

I will not pause longer on these circumstances, but I invite my brethren to meditate upon them. The more we are penetrated with them, the more also our poor and feeble heart will appreciate this Saviour whom we love, but whom no one knows as He is worthy of being known.

There are yet, in this chap. xxvii., the circumstances of verses 52, 53; circumstances important in this respect, that they bear testimony to the manner in which the Spirit of God treats Jerusalem, as being the holy city, when it is completely abandoned as regards the judgment of God. It may be forgotten for a moment, trampled under the feet of the Gentiles; but if the eye of God takes cognizance of it, in His eyes it is ever the holy city. The bodies of the saints come out of their graves after the resurrection of Jesus, and enter into the holy city. The death and resurrection of Jesus had abolished for heaven the middle wall of partition; but that does not hinder it, (though, as regards His government, God had given up to chastisement the holy city, because it was not holy,) from always keeping in His eyes this position; for He has chosen Jerusalem, and He will not repent of it. The same thing is seen in Daniel: (compare especially the ninth chapter:) faith thinks and speaks always thus.

(1) There is not what is found in Matt. xxvi. 37—45, nor 67, &c., nor xxviii. 46, nor 39—44, or the parallel passages in Mark and Luke. In place of that, we have John xviii. 4—9, 11; xix. 28, 30, or in place of [ἐξέπνευσε] we have [παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα]; it was the act which he did (according to John x. 18,) knowing that all was finished.

Compare also xix. 7, 8, and the character of all the discourses of the Lord, whether before the high-priest, or before Pontius-Pilate, in the two Gospels.

XXVIII.

We have in this chapter the account of the service which the angel renders to the Messiah, as also some remarkable circumstances to point out. The evangelist in no way occupies himself with the greater part of the details of the forty days that ran out after the resurrection. Each gospel is the deposit of what refers to a special aim of the Holy Spirit, for the glory of Christ is diverse.

The only thing recounted by the Lord here is his interview in Galilee with His disciples, an interview which sets them in the position of testimony which He left them as Messiah, now the depositary of all power in heaven and on earth. The invention of the unbelief of the Jews to keep their minds still in blindness is related to us. This is all that remained to tell of the Jews as a nation, so that if we take away this last feature, we have only this: the angel says to the disciples to go into Galilee, that they may there see the Lord. Jesus says the same thing to the women, in order that they might tell it to the disciples, now "*his brethren.*" There had He been continually with them during his life; there the light was to have appeared for the time of distress; there the Messiah found a refuge at the time of the pride of Jerusalem; (compare John iv. and all the history of the gospel;) the disciples were themselves of that country. All the associations of Jewish ideas, as regards the relations of the disciples with Christ in the midst of the Jewish people, were there. He had acted on Jerusalem, but that was now closed. He had been rejected. The law will go out from thence, when He shall have returned in power. "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer;" but for the time, He had done with Jerusalem as regards his Messianic testimony. Further, it must be remarked that the ascension of Jesus is not related here, but solely His relations with His disciples, relations continued after His resurrection and upon this principle, that all power is given unto Him in heaven and on earth. The Lord has already renounced Jerusalem, saying that it should see Him no more till it repented. Jerusalem, or at least its chiefs, had cried: His blood be on us, and on our children. He takes no more cognizance of it here for the moment; in principle, His disciples were the remnant of the people.

As acting from on high, He sends the Gospel to Jerusalem; but it is the subject of Luke's Gospel, and of the book of the Acts, which is the continuation of it; (see Luke xxiv. 46-53;) it is there the grace of heaven, which kept to the promise of the Holy Spirit. (compare Acts i. 1-9.)

Here it is the power of Messiah already rejected at Jerusalem. The apostles were to go and instruct all nations, baptizing the disciples in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all that He had commanded, and He would be with them (the disciples) even unto the end of the age.

Let us examine a little their mission according to these words, comparing it with those which were given them in the other gospels.

Here are the terms of these diverse missions. In Mark, who bears testimony to the ministry, to the service of Christ in the Gospel, it is said to them: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Here is the most simple, the most general mission, and it is added: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." It was quite simply the preaching of the Gospel for the salvation of souls, and the judgment of those who would not believe.

Here is the mission in Luke, the Gospel which gives us grace, which introduces the new man and Christ in this character: "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." That is intelligence and power, this last being the consequence of the exaltation of Jesus on high, and the disciples being bound to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endowed with it. As witnesses of Jesus, the disciples could not depart from the place of His rejection until they were linked with Jesus at the right hand of God, and thus, by the power of the Holy Ghost, bore testimony from Him, as being there above. A thing wholly new! it was the Son of man proceeding from Adam in a certain sense, but a new man and near to God: also, a new testimony is borne and recommences with Jerusalem,—a

testimony which thence shall reach men in all nations, according to the power of the Holy Ghost. It is a heavenly testimony. This, as we have said, is resumed in the Acts, God having been forced to recommence it with Paul at Antioch, because of the incredulity of Jerusalem once more reiterated.

In John, we find their mission. (xx. 21.) Jesus says to them: "Peace be unto you! As my Father has sent me, even so send I you; and when He had said this, He breathed and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Here the thing is closer. Jesus is not yet ascended on high, but He has, according to the power of the resurrection, the life of God in Him; put to death as to the flesh, quickened according to the power of God in Spirit, He communicates to them life according to the power of the Spirit. Vitally they are one spirit with Him; for it was as man that He possessed it, although He was the power of God. Thus God breathed into the nostrils of Adam, and he became a living man. Now the second Adam is a quickening Spirit, but as He, according to the power of this life, has been sent of the Father, administrator, as man, of the pardon that man quickened by Him needed to *possess* to be in relation with God, (compare Luke v. 20, 24,) so now He sent His disciples, made partakers by Him, and with Him of this life, to discharge from him this office, to bear this pardon to men, and to render them partakers of it; a pardon which, by his death and resurrection, was now completely effected before God, and administered on earth according to the power of the Spirit of life, whether in receiving into the Church those who should be saved, and who, being thus received, possessed this pardon; or whether, in the second place, in administering discipline. This administration of pardon received and possessed, following the exercise of this discipline, by him who is the object of it, is in the hands of every man in whom Christ has breathed his Spirit, according to the degree of the power of this Spirit in Him. And the pardon here spoken of, is not a pardon looked at as granted in heaven, but a pardon administered on earth and ratified in heaven.

The apostles did that according to the perfection of the gift of God which was granted them; but we have in the Word the revelation of this so important administration, according as it has been communicated to all the saints by the order of God. First, individual charity covers thus a multitude of sins; that is, in pardoning the wrongs in my brother, his sins no more exist, with regard to the government of God, as scandals and offences in the Church: before His eyes love has completely displaced them. Such is the individual privilege, but this is not yet the official administration of the thing; on the contrary, it anticipates the exercise of it.

In the examples of Ananias and Sapphira, and even of Simon the magician, sins were retained. They were remitted—I say not in the same manner, but *de facto*—to three thousand persons on the day of Pentecost. In 2 Cor. ii. 10, we have the sins remitted by the apostle and by the Church, officially, in the exercise of discipline.

That is, we have, as to this pardon, the apostolic mission, distinct from the Church—a mission specially confided to the apostles, as delegated of Christ with his authority; and the administration of this pardon, communicated to a Church *without intermediary*, the Church counselled and directed in this administration, but accomplishing the act herself.

I should not have enlarged so much on this subject, if this passage did not present a difficulty which often pre-occupies the mind, and of which adversaries lay hold of, while the faithful do not much know how to answer. It is then not only the pardon of sin granted by God himself, according to a truth revealed by the Holy Spirit; it is an administration of this pardon confided to man, a pardon thus revealed on earth, confirmed perhaps, and sometimes demonstrated, by miracles, or accompanied by a deliverance or a chastening sent from God. It was an administration confided to the apostles, who were sent to gather the Church, introduced into her privileges by this pardon; and afterwards exercised by the Church herself to maintain her members in the holy enjoyment of these privileges, and at the same time to sustain the glory of God. In the fact of chastening, where the question is neither of pardon in the sense of which we speak, nor of the official act of pardon, but simply of the efficacy of prayer. (Compare James v. 14, 15.)

I do not in any wise touch the question, What has been the effect of the actual state of the Church on this administration? Apostolic delegates of this kind, there are absolutely no more. As to all the rest, it is a question of intelligence and spiritual power; but it is important to understand enough of these things, to be ready to answer the pretension to forgive sins, of men who would allege, perhaps without scruple, the verses of James, of which we speak, which do in no wise belong to them.

Doubtless, God, by his grace, will keep the simple from such pretensions, and that from other motives; but it is well to have an answer. The Lord has meant to say something, and if we know what He meant to say, men cannot lead us astray and shut our mouths to make us fall into their snares. There is a pardon administered here below, whether by apostles, or by the whole body, and a priest or a minister has nothing at all to do therein. If he is wise enough to give spiritual counsels, it is well; but it is not he who acts. The Holy Spirit is needed for this act. "Receive ye the Holy Spirit; to whomsoever," &c. The judgment of a body, which flows not from that, is perhaps a very suitable act for a human society, but which is not pronounced on the part of God; and if one speaks of acting by the Holy Spirit, that will be demonstrated in other things also.

I return now to the mission given in Matthew, having only considered the others in order the better to seize the difference. It is not here then the Son of God, sent from the Father, who sends, according to the power of life which is in him, disciples to whom He can communicate the energy of this life, that they may accomplish their mission according to his heart of love filled by the Father. Neither is it Jesus, minister of the Gospel, servant of all, sending those who are to replace him, that every creature may hear the good news, which can now be addressed to them in his name who has fulfilled all things—such is the Jesus of St. Mark.

Neither is it the Son of man, raised to the right hand of the Father, who is about to give the Holy Spirit of power, in order that his sent ones may answer, in their work, to the exalted position that man occupies in His person, (compare Ps. lxviii. Eph. iv.) and who has already (1) opened their understanding that they may understand the Scriptures, or the revelation of the thoughts of God, in the economics and dispensations on which this work and this presence of the Holy Spirit will cast their light. That is the exalted Christ of Luke, giver of the Holy Spirit. But here, in Matthew, we have a rejected, crucified Messiah, who, for the moment, abandons Jerusalem to its folly and its sin, and who, now risen, sends to the nations the message that his death, his resurrection, and the gift of the Father to Him risen, have enabled him to put into the mouth of his disciples; a message no longer suitable to the Jews, who have already rejected the subject of it, their Messiah; it is no longer simply the only true God in his unity, surrounded by a people which should have kept this good and precious deposit. Now, other things in God had been put in the light of men, things which opened the door to the Gentiles, or rather which could be sent to them. Christ could not be there without the Son were named, and if the Son, then the Father and the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit, who acted with efficacy in the communication of the knowledge of the Father and of the Son; and, on the other hand, both the Father and the Holy Spirit had been necessarily manifested in Christ and his acts, while He lived and acted on earth; for in being Messiah, He was also Son, and it was because He called himself such, that the Jews rejected him.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, all this could be sent in grace to the Gentiles. The disciples were to make them know the Messiah and the God of the Jews in this manner, or to make them enter into relation with God under this name, as by circumcision the Jews were put in relation with the Eternal, or Jehovah. And that because all power was now given to Jesus in heaven and upon earth. Here is then (the rights of the Messiah being rejected by the Jews) not the establishment of the crown of David, whose influence should spread over all the earth, but He who, depositary of all governing power in heaven and on earth, sent his disciples to put the Gentiles (nations) in relation with God, according to the revelation of that which was no longer hidden behind the veil from the eyes of the blind Jews, the trinity

(1) It appears to me that an example of this is found in the choice of Matthias, before the gift of the Holy Spirit—a choice based on the explanation of Psalm cix.; an explanation of which, it would seem to me, the disciples would have been incapable before that time, but the act itself had nothing in it of the power of the Holy Spirit. They draw lots, as Jews, after having understood this Psalm. Though we have received the Holy Ghost, it is of importance for us to distinguish between the understanding (though it were a gift) and power. It is evident, from the end of Luke and the commencement of the Acts, that a person may have the one and not have the other.

of persons which faith recognized by means of Jesus: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (1)

But this mission depends on the power of Jesus, as being given, and is to subject the nations that they may be his disciples, according to the claims that this power conferred on Him. It was a mission, *belonging yet to the age*, which, though the Messiah had been rejected, was not yet terminated; it looked consequently at the submission of the Gentiles to the Messiah, in a new way, it is true, and left Jerusalem aside, because it had rejected the Messiah; but it supposes a going forward in the ways of God towards the end of this age, before which the Gospel is to be preached in the whole habitable world. Those who carried this message might have higher privileges, which would be made evident when the Lord would be removed, and their first testimony rejected; these same messengers, individually, might be charged, from the commencement, with the message of the grace which was in Jesus, according to the other forms of mission that we have seen in the three other gospels: they might preach the gospel to every creature, beginning at Jerusalem, as representatives of Him who was exalted at the right hand of God, or remit the sins, on the part of Him who said: "Peace be unto you;" but it is none the less true that the speciality of the mission found in this gospel, is a mission to the nations from Jesus, speaking as the rejected Messiah, who has now all power, leaving aside Jerusalem, and mentioning the continuation of the age; promising to be with the witnesses to the end of this age, and saying nothing, either of the Church, or of heaven, or of the Holy Spirit given, or of the deliverance from this present evil age, or of the privilege of not being of this world as the Son of God was not of it; but, speaking of subjecting the Gentiles to the ordinances of Christ, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to bring the age of its close, according to to the promise of Him who should be with them till then. (2)

(1) There was, in this, a revelation evidently much clearer, and relations different from those which the Jews enjoyed, as the people of Jehovah. These terms were not entirely unknown to the Jews; but they were always employed by the *prophets* in the prospect of the times when there would be this clearer revelation to call the Gentiles, and when blessing would be manifested for the Jews in a new measure. "Kiss the Son" is a summons to the kings of the earth (Ps. ii.) and the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit, whether upon the Jews and their posterity, or upon all flesh, is sufficiently known, (see, amongt others, in Joel; in Is. lv.; see also xlviii, 16.) Before the accomplishment of these things, or at least before they are fully accomplished to the letter, the revelation has been made of what is their foundation in God, and this name of Father, of Son, and of Holy Spirit has been proclaimed amongst the Gentiles. I do not think that it is here the unity of the Son with the Father, and of the Church with Jesus by the Holy Spirit, that is taught elsewhere: but the revelation of the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the submission of the Gentiles by faith, in anticipation of that day when the Son will be manifested in power, and the Holy Spirit fully shed abroad. But this is very precious for us, because it shews us these things in God, and makes us see that there are not only certain acts of manifestation which will take place hereafter, but the truth of God, of which one can speak before these manifestations take place: for the knowledge which the Jews and the earth will have of the Son, for example, in His reign, according to Ps. ii., is very inferior, it seems to me, to the knowledge which we have of Him, as being in the Father and the Father in Him, one with the Father, hidden in God; it is the same person, undoubtedly, but we have a much deeper knowledge of what He is. Further, we learn, in thus comparing Ps. ii., that the preaching of the name of the Son does not necessarily suppose the blessings of the Church:—*now*,—it does, because God gathers the Church in Him; but the call made to the kings to submit to the royalty of Christ in the last times, is made in the name of the Son: "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry."—We have acknowledged Him before through grace, and we know Him as one with the Father. In this Psalm it is spoken of Him, as presented to the world in time: "To day I have begotten thee."

(2) One may examine Ps. xcv., (and also Ps. xci. to c.) which treats of these times, as well as Daniel xi. 33; xii. 3, 9; Is. lxv. 13, &c., where, however, the testimony is rather practical than in word. Here is the connection of this subject in Isaiah, which may interest those who search the Word; and it is only for such that I give it.

God desires to comfort his people; and in the midst of present deliverances, pledges of better ones to come, the servant, Christ, is introduced. Chap. xlii. Israel should have been so, but was blind; nevertheless, he should be delivered, being forgiven. Cyrus and Babylon pass then before our eyes, to the end of xlviii, the pledge of better deliverances, as we have said. God announces, notwithstanding, that He distinguishes the wicked; there is no peace for them. Chapter xlix., the Gentiles are summoned by *Israel*, as called of God to be a servant, in whom God should be glorified. Thereupon the Messiah says: "I have then laboured in vain;" nevertheless, his judgment and work were with God. The Spirit answers that it was a small thing to raise up Israel, that He should be a light to the Gentiles. From that time, it is Christ the true vine, who holds the promises as a faithful servant. Chapter l. explains the dismission of Israel for the rejection of Christ, the Lord God who had made himself a servant, and thereupon is brought out the distinction of the remnant who fears the Lord and obey the voice of *his servant*, not here the Church in the joy of the Son, though that has been true of a certain number from among this remnant. In these passages the Church finds itself only as hidden in the person of Christ Himself; which will be seen in comparing Isaiah iv. 8, 9, and Romans viii. 33, 34, when the apostle applies to the Church the substance of those verses which speak of Christ in Isaiah. I will observe, by the way, that the Lausanne translation, in general very faithful to the letter, has spoilt these verses in the form it has given to them. Here, I believe, is the true contrast. God justifies; who shall condemn? Christ is dead, &c. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? The Old Testament does not take up the union of Christ and the Church: here it is the remnant that obeys the voice of the *servant* of God, of Christ, come as Messiah here below. Nevertheless, the obedient walk in darkness. Consolation is given them, a consolation properly Jewish, by calls (li. 1-4, 7.) in which there is progress in their position (verse 9.) They themselves call, by the Spirit of prophecy, the arm of the Lord to awake. He answers at last, (17,) summons Jerusalem to awake in her turn, and (lii.) to clothe herself with glory and honour. This passage, ending at the 12th verse, is all beautiful. lii. 13, and liii., gives the expiatory character of the work of the "Servant," recognized by the Jews in the latter days. Then come the details of blesssings (liv. lv. lvi. lvii.) and of the ways of God, and of what hinders the deep iniquity of the people in the latter days. From lviii., testimony is strongly borne to this iniquity, which finally forces the Lord to arise, (lix. 15, 16, &c.,) and the deliverer comes to Sion according to Rom. xi. 26. Then (lx.) Jerusalem is glorified, and the same subject, (introducing in order to identify his person in the two advents, what Christ was at His first, lxi. 1, and the first-half of 2,) and the judgment of the Gentiles, are treated to the end of lxiii. 6. Then, upon the touching call of the prophet, there is a detailed explanation of all their ways, how grace had seized the occasion, given by the folly of Israel, to be found of those who sought it not, whilst He had ever stretched out His hands towards rebellious Israel, (quoted by the apostle, Rom. x. 20, 21,) which explains these same points. And here, finally, we find a special remnant (all those who are spared; see Is. lxvi. 19, 20,) treated as the "servants" to whom the blessing of all the nation would be a particular subject of joy; Such is what has led us to this summary of the latter part of this prophetic book: this special remnant owned of God, but having all its affections in the well-being of Jerusalem and of Israel. One may, for the last testimony to the Gentiles; compare Ps. xcvii. and Apoc. xiv. 6, 7.

The key of this summary of Isaiah xl.-xlvi. is *Israel the servant*:—nevertheless, no peace for the wicked. *Christ, the true servant*, rejected. The remnant, true servants, owned in that they obey the voice of the "servant," but in prospect of Jewish interests. Translate xlix. 3: "Thou art my servant, O Israel, He in whom I will be glorified."

That this might have an application to the unreported labours of the apostles, I doubt not; but the Bible furnishes us with no tokens on that head, at least if it be not, in the most indeterminate manner, in the last verse of the Gospel of Mark. That which the detailed history of the Acts presents us with, is the fulfilment of the mission given in Luke, the rejection of the messengers at Jerusalem, where they nevertheless remained; then the labours of Peter in the midst of the Jews, and a new apostle raised up of God, to carry the word to the Gentiles by a new revelation of Jesus, *so* new indeed that he says, if he had known Jesus as the others had known him, He knew Him no more after that manner. The salvation preached remained ever the same, without doubt, but with new lights which God accorded.

What is the conclusion which one should draw from all this? It is, that there will be an accomplishment of this mission before the end of the age, and that the message of the Gospel, here entrusted to the remnant, to the disciples, will be carried from Christ, of whom it remains always true (whatever be the state of things) that all power is given unto Him in heaven and on earth; from Christ, I say, acting in this character, the message of this same Gospel will be carried to all the nations, and that Christ will be with the messengers, even to the end of the age.

The testimony to Jerusalem will be different, it seems to me; we have already said some words on it in chap. xxiv. I do not speak of the conversion of such or such a Jew to make part of the Church, which is another thing far more precious; it is the duty of each day to search them, according to what is given us, as it is also to preach the Gospel to every creature. But as there will be a testimony at the beginning of the sorrows, (as there was one in the Jewish nation at the beginning of the Gospel,) a testimony which will be particularly addressed to the Jewish people; so there will be a special testimony borne to the Gentiles at the end, according to the principles of the mission here entrusted to the disciples. For the promise of the presence and succour of the Lord is not only bound up with the idea of the age, but it extends to its end, and we must always remember that here, as in chapters xiii. and xxiv., "the age" in no way applies to Christianity as an epoch; though Christianity might happen, and did happen, before the end of the age, the age already existed at that moment, and was in a great measure run out; it was a period of the world's history in the Jewish point of view, which the presence of the Messiah was to terminate.

Perhaps, employed in all the force of the term according to the circumstances in which the Lord spoke, this expression supposes Jerusalem existing but rejected, and, though rejected, the object of the thoughts of God, but of His thoughts in judgment, God going to put an end to all that, and, after great tribulations, to restore the city in blessing, by the coming of the Messiah in glory. The Gospel, sent to the Gentiles, might run independently of all that, for Jesus entrusts it to the disciples outside Jerusalem, and as having abandoned it. Nevertheless, till it was judged and restored by the coming of the Messiah, and after the repentance of its inhabitants, the age could not end; so that when we have well considered the passages, we have here a Gospel or mission of the disciples, independent of Jerusalem, from Messiah rejected here below, but having received all power in heaven and on earth; a Gospel addressed to the Gentiles, Jerusalem being abandoned, to make of these nations disciples of Christ in the name, not of Jehovah, but of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; a mission, nevertheless, which (though independent of Jerusalem and

coming from Christ, who had quitted it until it repent,) is identified with the course of an age here below, which supposes, before its end, Jerusalem the object of God's thoughts and judgments, (that is, Jerusalem under the Jewish point of view,) and the centre of all His thoughts, in judgment or in blessing, whilst this same Gospel is propagated among the nations. For before the end of the age (supposed here by the Lord to be still in existence) Jerusalem will be anew, all that, (as it was so at the time the Lord was speaking,) and yet more. It is a Gospel, then, which may subsist among the nations at the same time that Jerusalem is the object of God's thoughts, and anew the centre of all His ways.

One may suppose that the preaching of this Gospel begins before that is manifested. Nevertheless, these were the circumstances in which the Lord already was speaking. Jerusalem standing, abandoned, (1) the object of the thoughts and judgments of God, and afterwards of His blessing; and Christ awaiting the time of this end of the age, sending the Gospel to the nations by his disciples, independently of Jerusalem, but by the side of its existence in this state, and transporting himself, as to the term of the testimony, to the epoch which should terminate this state of things in Jerusalem, by the manifestation of the judgment of God and the blessing which should thence ensue and flow out. We have already seen (chap. xxv.) the Gentiles judged on earth, according to the manner in which they shall have treated the messengers which Christ calls his brethren, as Jesus here calls his disciples, and we have seen the preliminary and final circumstances, in Palestine and at Jerusalem, (chap. xxiv.) accompanied by a declaration (by the side of all that) that this Gospel of the kingdom should be preached in all the world, as a testimony to all the Gentiles, and that then the end will come—the end of the age which is in question here. I invite my brethren to think of this testimony, which is to be borne in the latter days; it would be to explain prophecy rather than the Gospel to pursue this subject further here. I desired to point it out, as this Gospel does so.

Here is the result of my researches at this time upon this Gospel; a result very imperfect, I feel, and researches which have made me feel how far we are still ignorant of all the ways of God; but which may aid my brethren to make others, perhaps, more happy and better followed up; and if they are led to make them, and are as happy as I in thus sounding the ways of God, I shall not have lost my trouble in communicating to them these, such as they are.

In the main, I do not doubt that the great principles, the thread of the ways of God (in this part of His ways) are found in these pages, and that, as a whole, it was given by *Him*. It is very possible that in some details my own mind has wrought, and that thus I may have overstepped the measure of what was given me; in this case, there will certainly be error, or at least obscurity, even when all I have said is understood. On the other hand, those who have not yet taken the trouble to sound the Scriptures ought not to be astonished if they find some things still difficult and obscure for them in these pages. They ought not to be discouraged, like a child who should plunge into the middle of a book which he ought to begin, and which he might judge too difficult; but they should set about the work, beginning with the beginning. They will find, let them be assured, many proofs of their ignorance, and very humiliating proofs; but they will also find the Lord with them, and a joy and a satisfaction of which they have not even the idea, not in the things only, but in the fact of being taught of Him; a joy and satisfaction which sanctify and attach to Him who deigns thus to be busied about our instruction, to endure with patience our ignorance, and to instruct us Himself in the truth. And how sweet is this converse with Him, in which he gently leads us on in the knowledge of His ways and unveils for us in His Word all the goodness and wisdom of His counsels! Is it not evident that such converse, pursued in such a spirit, must sanctify the soul?

Let us remember that all this belongs to children, to those who, by the power of the good news of the pure grace of God, are grounded on the work which this grace has accomplished, and rejoice in the confidence which His love inspires; the communications of His ways being for them daily proofs of this love, which nourish and maintain this confidence, and make them to know better Him, who is its object and source. May His Spirit and His grace direct all those who read these pages in the enjoyment of the everlasting salvation which He has accomplished for us!—(*Translated from the "Témoignage."*)

(1) Perhaps there may be trouble to reconcile these two ideas, "abandoned," and yet "the object of the thoughts and judgments of God;" but it is precisely the position of Jerusalem in the latter days, when recommences His work with the earth. It will be desolate and abandoned until it says: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" But God acts with it in testimony, in chastisement, in indignation. Such was already the case in the time of the apostles. In chap. xxiii. of this Gospel, it was abandoned. Nevertheless, the testimony and indignation are there. See upon that, in Zechariah, specially the end of chapter xi. and the beginning of xii., and all his prophecy; the end of Dan. ix.; xi. and xii. also, and chapters lxv. and lxvi. of Is.; see also Jer. xxx. 4, 8, &c. In these chapters, and in so many others, Jerusalem is not owned, but it is the object of God's thoughts and ways; according to the expressions, as to Ephraim, Jer. xxxi. 20, and as to Jerusalem itself, Is. xlix. 14, &c. The fact is, that Jerusalem is chosen as the Jewish people. (Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.)

We have a principle which is bound up with this, and which is very precious in its analogy for us. God, at the time of the Babylonish captivity, had written, *Lo-Ammi, not my people*. Notwithstanding that, in Hagg. ii. 5, we find that the Spirit remained with them, as when they came out of Egypt. What encouragement for us, whatever may be the state of the Church! If they had said, No, we are not in this state of Lo-Ammi, it would have been unbelief; if they had been discouraged, as if the Spirit was not with them, as at the departure from Egypt, it would have been practical unbelief also under another form. In the two cases, faith in the goodness and in the chastisement of God would have been lost.

THE FAN AND THE SIEVE.

What a separating process is needed in order to prepare "the bread which strengtheneth man's heart!" Great indeed is the toil of preparing the ground before the husbandman can "cast in the principal wheat, and the appointed barley, and the rye, in their place." But when the harvest has rewarded his toil, then, first, there is the threshing, to separate the grain from the ear—a laborious process, whether by cattle dragging over it, "the threshing instrument having teeth;" or by the flail, so dexterously wielded by the husbandman; or even by the more scientific machine of modern days. After the grain is thus separated from the ear, it needs another process to separate the wheat from the chaff, and this is effected by winnowing. In winnowing, there are two instruments specially used, the fan and the sieve. By the first, the chaff is separated from the grain; by the second, the stunted grain and any other refuse is separated from "the fat kidneys of the wheat." Thus we get a good sample of grain, even as in the happier day in reserve for Israel. "Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth; and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures; the oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat *clean provender*, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan."

If we follow on farther, we shall find more labour needed: "bread corn is bruised"—it must be ground—a weary toil it was, especially for females. "Take the millstones and grind meal." Neither can we stop here—if we would separate the bran from the flour, a fine sieve is needed, and the process of bolting at length brings out "the fine flour" with which God so abundantly fed Israel, and Israel gave to her idols, (Ezek. xvi. 19,) and which is marked also as a special part of the merchandize of Babylon. (Rev. xxiii. 13.)

There is a beautiful passage in the twenty-eighth chapter of the prophet Isaiah, which shows that God himself, as the husbandman, has constantly been carrying on a process analogous to the above, in "his husbandry" or "tillage." (1 Cor. iii. 9.) Awful indeed is the judgment of God, pronounced by the prophet against Ephraim for their exceeding pride and presumption. Yet, in the midst of this denunciation, so as to interrupt and break its course, mercy rejoices against judgment, and the Lord's own sure foundation is announced as the only one which would stand, when "the hail would sweep away every refuge of lies." God would "do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act." "Now, therefore, be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong." For awhile Israel or men may mock at the thought of the judgment of God; yea, they may fortify themselves, as they suppose, against them; they may sneer also at the idea of the grace of God, and despise the foundation; "mockers," "scorners," "scoffers," mark alike the last days of Israel and Christendom. But God has not all this while been acting without counsel and design; he may deal with man, Israel, or the great professing Christian body, in a variety of ways during his long-suffering, yet the appointed evil will come. It was fixed and settled, as to Israel, in the prophetic announcement: "I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth."

"Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech. Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cum-

min, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rye in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him. For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin: but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen. This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working."

Surely, we may say: "He that planteth the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall he not correct?" He that teacheth man knowledge—even all the preparatory means in agriculture, unto a definite end—does he not know how to manage man? how to make man understand that He is God alone, and man himself but the creature of His hands?

But the analogy will be found very striking if we regard the many processes of separation, whether by judgment or by mercy; or rather, by the combination of mercy and judgment. "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing." (Ps. ci.) Ever since sin came into the world, separation has been God's principle of blessing. When God has separated to blessing, there have been two principles set in operation—separation from the corrupt mass obnoxious to the judgment of God, and separation unto God himself. The character of this separation determines the character of the holiness of those so separated. Thus it pleased God to separate a people (the people of Israel) from other people, to be his peculiar people; and there was a sanctity connected with this, marking them both as separated from other people, and as separated unto God as a worshipping people. "Ye shall not walk in the manner of the nation, which I cast out before you; for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them. But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean; and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and *have severed you from other people that ye should be mine.*" (Lev. 22-26.)

The principle of separation did not stop here; it was followed by a separation of a class and also of a tribe. "And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, *from among the children of Israel*, that he *may minister unto me* in the priest's office." "Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine." (Num. viii.) The "God of Israel had separated the Levites from the congregation of Israel, to bring them *near* to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them." But the priests were separated unto greater nearness: the very censers of the Levites, who presumed to burn incense before the Lord, were made "broad plates for a covering of the altar, to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger *which is not of the seed of Aaron come near to offer incense* before the Lord." Even in the priestly family there was further separation; the high priest was brought into greater nearness to God than his brethren, the father than the sons. (Heb. ix. 6, 7.) In all this separative process, we are instructed in a deep principle, which is the root of holiness of every kind: it is God who separates, or sanctifieth unto himself, whatever may be the order of the separation. That order once was "only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and cardinal ordinances, imposed until the time of reformation." But it was ineffectual in keeping Israel as "holiness unto the Lord, the first-fruits of his increase." Israel speedily adopted the gods of the nations, which yet were no gods, and by mingling this false worship with the worship of Jehovah, effectually destroyed their separateness as a people unto Jehovah; and not only so, but at the same time presumed on their separateness in a spirit of self-complacency, and thus brought out that worst form of evil, which ended in saying, Stand by, I am holier than thou; and rejecting God himself in order to maintain their own character.

During the ministry of the Lord Jesus on earth, the question of the day was about purification. It was mooted between the disciples of John and the Jews. The Jews vaunted their ceremonial purification, so as to esteem one of another nation "common or unclean." It was a higher crime in their esteem to come into contact with a Gentile, than to meditate murder. "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early, and they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, *lest they should be defiled;* but that they might eat the passover." "They please not God, and are contrary unto all men." Such was the result of separating themselves, instead of being separated unto God. The ministry of John the Baptist was a direct inroad on this ceremonial order of purification. Born as John was of the family of Aaron, he found his place of ministry not in the temple but in the wilderness. He "came in the way of righteousness:"—descent from Abraham, or observance of ordinances, did not meet the requirement of his ministry. Repentance was an inward moral purification—an order immensely beyond the Jewish ceremonial order, but still immensely below that new order of purification to which the ministry of John was but introductory. They who really justified God in John's baptism, were prepared to justify Him further in the reception of Him to whom John bare witness—even Jesus—the Son of God, the Lamb of God, and the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost. It is the new order of purification from above, to which John turns the thoughts of his disciples, when so many had turned from John their master to Jesus. They appeared jealous for their Master's honour; John, on the contrary, quietly recedes from the scene, to make way for the display of the saving power of Him whose faithful witness and forerunner he was: John saw now that the time was come for superseding his order of purification—high as it was, compared with that of the Jews, by the introduction of this new and heavenly order by Jesus. (John iii. 27-36.) God—who had secretly separated to himself under every dispensation by his quickening power giving faith—now manifestly separated to Himself, by presenting Jesus as the object of faith. It is no longer separation by ordinances, or even by merely moral change; it is separation and purification by the blood of Christ, the Son of God, and the Lamb of God. We are "justified by His blood," "sanctified" by His blood, and by it, from being afar off, brought nigh to God. (Ephes. ii. 13.) The blood of Christ is the power by which God himself calls into peace with himself. In this view we see the same principle in action of God separating unto Himself, only it is now by a reality—even the blood of the cross—of which all the previous ordinances had been but shadows; and those so separated are placed not in national or official nearness to God, but in real personal nearness to Him. It is not only nearness of position; but inseparably connected with it is the positive power of recognized nearness by the quickening and indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Jesus cannot be known as the Son of God and the Lamb of God apart from his being the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost. And then a new ground of nearness unto God is ascertained to the soul—it is nearness *in* Him, as well as by His blood. "But now, *in* Christ Jesus ye who sometime were far off are made *by* the blood of Christ." It is therefore a heavenly nearness, a heavenly pacification, a heavenly sanctity—which is our portion. God calls us to be saints, or we are saints by calling. "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through *sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth;* whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is evident that the maintenance of such nearness to God, which is the groundwork "of righteousness and *true* holiness"—connected necessarily, as sure nearness is, with a new order of being which can stand and delight in such nearness to God—must be attended with many difficulties. Such a calling and standing is equally threatened by a return to ordinances, the natural order of separation; or by using Christ himself only as the conservator of the moral order, by which indeed man may be separated from his fellow, without being separated unto God. Now it is in immediate connection with his baptizing with the Holy Ghost that Christ is spoken of as the Winnower. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." When threshing is used, it appears as the simple emblem of judgment; but winnowing conveys rather the double idea both of separation unto mercy and unto judgment, and this especially in connection with

the fan. "Fear not, thou worn Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them." So also in the passage which presents to us the Lord having the fan in his hand—the chaff is burnt up with unquenchable fire—and the wheat is gathered into the garner. Whilst this passage has its direct application to a future separation of the chaff and the wheat on the earth—when all Gentile glory shall become as "the chaff of the summer threshing floor," and the Lord's own floor (evidently on earth in connection with Israel) shall be thoroughly purged, and the wheat gathered into the garner—yet it has its present application. "What is the chaff and the wheat, saith the Lord?" may be a question at all times suitably asked, not only in the falsehood which mimics truth, but where there may be the form of godliness apart from the power. How many there are who very consciously know the Lord not only as holding the fan in His hand, but that He has used it in their case in severing them from many a long-cherished feeling, from many hereditary and traditionary ways, which have been blown away as chaff before the wind—when Christ himself as a substantial reality has been manifested to the soul! Old habits and old prejudices have dropped off one by one before the power of truth. Many have been astonished to find how many things they have cherished and clung to, which have no warrant whatever from Scripture—and yet have been more tenaciously held than any scriptural truth. The fan of separation has been needed—and we have understood in some measure the remarkable expression of the apostle Peter. "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, *from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;* but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." But after knowing the power of the separation of the fan from much of the chaff and being brought to realize the liberty which we have in Christ, worship in the Spirit, and service in the Spirit also—we are subjected to the far more searching process of the sieve—a process which goes on within—entering into the inmost thoughts, and proving that God requires "truth in the inward parts." It is thus the Psalmist expresses it: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou winnowest* (marg.) my path and my lying down and art acquainted with all my ways." And when the Lord applies himself in most searching dealing with Israel at a yet future day—with Israel as his people—this is the language used: "For lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." It is humbling indeed to come under the scourge of the Lord; yet "he scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," and that because He loveth them. Yet to be subjected to the sifting process, although still a proof of the Lord's love, is more powerful to us than the very scourge itself. It is in love and mercy notwithstanding—it is to separate us unto our own proper and peculiar spiritual blessings in Christ—it is to remove every obstacle in the way of our abiding in the immediate presence of God—it is to get rid of the refuse that the clean grain may be brought forth. The Lord is no less jealous of our blessings than He is of His own honour. He will sift us so *by* circumstances, that the joy arising *from* circumstances may give way for joy in the Holy Ghost. How many have regarded all the most elaborate skill of man, when used in the worship of God, as chaff, by becoming true worshippers, in spirit and in truth. But, after so great a spiritual advancement, circumstances may have their influence, and the sieve may be needed, and "singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord," may be learnt by congregations being dispersed, and by the saints themselves being driven into loneliness. It is the sieve which so fearfully lays bare the unchanged evil of the flesh in the saints, and its readiness ever to take its part. It would be an interesting enquiry whether the Lord resorts to the process of sifting on the failure of self-judgment, or whether it is necessary even when there is honest self-judgment, to search into that which self-judgment would fail to seek. "The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." This passage shews what discoveries may be made to the soul by the searching application of the Word by the Spirit, so as to lead the soul into the practical sense of the need and value of the present priestly ministry of Christ. (Heb. iv. 12-19.) The sifting process is also connected with the priestly ministry of Christ, as we find in that memorable passage: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that *he may sift you* as wheat; but I *have prayed* for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." But that which appears to be so humbling in the sifting process, is the agency of Satan. It would seem, both from the case of Job of old, and of Peter at the close of the Lord's ministry on earth, that Satan was allowed by God to take all advantage of circumstances to get at the weak point of individual character, as well as to manifest the counsels of the heart, and to bring out those reasonings and high things which exalt themselves against the knowledge of God; so that every thought might be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. But there is something beyond this, the deep purpose of God in blessing, by Satan even being made the instrument of finding the grace of God at the bottom.

It is therefore probable that the Lord, in His infinite wisdom, not only uses the sieve when there has been failure in self-judgment, but even where it has been honest, knowing how much we are the creatures of circumstances, He may sift His saints, that they may, by the exercise of faith, get above the power of circumstances, and be occupied with realities. "Is thy servant a dog that he should do these things?" may have been the language of purest honest intention, though betraying entire ignorance of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart. "The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria," is the simple reply of the prophet, yet how full of meaning. The sifting of Job ended in rich blessing. "The Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?" "Doth Job fear God for nought?" is Satan's reply; and then permission is given to Satan: "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand." Satan was thus allowed full power over circumstances; but still he was only the sieve in the hand of the Lord. In the dispute which arises on his lamentable condition between Job and his friends, more truthful and magnificent sentiments, as to the attributes and perfections of God, are not to be found in any other part of Scripture, than we find in the lips of Job's three friends. But they did not meet the case of Job, and are rather to be regarded as fragments which show the need of God in some special manner manifesting Himself, as He has done by incarnation and in the cross, than any vivid presentation of God to the soul. The soul of man cannot be satisfied by arguments on the perfections of God, neither can the dealings of God with man be made satisfactory to the soul, where man, instead of God, is affirmed to be the end of those dealings. It was in this respect that Job had spoken more rightly of God than his true friends. They had asserted that Job's conduct was the solution of the strange dealing of God with Job; he, on the contrary, had referred the solution to God himself; that God alone could explain the reasons of his own conduct. Yet Job had "darkened counsel by words without knowledge." Job had, in his own case, "contended with the Almighty;" he had "reproved God," and this he must answer. But the mouth of Job is stopped in the immediate presence of God. He is not able to argue his case there. "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer: yea twice, but I will proceed no further." Now, the end of all this terrible sifting was to bring Job into the reality of the presence of God, so as to have to do with God, instead of speaking even true things concerning him, and thus from the immediate presence of God Himself, to learn even what "the perfect and upright man" was, as a creature brought there; in other words, to learn the truth of himself, by learning the truth of God. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore, I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Surely, if the more close sifting in winnowing only brings out the perfect wheat, this close sifting of Job brought him to have to do with realities; and in his thus deepened knowledge, both of God and himself, instead of any longer arguing with his friends, he is put in the honourable place of "praying for" them, "for him (says the Lord) I will accept."

* So also the Latin of Jerome, "eventilasti."

There may be even a complacency arising from the favour of God, from a conscience approving that we do fear Him, from the approbation of others, which may in effect displace God from His rightful supremacy. We must then be sifted, that God may be God, and man be man. "No flesh shall glory in His presence; he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

In the case of Peter also, Satan was allowed to take all advantage of circumstances against the disciples of the Lord; and if he prevailed to make one a traitor, he almost succeeded to do the same with another. But Satan could not prevail, with all the power of circumstances at his disposal, against the prayer of Jesus for Peter. Surely, Jesus had power to have hindered the sifting altogether; but Peter needed, and we all too need, the sieve. A deep practical truth was to be learnt by Peter, and by Peter that he might instruct others, that no wit or wisdom of man, no honesty of purpose, no determinateness of resolution, can stand before the overwhelming power of circumstances, and that faith alone rises superior to them. "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Well might it fail when, with the fondest expectations so rudely shocked by the arrest of Jesus, all appeared in the hands of "the power of darkness." It seemed as though God had given up every thing. "All forsook him and fled." But when the power of darkness had so far prevailed as to lead Peter to curse and swear, and deny Jesus with an oath; when by the cock crowing this was brought to his sorrowful recollection; then, for faith not to stagger or fail is marvellous indeed. It was indeed a deep soul-trying sifting which Peter needed; but how pure and clear does the wheat come forth! what a gainer was Peter! his faith failed not. It was all that was left him. Where is Peter? "Lo, we have left all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" What is become of his boast? "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." Peter is left without any ground of boasting. He can make no new resolve. He is stripped of every thing, and brought back to know himself as "Simon, Simon." But there was the same Lord, before whose feet he had fallen at the outset, confessing himself to be a sinful man. His faith did not fail. He looked to Him still, and he knew the power of restoring grace. How well was he able to strengthen his brethren after this his fall and recovery! It was the severe sifting he had gone through which gives such emphasis to his words: "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." He could very feelingly say: "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist, stedfast in the faith." Satan had indeed, by the power of circumstances, brought out from Peter that which Peter little suspected to be in himself, and doubtless thought thus to ruin Peter and to dishonour the Lord. But Satan was but the sieve in the hand of the Lord: that which was defective was sifted away, and Peter comes forth from the painful process converted from self-confidence to confidence in the Lord; strong by knowing his own weakness, and by proving faith in Jesus to be a blessed reality indeed.

There is one result connected with the sifting of Peter most blessedly brought out. The Lord knew what was at the bottom of the heart of Peter, for his grace had put it there. In a temperament naturally sanguine, under a mass of fleshly confidence and forward zeal, there was genuine love to the Lord Jesus Christ. After his terrible sifting, how readily can Peter answer to the challenge of his Lord: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" "Lord, thou knowest *all things;* thou knowest that I love thee." Simon no longer voluntarily undertakes to be put to the test. He has no such thought now in his heart: "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended;" but he appeals to that very omniscience which had searched and sifted him. He knew that Jesus "searched the reins and hearts." On all former occasions, Peter had acted on his own presumed knowledge of himself; now he appeals to the Lord's own perfect knowledge of him. In this sifting, even though Satan was the instrument, "no grain fell to the ground;" but the precious grain, buried under much rubbish, was brought forth clean and unmixed. And is not this according to the divine order in Ps. cxxxix.? "O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me: thou winnowest my path." And what is the reply of the soul to all the sifting through which it has consciously passed? "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts." If such be the result, well may we, having the like spirit of faith, say: "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" Brethren, beloved of God, are we conscious of the painfulness, the shame, the perplexity, arising from actual sifting? Let this precious thought comfort our hearts, that the Lord is thus sifting away much that we have cherished *more than Himself*, but only to bring out that which He knows to be at the bottom of our hearts; for He by his Spirit has put it there, faith in Him and love to Him. Let each one then bare his heart to Him that makes Himself known in the churches, as "searching the reins and the heart," and say: "Search me, O Lord."

Granted that we have broken down under the very weight of the blessings conferred by the goodness of God on us. Granted that we have exhibited much weakness and folly. Spots have been discovered to mar the good report of a long career of usefulness in the Church. Double-mindedness between Christ and the world, between faith and human resources, between the truth of God and human wisdom, has been made sorrowfully manifest. Humbling indeed is the process, yet we can justify the Lord in using it. "He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his words." Much of the evil which has been concealed even from ourselves is now made manifest; that which was rankling underneath is now on the surface. Enough indeed has been already done to make us feel that "to us belongeth shame and confusion of face;" but, if faith fail not in answer to the intercession of Jesus; then will Jesus himself be learnt in a way he was never known before. The soul will be led consciously to have to do with Him—nearness to Him and intimacy with Him, will take the place of things valuable in themselves, but hurtful in proportion to their value when used by the folly of our hearts to hinder Jesus from having the supreme place in our hearts. Much may indeed have passed through the sieve; the comfort derived from enlarged Christian intercourse, the honest desire for testimony against evil, the use of an enlarged platform of truth: but the "one grain" has not fallen to the ground—faith in Christ and love to Christ—this comes forth more simple and more unmixed than ever. The sieve has been needed by many of us to lead our souls into the experience of Job: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye hath seen thee." If this be the result of sifting to us, surely, we too shall find "the end of the Lord, that He is very pitiful and of tender mercy." And if "the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning," may we not expect that, after being sifted, the same Lord can now safely intrust us with the very blessings we have misused, and give to us larger, freer, and fuller Christian intercourse, more powerful testimony against evil, and more clear knowledge of his truth, because He himself has received his proper place in our hearts? The sieve has been needed to strengthen some of us even as Peter was strengthened. To one choice servant, Satan was used as a buffeter, lest he should be exalted by the abundance of the revelations vouchsafed to him. But in the case of Peter, Satan was used as the sieve, to show the impossibility of the flesh using aright the wondrous revelation made to him, of the glory of Jesus, the Son of the living God—the unassailable foundation of the Church. We need to be strengthened by experimentally learning the security of this Rock under us, when every confidence in which the flesh could possibly take part has utterly failed. The Lord alone can bear the glory. He abideth faithful. He cannot deny Himself. Let Him be alone exalted. "No flesh shall glory in His presence." "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

PRESBUTES.

SIMPLE OUTLINES OF PROPHETIC TRUTH.

I.—THE DREAM OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.—DAN. ii.

We are to present to your attention, beloved friends, to-night, as simply and briefly as we can, the revelation made in this important chapter, to king Nebuchadnezzar, by the God of heaven.

But it may be well first to say a few words on an objection which is often made to the study of prophecy.

People say, "Let such mysteries alone. Mind more important things." They seem to feel confident that such advice is established, as good and scriptural, when they have added, "Secret things belong to God." Secret things *do* belong to God. We heartily

admit that *such* things belong to Him alone. But it is not to the consideration of secret things that you are here invited.

That which is to occupy us now is not "secret." It is *a revelation*. Certainly, a thing revealed is not a secret. To *reveal* is to unfold secrets, as we are emphatically told in verse twenty-eight of the chapter before us: "There is a God in heaven *that revealeth secrets, and maketh known* to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." And again, in verses twenty-nine and thirty; "He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me, for any wisdom that I have more than any living," &c.

Further. Whence do objectors derive their favourite and continually repeated expression, "Secret things belong to God?" Will they turn to the portion of Scripture from which it is detached? Will they consider the whole sentence, as it stands in Deut. xxix. 29? It reads, as a whole, thus: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." How completely unavailing are the quotations which men make in endeavouring to defend their errors! We are to set aside the things which were graciously revealed to Israel—which "belong unto us and unto our children for ever,"—because—"secret things belong to God!" No! this sort of admonition will not suffice—at least for its intended purpose. On the contrary, does not the text tend directly to establish the propriety of giving heed to prophetic Scripture? Such Scripture "belongs to us and unto our children for ever and ever." The God that revealeth secrets (whilst He righteously conceals, in the depths of His own eternal and unsearchable mind, those "secret things" which *it is not* for us to know) has, in the riches of His grace, revealed those things which *it is* His wise design that we should understand and enjoy. These He has caused to be written down in His Word. *They are no longer "secret things."* These we may desire to look into; and in their investigation, He, by His Holy Spirit, will vouchsafe all needful help. May we be thus strengthened now!

In our chapter, the particulars of the dream itself, or vision, are thus stated, verses 31 to 36: "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head *was* of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king."

Such was the dream. Then the interpretation was given by Daniel to the king.

But let us endeavour, first, to have the great idea of the dream itself impressed clearly and fully upon our minds. The sketch given by the Spirit is quite a simple one.

There was seen "a great image," of the shape of the human person. There was the head and the other parts of the body down to the legs, the feet, and the toes. The whole was of dazzling splendour and terrific majesty. But it was not made of any one material alone. It was of four metals, and there was a mixture of clay as well. The head was composed of gold; the breast and arms of silver; the belly and thighs of brass; the legs of iron, and the feet partly of iron and partly of potter's clay. Let us remember this distinction as to its parts. There was a four-fold division exhibited of this great image; gold, silver, brass, and iron were its component substances; only the fourth or iron portion was, as to its lowest parts, mingled with clay.

Then there was seen *a stone*—a stone hewn out of a mountain without hands—and this stone smote the image upon its feet. The result was, that the whole image was at once reduced to powder, which powder the wind immediately dispersed so completely, that none of it at all remained. The stone itself, then, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. "This is the dream." (See verse 36.)

Such was the revelation made by the God of heaven, the revealer of secrets, to king Nebuchadnezzar, when that potent Gentile's thoughts came into his mind upon his bed, what should come to pass hereafter. And assuredly it was *written* for *our* instruction too.

What, then, was the meaning of this vision, and what the information to be conveyed by it? What the "things which should be hereafter," which the God of heaven would "make known" by the medium of the great image, and the stone cut without hands?

The prophet furnishes the interpretation in the following verses. Be pleased to read with me from verses 36 to 45 of the chapter: "This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron," &c. Besides this explanation, here given consecutively, we shall find details of illustrative statement, in various portions of other chapters of this book, and indeed of the Scriptures generally.

"We will tell the interpretation thereof before the king." Such were the words of the noble, and yet humble, Daniel. It is not for us to predict or to guess at the future, nor even at the interpretation of this vision. We have an inspired statement, in plain literal words, clearing up many of its chief particulars. Nor do we purpose, the Lord keeping us, to go beyond what may be regarded as being either expressly included in, or pretty clearly to be deduced inferentially from, such inspired statements.

First, then, we are told what is the meaning of the *golden head*. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom," &c. "Thou art this head of gold." Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, then, was the head of gold. The first division of the metallic image symbolized the Babylonian monarch. It symbolized, indeed, *the Babylonian empire;* for we read, immediately afterwards: "And after thee shall arise *another kingdom inferior to thee*, and *another third kingdom* of brass, and the *fourth kingdom* shall be strong as iron." Thus the four metals were designed to represent *four kingdoms*, the first of which we have been already given to understand was that over which Nebuchadnezzar was king, viz. the Babylonian or Chaldean.

Thus, there should exist, in succession, four great monarchies. What had *preceded* those monarchies we know, namely, the supremacy of the elect nation of Israel. But Israel nationally had apostatized from God. Age after age had rolled on merely to testify, in result, that the national will was fully bent on a course of almost uninterruptedly increasing evil. And God had been compelled to interfere. The nation was given over into Gentile hands. The narrative portion of Daniel tells the sad story, in very few words, at the commencement of the book. "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand." (Dan. i. 1, 2.) The Jewish nation was no longer at the head of the nations of the earth. It was no longer even independent and free. A Gentile monarchy now exercised supreme power in the earth. "*The times of the Gentiles" had commenced.* What should be the course of events in future? Such was, doubtless, the great inquiry which arose in thoughtful minds at the time when God vouchsafed the revelation we are considering. And at this point we find ourselves when the intelligence comes to us of the succession of three other Gentile monarchies, of universal sway, in addition to that of Babylon, which was then in actual power.

We have seen the meaning of the first great division of the image, but can we ascertain anything as to the *second* empire, as to the silver portion of the image? The interpretation here tells us one particular only; it should be "inferior" to its predecessor. But if we turn to the fifth chapter of this book, we find the further information required.

Nebuchadnezzar had been succeeded in his royal office, by his son, or grandson Belshazzar, who made a feast, and profanely used the sacred vessels of the Jewish temple on that riotous occasion. Then came forth the mystic handwriting on the walls: "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin." The import, as explained by Daniel, was: "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Thy kingdom is divided, *and given to the Medes* and Persians." (Dan. v. 25-28.) The result was, that "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the

Chaldeans slain. *And Darius the Median took the kingdom.*" Here then we find the purport of the second division of the image. The silver kingdom was the *Medo-Persian.* It should succeed the Babylonian. But this second kingdom was to be "inferior" to the former one. How then was this particular fulfilled? Simply thus, perhaps: the Medo-Persian monarch must be subject to Medo-Persian law, "the law of the Medes and Persians, which alteredh not." (See chap. vi. 14-18.) On the other hand, the power of Nebuchadnezzar was absolute; his *will* was law. (Dan. v. 19.) Thus was the power held by the Medo-Persian monarchs *abridged*, and, so far as concerned themselves, thus *inferior* to that of Nebuchadnezzar. (Compare also Esther i. ii., where the influence of the nobles is manifest.)

But to proceed. Can we now find what was intended by the *third* division of the image? This point, also, another vision of this same prophet clearly shews. Turn to chap. viii. We are here presented with a vision of *a ram* and *a goat.* (Verses 1-5.) Then in verses 6 and 7, we have the destruction of the ram effected by the goat. What might all this mean? In verses 20 and 21, we are told: "The ram which thou sawest, having two horns, are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia." This is quite the information we want. That which should succeed the Medo-Persian empire was to be the *Grecian.* The *Grecian*, therefore, is the third, or *brazen*, kingdom. On the authority of plain, literal explanations made to Daniel himself, such was to be the case. The Grecian empire should be the third Gentile power bearing rule over the earth.

There remains still a portion of the image to be considered. Can we find any thing that will assist us as to the fourth? We have confined ourselves hitherto to the Scriptures alone: it will be well to do so to the end of our inquiry. In Luke ii. 2, we have the following statement: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed." Who is this that exercises the power of taxing all the world? Cesar Augustus. What is he? Emperor of *Rome.* Is this, then, the fourth empire of Daniel? All things considered, can there be a doubt about it? Dan. vii. gives further particulars. The fourth empire is there seen as a beast having "seven heads and ten horns." So the iron portion of the image ends with *ten toes.* But we forbear. The identity of this fourth empire will not be disputed, we presume. It is *the Roman empire.*

Then comes the *stone.* But we must detain you awhile longer on the interpretation given us as to the fourth kingdom. It is of momentous interest, occupying as it does five long verses of this chapter, and bringing us down the stream of time to our own day; a solemn and salutary light upon the shifting scenery and sad actings, now being exhibited on the world's tragic stage!

There were to be four great and successive Gentile empires. Then was to come THE STONE. The iron kingdom was to be broken to pieces by that of the stone. The stone, thereupon, becomes a mountain and fills the whole earth. Let us endeavour to trace the history of this fourth kingdom, as given in the words of Daniel, down to the termination of its existence, until the feet and toes of it are smitten by the stone.

1. "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that subdueth all these, shall it break in pieces, and bruise." Here the precise power of the symbol is declared. The kingdom was represented as an *iron* one, because of its strength—"strong as iron;" and because of its subjugating, destructive character; "so shall it break in pieces and bruise." How expressive is this description! It is one of our common figures to this day. We read, we hear, and speak of the "iron yoke" of the Romans, and of their "iron rule," continually. And we use the same mode of speech as to similar things, affairs, or persons. *Iron* represents strength, sternness, unyieldingness, decision of course, and character. Such was emphatically, the empire of Rome. Ages after this prophecy had become an ancient one, was its fourth announcement verified! But—

2. The prophet proceeds: "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." This is a most interesting part of our inquiry. We are coming quickly to our own day.

But here we anticipate an objection: "How can you speak of the Roman Empire as subsisting still? as still to be destroyed? How can you, further, say *the stone* was to destroy *it?* Was not the Roman Empire destroyed by the hordes of barbarians which poured down from Northern Europe upon it more than a thousand years ago? Have we not the history of its 'decline and fall?'" I can imagine such questions as these excited in some minds. Let us endeavour to supply an answer, if possible, from the Scriptures themselves.

Turn to verse 41 once more: "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided: but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron." Here then is the solution of your questions: "*The kingdom shall be divided.*" Before it was ground to powder by the stone, before ever the stone had touched it at all, it should have its existence in a divided state. The materials should exist as broken, but yet integral parts of the once united whole. And so the event proved, precisely and notoriously. England is but a broken fragment of that once powerful empire. France is another. Spain is another. The German States are composed almost entirely of such fragments. The chief of the Austrian territories were once constituent parts of the Roman Empire, and the Italian States were wholly so. Thus was "the kingdom divided," and thus we find it existing to this day. In a certain sense, it *is not;* that is, it exists no longer as a whole; yet, in another sense, *it is;* that is, as its once component parts. Now, it is *on these parts* that the stone was seen to fall. On the "feet and toes," which represent the empire in its divided state, (verse 34,) the stone falls.

3. "And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." The iron fragments should endeavour to get themselves united with the lower element of this fourth kingdom, that is, the *clay.* But the two could not "cleave together." The clay is here explained to be the "seed of men." What can this expression mean, but the masses of the people? The iron tries to amalgamate with the clay. But the two would not blend. Those jarring elements could not be fused. Iron and clay could not be welded together. The element of monarchic or aristocratic power will not unite with the opposing one of democratic will. A party which exists by a monopoly of power, will not blend ultimately and heartily with one that vows the destruction of all such monopolies. There was to be an attempt, throughout the divided parts of the once-united Roman Empire, to accomplish the hopeless task, but the attempt was to fail: "they shall *not* cleave the one to the other, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

Can ye not then discern the signs of the times? What is the special character of those convulsions which so recently burst forth over the face of Europe? Is it not this—the *clay* breaking through the *iron?* The iron, weakened with age, and the clay swelling, and consequently forcing its way upwards? Was it not this that caused the revolutions of last year* and of the present? And what is it that we see transpiring as the result? The attempted formation of *mixed* systems of government: the attempt to unite in one harmonious and settled system of secular control, the opposite and conflicting interests of the various, selfish, and grasping classes of society; and this irrespective of God. Will such efforts be permanently successful? Search and look. To the law and to the testimony. Can ye not discern the signs of the times? Has not the prophet, in the vision before us, brought us down to the spirit of our own times, if not to the actual occurrences?

What, then, will next take place? What follows the order of this extraordinary revelation? What, indeed, but the crisis of the whole scene! It is the winding up of the drama. "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken ye people; let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world and all things that come forth of it." For thus proceeds the interpretation given of this vision by the prophet: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without

* 1848.

hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Such then is the solemn prospect before the world. We have come to the concluding days of the existence of the fourth or iron empire. The great event yet in store is the intervention of the stone—that smiting "on the feet and toes," which shall grind the whole to powder. Hurled in fierce and fiery indignation, down from the throne of the majesty on high, it shall fall upon the divided extremities of this great image; and "*upon whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.*" Need we ask what is the meaning of this portion of the vision? Alas! it is most necessary; for out of so plain a threat of judgment men have drawn a deceitful peace.

It has been till recently, and even yet to some extent it is, a prevailing opinion that the stone here mentioned is the gospel; and among men we hear continual mention made of the rolling on of this stone, and of the gospel's increase till it shall fill the world. It has also been held that the smiting of the image by the stone commenced with the mission of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. Accordingly it has been further supposed that the increase of the stone is effected by the conversion of the metal of the image into stone: the stone, as it were, incorporating the substance of the image into union with its own bulk; thus increasing, as it rolls, until all the metal has become part and parcel of the stone itself; and so making the stone large enough to fill the world. But is this the true idea of the vision? Does it bear even a slight resemblance to the revelation here made? Can the destroying stone signify the gospel of peace? Can the grinding to powder of the metal mean its conversion into stone? First, Let me put a simple question. Is the *gospel* anything more than *a message—about the stone*, perhaps, but still God's good message? If not, how can this *message be the stone itself?*

2. Seeing that the gospel began its work whilst the Roman Empire was in the zenith of its unity and power, should not the vision have shewn us the stone as first smiting the image, not "on the feet and toes," (as in verse 34,) but on the upper portion of the legs? Such, however, is not the case. The stone does not touch the image, until even its divided state is closing with the endeavour to mingle together the iron and the clay. The stone therefore cannot represent the gospel.

3. The gospel was preached far before any such division. Neither can its action be *conversion;* for the whole substance of the image was first completely pulverised, and then entirely swept away, and found no more. This was evidently *judgment*, and not conversion; it was *destruction*, and not life or salvation.

4. The stone was not increased by absorption of the metal into stone. The metal is gone, before the stone begins to grow at all. Whatever formed the increase of the stone into a great mountain, the material of its increase was therefore plainly not derived from the image. The stone *took the place* of the image which it destroyed, but it was not constructed out of portions of the image which, on the contrary, the wind carried away, that no place was found for them. Certainly, therefore, it is not the world's conversion that the action of the stone denoted.

What, then, is the stone? And what the work done to the image by it?

We submit, confidently, first, That the stone is JESUS CHRIST, Himself, THE KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS; and, secondly, That the smiting of the image is at His personal appearing in the clouds of heaven, when He shall judge the nations of the earth—"dashing them to pieces like a potter's vessel."

Christ is continually spoken of as a stone. He is thus represented even in the book of Genesis: "From thence is the shepherd, *the Stone* of Israel." Then in Psalm cxviii. we read, "*The stone* which the builders rejected is become the head-stone of the corner." Again, in Isaiah cxxviii. 16, we have the striking and well-known declaration, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." These passages we know well are quoted, both by the Lord Himself, as relating to Himself, and by the apostles. (See Matt. xxi. 42; Acts iv. 11; Rom. ix. 33; and Eph. ii. 20.) The first we quote at length. "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. . . . . And whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken, *but upon whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.*" Here we have the stone, and the grinding effected by its fall. The Jews fell upon Him, stumbled and were broken; but He will fall upon the Gentiles and grind them to powder.

Let us pause for a few moments. How solemn is the subject of our contemplation! Jesus is this stone. He is at His first coming a *foundation stone* to them who believe, and a *stone of stumbling* to unbelief; at His second, *a stone which falls and grinds* to powder all found beneath it!

My brethren, we have here one of the liveliest symbols of the gospel as well as of coming judgment. Jesus is the only true foundation of our faith and hope. He is "a stone" solid and suitable for such a purpose: "a tried stone"—one that will resist the fiercest winds, and the most wintry weather: "a sure foundation,"—for the house built thereupon shall never fall! He is the everlasting rock. All is abiding here. The waves of this stormy world dash at its feet in vain. This rock rears its head far above them all. They are shivered for ever, at its base. "Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken." But he who builds upon this rock, shall never more be moved. "He that believeth shall not make haste." These are the words which follow Isaiah's declaration as to the stone. All else shall flee away; but he shall never be dismayed. He shall be undisturbed by the fear of evil. He is on that rock, over which no destructive wave has ever swept, save when our sins were borne; and they are borne away! Therefore shall his heart be kept in peace, trusting in the Lord. He shall not become agitated, nor prepare for flight. Whilst "the wicked fleeth," even "when no man pursueth," he that believeth shall stand "in the evil day," and endure to the end. He shall not make haste.

Meanwhile, all those who shall fall on this stone shall be broken. And oh! hear what is yet behind: "On whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder." Where is it that this stone *shall fall?* Our vision gives us the answer: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces." The stone is to fall like a thunderbolt upon the divided image—upon the iron kingdom, in the last stage of its existence. The stone, therefore, must have been lifted up, for it falls. Jesus hath been lifted up, and is ascended on high. And He shall so come again, in like manner as He was seen to go above. In person He went away, and in person, therefore, shall He return. This is the period which is to terminate the existence of the fourth empire. "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people," (as had been the case with its predecessors, one succeeding another,) "but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

This is the kingdom of heaven, not made known to faith only, but actually and outwardly. The God of heaven should set it up. Hence, we conceive, is the origin of the expressions so familiar afterwards, "the kingdom of heaven," and "the kingdom of God." From this verse, and perhaps chap. iv. 26, it would seem those expressions took their rise. And thence we may surely derive a true, if not the complete, notion of what we should understand by the "kingdom of heaven." It is the kingdom of this chapter; a kingdom which the God of heaven should set up, after the complete destruction of the four previous ones. The Jews thenceforward looked for this kingdom. They do so still—though the vail is on their heart; and they know not that JESUS will be the king. The external setting up of this kingdom is yet future. There is a sense, indeed, in which the kingdom has come already: viz. *by anticipative faith.* The power of the kingdom is that which has come already—its inward, spiritual power. In this sense (and not the final and literal and full meaning described here) the kingdom "is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The believer has entered the kingdom *in spirit. Manifestedly*, the kingdom is not yet come; its outward establishment is after the demolition of the fourth great Gentile empire. When "the times of the Gentiles" close, the kingdom comes. Then shall the world itself "see the Son of man coming in His kingdom." Further particulars as to the setting up of the kingdom of heaven, and proofs that it will not transpire, except as the result of the *personal return* of Jesus, in the clouds of heaven, may be furnished another time.

The narrative of the vision ends nearly as it commenced. "The

great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." (verse 45.) Man, even, can see that events have verified the whole already—except the terrible, concluding scene. Most assuredly it hastens fast! Blessed are those who shall be found with oil in their vessels and watching!

We may regard this revelation of the image and the stone, as an elementary lesson of prophetic truth; as a sketch which other prophetic Scriptures may be employed to fill up. It may serve as a clue to lead one through a variety of aspects in which the future is presented to us in the Word of God. Have, then, the great outlines therein presented deeply impressed upon your hearts, the outline of these four monarchies, closed by the kingdom which the God of heaven shall set up. So shall you be prepared to enter advantageously upon further researches, in all of which may we humbly seek the wisdom which cometh down from above!

II.—THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE KINGDOM.

We found, in the vision of the great metallic image and the stone, a grand and comprehensive *skeleton* of prophetic truth, at least so far as such truth relates to *the earth*. That was an outline of God's history of our earth from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, to whom the vision was granted, to the end; and it was with the kingdom of the stone that our minds were occupied on concluding.

We must now look at a further and important particular, *the postponement of this kingdom*. Our own present position of grace, and our own future position of glory, will be found to be, in fact, one of the designed results of this postponement.

But let us pause a moment, till we seek to have impressed upon our minds one blessed truth, *the personal, literal return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, in the clouds of heaven, is the great cardinal event in prospect for the Jews and the Gentiles, as well as for the Church of God; and it should ever form the centre of attraction, however we may enter into other details.* This truth may be read fully, clearly, and continually throughout the Bible. Let the Scriptures of the New Testament but speak their own language; let their simple, solemn language, but produce its own obvious impression as to the future, and we do feel most confident that the lesson to the disciple will be this: "*Let your loins be girded about with truth, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord.*" However obscure many portions of truth as to the future may be—however intricate and perplexing the varied surface of the widely-extended page of the prophetic Word—there is still one thing as to which there certainly *need* be no mistake, and it is this: the great and absorbing fact ever placed before the Church, as its hope, its separating, purifying, and consolatory power, is the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. This the whole tenor of the New Testament shews with exceeding clearness and harmony of evidence, and we desire it may be kept in mind, wherever and however we may travel, in pursuing our search. So shall we neither run in vain nor spend our strength for nought. Oh! may the Lord Himself open to us in power, and unto the edification of our souls, His own unerring Word! And now let us consider what we have ventured to designate as the postponement of the kingdom.

There is a verse in Matt. xxi. which may serve as a basis, rendered of increasing interest to us by the position in which it occurs; (namely, between two instructive allusions to the *stone* of Daniel's and Isaiah's prophecies;) that verse is as follows: "Therefore, I say unto you, *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you*, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

The connection in which this verse stands, it will be remembered, is this: "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

Long after the last of the Old Testament prophets had ceased to speak of Israel's doom, and dispersion, and ultimate repentance and restoration, came John the Baptist preaching, as the forerunner of Messiah. The fulness of the time had now come, and there were some, perhaps many, who were found actually "waiting for the consolation of Israel," and "looking for redemption in Jerusalem." To these expectants, then, and to all the people, came the reviving word: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Of this kingdom God had spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets; but by Daniel especially, in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, this "kingdom of heaven" had been foretold. "*In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom*, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." * Hence apparently is the source of the terms "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God." They were not strange to a Jewish ear, whatever minor distinction of import might be supposed; both phrases allude to the kingdom to be set up by the God of heaven, as here foretold by Daniel.

It would seem that the minds, both of the devout and of the carnal and disobedient Jews, were filled with thoughts and anticipations respecting this kingdom. They understood what kingdom it was that John the Baptist, the twelve, and the seventy, announced. They quite knew to what kingdom, lastly, the Lord himself referred as we read, when He began to preach, and to say: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." These declarations related to the kingdom which, in the latter days of the fourth, or iron, monarchy, "the God of heaven" himself should "set up."

But immediately thereupon they stumbled. The very first step requisite to the actual introduction of the kingdom was one they would not take. They themselves must repent, and receive and submit to the authority of the Lord Jesus. All this they could not comprehend. The nation could not be owned, delivered and blessed, by Messiah, until there was national humiliation and faith. "Ye must be born again." But the nation would not hear of it. Three long years did Jesus prove it. By all manner of miracles and mighty deeds did he shew forth his mission. By words equalled by none man ever spake did he teach them; but, as to the bulk of the nation, all was in vain. Nationally, the Jews rejected Him even to the end. What remained to be done?

The result was, *the postponement of the kingdom*: "*Therefore*," said Jesus, "*the kingdom of God shall be taken from you.*" The king would go away again; and, instead of their being then delivered and the oppressive Gentile empire then destroyed, their own nation should be destroyed; while a season of respite, and even of special and distinguished offers of grace, should thereby accrue to those very Gentiles. This is the new field of truth to which we have already alluded. An interval comes in here; *a parenthesis*, as it has been well expressed, occurs in the history of the Jews, and in the accomplishment of predicted events. But this interval is not an unoccupied blank. The gathering of the Church (which had its commencement, *as such*, on the day of Pentecost, and which shall be complete, so as to be presented to Christ at his coming,) fills up the parenthetic interval.

Rejected by the Jews, save by a chosen few, Jesus began to tell of his departure. The testimony that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, was now replaced by another—that the kingdom, for the present, would only be penetrated by faith—its manifestation would be postponed. There must intervene a period of judicial blindness, of tribulation, and of judgment, before the kingdom could openly dawn upon the world.

"*The Son of man goeth as it is written of Him*," said the blessed Saviour, as He sat with His disciples at the table of the passover. †

The place referred to, in these words, would seem to be Hosea v. 14, 15, where we read: "I will be as a lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away and none shall rescue. *I will go, and return to my place*, till they acknowledge and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early." But none of *such* predictions could the blinded Jews now understand. That Messiah should *die* for the nation, and that even the preaching of His death and resurrection to it should be of no national avail, but that, consequently, *He should go away again*—nothing of all this would they understand. They even quoted other Scriptures to disprove it. They said: "We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest thou that the Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?" ‡

On one occasion indeed some imagined that "the kingdom of God should immediately appear." This notion, however, was at once corrected; and that by a parable which bears closely upon our present inquiry. § "He said, therefore: A certain nobleman went

* Dan. i. 44. † Matt. xxvi. 24. ‡ John xii. 34. § Luke xix. 11-27.

into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return .... And it came to pass that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, &c.... And He said, Have thou authority over ten cities... Be thou also over five cities." We have the future investiture and so the postponement of the kingdom plainly set forth here. The proof that the kingdom could not "immediately appear," is given in the statement that the nobleman must first "go into a far country." He goes; the servants occupy, and, having received the kingdom, He returns. No one can be at a loss to know what this means. The Lord Himself went to heaven to "receive a kingdom and to return," when He judges the enemies, and reigns. The kingdom could not *appear* till then. Then only would the faithful servants begin their "authority over the cities." Here again we see *the interval*—the interval which has continued to our own day.

But hear the conclusion of this instructive parable: "Those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." This occurs when the nobleman, having returned in power, takes actual possession, and exercises the rights of the kingdom. Not until then will *the kingdom appear*. In passing, compare the slaying of the enemies here, and let the smiting of the iron and clay, in Dan. ii., be noticed well. They are obviously the same event, though in the one case the judgment may fall upon "his citizens" or Jewish foes, and in the other on the Gentile foes. The crisis in both cases seems to be similar.

We would now look at another Scripture which bears upon the question:

"And 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: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day."

The Pharisees demanded of Jesus, "when the kingdom of God should come." After giving other seasonable instruction, the Lord said to the disciples, that "first He must suffer many things, and be rejected of that generation." He also intimated that there would be a period during which their *hope* should be *deferred*, and during which there would be danger of delusion as to His return. "He said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here; or, See there," &c.

We get in this passage also a full solution (as it seems to me) of a difficulty which may be already pressing on some minds. This difficulty may be proposed thus: "How can you affirm that the kingdom was postponed? Was it not merely transferred from Jews to Gentiles? Did not the kingdom come at Pentecost? Was it not given when 'righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost' were imparted? Nay; does not the Lord Himself say, in the very passage before us, 'the kingdom of God cometh not with observation; behold, the kingdom of God is within you?'"

These are important questions. We do not deny their apparent, but desire to admit fully their *real*, force. They do in no way contradict or weaken what has been previously proved.

We venture to submit then, first, that there is a *twofold* coming of the kingdom; or rather, that there are two senses in which the kingdom is regarded as coming. More properly, perhaps, one should say that there is something that is of the kingdom, something that characterizes it, which comes and has come, before the actual arrival of the kingdom itself. The *new life* and *spiritual power* of the kingdom have been vouchsafed already to all believers. In this sense they are in the kingdom, and in this sense the kingdom exists; that is, to faith. They have been "translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son;" (Col. i.) they "have received a kingdom that cannot be moved." (Heb. xii.) But all this is, as it were, *by anticipation*. The kingdom itself, properly and strictly speaking, is the millennial reign, or period of a thousand years; the period which does not commence, as we saw in our previous lecture, until the last stages of the existence of the fourth empire have come, and the *stone* shall have executed judgment upon it.

There is a coming of the kingdom which is "not with observation," and another which shall be "as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven, so shall also the Son of man be in His day." This second mode is that of the kingdom at the period of its full, true, and proper coming and establishment. Believers have entered the kingdom in spirit already, and thus are in the kingdom, even though the kingdom, in a most true sense, is not yet arrived. Let us see whether the passage before us will not fully bear out this thought of such a twofold view of the kingdom.

The unbelieving Pharisees—unbelieving as to all that which could really admit into the kingdom—demanded of Jesus, "When the kingdom of God should come?" Now, this was a question which, from persons in their position, was impertinent and premature. They had not themselves received Him that should be king. They needed to become converted, and as little children. This was the first thing required by the Lord. The further mysteries of the kingdom it was not given to unbelieving Pharisees to know. To *disciples* only were those mysteries explained, though the multitude might hear what was outwardly visible to men.

To the Pharisees, therefore, the Lord gave no direct reply. When they demanded of Him, "when the kingdom of God should come?" He merely says *to them*: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." As if the Lord had said: "Your question is not the one *you* ought to ask. What you ask is an after matter. It is *the preparation* you need before you can have either part or lot in this kingdom. You need *a kingdom within*. You must *seek first the righteousness of the kingdom*, then all else needful shall be added. In this sense, the kingdom cometh not with outward shew. No: that coming is only seen and known to faith's interior eye. Do *you* then remember this."

But, having given *to the Pharisees* this most suitable reply, we find, from the very next words of the Evangelist, that the Lord immediately thereupon turned *to the disciples*, and spoke to them of a coming of the kingdom which *should be* with observation. Still referring to the question, "when the kingdom of God should come," "He said unto the disciples, The days shall come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here, or See there; go not after them, nor follow them. *For* as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven, so shall also the Son of man be in His day." That is, the coming of that day will be visible to all. The announcements, Lo here! and Lo there! might be detected to be false by this token. The true advent of that day would be like lightning; it would be manifested in and from the clouds of heaven.

This all was spoken to the question, "when the kingdom of God should come." Till that coming, the world at large would go on as it had done from the beginning. There should be no universal spread of the knowledge of the Lord, no disappearance of its evil, no millennium, before that coming of the kingdom. The whole interval is described as follows: "But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." The world would be the world, even to the end of the interval between the departure and the return of the Lord.

We learn, then, from this whole passage, that while there is a sense in which the kingdom has come to believers, viz. as to the *divine life* and *resurrection power* of it; yet, in the full sense, it has not yet come, and will not come till the King Himself returns. Till then, the kingdom is *postponed*.

The coming of Messiah in His kingdom, the actual admission of His own into the kingdom, the manifestation of that kingdom to the world, and the changing of the sovereignty of this world into that of our God and of His Christ—all these are yet future.

There was not only a *postponement* of the kingdom, in the sense now pointed out, but there was also, though in the other sense specially, *a transfer* of it, that is, from the Jews to the Gentiles: "*The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*" Upon this passage, the

words recorded in Acts xxviii., as having been spoken by Paul, "expounding and testifying the kingdom of God," will serve as an emphatic commentary: "Be it known, therefore, unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." (See verses 30, 31.) Here is plainly a transfer, but yet what is transferred is as plainly rather the offer of a previous spiritual preparation for the kingdom, than a present offer of the kingdom itself. This will appear further, and that in the strongest possible light, if we go on to see what the special work of God is with which, in the purposes of His grace, He is filling up the present interval.

God is now preparing for His only-begotten Son, for this heavenly Bridegroom, a heavenly Bride. The *opportunity*, so to speak, for this work of wondrous grace, is furnished by the solemn fact of the Lord's rejection of Israel: "He came unto His own, but His own received Him not." There must consequently ensue a period of judicial dispersion of the nation, and of national deprivation of their covenant privileges. God must mark with heavy indignation the consummated guilt of that highly favoured, and yet obstinately unbelieving, people. The blessings of the kingdom must be withheld, not for ever indeed, but for a period. "Blindness," therefore, "happened to Israel." We need not now quote the whole of Rom. xi., yet we would direct attention to it. The nation fell through unbelief. The natural branches of the olive were broken off on that account. What then? The result is stated in the same chapter with equal clearness. The special offer of the Gospel was thereupon vouchsafed to the Gentiles. The very necessity there was that the kingdom should be withheld from the Jews, became in the counsels of God a ground for withholding the judgment which hung over the Gentiles. Nay, not only were the falling of the stone and the grinding to powder of the image thus postponed awhile, but the offer of salvation through Jesus shone brightly upon the nations. The necessity for dealing in severity with the Jew became thus an occasion of long, special, and blessed grace to the Gentiles. The Gentiles also, before judgment came on them, should have the privilege which had previously been the lot of the Jews alone: "Through their fall salvation came to the Gentiles."

But the Gentiles also, it was foreseen by Him who knoweth the end from the beginning, *nationally*, and as to the mass of them, would refuse the offered salvation. So the event has proved even to this day. "Strait" has been "the gate, and narrow the way, that leadeth unto life, and few have they been who have found it." While "broad has been the gate, and wide has been the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many have they been who have gone in thereat." So that, as a whole, both Gentiles and Jews have come under sentence of "cutting off."

Have then the promises of God taken none effect? Has the purpose of God altogether failed? No, verily, God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Even to this present day, from among the Jews, there is a remnant according to the election of grace; as of old, God reserved unto Himself a people who had not bowed the knee to Baal. But it is the gathering of the Church that constitutes the special work, which, in the riches of His grace, God is accomplishing during the interval of the *postponement of the kingdom*. This body is intended for a bride unto the King. There are subjects too in the kingdom, but these constitute the bride, the Lamb's wife, rather than the subjects. The subjects will be found from among the earth's remaining population, after those happy ones shall have been taken up into the clouds, to be for ever with the Lord. There shall be, during the days of the kingdom, both a heavenly and an earthly people. The heavenly people includes all those who shall be Christ's at His coming. These in resurrection-bodies shall live, and reign above with the King, as bride with the bridegroom. While down upon the earth there shall be *a world full*, so to speak, of holy and happy inhabitants—descendants of a remnant both of Jews and Gentiles, who shall be saved after the Church has been taken away to meet her Lord, and who shall be providentially protected and brought through all the judgments of that great and terrible day. These then shall constitute the subjects, in and of the kingdom. All this, however, we can only state at present. We shall endeavour to consider it more fully in one of our further outlines.

During this period, while the kingdom itself, taken in its full and proper amount of meaning, is postponed, the Church is *a distinct and complete body*—a body preparing for the Saviour's glory, in the heavenly places. "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water through the word, *that He might present it unto Himself a glorious Church*, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. . . . *They two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.*" Such is ever, in the Scriptures, the position and destiny of the Church. The *kingdom*, however faith may be able to see and enter into it even now, has been, and is yet, *postponed*; but for the King, meanwhile, a glorious, heavenly Bride is being called, by His God and Father. But more of this again if the Lord will.

T. S.

THE JEWS.

ERECTION OF A SYNAGOGUE AT JERUSALEM.

THE Christian will peruse with sorrow the extracts here given from the address lately delivered at the synagogue in Crosby Street, New York, by Judge Noah. They will abundantly prove how far the glory is departed from the Jews, morally as well as actually. Far, very far indeed, is the tone of this address from the spirit which the Lord has described as that which He will eventually work in them. "If they shall confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they have trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land." (Lev. xxvi.) To this point Judge Noah and the Jews generally are not yet brought, and therefore utterly insensible as they are to their sin in God's light, their eyes are holden so that they cannot see that yawning gulph through which they must shortly pass, for "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*" (Daniel's people, the Jews) "*shall be delivered*, every one that shall be found written in the book." (Dan. xii.) This tremendous vista for the Jews needs to be urged the more, as even Christians are not wanting who help on the delusion of that woe-doomed people, speaking peace where there is no peace—peace to them nationally, though Jerusalem's warfare is not yet accomplished, nor her iniquity yet pardoned. Not yet has she received at the hand of Jehovah double for all her sins; however, God in due time will say: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." For want of seeing their state as God views and judges it, nearly all the expectations expressed by the judge are wholly opposed to the Scriptures which they themselves profess to venerate. What a comment upon the words of the apostle: "Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart!" May the Lord hasten the time when His Spirit will give a remnant to judge their condition, in presence not only of the state in which they were originally set by God, (Isa. v.) but of the glory which Christ's person and work will bring them into by and by. (Isa. vi.) "Lord, how long?"

"The army of the Roman conqueror captured and carried away the nation, to be sold as slaves. A few only of the faithful, hid in tombs and caverns, secreting themselves beneath the fallen columns of the temple, remained on a spot endeared to them by so many blissful reminiscenses, and by the promises of the Great Hereafter. The Roman centurions pursued them—the Greeks persecuted them—the Persians destroyed them, and, in after ages, the followers of Mahomet visited them with fire and sword, and the Crusaders trampled upon their necks—yet they refused, under these unprecedented calamities, to abandon the homes of their fathers, and their ancient heritage, the rich gift of the Almighty. With the law of Moses, which they had preserved; with the sacred rolls, written by Esdras, now in their possession, which they bore from the flaming ruins; they read the law in chambers—in caves—confined rooms, and deserted places—for, among their Pagan persecutors, they did not dare to worship openly that God whose protecting mercies the civilized world now unites to invoke. The Mosque of the Mussulmans reared its domes and minarets on the site of our temple.—Christians erected magnificent churches and rich-endowed chapels on our soil; while our people, the rightful inheritors of all that Land of Promise, crawled in abject submission to the walls of the temple, to bewail their hard destiny—to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and weep on the solitary banks of Jordan. They never despaired of the fulfilment of those promises which God had made to them—that still small voice continually whispered in their

ears, in accents soft as the cherub's voice, 'Fear not, Jacob, for I am with thee.'

"Centuries rolled on—nations arose, flourished, decayed, and fell—yet the Jewish people still existed, increased in numbers, and under every privation and persecution preserved their identity, their faith, and their nationality.

"At length a sign is given; the thunders begin to roll all over Europe; the cry is everywhere heard in despotic governments—To arms! The people are at war with their kings, and the kings are overthrown; Priestcraft and fanaticism are overthrown; the sun of liberty begins to rise; the chains of the Jews are unloosed, and they are elevated to the rank of men; the fires of superstition had burned out, and the age of reason had revived. The Sultan of Turkey, following the march of civilized nations, says to the Jews in his dominions: 'You are free; you have my permission to erect a synagogue in Jerusalem;' and messengers are despatched, as they were in the days of Solomon, to ask for aid from their brethren throughout the world, to erect a magnificent place of worship, the first that has been erected in the Holy City since the advent of Christianity.

"Friends and brethren, do you understand that Sign? Is it not pregnant with great events? Is not this another seal broken? We can erect a synagogue, and build a temple here, and it excites no attention; but when the trumpet sounds from Mount Zion, every ear is opened, every heart throbs. I know full well, that there are many Jews throughout the world, who look upon the restoration of their brethren to the Holy Land as a possible event in the great changes which may hereafter occur, but they take little interest in the signs of the times. Happy in the enjoyment of every comfort here, they only think of their brethren in the Holy Land when their charitable feelings are appealed to; but when the great events of the restoration, which are to fulfil the prophecies, are talked of, they cling to the home of their birth, and the country of their adoption, and say, My destiny is here. Be it so. I do not blame them; for great sacrifices of life and treasure await the first movements of restoration. We are safe, but let us feel for those brave hearts, who will not forsake their ancient heritage—who cling with ardent devotion to the sacred soil, and who turn their eyes of hope toward Zion, and say 'The time will come, the hour will arrive.' Let us furnish them with the means of living until the trumpet again sounds on the walls of Jerusalem—let us aid to erect a temple worthy of their faith, their devotion, and their constancy.

"The Jews, I regret to say, know little of the Holy Land and of their brethren who reside in it. It is now the object of Christian research, of Christian veneration; and no learned, pious, and liberal Christian visits that sacred spot, who does not feel that the chosen people of God are at this day the greatest miracle on earth, and have ever been the constant uniform object of Divine protection. The fate of a nation may depend on many causes: one becomes weakened by unjust and unnecessary wars; another falls from want of energy, character, good faith, and industry; a third is without courage to sustain its rights; and a fourth is ignorant, imbecile and bigoted. The rise, progress, and fate of the Jewish nation, exhibited no such defects of character. We sinned against God because it is the nature of man to be sinful; He punished us as the parent does his child, but, in the midst of our stubbornness, our disobedience, and hardness of heart, we did not forget the unity and omnipotence of that Divine Architect of the universe, and He pardoned us: His arm always has guided us, and amid the vicissitudes of six thousand years, the nation never has been lost; from the day and the hour that God declared us to be His people, down to the present time, we have remained the same people, distinct from all others. Shepherds of the Land of Promise, slaves in Egypt, a mighty power in Canaan, the revolted tribes captured at Samaria and blended with other nations, still Judah and Benjamin remained, and were still the chosen people. The whole world of idolatry united to crush us, but the handful of God's chosen servants could not be subdued or won to apostasy. By the rivers of Babylon they went in captivity, but could not forget Jerusalem nor the songs of Zion; the fiery furnace could not subdue them, and Pagan kings, awe-struck at their self-sacrificing piety and fidelity, set them free. After seventy years of bondage the faithful were restored to Zion. Punished for their sins thus severely, the children of Israel reposed four hundred years in their land of milk and honey, waiting for that Prince whom God promised to send them, to consolidate and rule over the nation as their temporal sovereign. But their glory was again destined to be dimmed, their light extinguished, and darkness once more enshrouded the people. The ambitious, conquering Romans appeared in great force under the walls of Jerusalem, and summoned them to surrender. . . .

"Admonished by the signs of the times, and by the expectation of important events, we find the aged Jews with some little means, coming down the Danube, from the Red Sea, and over the mountains of Circassia, journeying toward Jerusalem, there in holy meditation and prayer, to spend the remnant of their days, and to sit under the wall of the temple, and pray for the peace of Israel, and when they die, surrounded by the learned and pious, to be buried in the consecrated earth, near the ashes of the great prophets, the sublime psalmist, and the illustrious of our fathers and ancestors. If there is any consolation in the last hours of life among the truly pious of our faith, it is in knowing that they are to be buried under the shadow of Mount Zion; to be near when the trumpet shall arouse the quick and the dead, at the day of the great atonement. I never hear the name of Jerusalem without thinking of that mighty man, whose consecrated fingers struck the wires of his ravishing harp, and gave alarm to the hosts of heaven—that beloved of God, that warrior, poet, king—stern in his friendships, sublime in his orisons, he whose whole heart melted in his love and adoration of the Lord—the good, the great, the illustrious David. Who can read his psalms without feeling all the pride of religious faith in knowing that he too was a Jew? What a privilege it is to stand by his tomb—what a blessing to lie near him, even in death!

"I have said that the building of this new synagogue in Jerusalem would be considered throughout the world as a remarkable sign, particularly among a people, who, though separated and dispersed in the four quarters of the world, are united by the most extraordinary bonds of sympathy; like the magnetic shock, it reaches every extremity,—like the flash of electricity which conveys intelligence in every direction, the Jews will hear of it and will see the handwriting on the wall. We have been preserved miraculously for great and startling events; God's dealings with his people have been most wonderful; we have passed through the promised punishments; shall we not enjoy the promised blessings? When, and how, this great advent is to be brought about, is still in the hand and heart of that great Spirit, who depresses and raises up, who breaks down thrones and elevates the oppressed and persecuted; as the great French historian has said, 'Providence moves through time, as the gods of Homer through space—it makes a step, and ages roll away.'—To the Christian world, which has a common origin with us, and still clings to the Jewish nation as the favoured and chosen people of God, this little expressive sign will not be without its impression—it is one blast of that silver trumpet, which at the dawn of day was sounded from the eastern portals of our Temple. Here is the church of the Holy Sepulchre, in which Christians offer up their pious orisons to the memory of Him, who, while on earth, deserved all that the best feelings of the heart could bestow; there are the minarets of the Mosque of Omar, built on the site of our temple; and there, in simple grandeur, in one corner of Mount Zion, is the new synagogue of the Jews—the parent and his children, all were happy on the same spot, all wafting the orisons to that Heaven where sits in Divine majesty the Lord of Hosts and the God of Israel."

To this may be added the following very different extract from the recent letter of a Christian, who does not allude to such political changes as a criterion whereby to judge of the approach of Christ, but who, knowing on the sure testimony of God's Word that He is coming quickly, sees in what is now passing the evident preparation of a platform, which *may be* ready before we are caught up to meet the Lord, but which *must be* in use before we return with Him in judgment.

"I suppose you are watching the times with increasing interest. A paper has just been sent to me, containing the address of a Jew to his brethren, telling them that the Turk had given leave to their nation, to have a Temple at Jerusalem, and he calls on them, as in Solomon's days, to come to the aid of this mighty work—the first opportunity such a work has had since the ruin of the Temple, eighteen hundred years ago.

"The stir among the Gentiles or heathen is equally significant—all the nations of the earth, known to the prophets, I may say, are feeling a strange and surprising impulse. And if the fourth empire, as is judged, be to revive, how full of meaning is the dislodgment of the Pope from the ancient seat or metropolis of it, as though room were making for the Head of such empire to shew himself!

"We know not how long all these influences may be abroad, or these energies of evil be at their work, or how long, during such processes, we may be detained here; but all has a voice—'the days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.'

"How strikingly the Lord tells us, that the sign on which our *faith* rests is the *humbled* Christ, such a sign as 'Jonah the prophet.' (Matt. xvi. 1-4.) Faith deals with such a sign. But *hope* may feed itself by a thousand signs, such as I have referred to. Our *soul* rests on a Saviour or a humbled Christ; our *expectations* are nourished by the doings of the power of God, who, in all these great movements abroad, is displaying the ripening of His purposes and promises in spite of the world."

THE CHURCH HASTING THE COMING OF THE LORD.

The object of this paper is to show how the Lord's coming is, in a sense, dependant on our prayers, and communion with the Lord in that blessed hope. I suppose 2 Peter iii. 12 (if we accept the interpretation, which I think is true, of "hastening," instead of "hasting to,") may lay that thought upon the mind. "Looking for, and hastening the coming of, the day of God; wherein the heavens being on fire shall melt with fervent heat."

At once, no doubt, the objection will arise with some, What! can such an event as the Lord's coming for the Church depend on

our prayers—on us? I would answer, Yes, just in the same way as whilst the Lord has ordained all else for the Christian, so has He also ordained the means, as Ephes. ii. 10 tells us. (See Greek.)

It is, I would remark, God's greatest object and joy to have His people *working with Him*, partakers of His mind in whatever He does, or is about to do. (Ephes. i. 9.) "Surely, the Lord will do nothing, but He revealeth his secret unto his servants, the prophets." (Amos iii. 7.) In one sense, all the Lord's people are *prophets*. (Ps. cv. 15. John xv. 15.)

Let us look at this truth as shown in the Old Testament. How is it respecting the bringing in again of Israel? Is there not a most deep and blessed communion of prayer, and desire respecting it? (Is. lxii. 6.) "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." (See also chap. xxvi.)

Is there not then many and many a sigh: "Oh! that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!" And so we find it, chap. lxiv.: "Oh! that thou wouldest rend the heavens, and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!" And then, I think, the answer, verse 3: "When thou didst terrible things, which we looked not for, thou *camest* down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence. For," &c., and that whole part is full of it.

And so Luke xviii., I suppose, continues from chap. xvii. about the Lord's coming: "And shall not God *avenge* his own elect, which cry unto him *day and night*, though he bear long with (or *over, respecting*) them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."

And does not the position of the creature, (Rom. viii.) as viewed in God's mind, lay this thought on us? The very creature is looked upon there as waiting thus intently. "The earnest expectation of the creature" (ἀποκαραδοκία) "waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Shall it be less so with us, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit? Blessed indeed it is, when He who testifieth these things saith, "Surely, I come quickly: Amen," to reply, (like Samuel of old,) "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Blessed when such is the *real* position of our hearts—

> "Our hearts are with Him on the throne,
> No more we brook delay,
> *Each moment* waiting for the word,
> Rise up, and come away"—

yet willing to stay his full time in service. Surely then, dear brethren, these things have a solemn voice to us. Should the Lord take an unwilling, careless, worldly bride to Himself? Why has the Lord revived the thought, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," but that we should have communion of heart and desire with Him? Let us remember that we are joint heirs *with* Christ—His expectations, His hopes, are ours.

May we not learn something from the history of Israel in the wilderness? God brought them out of Egypt, and in the next year, I think, spies were sent up to search the land. But, through unbelief, they despised (perhaps better, "rejected," —Numb. xiii. 27, 28,) the land. Consequently, they were left to wander forty years in the wilderness, until that generation was consumed. God did not lead them up into Canaan, for they were not *prepared* for it. And so again in its day, the Lord will have Israel prepared. (Zech. xiii. 9.) "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call upon my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God."

Solemnly, then, I would say, dear brethren, should these things speak to us. If we get in worldliness, carelessness, disunion and division, (further than where God's truth calls for division,) are we hasting, in truth, that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ? I would say very solemnly, as to our Lord, that I say nothing of this as any *party* thought, even in the slightest: if there is wrong, it may speak to the conscience of them that do wrong; where there is right, it may help to show in what spirit the right should be done, and that prayer, like the Ornan altar, may avail to preserve the Lord's work. But this, by-the-by; I ask that *grace* may receive it without suspicion. I now commend these things to the hearts of the Lord's people, looking to Him for His blessing.

G.

SIGNS OF ANTI-CHRIST.

Though the thoughts I send you be very brief, I do not hesitate to communicate them, as I judge they aid in the estimate of one of the principal objects which fill the scene in the last days. And I apprehend that it is not merely in the arrangement of a complete system, for which our knowledge is often too imperfect, that we make progress in the mind of God on this, or indeed on any subject in Scripture, but quite as much in any light which gives a more distinct and definite character to any of the elements which compose the whole, if indeed we can say that prophetic subjects are revealed as a whole. Our sphere of vision, our capacity of embracing the entire scene as God does, necessitates in His communication of the truth the presenting of the parts which compose it; and it is in the attempt to combine them that we often find the greatest difficulty. That they do combine we cannot doubt, and that the points of combination exist since each part is perfect; but the combination itself not being always given, we have to wait much and patiently upon divine enlargement of view to be able to do it justly. The geographer can easily put together the dissected map, but the child (and we are children) must learn the geography in a slower process of putting it together: I suspect we have made less, while some elements are very certain, than we are disposed to think. But every progress in distinct knowledge of the elements facilitates the apprehension of the whole.

I proceed to notice two characteristics of the evil power in the latter days which may aid in this—very simple, but which have much struck me. One has been noticed some years back. In 2 Thess. ii., we have the statement that the presence of the wicked [one] will be with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; that is, ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει καὶ σημείοις καὶ τέρασι ψεύδους. If we compare this with Acts ii. 22, we find that the blessed Lord is described as a man approved of God, i.e. proved to be of Him, His mission and truth proved by miracles, (powers,) wonders and signs. That is, we have there things which were proofs of the truth and mission of the Lord Jesus, attesting to the eyes of men the title of the wicked one: in this case, ψεύδους is of course added, "lying" or of falsehood; but this does not, as to the terribleness of the case nor its character, alter it, because men are given up then εἰς τὸ πιστεῦσαι αὐτοὺς τῷ ψεύδει, to believe falsehood, or what is lying. In their state, it is a complete presenting of the proofs of Christ. If we turn to Rev. xiii., we have a circumstance analogous to this, which completes the horror of it. (Verse 13.) "And he doeth great wonders, (signs,) so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on earth in the sight of men." Now, reference to 1 Kings xviii. shews us that this was the grand and sovereign test of the prophet and messenger of Jehovah. Priests of Baal in vain essayed to produce this proof proposed by Elijah, to make known who was the true God in the solemn declaration to the people, "If Jehovah be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him;" and to preclude any further halting between two opinions, it was decided that the God that answered by fire, he was to be God; and Elijah thereon prays that it might be evident also that he was Jehovah's prophet, and that he had done all this at His word. And effectively at the sight of the fire descended from heaven the people cry out: "Jehovah, He is God; Jehovah, He is God." But in these terrible days that are to come, this proof also is given by the false prophet, the beast with two horns as a lamb.* That is, the very thing which was the absolute and well-known test of Jehovah's power and the mission of His messenger, now accredits the false prophet. It is in the sight of men, no doubt, but that is sufficient for its object. We have then that which bore witness to Christ's mission as of God, as Messiah on earth; that which witnessed and tested Elijah's message as coming, and sent by Jehovah—both accrediting the pretensions of the wicked one and of the false prophet. It is a frightful picture and testimony to the way in which they that dwell on the earth are given up to blindness in that day. I leave to be weighed by your readers the extent to which these circumstances give a Jewish character to the instruments and power of evil referred to in these passages, (1 John ii. 18,) excluding any necessity to restrict it absolutely to such an accomplishment, supposing it is admitted.—*(Extract from the letter of a brother labouring in the South of France to the Editor.)*

* Perhaps better rendered "lamb-like." At any rate, the allusion is evident; and note here, it is Christ in person who is the Lamb.

THE REVELATION.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following version of the Revelation, with notes, is an attempt to present to the Christian reader, in an English dress, *some of the results attained by the most careful* editors in approaching as closely as they could to the words actually written by the Holy Ghost. The translator has not adhered rigorously to the readings adopted by any particular editor, and he has at least sought to avoid the snare of following mechanically one or two of the more ancient MSS., or the mere majority of the more modern copies. In many instances, the text preferred by those who made the authorized version is departed from—it is hoped, for the better; in others, while the same text is maintained, the words are translated rather more uniformly, if not with greater fidelity. In both ways, the research and the mature judgment of others will doubtless suggest real and valuable improvements. But those who duly estimate the importance of a single amendment, in leading, by the Spirit, to a truer view of the mind of God in Scripture at large, and particularly in a book so pregnant with blessing to them who read, and hear, and keep its sayings, will not perhaps despise even this humble effort to bring it anew before brethren to whom the labours of critics are seldom accessible. If it be observed that such corrections, where really well founded, are few indeed, let them bless God, who has graciously and jealously watched over His own Word; but let them not suppose that any correction, however insignificant in appearance, is of little moment. The Spirit of God has Himself taught us elsewhere the importance which *He* attaches to the use of the singular rather than the plural. (Gal. iii. 16.)

Brackets are added in the version to words where there is considerable doubt, though the evidence may not be conclusive.

The foot notes are, in general, as concise as possible, consistently with shewing the opinions of the different editors consulted as to the comparative value of readings.

THE REVELATION.

I.—The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent by his angel and signified *it* unto his servant John; [2] who testified the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, *even* whatsoever things he saw. [3] Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time *is* at hand.

[4] John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace from him that is, and that was, and that is to come; and from the seven Spirits who are before his throne; [5] and from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the First-born of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

Unto him that loveth us, and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood, [6] and hath made us a kingdom,—priests unto his God and Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER I.

1.—The Alexandrine MS. (A) reads τοῦ δούλου (i.e. "by the angel his servant;") the editors (edd.) prefer the common reading.

2.—The "Received Text" (Rec.) has ὅσα τε but the edd. drop the latter word, which is omitted in the three uncial and forty-two cursive MSS., as well as in many versions.

4.—Matthiae reads ἀπὸ Θεοῦ with an uncial MS. in the Vatican (B) and more than thirty others; Rec. has ἀπὸ τοῦ; edd. ἀπὸ ὁ ὤν a plain Hebraism, as in Ἰησοῦ, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστὸς, in the verse that follows. Rec. Knappe (Kn.) Griesbach (Gr.) and Scholz (Sz.) read ἃ ἐστιν, Tischendorf (Tisch.) and Lachmann (Ln.) read τῶν, Tregelles (Treg.) ἃ. *

5.—Rec. ἀγαπήσαντι, the edd. ἀγαπῶντι.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Treg. λούσαντι, Ln. and Tisch. λύσαντι.

6.—Ln. ἡμῖν, the others ἡμᾶς.—Rec. βασιλεῖς καὶ ἱερ., the edd. βασιλείαν.

* I refer to the *first* edition in 1844. That of 1848 differs in many places, as in verse 5, where λύσαντι is preferred to λούσαντι. As no text accompanies the translation of 1848 I cannot cite it, but make this explanation to avoid mistake.

[7] Behold, he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see *him*, and those who pierced him, and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

[8] I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, that is, and that was, and that is to come, the Almighty.

[9] I, John, your brother and joint-partaker in the tribulation, and kingdom, and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, because of the word of God, and [because of] the testimony of Jesus [Christ.] [10] I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a loud voice as of a trumpet, [11] saying, What thou seest, write in a book, and send unto the seven churches; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. [12] And I turned to see the voice which was speaking with me. And having turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks, [13] and in the midst of the [seven] candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clad with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the paps, with a golden girdle. [14] His head and his hairs *were* white as white wool, as snow; and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire; [15] and his feet like unto fine brass, as if purified in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters. [16] And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength. [17] And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead: and he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the First and the Last, [18] and he that liveth: and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore: and I have the keys of Death and of Hades. [19] Write, therefore, the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass after these: [20] the mystery of the seven stars which thou hast seen in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches.

II.—Unto the angel of the church that is in Ephesus, write, These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; [2] I know thy works, and [thy] labour, and thy patience, and that thou canst not bear evil *men*; and thou hast tried those that call themselves

7.—The force is probably "all the tribes of *the land*," τῆς γῆς meaning either; but I leave it as in the common Bible with this note.—The wailing described in Zech. xii. 10, is different, but the phrase in the LXX is similar: ἐπὶ for עַל, the object *at, on, over*, or *because of* which the emotion is felt.

8.—Rec. has ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος, (and so the authorized version;) but the best MSS. and edd. omit the words.

9.—Rec. ὁ καὶ "who also am," but the older MSS. want the conjunction. So ἐν τῇ β. rightly omitted.—The evidence is conflicting as to what follows: ὑπομονῇ Ἰησοῦ Χ. is the ordinary reading, and so Gr. Kn. and Sz. But Tisch. Ln. and Treg. ἐν Ἰ. There is ancient authority for ἐν Χ. Matthiae edits ἐν Χ. Ἰ. following many MSS.—Διὰ and Χριστοῦ in the last clause are omitted in some of the later editions.

10.—The order of the words is a little different in the MSS. The sense is unaffected.

11.—The clause ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Α, (in some Ἄλφα,) καὶ τὸ Ω, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, καὶ is rejected by most, as also ταῖς ἐν Ἀσίᾳ.

12.—Rec. and Gr. ἐλάλησε. Sz. Kn. Ln. Tisch. and Treg. prefer ἐλάλει with most MSS.. A. reads λαλεῖ. None of these forms is free from Hellenism.

13.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. read ἑπτὰ λ., Ln. Tisch. and Treg. omit.

15.—Ln. πεπυρωμένης, and some MSS. of no great weight πεπυρωμένῳ, which the Vulgate and other versions follow.

16.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Treg. καὶ ἔχων, Ln. and Tisch. omit ἔ.

18.—Ἀμὴν is not found in the more ancient MSS., which also support the order τοῦ θ. καὶ τοῦ ἅ.

19.—Οὖν ought to be inserted, and so Gr. Kn. Sz. Ln. Tisch. and Treg.

20.—Tisch. without comment reads, on the authority of A., ἐν τῇ δ. instead of ἐπὶ τῆς δ. as almost all others do.—Ἃς εἶδες are omitted by all recent critics, following the best MSS. and versions.

CHAPTER II.

1.—Tisch. τῷ for τῆς in verses 1, 8, and 18.—Rec. Ἐφεσίνης, but ἐν Ἐφεσῷ is without doubt the reading.

2.—Valuable MSS. τ. κ. σου. A. omits καὶ before ὅτι.—All the oldest λέγοντας ἑαυτοὺς ἀποστ. Gr. and Sz. add εἶναι, with many MSS. and versions. Rec. ἐπειράσω τ. φάσκοντας εἶναι ἀ.

apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: [3] and hast patience, and hast borne for my name's sake, and art not wearied. [4] But I have against thee that thou hast left thy first love. [5] Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I am coming unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent. [6] But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. [7] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of [my] God.

[8] And unto the angel of the church that is in Smyrna write, These things saith the First and the Last, who was dead and did live; [9] I know [thy works and] thy tribulation and poverty, (but thou art rich,) and the blasphemy of those that say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan. [10] Fear not the things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. [11] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

[12] And unto the angel of the church that is in Pergamos write, These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword; [13] I know [thy works, and] where thou dwellest, *even* where the throne of Satan *is*, and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein *was* Antipas, my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwelleth. [14] But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there *some* that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. [15] So hast thou also *some* that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, in like manner. [16] Repent therefore, or else I am coming unto thee quickly, and will fight with them with the sword of my mouth. [17] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth saving he that receiveth *it*.

[18] And unto the angel of the church that is in Thyatira write, These things saith the Son of God, that hath his eyes as a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass; [19] I know thy works, and love, and faith, and service, and thy patience, and thy last works, *to be* more than the first. [20] But I have against thee that thou lettest alone the woman Jezebel, that calleth herself a prophetess; and she teacheth and deceiveth my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. [21] And I gave her space to repent, and she willeth not to repent of her fornication. [22] Behold, I cast her into a bed, and those that commit fornication with her into great tribulation, except they repent of her deeds. [23] And I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. [24] But unto you I say, the rest that are in Thyatira, whosoever have not this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan (as they speak); I put upon you no other burden: [25] but that which ye have, hold fast till I come. [26] And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works until the end, I will give him authority over the nations; [27] and he shall rule them with an iron rod; as the vessels of a potter are broken to shivers: as I also received of my Father. [28] And I will give him the morning star. [29] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

III.—And unto the angel of the church that is in Sardis write, These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. [2] Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die: for I have not found thy works complete before my God. [3] Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard; and keep, and repent. If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come [upon thee] as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. [4] But thou hast a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. [5] He that overcometh shall thus be clothed in white raiment: and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. [6] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

[7] And unto the angel of the church that is in Philadelphia write, These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no one will shut, that shutteth and no one openeth; [8] I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, which no one can shut: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. [9] Behold, I give over those of the synagogue of Satan, that say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie: behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and know that I have loved thee. [10] Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial that shall come upon all the habitable world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. [11] I am coming quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown. [12] Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, that cometh down out of heaven from my God, and my new name.

3.—Rec. ἐβ. κ. ὑπ. ἔχ. κ., but the best editors ὑπ. ἔχ. κ. ἐβ. For Rec. κεκοπ. κ. οὐ κέκμηκας, Gr. Sz. Tisch. κ. οὐκ ἐκοπ. Kn. Treg. κεκοπίακας, Ln. (with A. and C.*) κεκοπίακες.

7.—Rec. μεσῷ τ. π. All the critics ἐν τῷ π. to which Gr. Sz. Kn. and Tisch. add μου, but Rec. Ln. and Treg. omit.

8.—Rec. Σμυρναίων: but ἐν Σμύρνῃ is preferable. A has ἐν Σμυρνῆς which appears to be a slip.

9.—Rec. Gr. Sz. σου τὰ ἔργα. Tisch. and Treg. reject.—Read ἀλλὰ πλ. for πλ. δέ.

10.—Read μὴ φ.—Matthiae with many MSS. reads παθεῖν .... ἰδοὺ δὴ .... ἡμέρας δ.—Ln. ἔχητε for ἕξετε. (C. ἔχετε.)

13.—Compare on verse 9 τὰ ἔργα σου κ.—Gr. Kn. Sz. ἐν αἷς with Rec., but Matthiae and Tisch. reject ἐν, and Ln., and Treg. reject ἐν αἷς. Ln. π. μου.

14.—Tisch. omits ὅτι on the authority of C. and some versions.

15.—Rec. ὃ μισῶ, but the editors read ὁμοίως, with A. C. &c.

16.—Gr. Kn. Sz. Tisch. &c. read μεταν. οὖν.

17.—Rec. φαγεῖν ἀπὸ, but the MSS. of greatest authority want the words.

19.—Gr. Sz. Tisch. and Treg. omit καὶ before τὰ ἔσχ.

20.—Rec. ὀλίγα, ὅ. ἐ. τ. γ. Ι. τ. λ. Editors of note omit ὀλίγα.—Gr. Sz. Tisch. τ. γ. σου ("thy wife"): Treg. omits σου, reading with them ἡ λ. for τὴν λ.

21.—Read with Gr. Kn. Sz. Tisch. &c. καὶ οὐ θέλει (A. ἠθέλησεν) μετανοῆσαι ἐκ. τ. π. ἀ. for Rec. ἐκ. τ. π. ἀ. κ. οὐ μ.

* Regius, or "Codex Ephraemi," a valuable but defective MS.

22.—Rec. αὐτῶν: for which the editors read αὐτῆς.

24.—Rec. καὶ λ. καὶ οἵτ. but the better editions omit καὶ in both places, and for the first read τοῖς.—Rec. and Gr. βαλῶ: others βάλλω.

27.—Good MSS. and versions, which Matthiae follows, read συντριβήσεται, "they shall be broken to shivers." Most prefer συντρίβεται.

CHAPTER III.

1.—Rec. τὸ ὄνομα, but the editors rightly omit the article.

2.—Rec. μέλλει, but Gr., Kn., Sz., Tisch. and ἔμελλον, for which Matthiae on good authority has ἔμελλες ἀποβάλλειν, ("thou wert ready to cast away.")—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. τὰ ἔργα. The oldest MSS. omit τὰ, and insert μου after Θ. where it is left out in Rec.

3.—Ἐπί σε not found in many ancient MSS. and versions. Tisch. omits.

4.—Most read ἀλλ' ἔχεις. Tisch. αἱ for ἃ, following some MSS.

5.—Οὕτως has better authority than οὕτος, the reading of Gr. and Sz.—So ὁμολογήσω rather than ἐξομολογήσομαι.

7.—Ln. reads ἐν Φιλαδελφείας, which seems an erratum of the Alexandrian transcriber for Φιλαδελφείᾳ.

8.—Rec. καὶ οὐδεὶς, the editors ἣν οὐδεὶς.

9.—For δίδωμι, Ln. reads διδῷ, seemingly a slip in the transcriber.

10.—A. καὶ for ὅτι, another has καὶ ὅτι.

11.—The best MSS. omit ἰδού.

12.—C. omits ἐπ' αὐτόν. Ἡ καταβαίνουσα is better than ἡ κατα βαίνει.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

[14] And unto the angel of the church that is in Laodicea write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. [16] Thus because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am about to spue thee out of my mouth. [17] Because thou sayest, I am rich, and am waxed rich, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art the wretched, and the miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: [18] I counsel of thee to buy of me gold purified by fire, that thou mayest wax rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness may not be manifested; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. [19] As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent. [20] Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any one hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. [21] Him that overcometh will I give to sit with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and have sat down with my Father in his throne. [22] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

IV.—After these things I saw, and, behold, *there was* an open door in heaven; and the first voice which I heard, as it were of a trumpet talking with me, said, Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must come to pass after these. [2] [And] immediately I was in the Spirit; and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and upon the throne *was one* sitting, [3] and he that sat *was* in appearance like a jasper stone and a sardine: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in appearance like unto an emerald. [4] And round about the throne *were* twenty-four thrones: and upon the thrones *I saw* twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and upon their heads golden crowns. [5] And out of the throne proceed lightnings, and voices, and thunders: and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. [6] And before the throne *there was* as it were a glassy sea, like crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. [7] And the first living creature *was* like a lion, and the second living creature like a calf, and the third living creature had the face as of a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle. [8] And the four living creatures had each of them six wings about *him;* and they are full of eyes within; and they have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God the Almighty, that was, and that is, and that is to come. [9] And when the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to him that sitteth upon the throne, that liveth for ever and ever, [10] the twenty-four elders fall down before him that sitteth upon the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, [11] Thou art worthy, O Lord [and our God], to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and because of thy pleasure they were, and have been created.

V.—And I saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne a book written within and on the back, sealed up with seven seals. [2] And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof? [3] And no one in heaven, nor on the earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. [4] And I wept much, because no one was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. [5] And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion, that is of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath overcome to open the book, and the seven seals thereof. [6] And I saw in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the [seven] Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. [7] And he came and took [the book] out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. [8] And when he took the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which is the prayers of the saints. [9] And they sing a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and hast redeemed [us] to God by thy blood out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation; [10] and thou hast made them [unto our God] kings and priests: and they shall reign over the earth. [11] And I saw, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, [12] saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. [13] And every creature which is in heaven, and on the

14.—Rec. Λαοδικέων, but the best MSS. ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ.
15.—Rec. εἶης for ἦς which seems the right reading.
17.—Rec. Gr. Sz. οὐδενός. Tisch. &c. (with A. and others) οὐδέν. The critics receive the article before ἐλεεινός.
18.—Rec. Gr. Sz. and Tisch. κολλούριον. Treg. and Matthiae, κολλύριον.—Most prefer ἐγχρίσαι to ἔγχρισον. Matthiae ἵνα ἐγχρίσῃ.
19.—Matthiae Tisch. and Treg. ζήλευε. Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. ζήλωσον.
20.—Sz. on the authority of many, but not the most ancient, MSS. καὶ εἰσελεύσομαι. Rec. Gr. Tisch. Treg. omit καί. Throughout the book, however, there is a frequent recurrence of the conjunction, strikingly akin to the Hebraistic usage of the analogous word.

CHAPTER IV.

1.—Gr. Sz. Ln. ἀνεῳγμένη. Tisch. Treg. ἠνεῳγμ.—Rec. λέγουσα, the editors, λέγων.—Ln. ἀνάβηθι, and ὅσα δεῖ with A.
2.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. καὶ εὐθέως. Matthiae, Tisch. and Treg. omit καί. . . Ln. γενέσθαι. μετὰ ταῦτα εὐθέως ἐγ: "After these things straightway."
3.—Matthiae omits καὶ ὁ καθήμενος.—Rec. ἦν.—A. ἱερεῖς for ἶρις, but it seems a transcriptural error, though followed by some versions.—Rec. σαρδίνῳ. The older edd. in general had ὁμοία. Matthiae ὁμοίως ὅρασις σμαραγδίνων. Gr. and following editors ὅμοιος ὁράσει σμαραγδίνῳ.
4.—Ln. θρονούς.—Rec. καὶ twice between εἴκ and τ.—Rec. εἶδον τούς.—Ln. omits ἐν.—Rec. ἔσχον.
5.—Rec. β. κ. φ.—Sz. αὐτοῦ.—Ln. ἅ ἐστιν.
6.—Rec. omits ὡς.
7.—Rec. Kn. ὡς ἄνθρωπος. Ln. Treg. ὡς ἀνθρώπου. Matthiae, Sz. Tisch. ἀνθρώπου. Matthiae omits ζῶον after τέτ. Rec. πετωμένῳ. Edd. πετομένῳ.
8.—Rec. omits τά. Rec. καθ' ἑαυτὸ, εἶχον. . . γέμοντα. . . λέγοντα. The editors prefer ἓν καθ' ἓν αὐτῶν, ἔχον (Treg. ἔχων) . . γέμουσιν . . . λέγοντες.—B. κυκ. καὶ ἔξωθεν καὶ ἔσωθεν. Gr. and Tisch. punctuate κυκλόθεν καὶ ἔσ. γ. "are full round about and within."
9.—δώσουσι, some MSS. δῶσι, which Matthiae reads; some δώσει. —A. reads τῷ θ. which Tisch. follows. Others τοῦ, as most do in iv. 2, where Tisch. τὸν θ.
10.—The edd. drop καὶ between εἴκ. and τ.
11.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. κύριε but later edd. ὁ κύριος καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν. Many add ὁ ἅγιος, and so Matthiae. Ln. omits τὴν before δ. —Rec. εἰσι, but the critics ἦσαν on the authority of A, B, &c.—A omits the words καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν.

CHAPTER V.

1.—Sz. καὶ ἔξωθεν. The reader scarcely needs perhaps to be reminded that, as to form, the βιβλίον was a *roll*, as was usual among the Jews. Compare ch. vi. 14.
2.—The edd. ἐν φ. μ. τ. ἄ. omitting ἐστιν.
3.—Matthiae and Ln. οὔτε βλ.
4.—The whole verse is omitted by A. Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. πολλὰ, Tisch. &c. πολύ. Rec. ἀνοῖξαι καὶ ἀναγνῶναι: the edd. omit κ. ἀν.
5.—Rec. ὁ ὢν ἐκ τ. φ. Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. Ln. Treg. ἀνοῖξαι. Matthiae and Tisch. ὁ ἀνοίγων with B. and many others.—Edd. omit λῦσαι.
6.—Edd. omit καὶ ἰδοὺ, as A. omits also καὶ εἶδον, and reads ἔχων. . . . τὰ πν. τ. θ. ἀπεσταλμένοι. Matthiae ἀποστελλόμενα.
7.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. τὸ βιβλίον. Ln. Tisch. Treg. omit, with A. and many other MSS.
8.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. κιθάρας. Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. Treg. κιθάραν. with A. and many MSS. and versions.
9.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. Ln. Treg. ἡμᾶς. Tisch. rejects (with A.)
10.—Rec. ἡμᾶς: all the edd. αὐτοὺς on unquestionable authority. —Tisch. omits τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν with A.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. Treg. βασιλεῖς. Tisch. βασιλείαν with A.—Rec. βασιλεύσομεν. Gr. Kn. Sz. βασιλεύσουσιν. Tisch. Treg. βασιλεύουσιν.
11.—Some MSS. ὡς φ.—Rec. κυκλόθεν. Edd. κύκλῳ.
13.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. ὃ ἐστιν ἐν. Tisch. Treg. ὃ ἐν.—Edd. ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς for Rec. ἐν τῇ γῇ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. ἅ ἐστι. Tisch. omit ἅ.—Rec. Gr. Sz. τ. ἐ. αὐτ. πάντα, ἤκ. λέγοντας. Ln. πάντα ἤκουσα λέγοντα. Tisch. πάντας ἤκ. λέγοντας. Some MSS. and versions add ἀμήν.

earth, and under the earth, and [such as are] in the sea, and all things in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, *be* blessing, and glory, and dominion, for ever and ever. [14] And the four living creatures said, Amen! And the elders fell down and worshipped.

VI.—And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying, as it were [with] the voice of thunder, Come. [2] And I saw, and, behold, a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went out overcoming and to overcome.

[3] And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come. [4] And there went out another horse *that was* red: and it was given unto him that sat on him to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

[5] And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and, behold, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. [6] And I heard [as it were] a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and *see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

[7] And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard [the voice of] the fourth living creature saying, Come. [8] And I saw, and, behold, a pale horse: and his name that sat on him *was* Death, and Hades followed with him. And authority was given unto him over the fourth part of the earth to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and by the beasts of the earth.

[9] And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those that were slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they held. [10] And they cried with a loud voice saying, How long, O Master, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood of those that dwell upon the earth? [11] And a white robe was given unto each of them; and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a [little] space, until both their fellow-servants and their brethren, that should be killed as they also *were*, shall have been completed.

[12] And I saw when he had opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood, [13] and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig tree casteth its untimely figs, when it is shaken of a mighty wind. [14] And the heaven departed as a roll rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. [15] And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the mighty, and every bondman, and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; [16] and they say 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: [17] for the great day of his wrath is come; and who is able to stand?

(VII.—After this I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. [2] And I saw another angel rising up from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth, and the sea, [3] saying, Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God upon their foreheads. [4] And I heard the number of the sealed: an hundred and forty-four thousand *were* sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel. Out of the tribe of Juda, twelve thousand *were* sealed. [5] Out of the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] Out of the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] [6] Out of the tribe of Aser, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] Out of the tribe of Nepthalim, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] Out of the tribe of Manasses, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] [7] Out of the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] Out of the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] Out of the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] [8] Out of the tribe of Zabulon, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] Out of the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.] Out of the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand [*were* sealed.]

[9] After these things I saw, and, [behold,] a great multitude, which no one could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands; [10] and they cry with a loud voice,

14.—Some MSS. which Matthiae follows λέγοντα τὸ ἀμ. (also omitting τό.)—The most ancient MSS. omit εἴκοσ. τέσσαρες and so the edd. Rec. and Kn. (with brackets) admits these words, and ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. There is little doubt that we ought to reject both.

CHAP. VI.

1.—Rec. omits ἑπτὰ, but the three uncial and twenty-eight other MSS. contain it.—Rec. φωνῆς, Gr. Kn. Sz. Ln. and Tisch. φωνή, Treg. φωνῃ.—Rec. reads at the end of the verse καὶ βλέπε, Gr. Kn. and Sz. καὶ ἴδε, as does Matthiae; (see verse 5,) Ln. Tisch. and Treg. insert neither here, nor in verses 3, 5, and 7.

2.—The edd. καὶ εἶδον. Treg. marks the words as doubtful here, and in verses 5 and 8.—Rec. ἐπ'αὐτῷ, the edd. ἐπ'αὐτοῦ.

3.—Rec. τὴν δευτέραν σφραγῖδα, the edd. τὴν σφ. τὴν δ. and so in verse 5, τὴν σφ. τὴν τρίτην.—Rec. καὶ βλέπε, omitted by the edd.

4.—Rec. ἐπ' αὐτῷ, the edd. ἐπ 'αὐτὸν (and in verse 5).—Rec. ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, Ln. and Tisch. τῆς γῆς, others ἐκ τ. γ.—Matthiae omits καὶ before ἵνα.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. σφάξωσι, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. σφάξουσι.

5.—Compare verses 1, 2, 3, and 4.

6.—Ln. and Treg. read ὡς φωνὴν, following A., C. and other MSS. Other edd. omit ὡς.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. κριθῆς, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. κριθῶν.

7.—Compare verse 1.—Gr. Kn. and Tisch. omit, and Rec. Sz. Ln. and Treg. insert φωνήν.—Rec. λέγουσαν, the edd. λέγοντος. —Compare verse 1.

8.—Compare verse 2.—Ln. omits αὐτοῦ after ἐπάνω.—A. ὁ ἀθάνατος, and C. omits the article before θ., but both are manifestly wrong.—Rec. has ἀκολουθεῖ, the edd. ἠκ.—Matthiae αὐτῷ, (with B. and twenty-seven MSS.) instead of μετ' αὐτοῦ.—Rec. and Ln. αὐτοῖς, Gr. Kn. Sz. Tisch. following B. and many MSS. and versions, αὐτῷ.—The most ancient MSS. place ἀποκτεῖναι after γῆς, instead of before ἐπί. And so the edd. save in Rec.

9.—Tisch. drops and the others receive διὰ before τὴν μ.—Matthiae adds τοῦ ἀρνίου with B., and upwards of thirty MSS.

10.—Rec. ἔκραζον, the edd. ἔκραξαν, omitting also the article before ἀληθινός.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. ἀπὸ, later edd. ἐκ.

11.—Rec. ἐδόθησαν ἑκάστοις στολαὶ λευκαὶ, Gr. and Sz. ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς στολὴ λευκὴ, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. (doubtfully) add ἑκάστῳ σ. λ.—Rec. and others read ἀναπαύσωνται, Ln. and Tisch. ἀναπαύσονται.—Rec. μικρὸν ἔ. οἳ πληρώσονται, Gr. Sz. χρ. ἔ. πληρώσωσι.—Ln. χρ. ἔι μικρὸν, Tisch. and Treg. ἔ. χρ. (Treg. inserting μικρὸν doubtfully) ἕως πληρωθῶσι.—Rec. and Gr. ἀποκτείνεσθαι, others ἀποκτέννεσθαι.

12.—The edd. omit ἰδοὺ, which Rec. exhibits, and read ἡ σ. ὅλη where Rec. wants the latter word.

13.—Matthiae reads βαλοῦσα, where Rec. and others have βάλλει. —Rec. μ. ἀ., the edd. ἀ. μ.—Ln. has σαλευομένη, the others σειομένη.—The edd. insert the article before οὐρανός.

14.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. εἰλισσόμενον, Treg. ἑλ. Matthiae reads ἑλισσόμενος.

15.—Rec. πλ. κ. οἱ χ., the edd. οἱ χ. κ. οἱ πλ.—Rec. δυνατοὶ, the edd. ἰσχυροί.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. πᾶς ἑλ. Ln. Tisch. and Treg. omit πᾶς.

16.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Treg. πέσετε, Ln. and Tisch. πέσατε.—Matthiae edits ἐπὶ τῷ θρ., others ἐπὶ τοῦ θρ.

17.—Tisch. αὐτῶν, the others αὐτοῦ.

CHAP. VII.

1.—Rec. Gr. Kn. read καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα, Sz. κ. μ. τοῦτο, and later edd. μετὰ τοῦτο, omitting καί.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. πᾶν δ., others τι δ.

2.—Rec. ἀναβάντα, the edd. ἀναβαίνοντα.—Ln. and Tisch. ἀνατολῶν, others ἀνατολῆς.

3.—Ln. καὶ τ. θ., others μήτε.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. ἄχρις οὗ, others ἄχρι σφ.

5-8.—A. C. and more than thirty other MSS. want ἐσφραγισμένοι, in ten places, (i.e. in all save the first and last,) and are followed by Ln. and Tisch. Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. insert, as does Treg. hesitatingly; Matthiae ἐσφραγισμέναι in the first and last.

9.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. κ. ἰδοὺ ὄχλος π., Tisch. omits ἰδοὺ, Treg. inserts it with doubt, and Ln. drops καὶ, and reads ὄχλον π.—Matthiae ἑστῶτας and φοίνικας.—Rec. περιβεβλημένοι, but the edd. περιβεβλημένους.

10.—Rec. κράζοντες, the edd. κράζουσι.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. τοῦ θρόνου.—Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. τῷ θρόνῳ.

saying, Salvation unto our God that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. [11] And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell before the throne upon their faces, and worshipped God, [12] saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. [Amen!] And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these that are clothed in white robes? And whence came they? [14] And I said unto him, My Lord, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. [15] Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth in the throne shall be a tabernacle over them. [16] They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat. [17] For the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall tend them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.)

VIII.—And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. [2] And I saw the seven angels, who stand before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. [3] And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and much incense was given unto him, that he should give *efficacy* to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar that is before the throne. [4] And the smoke of the incense rose up, with the prayers of the saints, out of the angel's hand before God. [5] And the angel took the censer, and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast *it* unto the earth: and there were thunders, and lightnings, and voices, and an earthquake.

[6] And the seven angels that had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

[7] And the first sounded, and there was hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast unto the earth; and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

[8] And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; [9] and the third part of the creatures that were in the sea, that had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

[10] And the third angel sounded, and there fell from heaven a great star, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters. [11] And the name of the star is called Wormwood. And the third part of the waters became wormwood: and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

[12] And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so that the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

[13] And I saw, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to those that dwell upon the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels that are about to sound!

IX.—And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fallen from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the pit of the abyss. [2] And he opened the pit of the abyss, and a smoke arose out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. [3] And out of the smoke came locusts unto the earth, and to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. [4] And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, save those men who have not the seal of God upon [their] foreheads. [5] And it was given to them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when it striketh a man. [6] And in those days shall men seek death, and not find it; and shall desire to die, and death fleeth from them. [7] And the likenesses of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and *there were* on their heads as it were crowns like gold, and their faces *were* as the faces of men. [8] And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as *the teeth* of lions. [9] And they had breastplates, as it were iron breastplates, and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. [10] And they have tails like unto scorpions, and stings; and their power *was* in their tails to hurt men five months. [11] They have a king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in the Hebrew tongue *is* Abaddon; and in the Greek tongue he hath *his* name Apollyon.

[12] The first woe is past: behold, there come two woes more after these things.

[13] And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the [four] horns of the golden altar that is before God, [14] saying to the sixth angel that had the trumpet, Loose the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates. [15] And the four angels were loosed that were prepared for the hour, and day, and month, and year, to slay the third part of men. [16] And the number of the

11.—The older edd. ἐστήκεσαν, the modern are divided between ἐσ- and εἱστήκεισαν.—Rec. τὸ πρόσωπον, the edd. τὰ πρ.
12.—Rec. Gr. and Sz. add at the end ἀμὴν, but Tisch. and Treg. omit it. Kn. brackets the word.
14.—Rec. and Tisch. omit μου after κύριε, (Ln. with brackets,) the others add.—Ln. ἀπὸ θλ. μ., the rest ἐκ τ. θλ. τ. μ.—Rec. ἐλεύκαναν στολὰς αὐτῶν, Gr. Sz. Ln. and Treg. (with brackets) ἐλεύκ. αὐτάς. Tisch. omits altogether.
15.—Matthiae ἐπὶ τῷ θρ. Others read ἐπὶ τοῦ θρ.
16.—Matthiae οὐδ' οὐ μὴ π. Others οὐδὲ μὴ π.
17.—Matthiae reads ποιμαίνει and ὁδηγεῖ, the rest ποιμανεῖ and ὁδηγήσει.—Rec. ζώσας . . . . ἀπὸ, the edd. ζωῆς . . . . ἐκ.

CHAP. VIII.

1.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. ὅτε and ἡμιώριον, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. ὅταν and ἡμίωρον.
3.—Tisch. ἐπὶ τοῦ θ., the others ἐπὶ τὸ θ.—Ln. and Tisch. δώσει, others δώσῃ. "Add" or "put *it* to," and "offer *it* with," are natural renderings.
5.—Modern edd. βρ. κ. ἀσ. κ. φ., and not φ. κ. βρ. κ. ἀσ., as in Rec. Gr.
6.—Rec. omits οἱ before ἔχοντες, the others insert it.—Ln. reads αὐτοὺς, rather than ἑαυτοὺς, which most prefer.
7.—Rec. and Kn. (in brackets) ἄγγελος.—Rec. omits ἐν, and καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῆς γῆς κατεκάη, which the rest add.
8.—Matthiae omits πυρί.
9.—Matthiae omits τῶν after κτ.—Rec. Gr. Sz. διεφθάρη, the rest διεφθάρησαν.—Rec. and Treg. omit τῶν before ὑδάτων. The others have it.
11.—Rec. omits ὁ before Ἄψινθος and τῶν before ἀνθ.—Rec. Gr., Kn. and Sz. read γίνεται, Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. ἐγένετο.
12.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. φαίνῃ, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. φάνῃ.
13.—Rec. has ἀγγέλου, the edd. αἐτοῦ: also πετωμένου, where they read κετομ.

CHAP. IX.

2.—Matthiae omits καὶ ἦν. τὸ φρ. τῆς ἀβ. and reads καμ. καιομένης instead of μεγ. The others agree with Rec.—Ln. and Tisch. ἐσκοτώθη, others ἐσκοτίσθη.
4.—Ln. and Tisch. prefer ἀδικήσουσιν to the more usual form ἀδικήσωσι.—Rec. ἀ. μόνους, the edd. reject the latter.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Treg. (in brackets) read αὐτῶν.
5.—Ln. αὐτοῖς, where others αὐταῖς.—The older edd. βασανισθῶσι, the more modern βασανισθήσονται.
6.—Rec. οὐχ, the edd. οὐ μή.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. εὑρήσουσιν, where Ln. Tisch. and Treg. have εὕρωσιν, and φεύξεται where the others have φεύγει.
7.—Gr. Kn. and Sz. χρυσοῖ, Rec. &c., ὅμοιοι χρυσῷ.
10.—Rec. Gr. Kn. κέν. ἦν ἐν τ. οὐρ. αὐτ. κ. ἡ ἐξ. Sz. Ln. Tisch. and Treg. for ἦν read καί.—Matthiae reads ἐξουσίαν ἔχουσιν.—Sz. reads τοῦ ἀδ.
11.—Rec. καὶ ἔχ. Gr. Kn. Ln. and Treg. ἔχουσιν, Sz. and Tisch. ἔχουσαι.—The older edd. ἐφ' αὐτ., later edd. ἐπ' αὐτ.—For καὶ ἐν Matthiae has ἐν δὲ τῇ.
12.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. ἔρχονται, Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. ἔρχεται.
13.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. read and Ln. and Tisch. omit τεσσάρων. Treg. brackets the word.
14.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Treg. λέγουσαν, Ln. and Tisch. λέγοντα, and Matthiae λέγοντος.—Rec. ὃς εἶχε, the edd. ὁ ἔχων.
15.—Matthiae reads καὶ εἰς τὴν ἡμ.
16.—Rec. omits τῶν before στρ.—For ἱππικοῦ Matthiae has ἵππου.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. δύο μ., Treg. δυσμ., Tisch. δισμ., and Matthiae μυρ.—The edd. omit καὶ, which Rec. inserts before ἤκ.

armies of the cavalry *was* two myriads of myriads: I heard the number of them. [17] And thus I saw the horses in the vision and those that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and like brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceeded fire, and smoke, and brimstone. [18] By these three plagues was the third part of men killed, by reason of the fire, and the smoke, and the brimstone, that proceeded out of their mouths. [19] For the power of the horses is in their mouth and in their tails: for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads; and with them they do hurt.

[20] And the rest of the men, who were not killed by these plagues, repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold and of silver, and of brass and of stone, and of wood; which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk; [21] neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

(X.—And I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: [2] and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and the left upon the earth, [3] and cried with a loud voice, as a lion roareth: and when he had cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices. [4] And when the seven thunders had uttered *them*, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Seal the things which the [seven] thunders uttered, and write them not. [5] And the angel whom I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his right hand to heaven, [6] and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things therein, and the earth and the things therein, and the sea and the things therein, that there should be no more space, [7] but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he should sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath announced to his servants the prophets. [8] And the voice which I heard from heaven spake with me again, and said, Go, take the book that is open in the hand of the angel that standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. [9] And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he saith unto me, Take, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but in thy mouth it shall be as sweet as honey. [10] And I took the little book out of the hand of the angel, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey, and when I had eaten it, my belly was made bitter. [11] And he saith unto me, Thou must prophesy again of many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

XI.—And there was given me a reed like unto a rod; saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar and those that worship therein. [2] But the court that is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty-two months. [3] And I will give *efficacy* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. [4] These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks that stand before the Lord of the earth. [5] And if any one wisheth to hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any one wisheth to hurt them, thus must he be killed. [6] These have authority to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with every plague as often as they will. [7] And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss shall make war with them, and shall overcome them and shall kill them. [8] And their dead body *shall lie* in the great street of the city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. [9] And *some* of the peoples, and tribes, and tongues, and nations, see their dead body three days and an half, and do not suffer their dead body to be put into a sepulchre. [10] And those that dwell upon the earth rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented those that dwell upon the earth. [11] And after the three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them that beheld them. [12] And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they went up to heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them. [13] And in that hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain seven thousand names of men: and the rest were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.)

[14] The second woe is past; behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

[15] And the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world hath become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. [16] And the twenty-four elders, who sit before God upon their thrones, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, [17] saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God the Almighty, that art, and that wast; because thou hast taken thy great power, and

18.—Rec. has ὑπὸ, Ln. ἀπὸ and omits πληγῶν, which the edd. add.—Matthiae has ἀπὸ for ἐκ τ. π.—The edd. omit the second and third ἐκ.

19.—Rec. has αἱ γὰρ ἐξουσίαι αὐτῶν . . . . εἰσιν, and omits ἐν τ. οὐρ. αὐτ. The edd. read ἡ γ. ἐξ. τῶν ἵππων . . . . ἐστὶ, καὶ ἐν τ. οὐρ. αὐτ.—Matthiae ὄφεων.

20.—Rec. and Ln. οὔτε μ., others οὐ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. προσκυνήσωσι, Ln. Tisch. &c.,—σουσιν.—Rec. omits τὰ before εἴδωλα.—Ln. and Tisch. δύνανται.—Matthiae omits τὰ χαλκᾶ.

21.—Matthiae reads φαρμάκων.

CHAP. X.

1.—Matthiae omits ἄλλον, and Rec. omits ἡ before ἶρις and αὐτοῦ after κεφ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. τῆς κ., others τὴν κ.

2.—Rec. has εἶχεν, the edd. ἔχων, and τὴν θ. and τὴν γ., where the edd. have τῆς θ. and τῆς γ.

4.—Rec. reads τὰς φ. ἑαυτ. ἐμ—λέγ. μοι, and ταῦτα γρ.

5.—Rec. omits τὴν δεξιάν.

6.—Matthiae omits ἐν before ζῶντι. Rec. οὐκ ἔσται ἔτι.

7.—Rec. τελεσθῇ . . . . . τοῖς ἑ. δ. τ. πρ., the edd. ἐτελέσθη . . . . . τοὺς ἑ. δ. τ. πρ.

8.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. λαλοῦσα . . . . λέγουσα, others—αν; and βιβλαρίδιον, where others read βιβλίον.—Rec. omits τοῦ before ἀγγέλου.

9.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Treg. ἀπῆλθον.—Ln. and Tisch.—θα.—Rec. δὸς, the edd. δοῦναι.—Matthiae βιβλιδάριον.

10.—Matthiae βιβλίον.

11.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. λέγει, Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. &c. λέγουσι. —Matthiae ἐπὶ ἔθν. Some here translate ἐπὶ "before," others "against."

CHAP. XI.

1.—Rec. καὶ ὁ ἄγγελος εἱστήκει λ. The edd. read ἔγειραι, save Tisch. who prefers —ρε.

2.—Ln. and Tisch. read ἔκβ. ἔξωθεν, and καὶ δ.

3.—Ln. περιβεβλημένους.

4.—Rec. omits αἱ after καὶ, and reads τ. Θεοῦ . . . . ἑστῶσαι, but the edd. (Ln. omitting τοῦ) agree in κυρίου . . . . ἑστῶτες.

5.—Rec. περιβεβλημένους.

6.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. omit τὴν before ἐξ. κ. (Gr. and Sz. τ. οὐρ. ἐξ. κλ.)—Rec. βρ. ὁ. ἐν ἡμ . . . . αὐτ. τ. πρ., but the edd. prefer ὁ. βρ. τὰς ἡ. τ. πρ. αὐτ. and insert ἐν before π. πλ. which Ln. Tisch. and Treg. put before ὁ. ἐ. θ., Gr. Sz. &c., after.

8.—Rec. τὰ πτ., the edd. τὸ πτ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. omit, and Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. insert τῆς before πόλεως.* Rec. κ. ἡμῶν, the edd. κ. αὐτῶν.

9.—Rec. βλέψ . . . . τὰ πτ . . . . μνήματα, the edd. βλέπ . . . . τὸ πτ . . . . μνῆμα.—Matthiae omits καὶ before ἥμ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. ἀφήσουσι, others ἀφίουσι.

10.—Rec. χαρ., the edd. χαίρ., and the more modern εὐφραίνονται. —Matthiae edits δ. δώσουσι.

11.—Rec. ἐπ αὐτούς. Matthiae εἰς αὐτ. Gr. Kn. Sz. Ln. and Tisch. ἐν αὐτ. Treg. αὐτοῖς.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. ἔπεσεν, others ἐπέπεσεν.

12.—Matthiae ἤκουσα ("I," not they, "heard.")—Ln. and Tisch. omit αὐτοῖς after λέγ.—The older edd. ἀνάβητε.

13.—Matthiae omits καὶ, and reads ἡμέρᾳ, not ὥρᾳ as other edd. do.

14.—Matthiae omits ἰδού.

15.—Rec. λέγουσαι· Ἐγένοντο αἱ βασιλεῖαι, the edd. λέγοντες· Ἐγένετο ἡ β.

16.—Rec. οἱ εἴκ. καὶ τ. Ln. omits οἱ before εἴκ. and before ἐνώπιον. (Many MSS., B. and twenty-nine others, add τοῦ θρόνου, i. e. "before the throne of God.") So also Matthiae, who, with Treg. reads οἱ ἐν. τ. Θ. κάθηνται, instead of οἱ . . . . καθήμενοι.

17.—Rec. καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, the edd. reject the words.

* It is evident that Jerusalem (literal or symbolical,) is the city referred to in the preceding verses, and determined to be the city in question by the words which follow. Now τῆς μεγ. *may be* taken, so far as grammar is concerned, either with τῆς πλατ., or with τῆς πόλεως. But the internal evidence opposes the latter and ordinary view, because Babylon, not Jerusalem, is designated "the great city" in this book. That others have been dissatisfied, and that on other grounds, I presume, is plain from Boothroyd's suggestion, "in the broad city, the great one." But this leaves the difficulty untouched.

hast reigned. [18] And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and unto the saints, and unto them that fear thy name, the small and the great; and that thou shouldest destroy those that destroy the earth.

[19] And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen the ark of his covenant in his temple; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail.

XII.—And there was seen a great sign in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: [2] and she being with child crieth, travailing and pained to bring forth. [3] And there was seen another sign in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. [4] And his tail draweth the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman that was about to bring forth, that he might devour her child, when she should have brought *it* forth. [5] And she brought forth a man-child, who is to rule all the nations with an iron rod: and her child was caught up unto God, and unto his throne. [6] And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days. [7] And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, [8] and he prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. [9] And the great dragon was cast *out*, the old serpent, that is called the devil and Satan, that deceiveth all the habitable world: he was cast *out* into the earth, and his angels were cast *out* with him. [10] And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast *out*, that accused them before our God day and night. [11] And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death. [12] Therefore rejoice, *ye* heavens, and *ye* that tabernacle in them! Woe to the earth and to the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. [13] And when the dragon saw that he was cast *out* unto the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man-*child*. [14] And to the woman were given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished there a time, and times, and half a time, from the serpent's face. [15] And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. [16] And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. [17] And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus.

XIII.—And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and upon his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy. [2] And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet as it were of a bear, and his mouth as a lion's mouth; and the dragon gave unto him his power, and his throne, and great authority. [3] And *I saw* one of his heads as it were slain to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the earth wondered after the beast. [4] And they worshipped the dragon because he gave authority unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like the beast? and who is able to make war with him? [5] And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and authority was given unto him to work forty-two months. [6] And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, [and] them that tabernacle in heaven. [7] And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and authority was given him over every tribe, and people, and tongue, and nation. [8] And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, of whom the name is not written, from the foundation of the world, in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain. [9] He that hath an ear, let him hear. [10] He that leadeth into captivity, into captivity he goeth; he that will kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

[11] And I saw another beast rising up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. [12] And he exerciseth all the authority of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and those that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. [13] And he doeth great signs, so that he even maketh fire come down from heaven unto the earth before men; [14] and he deceiveth those that dwell upon the earth through the signs which were given unto him to do before the beast, saying unto them that dwell upon the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which hath the wound by a sword and did live. [15] And it was given unto him to give breath unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should

18.—Ln. τοὺς ἁγ. κ. τοὺς φ . . . . τοὺς μ. κ. τοὺς μ. and omits καὶ before διαφθ. Others τοῖς, &c.

19.—Matthiae ἠνοιχθη.—Ln. ὁ ἐν τῷ οὐρ. Treg. brackets ἐν τ. οὐρ. as being omitted in A and three other MSS.—Rec. Ln. Tisch. and Treg. αὐτοῦ, Gr. and Sz. τοῦ κυρίου.—Tisch. rejects καὶ σεισμὸς which the other edd. receive.

CHAPTER XII.

2.—Sz. ἔκραζεν, others κράζει.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Treg. omit καὶ, which Ln. and Tisch. (with A. C.) read before ὠδ.

3.—Rec. Gr. Sz. μέγ. π. Ln. Tisch. and Treg. π. μ. Rec. διαδ. ἐπ., the edd. ἐπ. διαδ.

5.—Rec. omits πρὸς after καί.

6.—Rec. omits ἐκεῖ (Treg. brackets it) before τόπον.—Matthiae has ὑπὸ τοῦ Θ. (others ἀπὸ) and ἐκτρέφ.

7.—Ln. ὅ τε Μιχαὴλ.—Rec. ἐπολέμησαν κατὰ τ. δ. the edd. τοῦ πολεμῆσαι μετὰ τ. δ., Matthiae omitting τοῦ before π.

8.—Rec. and Treg. ἴσχυσαν, others—εν.—Rec. οὔτε, the edd. οὐδέ.—Kn. and Ln. αὐτῷ for αὐτῶν, as others have it.

9.—Matthiae omits ὁ before Σατανᾶς.

10.—Rec. λέγ. ἐν τ. οὐρ., the edd. ἐν τ. οὐρ. λέγ.—Rec. Gr. and Sz. κατεβλ., others ἐβλήθη.—Rec. κατήγορος, others κατήγωρ.—Ln. and Tisch. ὁ κ. αὐτοὺς, others αὐτῶν.

11.—Ln. οὐχ ἠγ.

12.—Matthiae and Treg. omit οἱ before οὐρ.—Rec. οὐαὶ τοῖς κ. τὴν γ. κ. τ. θ., the others οὐ. τῇ γῇ, except Treg. οὐ. τὴν γ.

14.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. omit αἱ.—Matthiae reads ὅπως τρέφηται ("that she might be nourished,") instead of ὅπου τρέφεται.

15.—Rec. ταύτην.

17.—Rec. τοῦ Ἰ. Χριστοῦ.

CHAPTER XIII.

1.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Tisch. prefer ἐστάθην, Ln. and Treg. (following A and C, &c., and some versions) ἐστάθη, i.e. "he stood."—Rec. κεφ. ἐπ. κ. κέρ. δ., others κ. δ. κ. κ. ἐπ.—Rec. ὄνομα.

2.—Rec. ἄρκτου.

3.—The edd. omit εἶδον and add ἐκ.—Matthiae ὡσεί.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. ἐθαύμασεν, others-άσθη.—Rec. τὸν δρ. ὃς ἔδ. ἐξ., the edd. τῷ δρ. ὅτι ἔδ. τὴν ἐξ., and Matthiae τῷ δεδωκότι and δυνατός.—Rec. τὸ θ. (others τῷ θ.) and omits καί.

5.—Rec. &c. βλασφημίας, Tisch and Matthiae βλασφημίαν, Ln. and Treg. βλάσφημα.—Rec. ἐξ. πόλεμον ποιῆσαι, Gr. πόλ. ποι., Kn. Sz. Ln. and Treg. ἐξ. ποι., and Tisch. ἐξ., omitting both πόλ. and ποι.

6.—Matthiae, Ln. and Treg. omit, and the others insert, καὶ before τούς.

7.—Rec. Gr. κ. πόλ. ποι. Treg. ποι. πόλ.—Ln. omits καὶ ἐδ . . . . νικ. αὐτοὺς, with A. C. and other MSS.—Rec. omits and the edd. add καὶ λαόν.

8.—Rec. αὐτῷ, the edd. αὐτόν. Ln. and Tisch. οὗ, ... αὐτοῦ, others ὧν.—Rec. τὰ ὀν. ἐν τῇ β., the edd. τὸ ὀν. ἐν τῷ β.—Rec. wants and the edd. supply τοῦ before ἐσφ.

10.—Rec. Gr. and Sz. (and Treg. omitting συνάγει with A.) εἴ τις εἰς αἰχ. σ., εἰς αἰχ. ὑπ. (so B.) Matthiae εἴ τις αἰχ., ὑπάγει. (so C.)—Most read μαχαίρᾳ ἀποκτενεῖ, Ln. and Tisch. ῥῇ, the former ἀποκταίνει, the latter ἀποκτέννει, Matthiae omitting the second ἐν μαχ.

11.—Matthiae omits δύο.

12.—Rec. &c. προσκυνήσωσι, Ln. &c.—ουσι. The edd., contrary to Rec., read τ. ἐν αὐτῇ κ.

13.—Most edd. ἵνα καὶ πῦρ ἐκ τ. ο. κ., (Rec. κ. ἐ. τ. ὀ.,) but Gr. and Sz. καὶ π. ἵνα ἐκ τ. ὀ. κ.—Matthiae for ἐπὶ τὴν γ. has εἰς τὴν γ.

14.—Ln. and Tisch. read ὃς ἔ. for the common reading ὃ ἔ.—Matthiae reads τοὺς ἐμοὺς τ. κ. and ἔζ. ἀπὸ τῆς μ.

15.—Ln. αὐτῇ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. omit ἵνα before ὅσοι ἐὰν, (which they read ἂν,) and insert it before ἀποκτ. Matthiae omits the last ἵνα.—Gr. Kn. and Sz. τῇ εἰκόνι.

both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. [16] And he causeth all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, to receive a mark upon their right hand, or upon their forehead, [17] [and] that no one might buy, or sell, save he that hath the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name. [18] Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* six hundred *and* sixty-six.

XIV.—And I saw, and, behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his name and his Father's name written upon their foreheads. [2] And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters and as the voice of loud thunder: and the voice which I heard *was* as it were of harpers harping with their harps; [3] and they sing [as it were] a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn the song but the hundred forty *and* four thousand, that were redeemed from the earth. [4] These are those who were not defiled with women: for they are virgins. These [are] they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb. [5] And in their mouth was found no falsehood: [for] they are blameless.

[6] And I saw another [second] angel flying in mid-heaven, having the everlasting Gospel, to announce unto them that dwell upon the earth, and unto every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, [7] saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and fountains of waters.

[8] And there followed another angel, saying, Fallen [fallen] is Babylon the great, who made all the nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

[9] And another third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, He that worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead or on his hand, [10] even he shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, that is poured out unmixed into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone before the holy angels and before the Lamb: [11] and the smoke of their torment riseth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day and night, that worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

[12] Here is the patience of the saints, [*here are*] those that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. [13] And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Write, Blessed *are* the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth. Even so, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works do follow them.

[14] And I saw, and, behold, a white cloud; and upon the cloud *I saw one* sitting like the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. [15] And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice unto him that sat on the cloud, Send forth thy sickle, and reap; for the time to reap is come: for the harvest of the earth is dried up. [16] And he that sat on the cloud thrust his sickle upon the earth; and the earth was reaped.

[17] And another angel came out of the temple that is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. [18] And another angel came out from the altar, having authority over the fire, and cried with a loud voice unto him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Send forth thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. [19] And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. [20] And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs.

XV.—And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them hath been finished the wrath of God.

[2] And I saw as it were a glassy sea mingled with fire, and them that came off victors over the beast, and over his image, and over the number of his name, standing upon the glassy sea, having the harps of God. [3] And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are* thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; just and true *are* thy ways, thou King of the nations. [4] Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou* only *art* holy: for all the nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy decrees have been manifested.

[5] And after these things I saw, and there was opened the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven: [6] and the seven angels that had the seven plagues came [out of the temple,] clad in pure bright linen, and girt about their breasts with golden girdles. [7] And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls, full of the wrath of God, that liveth for ever and ever. [8] And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no one was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

XVI.—And I heard a loud voice [out of the temple] saying unto the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God into the earth.

16.—The edd. δῶσιν for δώσῃ the reading of Rec., and ἐπὶ τὸ μ. rather than ἐπὶ τῶν μ.

17.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. (and Treg. with brackets) καὶ ἵ.—Rec. ἢ τὸ ὄν. the edd. drop ἢ, but Ln. and Tisch. τοῦ ὀν.

18.—The edd. rightly drop τὸν before νοῦν. Some edd. write χξς, instead of ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἕξ. Irenaeus names, but rejects, the reading χις, that is 616.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. Rec. omits τό. Ln. Tisch. and Matthiae ἑστὸς, Treg. ἑστώς. —Rec. omits αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα.

2. Rec. κ. φωνὴν ἤκ. κιθ., the edd. κ. ἡ φ. ἣν ἤκ. ὡς.

3. Rec. Ln. and Treg. ὡς ᾠδ. others omit ὡς.—The ancient edd. ᾠδ. the modern ἐδ.

4. Ln. and Tisch. omit εἰσὶν before οἱ ἀκ. (Treg. brackets it.)—Matthiae has ὑπὸ Ἰησοῦ ἠγορ.

5. Rec. δόλος, the edd. ψεῦδος.—Rec. has at the end ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ Θεοῦ, omitted by the edd.

6. Matthiae and Tisch. omit ἄλλον.—The edd. read πετόμ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. omit ἐπὶ before τ. κ., as also Rec. and Ln. κατοικοῦντας for καθημένους.—Rec. omits ἐπὶ before π. ἔ.

7. Rec. λέγοντα, the edd. λέγων.—Matthiae reads for θ. κύριον. and αὐτὸν τὸν π.—Rec. Ln. and Treg. omit τὴν before θ.

8.—Rec. Gr. Sz. and Treg. omit δεύτερος, which A. B. and more than twenty other MSS. contain, and Kn. puts δ. after ἄγ, following C. and ten other MSS.—Matthiae, Treg. &c., do not repeat ἔπεσεν.—Rec. adds ἡ πόλις.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. for ἢ have ὅτι, and omit τά.

9.—Rec. omits ἄλλος, and has the order slightly different.—Ln. αὐτῷ.—Rec. τὸ θ. π., the edd. πρ. τὸ θ.

10.—Ln. ἐκ τοῦ π.—Ln. and Tisch. βασανισθήσοντμι, others, ησεται. —Tisch. omits ἁγίων, and Ln. and Treg. τῶν in connection with ἐν . . . . ἁγ.

11.—Rec. ἀναβ. before, others after εἰς ἀ. ἀ.

12.—Rec. omits ἡ before ὑπομ. (as do Gr. Kn. and Sz.) and inserts ὧδε before οἱ τ.

13.—Rec. λ. μοι.—Rec. &c. ἀναπαύσωνται, and τὰ δὲ, others τὰ γάρ.

14.—Rec. and Ln. καθήμενος ὅμ., others —ον.—Ln. υἱόν.—Rec. Gr. &c. τῆς κ., others τὴν κ.

15.—Rec. μεγ. φ., the edd. φ. μ.—Rec. σοὶ ἡ ὡ. τοῦ.

16.—Some read τὴν ν.

18.—Ln. and Tisch. omit ἐξῆλθεν.—Rec. &c. κραυγῇ, Matthiae ἐν κ., Ln. Tisch. and Treg. φωνῇ.—Matthiae ἤκμασεν ἡ στ.

19.—Matthiae καὶ ἐξέβαλεν.—Rec. τὴν μ., the edd. τὸν μ.

20.—Rec. ἔξω, the edd. ἔξωθεν.

CHAPTER XV.

2.—Matthiae's order differs a little.—Rec. adds ἐκ τοῦ χαράγματος αὐτοῦ.

3.—Rec. Μωσέως δ. later edd. Μωϋσέως τοῦ δ.—Rec. ἁγίων, the edd. read ἐθνῶν. after A. B., &c. (C. reads αἰώνων., i.e. "of ages.")

4.—Matthiae and Ln. δοξάσει. The edd. ὅσιος, but B. and many MSS. ἅγιος. (Matthiae μ. ὅσ. ὅτι πάντες.)

5.—Rec. adds ἰδού.

6.—Rec. omits οἱ before ἔχ.—Matthiae and Tisch. omit ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ (Treg. in brackets). Matthiae reads οἳ ἦσαν ἐνδ.—Ln. λίθον.—Rec. adds καὶ λ.

8.—Matthiae ἐκ τοῦ κ.—The modern edd. ἐδύν. rather than ᾠδ.

CHAPTER XVI.

1.—Rec. and Gr., φ. μ., the edd. μ. φ.—Matthiae and Tisch. omit ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ, which Treg. brackets.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. ἐκχέετε, others —ατε.—Rec. omits ἑπτὰ before φ.

2 And the first went and poured out his bowl unto the earth; and there was a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark of the beast, and *upon* those that worshipped his image.

3 And the second poured out his bowl into the sea: and it became blood as it were of a dead *man;* and every [living] soul died [*even* the things] in the sea.

4 And the third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of waters; and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters, saying, Righteous art thou, who art, and who wast [the] holy, because thou hast judged thus. 6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink: [for] they are worthy. 7 And I heard the altar saying, Even so, O Lord God the Almighty, true and righteous *are* thy judgments.

8 And the fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given unto him to scorch men with fire. 9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, that hath authority over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.

10 And the fifth poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom was darkened; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, 11 and blasphemed the God of heaven for their pains and for their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

12 And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings that are from the east might be prepared. 13 And I saw three unclean spirits, as it were 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. 14 For they are spirits of demons, working signs, who go forth unto the kings of all the habitable world, to gather them to the battle of [that] great day of God the Almighty. 15 (Behold, I come as a thief: blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, 16 lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.) And they gathered them together unto the place that is called in the Hebrew tongue Armagedon.

17 And the seventh poured out his bowl upon the air; and there came a loud voice out of the temple [of heaven], from the throne, saying, It is done. 18 And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since there was a man upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great. 19 And the great city was *divided* into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and Babylon the great came in remembrance before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And there fell upon men great hail, about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God for the plague of the hail; because the plague thereof is exceeding great.

XVII.—*And there came one of the seven angels* which had the seven bowls, and talked with me, saying, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great harlot that sitteth on many waters: 2 with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and those that dwell upon the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. 3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-coloured beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup, full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication, 5 and upon her forehead a name written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus; and when I saw her, I wondered with great wonder. 7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou wonder? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carrieth her, that hath the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast which thou sawest was, and is not, and is to ascend out of the abyss, and to go into perdition: and those that dwell upon the earth shall wonder, of whom the name is not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast, because it was, and is not, and shall be present. 9 Here *is* the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth: and there are seven kings: 10 five are fallen, one is, the other is not yet come; and when he shall have come, he must continue a short space. 11 And the beast which was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. 12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, who have [as yet] received no kingdom; but they receive authority as kings one hour with the beast. 13 These have one mind, and give their power and authority unto the beast. 14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those that are with him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful. 15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall

2.—Rec. Gr. and Kn. ἐπὶ τὴν γ. the others εἰς.—Rec. Gr. and Kn. εἰς τ. ἀ., others ἐπί.—Rec. differs from the edd. as to the order of the last words.

3.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. omit ἄγγελος here and in verses 4, 8, 10, 12, and 17, Kn. bracketing the word in each case; Gr. and Sz. insert it in verse 3.—Rec. ζῶσα, the edd. ζωῆς, save Sz. who omits either.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. read τὰ before ἐν τῇ θ.

4.—See verse 3.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. drop εἰς before τ. π. and the two former prefer ἐγένοντο to ἐγένετο.

5.—Rec. adds κύριε and καὶ ὁ ὅσιος, Gr. Kn. and Sz. ὁ ὅσ., but the uncial and many other MSS. and versions omit καὶ and ὁ. Beza and the Elzevir edition have ἐσόμενος, which the authorised version follows.

6.—Rec. γάρ.

7.—Rec. ἄλλου ἐκ.

8.—See verse 3.

9.—Sz. ἐβ. οἱ ἄνθρωποι, following B. and many other MSS. and versions.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. τὴν ἐξ.

10.—See verse 3.—The older MSS. read ἐμασῶντο, (not ἐμασσ.) and are followed by Ln. and Tisch.

12.—See verse 3.—Gr. Kn. and Sz. omit τὸν before Εὐφρ.—Matthiae and Treg. ἀνατολῆς.

13.—Rec. ὅμοια β., the edd. ὡς β

14.—The edd. δαιμονίων.—Rec. adds τῆς γῆς καὶ, and omits τόν. —Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. add ἐκείνης, Ln. and Tisch. τ. μ. ἡ., Treg. τ. ἡ. [ἐ.] τ. μ.

16.—The more common rendering is "he." But compare verse 14.—Most read Ἀρμαγεδὼν, save Ln. and Tisch. Ἀρ., and Matthiae Μαγεδών.

17.—See verse 3.—Rec. εἰς.—Ln. and Tisch. drop μ. γ. and τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, which Kn. and Treg. bracket.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. ἐκ rather than ἀπό.

18.—The order in Rec. differs slightly.—Ln. Tisch and Treg. ἄνθ. ἐγένετο, others οἱ ἄνθ. ἐγ.

19.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. ἔπεσαν.

CHAPTER XVII.

1.—Rec. λέγ. μοι.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδ. τῶν π. Ln. and Tisch. omit the articles and Treg. brackets them.

2.—The order varies slightly.

3.—Ln. and Tisch. εἶδα, others εἶδον as in verse 6.—Rec. &c. γέμον ὀνομάτων, Ln. γέμοντα ὀνόματα, Tisch. γέμον τὰ ὀνόματα, Matthiae omitting the article.

4.—Rec. ἡ περιβ. πορφύρᾳ κ. κοκκίνῳ. . . χρυσῷ. . . χρ. ποτ. . . καὶ ἀκαθάρτητος πορνείας, the edd. ἦν. . . πορφυροῦν κ. κόκκινον. . . χρυσίῳ. . ποτ. χρ. . κ. τὰ ἀκάθαρτα τῆς. π. αὐτ. Matthiae omits καὶ before κεχρ.—B. and more than twenty other MSS., besides several versions, have τῆς γῆς instead of αὐτῆς.

6.—See verse 3.—Matthiae omits the first ἐκ, and the second καί.

8.—Rec. omits τὸ before θηρίον.—Ln. and Tisch. ὑπάγει and θαυμασθήσονται.—Matthiae τὴν γ.—Ln. οὐκ ἐγέγραπτο.—Rec. and Gr. τὰ ὀνόμ.—Matthiae τοῦ β.—Rec. βλέποντες.—Rec. καίπερ ἐστίν. The edd. read καὶ πάρεσται.

9.—The order of the words differs.

10.—Rec. adds καί.

11.—Matthiae reads οὗτος ὄγδ.

12.—Ln. and Tisch. οὐκ, others οὔπω. "At" or "for one hour."

13.—Some μ. ἕ. γν. others μ. γν. ἕ.—Matthiae, Ln. and Tisch. omit τὴν, Treg. brackets it. They also read αὐτῶν.—The edd. in general διδόασιν instead of διαδιδώσουσιν, as in Rec.

15.—Ln. and Tisch. omit μοι.

16.—Rec. ἐπὶ, the edd. καί.—Matthiae omits καὶ γυμνήν.

eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. [17] For God hath put into their hearts to accomplish his mind, [and to accomplish one mind,] and to give unto the beast their kingdom, until the words of God shall be finished. [18] And the woman, whom thou sawest, is the great city, that holdeth rule over the kings of the earth.

XVIII.—[And] after these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory. [2] And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, Fallen, [fallen] is Babylon the great, and is become an habitation of demons, and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. [3] For all the nations have drunk of [the wine of] the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have waxed rich through the power of her voluptuousness. [4] And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not joint-partakers in her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: [5] for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. [6] Reward her even as she rewarded, and double twofold according to her works: in the cup which she hath mingled, mingle to her double. [7] How much she hath glorified herself and lived voluptuously, so much torment and sorrow give her: because she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no mourning: [8] therefore, shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire: for mighty *is* [the Lord] God that hath judged her. [9] And the kings of the earth, that have committed fornication and lived voluptuously with her, shall weep and wail because of her, when they see the smoke of her burning, [10] standing afar off because of the fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city Babylon, the mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. [11] And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn because of her; for no one buyeth their merchandise any more, [12] merchandise of gold, and of silver, and of precious stones, and of pearls, and of fine linen, and of purple, and of silk, and of scarlet, and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel of most precious wood, and of brass, and of iron, and of marble, [13] and cinnamon, and spice, and incense, and unguent, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and of horses, and of chariots, and of bodies and souls of men. [14] And the fruits that thy soul desired after have departed from thee, and all the sumptuous and the bright things have perished from thee, and they shall find them no more at all. [15] The merchants of these things, that waxed rich by her, shall stand afar off because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, [16] saying, Woe, woe, the great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! [17] for in one hour so great riches have been made desolate. And every shipmaster, and every voyager, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, [18] and cried, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, What *city* is like the great city! [19] And they cast dust upon their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, wherein waxed rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness! for in one hour has she been made desolate. [20] Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* saints, and apostles, and prophets: for God hath avenged you of her. [21] And a mighty angel took up a stone as it were a great milstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be cast down, and shall be found no more at all. [22] And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman of any craft shall be found more in thee; and the sound of a milstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; [23] and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of a bridegroom and of a bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the grandees of the earth; for by thy sorcery all the nations were deceived. [24] And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

XIX.—After these things I heard as it were a loud voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia! the salvation, the glory, and the power of our God: [2] for true and righteous *are* his judgments; for he hath judged the great harlot, who did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. [3] And a second time they said, Alleluia! And her smoke riseth up for ever and ever. [4] And the twenty-four elders, and the four living creatures, fell down and worshipped God that sitteth upon the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia! [5] And a voice came out from the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, small and great. [6] And I heard as it were a voice of a great multitude, and as a voice of many waters, and as a voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord [our] God the Almighty hath reigned. [7] Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. [8] And to her it was granted that she should be clothed in bright [and] pure fine linen: for the fine linen is the justification of the saints.

17.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. add καὶ ποιῆσαι γνώμην μίαν (μ. γ. Rec.) Ln. and Tisch. omit the words.—Rec. τελεσθῇ, Matthiae τελεσθῶσιν, with B. &c., others τελεσθήσονται, with A. &c.—Rec. τὰ ῥήματα, the edd. οἱ λόγοι.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1.—Matthiae, Ln. and Tisch. omit καὶ at the beginning. Treg. brackets it.—Rec. omits ἄλλον.
2.—Rec. ἐν ἰσχύϊ, φ. μ., the edd. ἐν ἰσχυρᾷ φ.—Matthiae omits ἔπεσε, Treg. hesitates.—Ln. Tisch. and edd. δαιμονίων.—Ln. πν. ἀ. καὶ μεμισημένου.
3.—Ln. omits and Treg. doubts τοῦ οἴν.—Matthiae πεπώκασι.
4.—Ln. and Tisch. ἐξέλθατε, Matthiae and Treg. ἔξελθε.—The edd. differ from the order of Rec. as to the last words.
5.—Rec. ἠκολούθησαν, the edd. ἐκολλήθησαν., lit. "have been glued," or "builded together."—Matthiae after ἐμν. reads αὐτῆς.
6.—Rec. adds ὑμῖν.—Ln. and Tisch. omit αὐτῇ.—Matthiae adds τὰ δ. ὡς καὶ αὐτὴ καὶ κ. . . π. αὐτῆς.
7.—Ln. and Tisch. αὑτὴν, Treg. αὐτήν, and read ὅτι before κάθημαι.
8.—Matthiae omits καὶ before π.—Ln. and Tisch. drop κύριος, Treg. doubtful.—The edd. κρίνας.
9.—Rec. (adding αὐτὴν,) Gr. and Ln. κλαύσονται, others κλαύσουσι. —Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Ln. ἐπ' αὐτῇ, Matthiae, Tisch. and Treg. ἐπ' αὐτήν.
10.—Rec. ἐν.
11.—Matthiae κλαύσουσι καὶ πενθοῦσιν. Tisch. and Treg. ἐπ' αὐτήν.
12.—Ln. μαργαρίταις.—Rec. βύσσου, the edd. βυσσίνου.—Rec. and Matthiae πορφυροῦ, the edd. πορφύρας.
13.—Rec. κινά,— others κιννά,— and Matthiae —ου.—Rec. omits καὶ ἄμωμον.
14.—Rec. &c. put σοῦ after ψυχῆς, others after ὀπώρα.—Rec. ἀπῆλθεν, the edd. ἀπώλετο.—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. εὑρήσῃς αὐτὰ, Matthiae εὕρῃς, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. εὑρήσουσιν.

16.—Rec. and Gr. add καί.—Matthiae omits οὐαὶ once.—The edd. χρυσίῳ.—Matthiae, Ln. (and Treg. doubtfully,) omit ἐν.—Ln. and Tisch. μαργαρίτῃ (with A. and C.)
17.—Rec. ἐπὶ τῶν πλοίων ὁ ὅμιλος, the edd. ὁ ἐπὶ τόπον πλέων.
18.—Rec. ἔκραζον here and in verse following. The edd. ἔκραξαν βλέποντες rather than ὁρῶντες.—Ln. and Tisch. τὸν τόπον, others τὸν καπνόν.
19.—Compare verse 18.—Ln. ἔβαλαν.—Matthiae καὶ λέγ.—Rec. and Gr. omit τὰ before πλοῖα.
20.—Rec. and Kn. ἐπ' αὐτὴν, Gr. Sz. and Treg. ἐπ' αὐτῇ (with C. &c.) Ln. and Tisch. ἐν αὐτῇ with A.—Rec. omits καὶ οἱ before ἀπ.
21.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. μύλινον not μύλον as is usually edited. C. has μύλικον, as in verse 22 it has φωνὴ μύθου.
23.—Ln. omits ἐν after φανῇ, and οἱ before ἔμποροι.
24.—Rec. Ln. and Treg. αἷμα, others αἵματα.

CHAPTER XIX.

1.—Rec. καὶ, the edd. omit.—The order in Rec. differs slightly.—Rec. λέγοντος, the edd. λεγόντων.—Rec. καὶ ἡ τιμὴ (which Kn. brackets), and τῷ Θ. where the edd. read τοῦ Θ.
2.—Tisch. διέφθειρε, others ἔφθ.—Rec. adds τῆς, which the edd. drop.
3.—Matthiae reads εἴρηκεν.
4.—Rec. καὶ τ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. ἐπὶ τοῦ θ. others ἐπὶ τῷ θ.
5.—Rec. Gr. Sz. ἐκ τ. θ. others ἀπό.—Rec. τὸν Θ. and καὶ οἱ μ.
6.—Ln. omits the second ὡς.—Rec. Ln. and Treg. λεγόντων, others λέγοντες.—Gr. Kn. Sz. and Treg. (in brackets) ἡμῶν.
7.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. and Treg. ἀγαλλιώμεθα and δώμεν.
8.—Rec. καθ. κ. λ. others λ. κ. καθ.—Treg. brackets καί.

[2] And he saith unto me, Write: Blessed *are* those that are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. [10] And I fell before his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See *thou do it* not: I am the fellow servant of thee and thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

[11] And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. [12] His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and upon his head *were* many diadems; he had a name written which no one knew but he himself. [13] And he *was* clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called THE WORD OF GOD. [14] And the armies that were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clad in white [*and*] pure fine linen. [15] And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with an iron rod: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God the Almighty. [16] And he hath upon *his* vesture and upon his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. [17] And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in midheaven, Come, be gathered together unto the great supper of God; [18] that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of chief captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of those that sit upon them, and the flesh of all, both free and bond, both small and great. [19] And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war with him that sat upon the horse and with his army. [20] And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs before him, with which he deceived those that had received the mark of the beast, and those that worship his image: these both were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone. [21] And the rest were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse—*the sword* that proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

XX.—And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand. [2] And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, [3] and cast him into the abyss, and shut *him* up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be finished: after that must he be loosed a little space. [4] And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and *I saw* the souls of those that were beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus, and because of the word of God; and those who had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received the mark upon *their* forehead, and upon their hand: and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. [5] [And] the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. [6] Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. [7] And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, [8] and shall go out to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together unto battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea. [9] And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the encampment of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven [from God] and devoured them. [10] And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where both the beast and the false prophet *are*, and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. [11] And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. [12] And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works. [13] And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every one according to their works. [14] And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. [15] And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.

XXI.—And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away; and the sea was no more. [2] And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. [3] And I heard a loud voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will tabernacle with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. [4] And [God] shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more, neither shall there be any more mourning, nor crying, nor pain: for the former things had passed away. [5] And he that sat

9.—Ln. and Tisch. *οἱ ἀλ.*—Later edd. differ from the older in the order.
10.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. *ἔπεσα*, who also omit *τοῦ* twice before *Ἰησοῦ*, as Matthiae before the first.
11.—Ln. Tisch. and Treg. *ἦν.* others *ἀν.*
12.—Matthiae omits *ὡς* and reads *ἔχ. ὀνόματα γεγραμμένα καὶ ὄν.* following B. and many other MSS.
13.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. *καλεῖται*, Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. *κέκληται.*
14.—Rec. *καὶ καθ.*
15.—Sz. (after B. and thirty-five other MSS.) *δίστομος.*—Rec. *πατάσσῃ*, others —*ξῃ.*—Rec. *καὶ τ. ὁ.*
16.—Rec. Sz. *τὸ ὄν.*
17.—Matthiae omits *ἕνα* and adds *ἐν* to *φ. μ.*—Later edd. *πετομ.*—Rec. *καὶ συνάγεσθε* and *δ. τοῦ μ.* where Matthiae has *τὸν δ. τὸν μ.* but most edd. *τὸ μ. τοῦ Θ.* following A. and thirty other MSS.
18.—Ln. and Tisch. *ἐπ' αὐτούς.*—Rec. omits *τε* after *ἐλ.* as Sz. adds it after *μ.*
19.—Ln. *αὐτοῦ.*—Rec. and Gr. omit *τὸν* before *πόλ.*
20.—Rec. *μ. τούτου ὁ ψ.* Ln. reads *αὐτοῦ*, but gives *ὁ* before *ψ.*—Ln. *τῆς κ.*—Rec. *τῷ θ.* Rec. *ἐκπορ—*, others *ἐξελθ.*

CHAPTER XX.

1.—Rec. *κλείδα*, where edd. prefer *κλεῖν.*
2.—Ln. and Tisch. *ὁ ὀφ. ὁ ἀρ.*—Rec. Gr. Kn. and Sz. omit *ὁ* before *Σ.*, which Matthiae drops also, but adds *ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην.*
3.—Rec. *ἐκ. αὐτόν.*—The edd. *πλανᾷ.*—The order in Rec. differs.—Matthiae and later edd. omit *καὶ* before *μ.* Kn. brackets it.
4.—Rec. &c. *τῷ θ. οὔτε τῇ εἰκ.* Matthiae and others *τὸ θ. οὐδὲ τὴν εἰκ.*—The edd. omit *αὐτῶν* after *μ.* and the more recent *τὰ* before *χ.*

5.—Matthiae omits *οἱ — ἔτη.*—*Οἱ δὲ* is the ordinary reading; *καὶ οἱ* is that of B. and other MSS., while recent critics incline to *οἱ* with A.—The edd. *ἔζησαν ἄχρι.*
6.—The edd. *ὁ δ. θ.*—Matthiae, for *μετ' αὐτοῦ*, reads *μετὰ ταῦτα.*
7.—Matthiae adopts *μετὰ* for *ὅταν τελ.*
8.—Ln. and Tisch. drop *τὸν* before *Μαγ.* and the edd. in general, save Gr. and Kn., insert it before *πόλ.*—Rec. omits *αὐτῶν.*
9.—Matthiae, and most modern edd., read *ἐκύκλευσαν.* The order in Rec. differs from that which is approved.
10.—Rec. omits *καὶ* after *ὅπου.*
11.—Rec. *λ. μ.*—Matthiae, Gr. Sz. and Tisch. *αὐτοῦ.*
12.—Rec. &c. *μικ. καὶ μεγ.* Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. *τοὺς μεγ. καὶ τ. μικ.* The edd. after A. B. and many MSS. read *θρόνου*, and most read *ἠνοίχθησαν*, instead of *ἠνεῴχθ.* with Rec. &c. (and again in the sing.) Matthiae *ἤνοιξαν.*—The order of Rec. is *β. ἄ.*
13.—The edd. *ν. τοὺς ἐν αὐτῇ* and *ν. τ. ἐ. αὐτοῖς.*—Matthiae edits *ἔργα αὐτοῦ.*
14.—The edd. *ὁ θ. ὁ. δ.* and add *ἡ λίμνη τοῦ πυρός.*

CHAPTER XXI.

1.—Rec. Kn. *παρῆλθε*, Gr. Sz. Treg. *ἀπῆλθον* (some MSS. —*θε*), Ln. and Tisch. *ἀπῆλθαν.* Compare verse 4.
2.—The edd., with A. B. and upwards of thirty other MSS. omit *ἐγὼ Ἰωάννης*, and read *τ. π. τ. ἁ. Ἰ. κ. εἶ.* and follow their order rather than that of Rec. in the next words.
3.—Ln. Tisch. *ἐκ τ. θρόνου* (with A. &c.) others *οὐρανοῦ.*—Rec. Ln. *λαοί*, others *λαός.*—The order differs slightly.—More than twenty MSS. want *αὐ. Θ.* or *Θ. αὐ.*
4.—Matthiae, Gr. Sz. and Tisch. omit *ὁ Θεὸς*, Ln. (Kn. and Treg. in brackets) admits the words.—Ln. for *ἀπὸ* has *ἐκ.*
5.—Rec. *ἐπὶ τοῦ θ.*—The order is a little different in some.—Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. omit *μοι.* B. and twenty other MSS. add *τοῦ Θ.*

upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith [to me,] Write: for these words are faithful and true. [6] And he said unto me, They are done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life, freely. [7] He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. [8] But the cowardly, and unbelieving, [and sinners,] and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, *shall have* their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

[9] And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. [10] And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: [11] its light *was* like a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal; [12] it had a wall great and high; it had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: [13] on the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. [14] And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and upon them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. [15] And he that talked with me had a golden measuring reed to measure the city, and the gates of it and the wall of it. [16] And the city lieth foursquare, and the length of it *is* as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. [17] And he measured the wall of it, an hundred forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, which is of the angel. [18] And the building of the wall of it was jasper; and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass. [19] The foundations of the wall of the city *were* adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* a jasper; the second, a sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; [20] the fifth, a sardonyx; the sixth, a sardius; the seventh, a chrysolyte; the eighth, a beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. [21] And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; each gate severally was of one pearl, and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass. [22] And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. [23] And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God lightened it, and the Lamb *is* the lamp of it. [24] And the nations shall walk by means of its light; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory unto it. [25] And the gates of it shall in nowise be shut by day: for there shall be no night there. [26] And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations unto it. [27] And there shall enter into it nothing common, neither *one* working an abomination and a lie: but those that are written in the Lamb's book of life.

XXII.—And he shewed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. [2] In the midst of the street of it, and of the river, on this side and on that side, *there was* the tree of life, producing twelve *manner of* fruits, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. [3] And there shall be no more curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; [4] and they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* on their foreheads. [5] And there shall be no more night; and they shall have no need [of the light] of lamp, nor the light of the sun; for the Lord God will lighten them: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

[6] And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true; and the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets hath sent his angel to shew his servants the things which must come to pass shortly. [7] And behold I am coming quickly: blessed *is* he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book. [8] And I John *was* he that heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that shewed me these things. [9] And he saith unto me, See *thou do it* not: I am the fellow-servant of thee, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of those that keep the words of this book: worship God. [10] And he saith unto me, Seal not the words of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. [11] He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: [and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still:] and he that is righteous, let him work righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. [12] Behold, I am coming quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give to every man according as his work is. [13] I *am* the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the

6.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. γέγονε, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. γέγοναν. Matthiae, with some MSS., reads γέγονα and connects it, omitting εἰμι, with the following clause.—Sz. Tisch. (Treg. in brackets) insert αὐτῷ, with B. and twenty-four other MSS.

7.—Matthiae, with B. and twenty-four MSS., for κλ. has δώσω αὐτῷ.—For πάντα, the edd. read ταῦτα.—Rec. Gr. Sz. (Treg. in brackets) ὁ υἱ. others rightly, I think, omit the article with A. and sixteen other MSS.

8.—The edd. τοῖς δὲ δ.—Sz., following B. and more than thirty other MSS., after ἀπ. adds καὶ ἁμαρτωλοῖς.—The edd. φαρμακοῖς and ὁ θ. ὁ δ.

9.—The edd. omit πρός με. on good authority.—Rec. Gr. omit ἐκ. —Rec. Gr. Matthiae Kn. Treg. Sz. τὰς γ.—Ln. and Tisch. τῶν γ.—The order differs a little.

10.—Later edd. ἐπὶ ὄρ.—Rec. τὴν μεγάλην, but the edd. reject, with A. B. and more than twenty other MSS. and many versions. Matthiae has ἐκ τ. Θ.

11.—Rec. καὶ ὁ φ.

12.—Rec. ἔχουσάν τε τ. and ἔχουσαν π. the edd. —α omitting the enclitic.—Ln. Tisch. Treg. add τὰ ὀνόματα, (Matthiae ὀν.) and omit τῶν before υἱῶν.

13.—Rec. ἀπ' Ln. Tisch. &c. ἀνατολῆς, Gr. Kn. Sz. ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν. —Rec. omits καὶ thrice.

14.—The edd. ἐπ' αὐτῶν and δώδεκα ὀν.

15.—Rec. omits μέτρον, which A. and many other MSS. add.—Matthiae omits καὶ τὸ τ. αὐτ.

16.—Rec. τοσοῦτόν ἐστιν, contrary to A. B. and thirty-four more MSS. &c.—Kn. omits καὶ after ὅσον.—Matthiae δεκαδύο χ., δώδεκα.

17.—Matthiae omits ἐμέτρησεν.

18.—Ln. Tisch. drop ἦν.—Rec. Gr. Sz. ὁμοία, others ὅμοιον.

19.—Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. Treg. omit καί.

20.—Ln. Tisch. σαρδιόνυξ, others σαρδόνυξ. So χρυσόπρασον, where others —ος.

21.—The edd. διαυγὴς, not as Rec. διαφανής.

22.—Ln. Tisch. with A. insert the article (wrongly as it appears to me) before ναός.

23.—Matthiae φαίνωσιν. αὐτὴ γάρ. Rec. Kn. ἐν αὐτ., the others omit the preposition.

24.—The edd. κ. π. τ. ἔθ. δ. τ. φ. αὐτ. not as Rec. τῶν σ. ἐν τ. φ. αὐτ.—Ln. Tisch. Treg. omit καὶ τὴν τιμήν. Matthiae φέρ. αὐτῷ δόξ. κ. τιμὴν τ. ἐθνῶν εἰς αὐτ.

26.—Matthiae adds ἵνα εἰσέλθωσιν.

27.—Rec. κοινοῦν, edd. κοινόν.—Ln. Tisch. Treg. ποιῶν, Matthiae ὁ π.

CHAPTER XXII.

1.—Rec. καθαρὸν π., the edd. omit.

2.—Matthiae, Ln. Tisch. and Treg. ἐντ. κ. ἐκεῖθεν, after A. B. and twenty other MSS.—Rec. adds ἕνα, Kn. brackets it.—Matthiae ἀποδιδοὺς, others —οῦν.

3.—The edd. κατάθεμα.

5.—Rec. Kn. for ἔτι, (bracketed by Treg.) have ἐκεῖ.—Rec. Kn. χρ. οὐκ ἔχ., Gr. Sz. οὐ χρεία λ., others οὐχ ἑξ.—Tisch. φωτὸς, Treg. brackets the word, Ln. φῶς, Matthiae οὐ χρ. λ. κ. φ. ὅτι. —Rec. φωτίζει, Gr. Kn. Sz. φωτιεῖ, others φωτίσει.—Rec omits ἐπ'.

6.—The edd. τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν προ., Rec. τ. ἁγίων προ.

7.—Rec. Kn. omit the first καί.

8.—The edd. ὁ ἀκ. κ. βλ. τ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. Ln. κ— ὅ. ἤκ. κ. ἔβ., Matthiae and Tisch. κ. ὅ. ἤκ. κ. ὅ. εἶδον., Treg. κ. ὁ. ἤκ. κ. ἔβλεπον.—Ln. Tisch. ἔπεσα.

9.—Rec. γάρ.

10.—Rec. ὅτι, Matthiae, Ln. Treg. ὁ καιρὸς γάρ.

11.—The edd. ῥυπαρὸς ῥυπαρευθήτω, Treg. adding brackets to this clause.—The edd. δικαιοσύνην ποιησάτω.

12.—Rec. καί.—Ln. Tisch. &c. ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ. The common reading is αὐτοῦ ἔσται.

13.—Rec. εἰμι.—Rec. ἀ. κ. τ., ὁ π. κ. ὁ ἔσχ., Gr. Sz. ἡ α. κ. τὸ τ., ὁ π. κ. ὁ ἔ., Ln. Tisch. π. κ. ἔ., ἡ ἀ. κ. τὸ τ., Treg. ὁ π. κ. ὁ ἔ., ἀ. κ. τ.

Last, the Beginning and the End. [14] Blessed *are* those that wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. [15] Without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. [16] I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star. [17] And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: let him that willeth take the water of life freely. [18] I testify unto every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any one shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: [19] and if any one shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, that are written of in this book.

[20] He that testifieth these things saith, Yea I am coming quickly: Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.

[21] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *be* with all the saints. [Amen.]

14.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. ποιοῦντες τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ, Ln. Tisch. Treg. πλύνοντες τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν. (favoured by A. and ten other MSS.)
15.—Rec. δέ.—Rec. Gr. Kn. Sz. ὁ φ.
16.—Most read ἐπὶ τ. ἐ., Ln. Treg. ἐν, Tisch. τ. ἐ.—Rec. τοῦ Δαβὶδ, the edd. Δαυΐδ.—Rec. ὀρθρινὸς, the edd. πρωϊνὸς. (Tisch. omitting καὶ, and Treg. putting it in brackets.)
17.—Rec. has ἐλθὲ twice for ἔρχου, and ἐλθέτω for ἐρχέσθω, and καὶ ὁ θ. λαμβανέτω. The edd. prefer the other forms.
18.—The edd. μαρτυρῶ γ. π. τῷ. ἂν . . . ἐπιθῇ ἐπ' αὐτά . . . ἐν τῷ β.
19.—The edd. ἀφέλῃ . . . . τοῦ β . . . . ἀφελεῖ . . . . τοῦ ξύλου, and omit καὶ before τῶν γ.—Rec. omits τῷ before β. τ.
20.—Most edd. connect Ἀμὴν with ἔρχου. I prefer to read it as the seal of the words of Jesus.—They omit the second ναί.
21.—The edd. omit ἡμῶν, with A. B. and twenty other MSS.—Rec. ὑμῶν, the edd. τῶν ἁγίων with B. and thirty-five other MSS. A. wants either, as well as the final ἀμήν.

REMARKS CONNECTED WITH THE STUDY OF THE REVELATION.

There are few simple-minded Christians who, in searching into the prophetic Word, have not felt the difficulty of reconciling the undoubtedly normal posture of the Church in daily waiting for Jesus with the long train of successive events presented in the Revelation. The principle, if not the measure, of the difficulty is the same, whether you understand the Revelation to be fulfilled in a brief eventful crisis, or to extend over a course of many hundred years. In either way, I cannot truthfully expect Jesus from heaven from day to day, if I am looking out for a series of numerous, and some of them unprecedented, and all of them solemn, incidents to occur on earth, the gradual and accumulative evidence of His approach.

But it is certain that in the apostolic times, when the grace of God was proclaimed in its real power and freshness, when His Word was most prized and best understood, and produced its loveliest effects, the saints were habitually expecting Jesus to come. In Him they had redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, and they knew it. They were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Were they, therefore, satisfied? Was not the Spirit Himself, blessed divine Comforter though He be, yet was not He the earnest of still greater blessings? Doubtless, they received Him as the Spirit of sonship, and not as a spirit of bondage unto fear; (Rom. viii.) but instead of His leading them into rest and contentedness here below in the absence of Jesus, in the same chapter it is said: "Ourselves also, (besides the groaning creation,) which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body." It is the groaning of those who are justified by faith and have peace with God. It is the groaning of those who have the Holy Ghost dwelling in them, and bearing witness with their spirit that they are the children of God. It is the groaning of the adopted, earnestly yearning for the full results of adoption: of those who, because they have known God's grace in redemption forgiving their sins, look for more, for all,—for the redemption of the body in the actual presence of the Saviour, that they may be like Him and with Him for ever!

The aim, however, of these remarks is not to prove that the personal coming of the Lord was the hope of the Church—proofs easily found elsewhere. My desire is rather to convince those who know what is and was meant to be the hope of the Church, that God, by no concurrent or subsequent revelation, ever interfered with the practical power of that hope. That He might give fuller details as to the growing iniquity of man, of the Jew, and especially of the outward professing body, and as to His own judgments upon each before the millennial reign; that He might describe in greater minuteness the circumstances of that reign and the events that succeed it, is not only possible, but that which He has done. But that He, on this or any other theme, corrects in one part of His Word what is affirmed in another, is that which every Christian ought surely to repudiate from the bottom of his soul, in whatever modified form it may be insinuated.

The Word of our God needs no apologies from man. Unhesitatingly believed, every part of it will be found to be perfectly true, though (from the narrowness and imperfection of our apprehension) patient waiting on God is necessary to avoid the systematizing of the human intellect, and to discover in what order God puts things together. Haste in deciding such questions only leads to forcing Scripture, which will not yield; and hence the danger of framing one-sided hypotheses, which are only tenable by shutting the eye to the plainest Scripture which contradicts them as hypotheses, though there may be elements of truth in them.

To apply this to the matter in hand, it is undeniable that the apostle Paul (to say nothing of others) invariably speaks of the coming of the Lord to take the Church to Himself as that which might be at any moment, however Jesus might tarry; but no necessary detention—no chain of occurrences involving a period virtually—no certain lapse of time—is ever presented to the Church as keeping Him in heaven. On the contrary, if he writes to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. xv.) it is: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." Admitting that "we" is a representative word, not the persons addressed merely, but those standing in the same privileges: still will any one say that the apostle or the Corinthian saints knew that the moment would be deferred till they had fallen asleep? * Was it not calculated, beyond all cavil, to keep them in simple, constant expectancy of the Lord? And the Thessalonians, (1 Thess. i.) who were trained, from their birth to God, in looking for their Deliverer, were they mistaken enthusiasts? Or, did not the blessed work of the Spirit in their case consist not only in turning them from idols to serve the living and true God, but to wait for His Son from heaven? Did that wise and faithful servant, who knew what it was to mingle the service of a nurse with the affectionate care of a father,—did he consider that blessed hope to be unsuited food for such babes? So far from it, that when he writes to them supplying some things that were lacking, the Holy Ghost impresses this great doctrine in so repeated and different modes as to demonstrate how cardinal a truth it was in the mind of God, and how influential as regards the walk and communion of His saints. It ramifies both epistles, being not only found at least once in every chapter, but in some chapters occupying the most conspicuous place. (See 1 Thess. i. 3, 10; ii. 19, 20; iii. 13; iv. 13-18; v. 1-10, 23, 24. 2 Thess. i. 5-10; ii. 1-12; iii. 5.) They had rejoiced in this hope of our Lord Jesus Christ from their earliest Christian career; they had patiently continued it through the Spirit, and the blessedness of such patience was sweet to the absent apostle, even as their work of faith and labour of love. True, they needed further light as to its circumstances, and the Lord granted it. So immediately were they awaiting the Lord, that the decease of some of their number plunged them into sorrow—not, I apprehend, that they for a moment doubted of the salvation of those who were gone. No one knowing the Gospel in word only (much less knowing it in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as it came to them,) could have such a doubt. But they feared that death had severed their departed brethren from the glorious hope they had so brightly burning before them, of being caught up together to

* Nothing, it has been observed, more strongly proves the Church's constant expectation of the presence of the Lord for it, uncertain when that was to be, than the fact that it needed a *particular revelation to individuals*, (such as to Paul and Peter,) about their departure first, which so far modified their individual apprehensions. The general expectation of the Church was not affected thereby.

meet the Lord in the air. They were gone—doubtless, were happy; but would they not be absent from that crowning joy for which they themselves were waiting? Here was the place, if they had been mistaken in so waiting, to have corrected it. Here was the place for the apostle to say:—We have been all wrong in living with our eyes heavenward till the Son of God comes to take us to Himself: He is not coming soon. *We* need not expect Him, for many ages must expire before He comes. Besides, He has already given you some, and He now adds more, signs of His advent. You have not seen these signs yet. You must wait for them, and not for His Son.—But there is the exact reverse. The Holy Spirit deliberately keeps them in the same attitude of waiting which He had previously wrought and sanctioned in them, though He gives them a comfort of which they were ignorant as to their brethren who had been put to sleep by Jesus.* "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. go before] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

But it may be said,—If the Holy Ghost did not here correct the excited notions of the Thessalonians, He did in the second chapter of the second epistle.—I answer that the true question is, Does the Holy Ghost correct *Himself?* He may supply that which is suited to correct the undue sorrow of the believers in one epistle, or their fears in another epistle; but I insist upon it in the strongest manner, that *if the Church is set in the position of waiting for Christ's coming in one part of Scripture, no other part can possibly alter such a position.* It is necessarily right, whatever increase of instruction may be given. Let us only be well assured in the perfectness of every word of God, and we shall soon see how little the passage warrants the notion that the apostle Paul, in the second epistle, dissuades them from expecting Him, whom the first epistle had confirmed them in expecting.

In the first place, it is generally assumed that the day of Christ (or "of the Lord," for that is the true reading†) is identical with "the coming (παρουσία, presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ" in the verse before. But it is a groundless idea. If it be affirmed, let proofs be adduced. It is quite clear to me that the day of the Lord is a distinct though connected thing. In its full, ultimate sense, and no one disputes that such is its force here, it supposes the presence of the Lord; it is the judgment consequent upon that. But the presence, or coming of the Lord, by no means necessarily supposes judgment. Is there a word of judgment, or wrath, or destruction, expressed or implied in the full description given in 1 Thess. iv. of the Lord's coming for His own? So when the apostle says, "what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy," (1 Thess. ii. 19, 20,) where is the word of judgment or evil? On the other hand, when the day of the Lord occurs, it is, whether used in a full or a limited application, habitually connected with judgment and its consequences (compare 1 Thess. v. 2-4; Zeph. i. ii. iii.; Zech. xiv.; Mal. iii. iv.) I conclude therefore that, though the coming of the Lord may include the day of the Lord, as the whole includes a part, the coming of the Lord is in itself presented in an aspect of grace, not of judgment, and that the terms and things are not to be confounded.

In the second place, while it is true that the day of the Lord cannot come before the apostacy and the revelation of the man of sin arrive, which are to be judged in that day, yet is there a serious error in the English rendering of the last clause of verse 2, "is at hand." The word usually rendered "at hand," "near," or "nigh," is ἐγγὺς or ἐγγίζω, as is known to scholars. The present word ἐνίστημι, on the other hand, is *never so rendered* in the New Testament, save in the passage before us. On the contrary, occurring several times, it is used invariably in a way which excludes the possibility of such a rendering, (more especially when it is, as here, in the second perf.) The first occurrence is in Rom. viii. 38. It is evident that here ἐνεστῶτα cannot mean things at hand. It is contrasted with μέλλοντα, i.e. "things to come." It signifies only and emphatically "things *present*," and is so rendered in the common Bible. See the same words and the same contrast in 1 Cor. iii. 22. Again, in 1 Cor. vii. 26, διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην is properly translated "for the *present* distress." A distress not actually come, but only at hand or coming, would spoil the meaning. The next is Gal. i. 4, "this *present* evil world," the only possible meaning of the word here. The next world, or age, will not be evil, and therefore "at hand," or "imminent," is shut out. Compare also Heb. ix. 9, εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἐνεστηκότα "for the time then *present*," not "at hand," which cannot be the true force. All these are instances of the same tense as 2 Thess. ii. 2. The only other occurrence is 2 Tim. iii. 1, ἐνστήσονται, in the future middle. Here the English version renders it, "shall come." Still, the meaning indubitably is not "shall be at hand," which could have no point, but "shall be *present*." To be impending merely was little: the grave thing was, that perilous times should be actually there. It may be concluded, therefore, from an induction thus complete, that in all the other instances the authorized version is right, but in 2 Thess. ii. 2 it is wrong. It is not conceivable to uphold both; so that if right in 2 Thess. ii. 2, the version must be wrong everywhere else. But we have seen, from the intrinsic meaning of the word, as well as from the sense imperatively demanded by the context, that in all the other cases the translators are justified. They are therefore mistaken here, and the proper rendering, in conformity with their own translation of the word in the same tense elsewhere, ought to be, "as that the day of the Lord *is present*." *

The Thessalonian saints had from the first known much affliction. They had notoriously suffered from their own countrymen, and this to such a degree that the apostle, in his earnest and watchful interest about them, sent Timothy to establish and to comfort them concerning their faith, that no man should be moved by these afflictions. They knew that "we are appointed thereunto." Nevertheless, they needed comfort. The apostle had warned them before, that "we should suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass, and ye know." "For this cause when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, *lest by some means the tempter have tempted you*, and our labour be in vain." But Timothy brought good tidings of their faith and love, and the apostle could break out into thanks and joy for their sakes before God, and he lets them know it in his first epistle.

The tempter, however, was not to be discouraged, nor diverted from his wiles. They had been already taught that the Lord Himself was to come, and the saints, sleeping or living, were all to be changed, and to be caught up together to meet Him in the air, and so be ever with Him. They also knew that the day of the Lord was one of destruction and terror, unlooked for by the world: "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

Accordingly, he appears to have distracted the saints by the harassing statement that the day of the Lord was actually there, thus seeking to rob them of all profit and joy in the persecutions and tribulations which they were then enduring. Nor let any think it strange if, in a time of perplexity in the world and persecution of the Church, the fears of saints might be wrought upon; particularly as they knew that the day of the Lord in the Old Testament by no means necessarily implies the personal presence of the Lord, though it looks onward to that anticipatively. Compare, for instance, Is. xiii., where God's judgment of Babylon and the Chaldeans is so designated: "Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand;† it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty," &c. (See also Joel i. 15; ii. 1-11. Amos v. 18, 20. Zeph. i. 7, 14, 15, &c.)

In the second epistle, the Holy Ghost conveys the needed instruction. "We ourselves," says the apostle, "glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy

* Τοὺς κοιμηθέντας διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. So the Vulgate, eos, qui dormierunt *per Jesum*.

† So all the critical editors known to me, such as Griesbach, Knappe, Scholz, Lachmann, Tischendorf, &c.; and this wholly upon external evidence.

* Since the above was in print, I have had the opportunity of examining "Le Nouveau Testament de notre Seigneur Jesus-Christ, traduit en Suisse, par une Société de Ministres de la Parole de Dieu, sur le texte Grec reçu," (seconde édition, &c., 1849,) where the original is rendered, "Que le jour du Christ est là."

† The words in the LXX. are ἐγγὺς γὰρ ἡμέρα Κυρίου. Will men defend a version of 2 Thess. ii. 2 which makes the Holy Spirit contradict there what He has unequivocally affirmed in Is. xiii. 6? The Septuagint and the Greek Testament are in harmony here. It is the English version which is at fault.

of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." The time of retribution is not when Jesus comes, but when He is *revealed*. For though at His coming the Church is caught up, there is nothing yet of a retributive character. It is favour, not a process of judgment. Whereas the revelation and the day of the Lord are, as is manifest, associated with judgment, and hence there is the *public award of God*, then, for the first time, manifested to the world; "seeing it is a *righteous* thing with God to *recompense* tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed." Doubtless there is a tribulation, and even the great tribulation, in the time of Anti-Christ, previous to the revelation of Jesus; as obviously there is rest to those who sleep in Jesus now, and there will be rest in a fuller sense when our bodies are changed, and we are caught up to be with Him. But both are wholly distinct from the divine, retributive tribulation and rest here spoken of. It is the day of punishment with everlasting destruction to the adversaries, as it is the day when Christ comes, not to present the Church to Himself, nor to take them to mansions in the Father's house, but to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. For when Christ, our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. It is the public, judicial dealing, (not the hidden joy or blessedness, before, then, or afterwards,) which here enters into the scene.

Next, the apostle turns to the source of their agitation. "We beseech you, brethren, by * the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled." Assuredly, the consolation administered here is not that Christ's coming was a distant thing! Can it be that theologian upon theologian has desired to make of this fancied long and far off absence of the Lord a balm for the tried and fearful? Can it be that the poor Church has but too willingly sipped the cup, and, heedless of His words, cheers herself on the delirious career of worldliness, and folly, and faithlessness to Him? "Lord, how long?"

Not so the Thessalonians. Full well they knew that His coming was to end their sorrows and crown their joys. Under apostolic guidance they had looked, and the Holy Ghost had commended their looking, for Christ. Was it not the part of the evil servant to say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming? But Paul was a blessed, faithful servant, and never says anything of the sort. He uses the fact of the coming of the Lord and their gathering together unto Him as a comfort against the anxiety created by the idea that the day of the Lord was already arrived —nay more, as a proof that such an idea was false. His ground of entreaty is two-fold. He urges a reason connected with the Lord and heaven, and a reason connected with earth and the man of sin. There must be our gathering above, and the falling away below. In the first place, the Lord was to come, and they were to be gathered together unto Him, in order that He and they might bring in the day and appear together from heaven. This had not taken place, and therefore they were not to be disturbed as if that day had come, or could come, previously. In the next place, he presses the point that the evil must first be developed completely which that day is to judge. "Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away (or the apostacy, ἡ ἀποστασία) first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth, and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or object of worship; so that he* sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." But the apostacy was not then come, nor the man of sin revealed, and therefore the day of the Lord, the day of vengeance upon these evils, is yet to come. "And now (if one may translate the apostle's word a little exactly) ye know what hindereth that he might be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness † doth already work: only there is one that now hindereth until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the appearing of His coming."

No! the Thessalonian believers were not mistaken in waiting for the Son of God. It is not wrong to believe that "the Lord is at hand," (ἐγγὺς,) as the apostle pressed upon the Philippians when drawing to the close of his career. It is not wrong to stablish our hearts because the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. (ἤγγικε, James v. 8.) Nor does the language of the Spirit, in the passage before us, depict excitement from a too eager anticipation of this glorious event,—alas! that Christians should suppose we could too earnestly desire it. The expressions in verse 2 denote fright and agitation. The enemy sought to instil the idea that the day, the judgment was come, and that they were obnoxious to its terrors. Where then was their hope to be caught up to the Lord and to come along with Him? Would it have been sorrow and fear if Christ had come and they had been raptured to meet Him in the air? Rather would it have been their chiefest joy, as it had been the object nearest their heart since their conversion. Their faith was growing exceedingly, and the love of every one of them all toward each other abounded; and, far from weakening that which he had already taught, the apostle prays for them in the last chapter of the second epistle, that the Lord would direct their heart into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ. That is, he confirms them in their expectancy of the Lord.

But the deceiver had affrighted them, not of course by presenting the coming of the Lord as an imminent thing, which was what the Holy Ghost had done, and which is for the Church a hope of unmingled comfort, but by the report that the day of the Lord was actually present,—"a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness." The apostle had already told them (1 Thess. v.) that they were not in darkness, that that day should overtake them as a thief. The tempter disturbs and confounds them with the thought that, as a thief, it was really come upon them; using it would seem some false spirit, or word, or letter, to give to it the colour of the authority of Paul himself. And how does the apostle defend them from such assaults of others, and fears of their own? For, let it be repeated, it was not high-wrought feeling as though Christ were at hand, but terror arising from their giving heed to the false representation that *the day of the Lord was present*, and they in tribulation on earth, instead of being caught up to Jesus above. The apostle at once brings them back to the coming of the Lord and their gathering together unto Him as their ground of comfort and protection against the alarms of the day of the Lord. As if he had said: the Lord Himself is coming, and you will be gathered to Him. When His day comes, you will be with Him. You are the children of the day: you will come along with it, for you will come with Him who ushers it in. You therefore need not be troubled, but be joyful. That day is not come. You will go to meet Him whom the Church knows as the bright, the morning star (Rev. xxii. 16, compared with ii. 28;) so that when the day breaks and the Lord appears, you too will appear with Him in glory. You will introduce the day together—that day of retribution when those, who troubled you shall have trouble, and you, the troubled, shall have rest with us when Jesus is revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance.

In harmony with this, it is written in verse 8, that the lawless one will be destroyed, not simply by the coming of the Lord, but by a further step of it, by the appearing or manifestation of his coming.‡ This scene is given at length in Rev. xix. 11-21, where

* The authorized version appears to be substantially right in thus translating ὑπὲρ, when we bear the context in mind. Such is the rendering of the Vulgate, as well as of Luther. Professor Scholefield also, though choosing the sense "concerning," because of his interpretation, admits the sense "by" to be "*an unquestionable one.*" The fact cannot be disputed that "on account of," "for the sake of," are most common renderings: this sense of the word, connected with expressions of prayer and entreaty, is pretty nearly equivalent to our "by." None of the passages, such as Rom. ix. 27; 2 Cor. vii. 4; ix. 3; Phil. i. 7, cited by Rosenmüller, Schleusner, Macknight, Whitby, or Elliott, is apposite, because not one occurs after such a verb as ἐρωτάω. Let an instance be produced of ὑπὲρ after a word of beseeching, where it can be rendered in any other way. In certain cases, it is used, as Phavorinus says, ὁμοίως τῷ περὶ, but not, I believe, in a connexion parallel to the present, where it assimilates to πρὸς, as Stephanus observes, and translates it "*per*: ut Greg. ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ δέομαι, rogo te per Christum. Sic. Il. ω. Καί μιν ὑπὲρ πατρὸς καὶ μητέρος ἠὐκόμοιο Λίσσεο, καὶ τέκεος."

* All editors of note omit ὡς Θεόν: i. e. "as God."

† There is a link of importance missed by the English translators between the mystery of *lawlessness* already working and the *lawless* one who is yet to be revealed. The germ was there in the midst of professing Christianity, which was at last to issue in so portentous a conclusion.

‡ The word "coming" here, and frequently elsewhere, is παρουσία, which denotes not barely the arrival, (like the verb ἔρχομαι in Scripture, and like the substantive ἔλευσις in Greek ecclesiastical writers,) but the circumstance or state of being present; that is, "presence." Nevertheless, as the *presence* of a person, who is now absent, necessarily supposes his *coming*, the latter is often and fairly enough given as its English equivalent, though the former is the full meaning.

the seer beholds, in the prospective vision, the heaven opened, and the rider, the Word of God, upon the white horse, issuing to judge and make war. "And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean"—the righteousness not of angels, but of saints. (Compare verse 8.) The saints are already with Him. They follow Him out of heaven, as his army. Christ, therefore, must have come before this to take them to Himself, for they have been with Him in heaven and leave it together, preparatory to the battle with the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies. This then is not merely the coming of Christ. It is Christ *appearing*, and we with Him in glory. It is His *revelation* from heaven, taking vengeance. It is *the day* of the Lord, when sudden destruction comes. It is *the shining forth of His presence*, or the brightness of His coming, which destroys that lawless one. *

Matt. xxiv. 23-31 falls in with this view: "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." It is His coming in connection with His earthly rights. Rejected of this generation as the Christ, He comes as Son of man (in which capacity He is never presented as coming to take the Church.) "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 shaken: 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." The elect here gathered together by the angels of the Son of man from the four winds, are demonstrably not the Church, because they are gathered subsequent to His appearing. The Church, on the other hand, had been translated before. For *when* Christ, our life, shall appear, *then* shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Our manifestation in glory cannot be after His manifestation. Christ and the Church are manifested together. Hence the signs specified in this chapter are indices to elect Jewish disciples of His appearing. They are not to be regarded, therefore, as interfering with the posture of the Church continually waiting for the Lord from heaven. They are signs for a remnant in special relation with Judea, who will be awaiting the coming of the Son of man. No signs of this or of any other description were ever put before the Church, as such, whereby to judge of the near approach of Christ to take her to Himself. On the contrary, what the Holy Ghost taught the Church is, to a simple mind, inconsistent with such indications: she was to be expecting always, because she knew not the moment of His coming. The apostle (1 John ii. 18) would have even the babes to know that it is the last time; and that, not from the spread of the Spirit of Christ, but from the presence of many Anti-Christs. But, although they had heard that the Anti-Christ should come, no signs to be seen, no evil to reach its climax, no specific tribulation, are ever put before them, as events necessarily retarding the coming of the Lord to take the Church. For the Bride, the one heavenly sign is the presence of the Bridegroom Himself. But for a converted remnant of Jews, of whom the Lord has graciously thought in the instructions of Matt. xxiv., there are signs which will be given before the coming of the Son of man.

Now, it is precisely here that the Revelation affords so distinct a light, shewing us the position of the Church in heaven, Christ having come and taken her to Himself, and afterwards, during the interval of her absence in heaven before she appears along with Him, God's dealings, testimonies, judgments, and deliverances, on earth. The epistles gave us simply the fact of the rapture of the Church, but did not inform as to the length of the interval before the appearing and the kingdom. That such an interval existed might have been gathered; but whether long or short, or how filled up, does not appear in the epistles. The Revelation furnishes that which was lacking upon the subject, and connects, without confounding, the Church caught up to the Lord on high, with certain witnesses to be raised up during the closing term of the age on earth before He appears in judgment.

As for the relative bearings of the different portions of the New Testament, it may be said, in general, that the Gospels have a character peculiar to themselves. It is not certainly an exclusively Jewish condition, neither is it a proper Church condition, but a gradual slide, in John more marked than in the others, from the one to the other. The Lord Jesus, rejected, was with His disciples here below. The Holy Ghost, who of course was then, as ever, the faith-giving, quickening agent, was not yet given, i.e. in any new, unprecedented way, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Hence the disciples, although possessing faith and eternal life, (John vi. 35, 47, 68, 69,) were not yet baptized by the Holy Ghost into one body. (Compare Acts i. 5 with 1 Cor. xii. 13.) In a word, the Church was not yet built nor begun to be built: "Upon this rock," says the Lord, "I *will* build my Church." (Matt. xvi. 18.) But the Acts historically, and the Epistles doctrinally, describe a different state of things as then existing; Jesus absent and glorified in heaven; the Holy Ghost present and dwelling on earth in the saints, who were thereby constituted the body, the Church. Christ had taken His place as head of the body above, and the Holy Ghost sent down was gathering into oneness with Him there, into membership of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. Such is the mystery of Christ, which it was emphatically given to the apostle Paul fully to make known. And as the Gospels may be regarded as the preparatory transition out of Jewish relations to the blessed elevation on which the Church rests, the Revelation answers as the corresponding transition from the Church one with Christ in heavenly places, by various steps or stages, down to those Jewish relations which for a time dropt out of sight in consequence of the calling of the heavenly body.

The doctrine of the Church is clearly at the root of the ONE HOPE, which is found in the intermediate part of the New Testament. For along with the truth of the peculiar calling of the Church, as the body commenced by the descent and indwelling of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and thenceforward guided and perpetuated by Him—along with this truth, it will be found that the peculiar aspect of the coming of the Lord for which I have contended, stands or falls. None of the school of interpreters commonly called "the Protestant school" understood by the Church anything more, at best, than the Augustinian notion of an invisible company from the beginning to the end of time. None of them, therefore, has an adequate idea of the new and heavenly work which God began at Pentecost by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The consequence is that, if they read of saints in Daniel, in the Psalms, or in the Revelation, they are at once set down as of the Church. If they read of "this gospel of the kingdom" in Matt. xxiv., or of "the everlasting gospel," it is to their minds the same thing as what Paul calls "my gospel," the gospel of the grace of God preached now. Hence follows, and quite fairly too, a denial of any speciality in the walk and conversation of the saints since Pentecost, and a general Judaizing in doctrine, standing, conduct and hopes. It is also a simple and natural result of this, that all Protestant interpreters, if they admit a personal advent at all to introduce the millennial reign, present as the hope of the Church, that which is, in fact, the proper expectation of the converted Jewish remnant; viz. the day of the Lord, the Son of man seen by all the tribes of the earth, coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Nor is the truth of the Church unknown to the Protestant interpreters only: it is equally an object of dislike to many of the Futurist school. And it is my conviction that the two baleful heresies, which have brought such shame upon the revival of prophetic study towards the beginning and the close of the last twenty years, are intimately connected with the rejection of this grand truth. For an error touching the Church cannot but affect Him whose personal presence is what is so essential to it; and that which

* If the reader is disposed to investigate further a subject so full of interest, he may derive much instruction, through the grace of God, by examining carefully the following Scriptures:—

First as to ἀποκάλυψις, Rom. viii. 19; 1 Cor. i. 7; 2 Thess. i. 7; 1 Pet. i. 7, 13, and iv. 13, compared with the cognate verb, Luke xvii. 30; 1 Cor. iii. 13; 1 Peter i. 5, and v. 1.

Next, as to ἐπιφανεία, 2 Thess. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1, 8; Titus ii. 13.

Lastly, as to φανερόω, Col iii. 4; 1 Peter v. 4; 1 John ii. 28, and iii. 2.

It is only needful to remark that, though (as already proved) we are not here below until the appearing of Christ, it is only then, and not before, that the result of faithfulness, or the want of it, will be manifested. The labourer is to work patiently, and it may be hiddenly, in view of that day. Though still the παρουσία, it is more than the presence of the Lord; it is the revelation, the appearing, or manifestation, as the case may be.

Be it noted, further, that *the appearing of Christ is still His coming*, although His coming does not necessarily mean His appearing. Thus, when Christ comes to take the Church first of all, it is His coming, but not His appearing, save to them that look for Him. But when afterwards He is revealed in view of the world, vindicating the ways of God, both as to His enemies and His friends, it is still His coming, while, as a distinctive thing, it is His day, or the epiphany of His presence, as it is termed in 2 Thess. ii. 8. The recent Swiss version renders the entire verse thus: "Et alors sera révélé l'iniqne, lui que le Seigneur détruira par l'Esprit de sa bouche, et rendra impuissant par l'apparition de son arrivée, (*ou* présence.)"

dishonours the Spirit goes far, in the long run, to disfigure or deny the person and work of Him of whom the Spirit is the vicar.

In the epistles, it is beyond doubt that the Church is continually addressed, as if there were no understood, fixed, necessary hindrances to the rapture at the coming of the Lord. How could this be if the Church be the same body as those saints who are described in Daniel, the Psalms, &c., as being destined to certain fiery trials still future from a little horn and his satellites who are yet to appear? How comes it that the apostle Paul, when he speaks of the coming of the Lord, never hints at this tribulation, as one through which the Church must pass; but always presents the advent as an immediate thing which might occur at one unknown moment to another? That the apostle Paul understood the just application of these prophecies, better than any since his day, is that which few Christians will question: they were Scriptures long revealed and familiar to Jews, and the Lord Jesus, in Matt. xxiv., had very significantly linked his fresh revelations upon that occasion with the predictions of Daniel. Yet, the Holy Ghost, in His constant allusions in the writings of the apostles to the future hopes of the Church, *never once refers* to these terrible circumstances as a future scene wherein the Church is to enact a part: on the contrary, the way in which the coming of the Lord is put before the Church, as a thing to be constantly looked for, seems incompatible with it. We have examined the only statement in the epistles which might appear to interpose such a barrier, and we have seen that, so far from contradicting the thought of immediateness, the apostle seeks to relieve the Thessalonian saints from all uneasiness about the day of the Lord and its troubles, by the blessed hope of His coming and their gathering unto Him, which are in his mind indissolubly bound together: a gathering unto Him which must be before He appears to the world, and judges it, because He and they are to appear together. It is certain, moreover, that there must arrive the apostacy and the revelation of the man of sin (not before the coming, but) before *the day* of the Lord.

The prophecy of Daniel had already revealed the leading features of the interval during which "the prince that shall come" plays his terrible *rôle*. "And he shall confirm *a* covenant" (see margin and compare Is. xxviii. 15) "with the many" (i.e. of Daniel's people, the Jews) for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation" (or consumption, as in Is. xxviii. 22) "and that determined, shall be poured upon the desolate." (Dan. ix. 27.) That this prince is not "the Messiah the prince" is manifest, not only from this, that the former is described as one "that shall come," after the latter has already come and been cut off, as is plain from verse twenty-six, but also from the certainty that "the prince that shall come" is the prince of the Roman people: *his* people "shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." We know who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple—the people of this future prince. The latter part of the twenty-sixth verse does not continue the thread of the history, further than the general expressions "and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." In the last verse we are transported to the epoch of "the prince that shall come," and his actings during the last week of the age. This period is shown to be broken into two parts, during the former of which, according to covenant, Jewish worship is resumed, but "in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." If chap. vii. be consulted, it will be seen that there is a certain little horn rising after the ten horns of the fourth Roman beast, before whom three of the first horns fell—"that horn that had eyes and a mouth, that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows." (verse 20.) "And he shall speak *great* words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High (or of the high places) and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand, until a time and times and the dividing of time." (verse 25.) Is it not evident that in chap. vii. is a horn or king whose blasphemous pride brings judgment upon the beast, or Roman empire, and whose interference with times and laws, that is with Jewish ceremonial order, continues for three years and a half? and that for the same space of time, or the last half week, "the prince that shall come," the Roman prince of chap. ix., overthrows this ceremonial worship?

But the Revelation not only takes up the two halves of Daniel's week (Rev. xi. xii xiii.) but shows what is the place of the Church during this period—a truth which it was not given to the Jewish prophet to reveal, because it was that which supposed and fitly followed the revelation of the mystery hidden from ages and from generations. Paul had shown us the Church waiting for the presence of the Lord. What is it that the Holy Ghost adds by John? What is the great outline given in the Revelation?

After the vision of the Lord Jesus, in chap. i., we have "things that are," epistles to the seven churches, so conveyed as to apply not only at that time, but as long as the Church subsists on earth, and then the properly prophetic part, the things which should be after the Church-condition had passed away. *Throughout the prophetic portion of the book, the Church is never described as being on earth.* At the close of the third chapter, it altogether disappears from earthly view; and instead of its course being any longer traced here below, a door is opened in heaven and the prophet is called up there to see the things which must come to pass after these, i. e. after the things which are, or the Church regarded in the completeness of its varying phases on earth. Besides other things, (the Throne and One that sat upon it being the centre of the vision,) John sees, not seven candlesticks, but, suited to the new circumstances of heaven, four and twenty thrones, and upon them four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment and upon their heads golden crowns.

Here we have, in vision, the place and functions of the Church after it shall have been taken up to meet the Lord, and before its manifestation with Him in glory. And for this simple reason, that the way in which He and they are here represented emblematically is totally different from what is revealed as connected with either, when the moment comes to leave heaven for the purpose of judgment upon the beast, &c.; or from what is revealed touching the reign for a thousand years subsequent to that judgment: that is, in Rev. xix. 11 and xx. 4-6. Nor can the scene in Rev. iv. v. be interpreted consistently with any view, save that of the Church being actually caught up and completed in the presence of God. It is a quite distinct thing from our sitting in heavenly places in Christ: that is the subject of the epistle to the Ephesians. Neither is it the same thing as the boldness which the partakers of the heavenly calling have even now to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. Such is the subject of the epistle to the Hebrews, where the high-priesthood of Jesus is dwelt on at length and the liberty which we have in consequence to draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith; for it is still faith, and not actual possession, however it may be, through the power of the Holy Ghost, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But the purpose of the Revelation is to disclose the dealings of God, whether the facts be expressed or understood, but dealings which involve a certain condition of things, which was future if considered in relation to the circumstances looked at in the epistles, as actually subsisting at the time—the things in short which must be *after these*. Nor can this chapter be supposed to describe the blessedness of the spirits of the saints previous to the coming of Christ for the Church, because the departed who are with Christ could not be symbolized by twenty-four elders:* that is, by an image evidently borrowed from the *full courses* of Jewish priesthood. *The whole Church*, and not a part only, is comprehended in the symbol. But this can only be after the dead in Christ rise first, then we which are alive and remain are caught up together with them in the clouds, and so are ever with the Lord. Accordingly, here they are represented in heaven, the Lord being also there, and although made kings and priests even when on earth, still the time is not yet come for the exercise of government. In beautiful harmony, therefore, with this peculiar and transitional period during which they are removed from the world, they worship above. But the saints below are not forgotten. Those above have golden harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers *of saints*. And they sing a new song, celebrating the worthiness of the Lamb to take the book and open the seals, not only because He was slain and had redeemed themselves, but had made *them*, i.e. *these saints*, to their God, kings and priests. They should reign

* Let not the reader suppose that the omission to dwell upon the four living creatures is through inadvertence: I have designedly passed them over, because I do not at this moment possess upon the point any light satisfactory to my own mind. Some suppose that they see in them the symbol of the *angelic* functions, as the four and twenty elders set forth the *priestly* functions, of the Church above; some, that the four living creatures are the representatives of the Old Testament redeemed, as the twenty-four elders represent the New, while others conceive that in them indications are to be traced exactly opposite. The four living creatures seem to be heads of creation—at least, of the creatures which found a shelter in the ark.

over the earth. The fulfilment is seen in Rev. xx. 4-6: the reigning with Christ not merely of those symbolized by the elders, but of the Apocalyptic saints also.

Moreover, it is clear on the one hand, that the lightnings and thunderings suit neither the day of grace nor the millennial state. Earth is certainly not yet brought under the power of the blood of Christ, when these symbols will find their accomplishment. On the other hand, it is equally clear that there are saints on earth, while the twenty-four elders are before the throne above. That is, it is neither the millennial nor the present state; but an intermediate period of a peculiar nature, in which we have the throne, not of grace as now, nor of displayed glory as by and bye, but clothed with what has been justly termed a Sinai character of awful majesty attached to it.

But those above exercise their priesthood in the presence of God as the full completed Church. Hence the symbol of twenty-four elders round the throne, at a time when, as all confess, earth is still unreconciled, however there may be, in the next chapter, the anticipative song of every creature. If this be true, it follows that the Lord's coming to meet the saints takes place between Rev. iii. and iv.; (if the thought be pursued, which I doubt not, that chap. vi.—xix. will be fulfilled in a rapid crisis;) room being left there for the coming described in 1 Thess. iv. and elsewhere. Then the main action of the book goes on subsequently to the removal of the Church, and after that another character of testimony from that of the Church properly is announced, and God Himself is revealed in ways different from those which He is displaying now: that is to say, not as shewing the exceeding riches of his grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus, but in the chastening judgments of the seals, trumpets, and vials, preparatory to the great day of the Lord which Rev. xix. 11 ushers in. On this state of things Daniel compared with the Revelation will be found to cast and to receive much light, for it seems plain that the saints of the Most High or heavenlies, of whom we read in Dan. vii., identify themselves with the saints who suffer under the beast, after the rapture of the Church and before the Lord's appearing. They keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, which, be it noted, is the spirit *of prophecy*, and though they are not of the twenty-four elders, they will have their blessed and holy part in the first resurrection. And here let it be remarked, that the term has nothing to do with the question whether all are raised at the same time; it simply describes the condition of those who rise and reign during the thousand years, as distinguished from those who do not rise till that period is ended. How true this is, is manifest from the fact that Christ has part in the first resurrection, who nevertheless rose before the Church more than eighteen hundred years at least. Hence the thought is not forbidden of certain saints being raised who stand and suffer after the Church is gone.

The symbol of the twenty-four elders continues unchanged throughout the course of the book, till chap. xix. They enter into God's ways and judgments, as interested in whatever affected His glory, as may be seen in Rev. iv. v. vii. xi. xiv. xix.

But in chap. xix. there is a striking change. After the opening scene of the rejoicings over Babylon the elders no longer appear, but the time for the marriage being come, (and how evidently the Church therefore is still viewed in the Revelation as unmarried,) the Bride, the Lamb's wife, is announced as made ready.

The heavenly joy and the Bridegroom and His bride being thus incidentally glanced at, He takes a new aspect, for the day is about to break upon the world; and so do we, for we will have gone long before to be ever with the Lord, and if He is about to appear, so are we along with Him in glory. Hence, in the eleventh verse, the prophet sees heaven opened, and a white horse, and He that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. In unison, therefore, as He thus comes to smite and rule, the armies which are in *heaven* follow the Lord of lords and King of kings; and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful, which expressions are sufficiently clear to determine who are meant by the armies, if any one should have a doubt. It is the Church which was in heaven following Christ, in the capacity of His hosts, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. Contrasted with the marriage supper of the Lamb, all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven are invited to the great supper of God. The prophet sees the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse and His army. The result all know.

Next follows the angelic binding of the dragon for a thousand years, and the parenthetic revelation of the sitting on thrones, or at least, of the living and reigning with Christ during that period, of such as had part in the first resurrection. They will not cease to be priests of God, though their office may be discharged in a different way from what we saw as to some of them in Rev. iv. and v., but they all reign with Christ for a thousand years.

It is a prominent feature of the book, that in it is traced the sovereignty of God, not only in His purposes regarding the Church properly so called, but in His gracious ways with an election from among Jews and Gentiles subsequently. Thus, after the Church is seen in its completeness in heaven, under the symbol of the twenty-four crowned elders, (ch. iv. v.) we hear in ch. vi. 9-11 of saints suffering, yet crying for vengeance; and the announcement to them that they should rest yet for a little, until their fellow-servants and brethren, doomed to be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. Vengeance should not arrive till then. These are evidently not the Church, but saints on earth after the Church is in heaven, whose sufferings and cries to the Lord accord much with the experience detailed in the Psalms. Still, whether Jewish or Gentile saints is not named here. But in ch. vii. we have a *numbered* company out of all the tribes of *Israel*, sealed with the seal of the living God, and after this an *innumerable* multitude out of *all nations*, &c., who are characterized as coming out of the great tribulation, and as having washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. These bodies are evidently distinguished from, if not contrasted with, each other; and they are still more markedly shown to be different from the Church; for we have the facts not only of a certain defined tribulation out of which these said Gentiles come, but of the elders, i.e. the confessed symbol of the Church, being still represented *as a separate party* in the scene.* (verse 11.) Under the trumpets again we find the prayers of saints alluded to, who are of course supposed to be still on earth, (compare ch. viii. 3, 4, with v. 8,) and an implication of the sealed Jewish remnant being in the sphere, though saved from the effects of the fifth trumpet. (ch. ix. 4.) In the eleventh chapter are seen the two witnesses, prophesying in sackcloth, and killed; in the twelfth, the woman persecuted by the dragon, who wars with the remnant of her seed that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is accomplished in the beast of chap. xiii., who makes war with the saints and overcomes them. Chap. xiv. is clearly a sevenfold sketch of the dealings of God, which brings the crisis to a conclusion: the hundred forty and four thousand associated with the Lamb on Mount Sion; the everlasting gospel summoning all to fear and worship God because of the proximity of His judgment; the fall of Babylon; the declaration of torment to the bestial worshippers; the blessedness from henceforth of those dying in the Lord; the harvest of the earth, out of which were redeemed the one hundred and forty-four thousand, as the first fruits unto God and the Lamb; and lastly, the vintage of the same. The reader has only to weigh verses 12, 13, in order to have the foregoing remarks confirmed. Even here we have the patience of saints described just before the harvest; the portion, too, not of the Church, (for *we* shall not all sleep,) but of a special class of saints here below, while the Church is hidden above. In ch. xv. (preparatory to ch. xvi., i.e. the seven outpoured bowls of the wrath of God), is heard the song of the conquerors of the beast, celebrating the works of the Lord God Almighty and the ways of the King of nations. Compare also Rev. xvi. 5, 6, 15; xvii. 6; xviii. 4-6. To those who kept the word of Christ's patience (Rev. iii. 10) the

* I cannot concur in the view put forth in the most voluminous and elaborate comment of modern times upon this book; namely, that the sealed hundred and forty-four thousand are identical with the innumerable palm-bearing multitude; the latter embodying the idea of the different generations of the former into a corporate form, (for the idea of the Church being one body here below by the presence of the Holy Ghost is utterly denied, and unceasingly distorted, in this system of interpretation.) But Mr. Elliott allows that the twenty-four elders represent the Church in the character of a royal priesthood. No one denies that the Church, in different scenes, may be set forth by different symbols. But how comes it, not only that these distinct symbols are in the same scene, but that one of the elders is found explaining who, what and whence the multitude are? and that the description is of those who, among other things, come out of a particular tribulation, and thus form a peculiar class? Nor is this denied by Mr. Elliott, who connects "the great" with the fifth seal, as the complement of the sufferers there, though another and distinct body. And if Israel, in verse 4, is to be understood symbolically, why not "all nations," in verse 9, which are plainly distinguished from the preceding company? And if the election *out of Jews* be the emblem of Christians, how come *these same persons* immediately after to be characterised as an election *out of Gentiles?* Where is the consistency of treating the former as symbolical, and the latter as literal? and the more so, as it is in the latter picture, that various mystic personages appear, such as the four living creatures and the elders.

promise was to be kept (not in or during, but) out of the hour of trial, out of that fearful tribulation which is in store for the dwellers upon earth. But in the preceding Scriptures it is clear that after Christ has fulfilled His promise in the translation of the Church to heaven, there are saints on earth, both from among Jews and Gentiles, who suffer throughout the tribulation. And these Apocalyptic sufferers are described in Rev. xx. 4 as having part, equally with the Church, in the first resurrection. For that text discloses, first, the general place of the Church in the millennial reign, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them;" secondly, those killed in the earlier persecutions of the book, (ch. vi. 9-11,) "And *I saw* the souls of those that were beheaded because of the witness of Jesus, and because of the word of God;" and thirdly, the later witnesses for God, "and those who had not worshipped the beast," &c. (ch. xv. 2.) Those saints who were called and suffered after the rapture of the Church, are emphatically mentioned, because it might have appeared that they had lost all by their death. Not members of Christ's body before He comes for the Church, they share not in the rapture; not protected from death during the prevalence of the beast, they cannot be the living nucleus of Jews or of Gentiles, saved to be the holy seed on earth during the reign of Christ. They suffer, are cut off, but not forgotten. "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Thus the truth brought to light in the epistles to the Thessalonians, is *assumed* in the view which the apostle John was the honoured servant to enunciate—viz., the blessed condition and holy employ of the Church round the throne and the Lamb, after the removal from earth, but previous to the appearing with Christ in glory.

The central part of the Revelation then appears to corroborate on an irrefragable basis, the truth that the Church will be taken away and fulfil the symbols we have been noticing, previous to the day of the Lord, during the same time that other saints are still groaning and shedding their blood like water here below. (Ps. lxxiv. lxxix.)

Such seems to be the main key which unlocks an important portion of the book and confirms the view, so sweet to the renewed mind, of going to meet the Lord, without one earthly obstacle between: keeping unblunted the point and energy of a truth *only revealed in the New Testament.* For the Old Testament spoke of His coming *with* all His saints, not *for* them; of His appearing in glory to the confusion of His enemies, and not of His descending to meet His friends, when we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed and caught up together in the clouds. And hence, it would seem, the emphatic language of the apostle, conscious that God was by him revealing a new thing to faith. For in 1 Cor. xv. he says, "Behold I shew you a mystery;" and in 1 Thess. iv., "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord."

How sweetly do the closing appeals tell upon the heart of him who has an ear to hear! "I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come." It would be to lose the blessedness of keeping the prophetic sayings of this book, to have any other thought than that Jesus is coming quickly. (chap. xxii. 7.) It is well to read in their light the signs of the times: knowing the closure, we can thus detect the principles now at work. But it is a mistake and a misuse to construe of such signs obstacles to the coming of the Lord: to say, until I know the arrival of this or that precursor, I cannot in my heart expect Jesus. Blessed be God! such is not the language of the Spirit. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." Are these the words of mere feeling, unguided by spiritual understanding of the mind of God? As a fact, we know that the Lord has delayed; but He is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But who will say that it is conceivable to be looking for the Lord, *wholly uncertain* of the time of His advent, and at the same time to have the *revealed certainty* of a number of events which determine the year, or, it may be, the day?

That Jesus will arise, the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings, (Mal. iv.) is clear, and we know that the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. (Matt. xiii.) But this same Jesus is more than the supreme power of righteous government on earth. He is known to the Church, at any rate, as the bright and morning Star. Blessed light of grace, ere the day breaks, to them who watch for Him from heaven during the dark and lonely night! "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come."

"He that testifieth these things saith, Yea I am coming quickly: Amen! Come Lord Jesus."—Ed.

THE PRINCIPLES DISPLAYED IN THE WAYS OF GOD, COMPARED WITH HIS ULTIMATE DEALINGS.

It seems to me that the examination of the great principles which God has brought out in his ways in the history given us in the Bible, *would facilitate the intelligence of His ultimate dealings* with men and the understanding of their prophetic announcements, the accomplishment of which will be the establishment in power of the principles which God has already displayed and taught historically in his dealings of old. I send you, therefore, some thoughts upon the progressive development of these principles. In the very outset of creation, we have one of the last importance, and which gives in figure the ultimate results of God's ways in His dispensations towards men, a kind of exhibition of ἀρχὴ τῆς θεωρίας, which is to be τέλος τῆς πράξεως.

Adam was created in the image of God, and was set to rule over the works of God's hands, the centre of a vast system subordinated to him, and over which he had universal dominion. He was, says the apostle, the image of Him that was to come; and the same apostle takes the eighth Psalm,* which, in the letter of its application there, would be limited to the first Adam, and applies the universality of its terms to the full dominion of the second. No doubt the dominion of the second Adam is far more extensive than that of the first, because having Himself created all things, He is to inherit all He has created; but it is not the less true that the first Adam, as image of God, as centre of the system in which he was placed, as having dominion over the creation by which he was surrounded, was the image or type of the Lord Jesus, Son of man, head over all things. Other accessories enlarge this resemblance. Eve partakes of a lordship to which she had no right of her own, but which she enjoyed as one with Adam, is the liveliest picture of the Church, and so used beautifully by the apostle in Eph. v. We have also, according to Rom. v., in Adam fallen, the head of a race involved in his sin and all its consequences, as in the second Adam, when righteousness was accomplished, the head of a brotherhood or family which participates in all that He is, as the head of it in the presence and sight of God.

I pass over the time before the flood, whose general character offers a sad contrast to the time when righteousness dwells in the new heavens and the new earth, without a government to maintain it and make it good against the opposition of an adverse nation or the weakness of a failing one. Neither one nor the other can properly be called dispensation. They are both another world from that in which we live.

With Noah we begin the course of dispensations, or of the manifestations of the ways of God for the final bringing out the full glory of Christ. These ways regard the earth and are founded, so far as they are conferred blessing, on the sacrifice of Christ. Noah indeed had been taken out of the midst of a corrupt world and had a heavenly portion, while he testified of the judgment of the world, out of which he was called, by the coming of the Lord with his saints, a very remarkable anticipation of our portion in Christ. But Noah was preserved through the deluge, to begin a new world, of which he was the head and chief.

The name Noah is expressive of the rest of the earth, comfort concerning the work of men's hands, because of the ground which the Lord had cursed. Three especial features accompany and characterize this position: the sacrifice which turned aside the curse, the restraint of evil, and the pledge of secured blessing to creation while earth lasted. But, as regards dispensation, Noah was the head of a new system where evil was, but where evil was to be restrained, and the curse relieved under which the earth groaned.

The next important principle brought out is calling and election. The earth was not only now corrupt and violent—it had departed

* It is very interesting to observe the righteous man under law and Messiah the king, in the first and second Psalms; and then, after being rejected with them that were His, and in trouble, the far larger glory of Son of man resulting, in Psalm viii., which closes and crowns the series, as we find in the Gospels also the transition from *His unadmitted Messiah-title to the fuller* one of Son of man, suffering and glorified. (See Luke ix. 20, and following.)

from God. It had not liked to retain God in its knowledge, and served other gods. God, in sovereign election, calls Abram to follow Him *apart from the world;* and separation from the world, for the enjoyment of promise by faith, becomes the divine principle of blessing. Abraham is the father of all them that believe. He has to quit all on the supreme claim of the Lord—country, kindred, and father's house, for a land only in promise, which God would shew him. Brought there, he has still to walk by faith in patience, not yet inheriting the promises. When in possession of them in pledge, in Isaac he has to give them all up, as held in the present life of Isaac, in unquestioning confidence in God, to receive them in the power of One who raises the dead.

We have election, call, promises, by which the believer is a stranger in a world departed from God. To this we may add the distinct principle of receiving the promises by the power of God in resurrection. This special position made of Abraham, in a peculiar manner, the father of the faithful, of all them that believe; the father of many nations before God, in whom he believed, the heir of the world. The detail of the promises, whether of the blessings of the nations, only given, Gen. xii., and confirmed to Isaac, Gen. xxii., or of a numerous seed according to the flesh, and of the land of Canaan,* are not properly our subject here. The latter leads, however, to the next important step in the ways of God, the formation and deliverance of a people from the power of their enemies by judgments and an out-stretched arm, by which they were set apart as a people of dilection to God on the earth. Israel's coming up out of Egypt is, I need not say, the event in which this was prefigured. Long subject to hostile and oppressive Gentiles, and particularly at the close, when God was about to deliver them, His arm, who had already given the blood of the Lamb as the safeguard against His righteous judgment, delivered the people with a power which none could dispute, executing judgment on the proud enemies who oppressed them, and defied His majesty. Joseph and his Egyptian wife had given meanwhile the remarkable type of a rejected Christ exalted on high and his Gentile bride, who had made him to forget all his affliction and his father's house. But the deliverance of Israel gave occasion to the introduction of an entirely new principle, not the prefiguring the ways of God, but the putting of man to the proof on the revealed principles of what he ought to be, and that, when thus delivered and brought near to God, as a favoured people guarded of Him with every motive and means for walking before Him who had thus borne him on eagle's wings, and brought him to Himself. In a word, the law came in. Immediately broken, Israel is anew, through intercession, placed under it as a condition, with the added revelation of all the graciousness and goodness of the character of Him under whose government he was placed, and who would act in that government on the principles thus revealed. Still he was placed under law, and held the blessings under the condition of his own obedience. This, as the apostle states, came in by the bye, added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. The law in itself could do nothing but convict man of his incompetency. But it gave in general the principle of a rule of God's will, to be written afterwards in the heart of His earthly people; in obedience to which, maintained in their hearts by God, they would enjoy the blessing conferred by Him on His people on the earth. But on the principles of government declared by God to Moses, and announced in Exodus, the people were placed on the mediation of the priesthood under the immediate government of God. The priesthood was there to maintain the blessing if there was failure, where it was not departure from God or sinning with a high hand, and Israel, in obedience, would have had their peace flow like a river.

But Israel, incapable of walking by faith and trusting God even when the blessings were immediately consequent on obedience, prefers being like the nations, and demands a king, when God was his king. However, this gave occasion to the revelation of another principle of God's ways with men, the establishment of royalty in Zion, a royalty whose sway should extend much farther, and in which the Gentiles should trust. However, royalty is established and in Zion, and that by grace, after the failure and ruin of the people, through disobedience to God, under His immediate government. The priesthood itself loses its place, and the faithful priest is to stand before God's anointed. The king is now the anointed of God. The principle of this royalty is on one side the throne of the Lord, (Solomon is said to sit on the throne of the Lord,) and on the other, it is strength out of weakness. See Hannah's song. It is the re-establishment of Israel in blessing, when hopelessly ruined, by the means of the rejected, but God-fearing, King, who delivers them from their enemies and subdues the heathen. This re-establishment by royalty has a double bearing, the blessing of the people after their ruin, by the deliverance wrought, and their re-establishment in accepted worship after the guilt—the temple after Shiloh—and that in a peculiar manner in grace, after the numbering the people. There were three stages to this royalty: when rejected entirely in Israel; when the ark was placed by David on Mount Zion—the energy of victory in connection with the assured covenant, but not yet the blessing of peace. This was the third state, which was Solomon's. Christ, I doubt not, has filled up, or will fill up, all these: the rejected, the victorious, and the peaceful King. In general, we have the important additional principle of a human, ordained king, in a royalty established by God over His people, said to be seated too on the Lord's throne. This, as we know, in man's hands failed, like all the rest, and gave rise to another and large modification of the principle of royalty, the confiding the power of universal dominion, wherever the children of men dwell, to man on the earth. This was sovereignly conferred beyond the limits of Jewish promise and dominion, acquired by no faithful service in suffering, but divinely bestowed by the God of heaven. This also fell, and more than fell. Substituted to the Jewish royalty, it united with the Jews and their ecclesiastical rulers in the rejection of the Son of God and King of the Jews, one of which titles,* in its lowest acceptation, is the character in which, above all descent from David, though that be at the same time true, Christ is to have the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, and the other of which expresses evidently his title among the Jews as the anointed, the Son of David. We have thus far all these features:

Adam, centre of the earthly system under God.

Noah, head of the earth blessed after the curse, restraining evil.

Abraham, called by election out of the world, to which promise is annexed.

A people redeemed and formed as such, as belonging to God on the earth.

The law, the rule of the people so formed, and the path of blessing as the will of God.—The royalty of Israel in the family of David, the anointed king, and the royalty of the Gentile world, sovereignly conferred by the God of heaven.—All these will be made good in Christ, in person, or for His people. He is the second Adam, the head of the earth, restraining evil after the curse, the chosen one separate from the world in whom all the promises are Yea and Amen, the head and uniter of redeemed Israel, the true vine, the son called out of Egypt, the one in whom the law was magnified.

These two facts will also have their accomplishment hereafter in his people: the Son of David, and the head of the Gentile world established such by the sovereignty of God.

Hence all this progress of development closed with the rejection of Him in whom all was to be accomplished.

The testimony of the Holy Ghost, in patience, called them, who had put Him to death, to repentance, but the call was unheeded and the guilt remained upon them. And thus closed all God's dealings with the earth, as presenting means of blessing to their acceptance, and Christ the Lord, the Son of man, must return, sent by the Ancient of days, before the principles of blessing held out, and the revealed means of relationship with God, could be made good in power and available in blessing.

In all this, it will be evident that the Church of God does not at all enter. The scene had for the time† closed, in which these

* The cases of Lot and Abraham furnish, on the one hand, the deep moral lesson of the impossibility of walking to the end in the presence of temptation by accompanying another's faith—our own, sooner or later, will be put to the test; and on the other, a new and interesting type of the privilege of the heavenly-minded Church to enjoy communion with God and the knowledge of His thoughts concerning others, far from the trial and judgment; while Israel, attached to the earth, are saved out of them, and so as by fire, and perhaps others besides Israel though for heaven, as those found on the sea of glass.

* I am quite aware that the Jews rejected Him religiously as Son of God, and Pilate politically, as King of the Jews, but I speak of the real import and value of these titles as to the government of the earth. The second Psalm does not, I believe, refer to the character of Son, as given in the Gospel of John and elsewhere, though this higher sense may be the necessary introduction to the lower; but the second Psalm speaks of the Lord as in time.

† I say for the time, because it is evident that the age in which Christ was upon earth (though suspended, so to speak, to let in the heavenly body, the bride, the Church) is not closed, and will be resumed in the dealings of God with the Jews and the kings of the earth, who stand up against the Lord and

various principles were developed on earth, to be resumed in power when Christ returns there, to whom all the title and blessing belongs. Meanwhile He is hid in heaven, and unites to Himself a heavenly people outside all these ministrations, to be associated with Himself, as a better Eve, when He shall take the inheritance and accomplish all that God has held out to man. Yet in one point there is connection, that is, in Abraham. Although there be higher principles of blessing which have formed the subject of promise, such as being united to the Christ, members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, yet Christians do come in, under Abraham, as heirs of promise, as strangers and pilgrims on the earth, walking by faith, called out of the world. Thus they fill up the gap during the power of the Gentiles, guilty of rejecting the Lord, and the setting aside of the Jews for their despisal of Messiah, until called to take their place in the heavens with the Lord. In Christ we are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise, though God has reserved some better thing for us. But as the Church, she is entirely outside all this, unknown and a mystery, till the time Israel was set aside, and there was nothing but what unknown and sovereign counsels might introduce, until God too keep Israel again for repentance and blessing. This very plainly shews the distinction of the Church from all earthly position and promise, though manifested there until God shall again begin to act from the throne on the nations, and take up again his questions with the earth then in judgment, as heretofore in grace—judgment, to which men will be as callous as they have been to grace, till it assumes a character which there is no escaping, and when despair will be as complete as revolt and self-will were before. It does not enter into the subject of this paper to treat of the details of that day. The judgments on the Gentiles are the subject of the Apocalypse. The state of the Jews of the Old Testament prophecies chiefly. After a moral preparation in the hearts of the Jews, the presence of the Lord Jesus will at once bring in the accomplishment, not only of promises made to them, but the concentration in His person and kingdom in the power conferred on Him, of all the scattered elements of the Divine ways previously revealed. It may be remarked, that I have left prophecy out of the list I have given of manifestations of Divine intervention. The omission was not forgetfulness. A prophet was one by whom God sovereignly maintained His relationship and connection with Israel, and even in a measure with the world, when there was entire failure. It took place in every dispensation, and was not properly one, but ran through all, though God acted by it in emergencies. It revealed God and foretold Christ, but evidently was to cease when the things it spoke of were accomplished, for then it had no place. Its character was the sovereign intervention of God, not the development of His ways. Hence it was in exercise at all times, when, as regards those ways, man had failed. It shewed and reproved the failure, and encouraged the faith of the Jew, faithful among the faithless, in the enduring fidelity of the Lord, pointing out with an increasing fulness the intervention of God in power, when the faith that made its way through the power of evil would be no longer needed, because that evil would be set aside by power. Hence we find it in Enoch before the flood, in Noah, in the patriarchs, and, in a particular manner, in Samuel, when Israel had failed under the theocracy, and in Israel departed from God, and in Judah become unfaithful in her kings. I do not touch here on the character of prophecy in the Church, as spoken of in the epistles. The Church was based, as we have seen, on the failure of every thing, and to it, and in it, the mind of God was specially communicated. To that which takes a definitely prophetic form the above remarks, however, fully apply in principle. Only the Church counted faithful is made the depositary. We have prophecies in Thessalonians, Timothy, Jude, and Revelation. In the latter case, the part fully and properly prophetic treats of the world and the apostacy, or of the Jews; so that it takes a distinctly prophetic character, and returns to the principles † stated above. The prophetic character was accomplished in the Lord at His first coming, as far as regards His person.

The priesthood does not enter either in its Aaronic character into the ways of God with man. It was the means of approach of man to God, and subsisted in connection with the existence of his people without a king and under the kings. It supposed an accepted earthly people, so far as it was in daily exercise, though there might be particular failure. So far as the acceptance of the people was in question, it was hidden within the veil. In this character it is Christ's present position as regards Israel, for we know the acceptance, the veil being rent. It existed under different dealings of God to maintain individuals in their position, and was not positively itself one.

J. N. D.

his anointed, and, as is evident to me, before the manifestation of the Son of man. Meanwhile, the apostacy of professing Christendom will have taken place, and it is the putting this and the Jewish state of things in their place which creates the chief difficulty of interpretation, because it is the developing, in point of time, of two different systems, which unite, however, in their rejection of God and His Christ. Patient waiting upon God will clear up this, as all else revealed in the Word. The death of Stephen and calling of St. Paul, and the rapture of the Church, are the boundaries of the time of full light in standing before God. I do not speak of man's profiting by the light, but of his position.

† There are two kinds of prophecy in the Old Testament. Prophecy addressed to the conscience of God's people, while owned or at least subsisting as such. Prophecy revealing God's ways when He no longer owned His people. Daniel is the example of the latter. His prophecy is not addressed to Israel. The former kind of prophecy does not exist in the New Testament in the Church, because the occasion of it had ceased. The Church was united to Christ in heaven, and the character of communication was to the members of His body enjoying unity with Him by the Holy Ghost; it called for what suited that, and the coming of Christ was the object of highest affection where there was no failure, but He was possessed, not prophesied of. The second character of prophecy confided to the Church, but not addressing it, is found in the Revelation, and depicts a time in which God would deal with the world of which the Church was not. Israel has its place in the sum of prophecy which is necessarily the earth, and hence was addressed in it. The Church does not. Hence the character of the Lord's prophecies. They address the disciples in this condition, and though more simple and intimate in their nature, as we might suppose, partake of the character just spoken of in reference to prophetic addresses to Israel.

THE UNITY OF TRUTH.

SCRIPTURE is the history of the actings and dealings of God in connection with man.

The unity of God's blessed book is thus, to those who are initiated in its truth, most perfect. It is the mirror in which the glories of God, in His three great displays of creation, providence and *redemption*, may be seen. Man is the subject of the blessings, and Satan, with all his powers subject to him, is the would-be hinderer and enemy both of God and man. Infinite and varied are the glories which are brought before us in its marvellous pages, —yet are they but partial expressions of the glory of Him with whom we have to do; for man's language, even when used by whomsoever, is an imperfect medium of recording the wonders of God as displayed in His actions. These glories are infinite; for God's actions are the revealers of what God IS, and He is infinite. And they are varied too. In creation shines forth one set of glories, as the creatorial power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Godhead. Providence tells its tale about his gentleness and long-suffering goodness, not willing that any should perish; — but redemption, the hidden, yet surely the most deep object both of the creation and of the upholding the world, is the great unfolder of the glory of the being, and character, and ways of God. By redemption, his mercy and his grace, as for *eternity*, make their appearance; and thus it becomes evident that creation and providence are *means* to an end, and that end so amazingly great, that no one can apprehend it aright without seeing how all blessing, from first to last, has been according to one counsel, and plan, and purpose, even of the Father; all done by means of one glorious Person, the Son, and all standing in the energy of one Spirit — all, too, a means and pathway to one common glory.

Thus, the unity of the whole, its oneness in *deed* and in *truth*, will be seen.

But there is another way in which oneness may be traced. Not only do all the subordinate parts adjust themselves together to make up one whole—creation the stage or platform, and providence the drapery or scenery in which redemption is displayed—but there is also the unity of correspondence. While the subject matter and its circumstances, in which God displays himself severally as Creator, Upholder and Redeemer, are very diverse—inasmuch as He is always the same God—great unity in His character, and ways, and attributes, and works, may be traced. In all three of these kingdoms, and all the various parts of them, the same God, all-wonderful and all-adorable, stands confessed.

Again, besides these two displays of unity in truth, there is, thirdly, that which is very interesting, the principle of unity as to the mode of first presenting, and then of unfolding the details. Gen. iii. 15 is the bud, the germ of all truth: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." A little word which, when fully unfolded, will show forth the glories of the twenty-first

and twenty-second chapters of the Revelation. How wonderful is this! All the glories of the new heavens and the new earth, and of the triumph they shall witness of the Son of God and His people over Satan and sin, all folded up in a little promise, just suited to the twilight and the narrow circumstances of the first individual that sinned against God. There is a unity between the bud and the full-blown rose, between the acorn and the oak; but not a more perfect unity than between that little promise which Eve heard, and the triumph of the redeemed, through Christ, in the new heavens and the new earth.

And let us see, too, *how* the promise has opened—just in a way confirmatory of all this unity. The little germ has gradually unfolded itself from glory to glory, in shootings, which have at each succeeding stage said: "The work is one"—"redemption comes." As the end was important to be known, even at the first, and from the first all along till the end came in all its fulness and blessedness, what has God done but shown and re-shown the principle of the end continually over and over again?

Such pleasure from the beginning has God ever had in the end, that he has stamped its impress again and again upon human events as they have rolled past by man to be for ever forgotten. I could pause here to count the innumerable proofs of God's delight in redemption, and the subordinate things connected with it, as given in his impressing scenes, and persons, and things, and times, with the mould of truths displayed in redemption; but I must forbear for the present, and endeavour to trace out a little of the way in which truth has been unfolded. It is a wonderful principle on which God has acted in unfolding truth to man. His way has been such as ever to keep before his people the last, the great, the all-important, because eternal, deliverance and triumph. He has made every fresh manifestation of the principle of His moral government and character, even when dealing with human circumstances, point to, and, when declared, speak of, this—the only real hope of God's people the great terror of Satan and his seed. The principle I refer to is that of dividing the history of redemption into parts, and in each of these parts, as a section of the whole, acting out in narrowed scenes it may be, the outline of the whole. And thus has there been acted and re-acted on the earth, in sections of the conflict, the great truth of redemption.* Scrutinizers of Scripture will find in it a repetition of events pointing to the one great end. We are too much accustomed to pass from Noah and the flood, to Lot and his escape from Sodom, and thence on to Moses and the escape from Egypt, and the return from Babylon, as containing instructive lessons to ourselves, and pledges of deliverance both to ourselves and to Israel in its day of amazement, and thence to the final rescue in the day of encompassing of the camp of God and the beloved city, for it to be needful to do more than just touch upon this chain of redemptions. But in each link of the chain, the history of redemption has, in some sense, been acted over, and a rescue of that which was dear to God been effected out of the midst of a judgment upon the adversary. Beautiful in its season each deliverance, helpful to faith in its day, but *most* precious as pointing to the one great eternal deliverance, and as showing too our God's pleasure in the anticipation of it.

It is blessed too to notice how, because all Scripture has to do with the Lord Jesus Christ, and is used by the Spirit, we find faith gets connection, through grace, with every part of it. A study of Psalms cv. cvi. and cvii. will show how the Divine mode of dealing is *one*, whether *nations*, *families*, or *individuals*, be the subject of it. Helpful as the observation of this is, I notice it here only as connected with *the unity* of truth.

* I remember an illustration by which one, (now with the Lord,) well read in Scripture, was wont to explain this: "The play of the wind upon a double harp could not produce a more harmonious repetition of notes than I hear in the prophecies. It might have its several octaves, and each octave its complement of notes; the octaves differ in tone, but contain similar notes. The sound increases in descending, yet is it but the repetition of the same notes from the top to the bottom of the instrument. So the events in time: there are series corresponding the one with the other, from the beginning to the ending. Eight such double octaves can I trace. 1. Cain to the flood. 2. Lot. 3. Exodus. 4. Solomon. 5. Cyrus. 6. The first advent. 7. The second advent. 8. The general resurrection. Each octave in proper complements of notes: on the one side, God, his seed, the good, its spread, its height, separation, suffering and rescue; and on the other side, Satan, his seed, the evil, its retirement, insidiousness, leavening character, persecution and overthrow. Yet, whether there be so many subdivisions, and whether in each subdivision so many parts can be traced out, matters not—the principle remains the same. Many prophecies sweep the harp. Faith dwells on no note till it reaches the end: the endings are those great events in which the God-man shall be glorified, which are ever in God's view, and in reference to which all others have taken place—events which prophecy would ever sound in the ear."

I will only add one word further. Most evident must it be, that the holiness and justice of God have only one thing, from the beginning to the end, as a means of dealing with the sinner, namely, the blood of the Lamb, and but one power of operating upon men, even the Spirit.

In the redemption by God in man's day, as of Noah, Lot, &c., God gat himself honor and glory, as in providence, but in such a way as to point faith onward to something yet to come; and, doubtless, so far as these were used for the exercise of faith, the Spirit was the energy.

O what a happy morn will that be when the shadows are all fled away, and the Lord in His glory is fully known to us as our salvation for ever and ever!

DIVERSITY IN TRUTH.

I DESIRE to call attention to some of the wondrous things which (as the Word reveals) are to be displayed among the glories connected with the person of our Lord Jesus in the coming day of His manifestation in glory.

And, first, as to the spheres of His glory. Ourselves in the new Jerusalem, the bride the Lamb's wife, fully associates with him there, in the highest enjoyments of Himself, as the heavenly Man, the quickening Spirit: two other glories will clearly then be seen by us to be His, viz. first, His communion with the Father; and, secondly, His display of glory for the earthlies.

No sound or sober mind, I am persuaded, taught in the Word or subject to the Spirit, would hesitate for a moment before asserting that the divine object in redemption is not expressed in either of the following propositions; either, first, to lower down the divine glory to the measure of human capacity, and then, as it were, to lose all that which finite human capacity cannot contain; or, secondly, to exalt men into that which is properly the glory of divinity. I can see no blessed hope in the thought of the throne of the infinite God being destroyed, nor in the mad delusion of any mere finite being sitting thereon, nor any soundness of mind *in confounding* the glory distinctively peculiar and proper to infinite Deity with that suited and proper to blessed and glorified, yet still finite, man. Such is not the testimony of the Word as to redemption.

At the beginning of this world's history, there was divine glory in the heavens, and a glory fit for man, as man, in Eden. Two glories distinct the one from the other, though connected together: sin entered, and all below was wrecked and marred, and marred for ever, but for redemption. Redemption, as we know, was not an after-thought of God's, merely to remedy what sin had done; but was altogether a divine counsel, and from before all worlds. Redemption had its own plans, and when they are accomplished, neither will finite man be made infinite, nor will the Infinite be made finite in any way. Infinite Godhead will be infinite Godhead still, and finite humanity will be finite humanity still, (however much enlarged beyond what it was at first,) and both will have their distinct glories, and (of grace) be connected together in the wondrous person of the Lamb that was slain, God and perfect man. The wonderful secrets of the tale of redemption are all presented in the person of Him in and by whom redemption is accomplished, God manifest in the flesh; for the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

All the counsels, and purposes, and plans of God found their centre in Him—in Him by whom redemption-work was accomplished: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Col. i. 14-20.)

The incarnation holds not, I am persuaded, its right place in

many minds. The INCARNATION is as much the great formative central truth in *redemption-glory*, as is *the death on the cross* a proper *characteristic;* that is, looked at as a whole, in connection with the divine counsels of *the coming glory* which is to flow from grace. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 5-11.) "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. ii. 10.) "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. xv. 45-49.) The glory of redemption is the glory due to the cross, endured by the Lamb, who was God manifest in the flesh. God manifest in flesh is the central truth of the glory which is to flow from grace through the cross. For the glory *given* to the Lord Jesus, whether as to the names, the kingdoms, or the unsearchable treasures of varied honour, are all such as are fitted for the God-man, for God manifest in the flesh. True it is the glory which flows from *grace*, and, therefore, the recompense of the glory was found by Him in depths of woe in death—death, the death of the cross; *wherefore*, God also hath highly exalted him. What grace to us, poor sinners! Nothing but the death of Him, the just One for the many unjust, could clear our responsibility, or embolden our consciences; but how great, how divine the grace that shows us that it was in that same death of His which cleared us that His reward was found!

We know where the man Christ Jesus is now, set down with His Father on His throne, (Rev. iii. 21,) as He prayed: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John xvii. 5.) As Son of man, He is in the glory of the Son of God.

But He will leave the Father's throne to take His own throne, that other men may sit there with Him. Having prepared a place for us in His own Father's house, he will come again to receive us unto Himself, that where He is, there we may be also; even us, whom God did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. And blessed truth! He hath said: "Behold, I come quickly."

Yet a little while, how little a while, and He that shall come will have come, for He will not tarry.

Beloved brethren, we shall be there for ever with the Lord, beholding Himself for ever, our eyes seeing Him, our ears hearing Him, while in the midst of the Church He sings praises to God. How great the joy, how glad the surprise, to see in the man of sorrows, the then man of glory, anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows! As no sorrow ere so deep as his, so no joy or gladness ere so full. Perfect, divine joy in human heart, tasting and displaying how it is more blessed to give than to receive. And we shall taste His joy too;—as he said, "if ye love me ye would rejoice, because I said I go unto the Father:" free then shall we be to taste it, for ourselves will be there, fair witness as the Bride of the Lamb shall be of His joy, in saying, "Behold I and the children thou hast given me;" fair witness of the rest of His heart in the Father's joy as each several poor prodigal is looked upon. God shall still be first in all His thoughts, but then first shall Christ find in other than Himself, for Himself will make it to be so, that God is owned as first perfectly in man, and has His rest, as so owned, among men. The Bride, the Lamb's wife, shall be at ease too, perfect ease, amid His glory, though it is the glory of God and the Lamb. But if in the hallowed freedom of brotherhood and sonship, as individuals; and of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, corporately; most peculiar as this is, most suitable expression of glory for the *heavenly man*—for the Lord from heaven; it is not all. It has its root in THE HEAVENLY ASPECT of the second Adam. It is, I judge, so entirely the proper display of that, as that that could not be displayed without it. But is there nothing above for glory, nothing beneath in glory—each sphere equally finding its root, and the cause of its display, in the untellible fulness of His own person, and God's delight in Him? Surely there is.

Free as I may be there, never shall I confound between Him and another man, however highly blessed that other may be. Still will He be my Lord and my God, and worship and praise to the Lamb will be the lightening of my heart, its vent for the exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And more than this, I, and we shall then be most sweetly conscious that while He has brought us to taste of the waters of Abba's love, that it is Himself alone, as still the Son the Infinite God, who knows fully the love of the Father the Infinite God. He says, John xx. 17: "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." The Son never could say, my God, till He became a man, but my Father he could, say even as only begotten Son. Now His grace has taken a place as man and servant, and associates us with Him there in grace, and that as adopted sons. And though the Infinite and Divine and eternal refreshment of His own communion as Son is tasted by us, it is Himself alone who can know and apprehend its fulness perfectly, for He and it are infinite. God only knows the love of God.

Closely connected, most surely, are God and the Lamb with the heavenly glory, and sweetly and divinely fed through the power of the Spirit will the heavenly brethren be, but still Infinite and finite, Godhead and manhood (as displayed in the heavenlies) are very different things, and never can be confounded; though the two both meet perfectly in Him. But there is besides these two a third, that on the earth. And this too has its roots in the person of the Lord, and is the proper expression of God's delight in certain things in Him.

Every rill and stream, in that day, may be traced up to Himself, and the fulness in Him fills all and keeps all full, yet still Himself inexhaustibly full. Perfect God, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, He will be; perfect man as seed of the woman, He will show himself gathering up all the earthly promises into Himself; but, besides this, He will have a heavenly glory proper to Him, as the Lord from Heaven, the new wonder, of which creation contained no trace, the marvellous secret unfolded by redemption, in which God the Son, manifest in the flesh, is the connecting link between God and redeemed man. And a halo of glory proper to Himself He will then have, for the Bride, the Lamb's wife shall be there in the heavenlies.

As to the earthlies, the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea. Jehovah Shammah, in Emmanuel's land, metropolis of the earth, shall see its feast of tabernacles honoured "by Israel mine inheritance, by Egypt my people, and by Assyria the work of my hands," and by the whole compass of nations; for David's son is Abraham's seed, too, and Jehovah Adonai is His name.

And thus he is Lord of Heaven and earth, and so displayed, though there is a glory celestial and a glory terrestrial.

Some think that all this will pass away with the millennium; and some would then bring all Divine glory down into earth; while some would leave the earth and have all to rest upon the throne. Are not both wrong? What is truth must still be an open question. I avow, however, that the way the glory celestial and the glory terrestrial, during the thousand years, seem to be the expression of different glories found *in the person* of the Lord—expressions in grace of different parts of His infinite fulness as God manifest in flesh,—makes me feel a difficulty of admitting such a view, and I think the Scriptures more naturally would teach the contrary; and that it is the mind of the Lord, I, though still a learner, think. G. V. W.

"AND MADE US SIT TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS."—EPH. ii. 6.

The history of the Ephesian saints, from the darkness of nature up to the height of glory, and rest, apportioned by God's grace to the members of Christ's body, is evidently instructive to us, in order that we may ascertain how far we have consciously advanced

in the same blessed path. We read in the end of Acts xviii. that the apostle Paul had preached in the synagogue at Ephesus and subsequently that Apollos came to Ephesus, and he spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. That the saints in Ephesus had advanced no farther than John's baptism is evident from the nineteenth chapter. Then we read the apostle again visits Ephesus and finds certain disciples, whose progress he ascertains by asking them, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost," to which they reply "we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." The apostle then traces their ignorance to the limited nature of their faith and profession by a second question "unto what then were ye baptized? And they said unto John's baptism." Now we must remember that the things of the Lord can be taught diligently, knowing only the baptism of John, and that saints can be disciples and not have heard even whether there be any Holy Ghost, (I suppose not simply hearing but understanding,)* ere we can form any just idea of the state of soul such limited acquaintance with the work of Christ must entail. John's testimony went no further than declaring the coming "of one mightier than he," awakening consciences to the ruin of their condition, demanding of them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, calling on them to repent, for God's reign was commencing and judgment was concomitant with it, but giving man no *new* power to effect this change. The terror of coming and deserved judgments were pressed on the minds of all, while John himself, as a witness of the judgment he pronounced, took a path in the world unfrequented by man, and eat food not common to or provided by man. He led his disciples to confess their sins and express in the waters of Jordan their willingness to enter on another course, but surely there was no sense of forgiveness—of acceptance with God in the Beloved—of membership with Christ as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh—of adoption, the Spirit of the Son in our hearts crying, Abba Father, or of sealing with the Holy Spirit of promise, the earnest of our inheritance. All these are to be learned by the Holy Ghost, of which the Ephesians had not as yet heard.

May we not fear that many disciples of the Lord even now have not practically advanced beyond the *doctrines* taught in the testimony of John the Baptist? How many know nothing, at least almost nothing, of the forgiveness of sins, and as possessors of a new life and nature, accepted of God in all the excellence of the Beloved! If not, surely they too might answer "we have not so much heard whether there be any Holy Ghost"—at least *instructively* so. But at this let them not be cast down, for such-like were the Ephesian saints, and yet "after they believed, they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance."

Now it is as sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise that the apostle proceeds to instruct the saints of Ephesus into all the glory of their calling. He first prays that the eyes of their understandings may be enlightened that they may know what is the hope of His calling, what is the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places. They had something more to learn than even being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, some greater enjoyment to be partaken of in addition—an earnest of our future inheritance. The soul is to be carried on to the hope of His calling and the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and, as leading to this, to know what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe. This is more than sealing—this is more than the earnest of the inheritance. Have we attained to it? and are the eyes of our understanding enlightened? If not, it is evident they ought to be. If, however, we know anything of the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, it is ACCORDING to the power which wrought in Christ and raised Him from the dead, and set Him at God's right hand in heavenly places. It is here the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe. has reached its limit. It raised Christ from the death into which He entered for us, and has set Him at God's right hand in heavenly places, and it is the same power which is to us-ward who believe, according to the same quality, reaching on-ward and proved by the same limit, to the heavenly places where it has set Jesus head over all things; and the Church, which is His body, knows no lesser quality. It is according to His mighty power which he wrought in Christ. If it were a lesser power, it would have a lesser limit and a lesser quality; but the power is the same, and the limit and the deliverance must be the same. There may be different extents of power given in the heavenly places, but it is the one and the self-same power which has raised Jesus there, and that our eyes ought to be enlightened to know as to us-ward who believe—and which the apostle goes to shew in the second chapter, is the same power (whether we know it or not) which has blessed us in *every stage*, from death in trespasses and in sins till it accomplishes in us, even now in spirit, the same blessed result, as it has triumphantly in unquestioned majesty in the Lord Jesus Christ. The depths of our degradation have not counter vailed. He has raised Jesus who entered into death for us, and having raised Him from the mire of our ruin, He quickens, into the life of Christ, every member of His from the *same* scene, and raises them together with Christ and makes them sit together with Christ in heavenly places. It is the *same* power all through. The power which quickens is the power which makes us sit in spirit together in Christ in heavenly places. Not by and bye, but as it is now, the eyes of our understanding should be enlightened, to know the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, and it is now that we should know the results. If saints yet have not learned it, let us remember that it is from blindness and want of faith. The Ephesian saints were not left in this darkness, for *they were willing to go onward.* They were willing to be taught, their hearts were the good ground. In honesty and truth they heard the word. No one is straitened in God; but he who has a hard judgment of God will have a judgment according to it. Let us further take the evidence of Scripture on this point. What was taught in the crossing of Jordan? Was it not a full and complete deliverance from the wilderness into Canaan? No Israelite set his foot in Jordan till a clear and immutable path, an assured path of safety, lay *fully* before him. He entered on it rejoicing in the power of God which provided it, but that was not all. Mere faith in deliverance, wonderful and gracious as it is, *is not the fulness of our blessing.* On Canaan's side of Jordan the memorial of deliverance was to be reared up. *Where* power was exercised, from thence the material of the memorial was to be procured. Where the priests' feet stood, *from thence* the stones were to be taken and set in the place where "they lodged that night." Their *first* lodging-place in Canaan was marked by this memorial—a memorial of what? Not that they had *hoped* for deliverance—not that they had *seen* by faith, through the intervention of the power of the ark of the covenant, an inobstructable path, across the wide flowing river—but that they really had crossed over, and as a remembrance of the power which wrought it, did they rear up a remembrance at the first lodging in Canaan. It is evident Canaan is not the scene of complete rest but of conflict in the scene of future rest and glory.

We are taught the same truth in the thief on the cross. He as a Jew had sought to be remembered in the kingdom, but Paradise is given to him as his present portion. So now the world's rejected one, is quickened with Christ, raised up together with Christ, accepted and made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places.

Again, in Lazarus (John xii.) we get a type of the Church *now.* In the xi. chap. we had our condition because of death, our only hope in Jesus: the male representing power or the lack of it, the female actual condition;—the one marking the conduct of faith, the other the state. The exceeding greatness of his power to us ward, who believe in the person of Christ, liberates Lazarus from the tomb, and thus quickened and raised up we find him sitting in happy social communion with Jesus, denoting our calling, or that into Christ has brought us; while the visible expression of the Church on earth is symbolized by Martha serving and Mary pouring forth fragrance in reference to the death of Christ, from whence all fragrance to this evil world springs.

May our souls be more conversant with the wonderful mercies of our God, and we shall be prepared for still greater revelations of His unaccountable grace! Only let us prize what we do know, honour Him in our appreciation of it, and have readiness of soul ever to say when opening His word, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

J. B. S.

* [I apprehend rather that it is simply "hearing," although of course the subject-matter was not understood. The extraordinary thing was the Holy Ghost given in this new and peculiar way—a thing which Pentecost first saw. Let the reader compare John vii. 38, 39. It is the Holy Ghost given then for the first time to those who were already believers.—ED.]

CHRIST, THE FAITHFUL WITNESS.—Rev. i. 1-5.

Before beginning the prophetic part of this book, the Lord addresses Himself to the seven churches of Asia by the mouth of John, in wishing "Grace *be* unto you, and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne." Thus, before beginning the prophecy, the Christians are put in their place, and it is on this I have to dwell now.

The eternal Spirit speaks here, not under the characters of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, because He speaks of that which God will do on the earth; it is rather according to the Jewish form—Jehovah upon His throne, and not a Father in the midst of His family. (Eph. i. iv.) The Holy Spirit is presented to us, not in His unity, but in the diversity of His perfection; that is, displayed in the manifestation of Himself, in what He is, and in what He does. (Rev. iv. 5; v. 6.) Finally, the Lord Jesus is spoken of—what He was on earth, and what He will be as Mediator, who has come, and who will come.

This address then differs a little from those which we find at the head of the epistles; nevertheless, he wishes "grace and peace." When the apostle addresses individuals, as Titus, Timothy, &c., he adds "mercy." The moment we contemplate a Christian individually, it is needful for him to wish mercy; but as to the Church, it is viewed in Spirit, perfect and accepted before God, having received mercy. It is ever as God sees it, in its privileges, praying that it may enjoy them: "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 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. Even so, Amen."

There are three things in these last verses: (1) the wish of grace and peace, and the description of the person in whose name this wish is made—Jesus Christ, "the Faithful Witness;" (2) in the fifth and sixth verses, we have the answer of the Church the instant that Christ is named before Jehovah, the answer unto Him that loved us; (3) in the seventh verse, we have not the response of the Church, of the heart of the Church, but the revelation of the knowledge which the Church possesses with reference to the world. The subject here is not the faith which fills the heart with joy through the knowledge it possesses of Jesus, for there are two kinds of knowledge; that which produces the answer of the heart of the Church as to itself, and that which it possesses of what is in the world.

Jesus is presented here under three characters: the Faithful Witness, the First-Begotten of the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth. He has not yet taken this last power. He has perfectly represented God; He is conqueror of death; He has all power, it is true, on earth, but it is the seventh verse which answers as regards the full accomplishment of this character. "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him," &c.

I will enlarge a little on the answer of the Church, verses 5, 6: "Unto Him that loved us," &c. Observe the effect of the thought, and what Jesus is in the heart of the faithful and of all the Church! There is nothing which stops; there is instantaneously the answer of praise and thanksgiving. The moment that the Church is found in the presence of this grace of Jesus, there is nothing but praise; there is no considering, no hesitating, no doubt nor difficulty; the only thing that faith has to do is immediately, and as soon as the grace of the Lord Jesus is come to the ears of the Church. "Unto Him that loved us .... be glory and dominion for ever and ever." It is the natural and necessary answer of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, and the revelation of what Christ is.

Too often, alas! there is a quantity of prefaces in our hearts in order to put us upon the ground of praise. Here there is nothing of the sort; it is the effect that the Holy Spirit must produce in the heart which is in its normal state, whether in the heart of the believer, or in that of the Church; because, as soon as we have believed that God regards the Church in Christ, He puts aside individual circumstances. Christ is there. The presence of Christ blots out every other thing; we are entitled to forget all, even ourselves and our state.

I will not say that individual circumstances are nothing in their place—very far from it; but the essential thing is to be a Christian, and it is necessary, in this vocation itself, to make new progress every day. The Christian is perfectly washed, purified, and capable of enjoying Jesus; he is all that Jesus wished that he should be, and in Him a partaker of joy and peace—of that which He has purchased for us, and of all that we are in Him. And when it is a question of the Church of God, of the adoration, of the worship that we render Him, we are then in our capacity as Christians, putting out of sight our circumstances and the flesh which is in us, for the purpose of enjoying, as Christians, by the Spirit, all that Christ is for us.

It is most important for the children of God to apprehend their position aright. When it is said that He is "the Faithful Witness," the question is not to say, I have not been the faithful witness, I ought to have been that; but rather to say, It is He that has washed us. I am entitled to think only of Jesus, only of what He has done for me; I am entitled to be set there.

If I am before God alone in my closet, it is needful that I judge myself. I may say to myself, You have not understood that you are a king and a priest, and the Holy Spirit makes me examine my state. But with other Christians, in my capacity as a Christian, I am there for the purpose of enjoying all that which Jesus has entitled me to enjoy—all things that He has done for those who believe in Him. It is true that my individual state may hinder me from enjoying as much of all the fulness of the grace of Jesus. It is possible that I may be more or less capable of enjoying my position, but that does not change the position itself; it is so much the worse for me if I enjoy not my title.

Important as it is to judge ourselves, it is very important also to think of all our privileges in Christ; it is this which imparts strength to sacrifice all; it is this which purifies, which sanctifies. The extent of the privileges of the Christian strengthens him to get aloof from a multitude of things of this world.

When we have understood heavenly things, we can immediately say: "Unto Him that loved us," &c. The Christian is no more to think of the particulars of his state, but "unto Him that loved us."

When in the presence of the Lord, there is nothing prepared for God but *praise and adoration*: "*Unto Him be glory and dominion.*" The Christian remembers what Christ is for Him. The Christian may sometimes say, I am not in a state to praise; he may, it is true, be more or less capable of doing it well, but he is always in a state to do it. If a man who has sinned is there in the midst of his brethren, he may be cast down in humiliation, but he is, and ought always to be, in the position to praise doubly the grace shewn him, because Christ is always suitable to a sinful soul. His praises will be modified, but he will always praise.

So also, whenever a Christian is in circumstances of chastening from the love of the Father, there is some hindrance to his enjoying this gladsome liberty of the Spirit; nevertheless, because Christ has done all for him, he can always praise Him.

That which makes the thing more remarkable is, that this song is sung in heaven. Observe what is said, (chap. v. 9,) "to Him that sat upon the throne." Those who begin the strain sing "a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." Clearly there is but a trifling difference; they sing better, without doubt, in heaven than on earth, but it is very nearly the same song. There is no other subject of praise for heaven than for earth; the blood of Christ has the same efficacy on earth as in heaven: that for which they praise God there, is equally true for us. Their harps are better tuned than ours, but their song is the same.

Well, the power and the glory of Jesus, who has accomplished all, being there, the Spirit who reveals Him to our souls produces in us praise and adoration;—those sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ are the answer to that which the Spirit reveals to our hearts. When the Holy Spirit reveals to our hearts what Christ has done, we know that we ought to praise. What else could we do? What the Holy Spirit can produce in us is thankfulness, adoration, and praise.

I speak of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. Observe the three things, and the immediate effect of the revelation of Jesus. He speaks of a simple certainty of His love. One may reason about it oneself, and not be sure of His love; but if it were given us to see Him, could we have a doubt? Did ever one that met Him on earth find any other thing than *love?* He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Our view may be obscured, but we know that He is *love.* If I commit myself unreservedly to what He is, He is love.

He came not for the purpose of judging. If I think on what Christ is, He is love. If I take the history of Jesus, I can see what He has done, but it is impossible to find a single trait to indicate that He did not love; and the truth of the word, that He casts out in no wise him that cometh to Him, has had its entire accomplishment. None could say, I have been to Him, but He wished me not. The Son has rejected none of those whom the Father sent Him; and here is the greatest proof of the humiliation of Jesus, that He gathered and received all those whom His Father sent Him. Had there not been love in Him, never would He have been in this position; His perfect obedience and His infinite, incomprehensible love, placed Him there; but not one did He refuse, because He was doing not His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. He cannot refuse us. Knowing our unbelief, He came to do the will of His Father, and to glorify the Father during the whole course of his ministry; and he must receive those who come. May God give us grace to think of Jesus! Certainly, the soul must see itself in its true light; but that is preparatory to the enjoyment of Him; for it is so hard for man to see himself vile and sinful, and God leaves sometimes for awhile a soul in doubt; but nevertheless He has loved us, and the first thing the heart must possess is the persuasion that, notwithstanding our great misery, God makes known His love to us, and when we are come thus far, we are to enjoy it, and we have no more than to say: To Him who hath loved us, and who hath washed us from our sins in His own blood: to Him be praise, worship, and glory!

He has washed us; a soul may have an imperfect knowledge of its salvation; it is not made free, but love may be there, though even it be ignorant that it is saved. Poor Mary, that woman who was a sinner, coming before Jesus, weeping and not daring to speak, had been drawn to Jesus; (Luke vii.) she manifested to Him a ruling affection; her heart was throughly melted, and she dared not to express herself. Jesus had understood all that, and she had understood the heart of God better than Simon, who had not expended a drop of water to wash the feet of Jesus, nor a little oil to anoint His head. But the woman understood the heart of God, not the effects of His love, but the love of God in Jesus; also Jesus said: "She has loved much, because much has been forgiven her." But she knew it not yet.

Mary had understood that there was love in Jesus; she was even appalled at her sins; but when Jesus spoke to her, she could have said: "He has washed me." And we also can say: "He has loved us, and has washed us in His own blood." There is more still; there is what He has made of us and for us, "kings and priests to God His Father." Behold Him, the subject of our songs! It is Christ; but in looking upon Him, we see what He has made us before God His Father.

There is something very touching in the thought, in the counsels of love: love wills that the beloved shall enjoy the same blessing of glory as he who loves. Christ is from God, King and Priest, the most near to God, as King and Priest, in power and in approach to Him; well, because He loves us, He will have us placed in the same position of blessing as Himself, and we are by faith already there. Something would have been wanting to His love if He had not done it, and it is because He has made us kings and priests that the subject of our praise is not equivocal, and what ought to proceed from the heart by the Spirit, is praise and adoration.

One may sing well or ill, high or low, according to the state of one's soul, but it is a song that ought to be sung without one discordant note.

Let us see whereon this is founded. On Jesus Christ, who is the Faithful Witness. It is always Christ, on the part of God, who is something. It is the Faithful Witness, and we need Him, for in what way can a sincere soul have knowledge of itself? It is generally occupied with itself. It says, I am this, I am that; it finds some uncertainty as what it really is, as if God did not know; if it had sufficient wisdom, it would have done with itself; it would know it could find no good in itself; it would refer to the judgment of Christ.

Christ knew well what Peter was, when he said to Him: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." (Luke v.) Did not Jesus know it? Yes: He knew it perfectly. Well, it was Peter who knew it not; it was just simply a remnant of pride, and that soul is precisely in the same case who seeks into these things by searching within itself, and expects not to find itself in the mud. But if a soul recognizes itself in this state of utter ruin, God has searched it out: His love is there.

But we need a "Faithful Witness." We see God in nature; that is true, but all this knowledge does not lead man to God.

Man has spoilt all. The traces of God, of the Architect, are there; but it is a ruin; all is defiled from His thought; all is in degradation. The ways of Providence are incomprehensible. A soul under chastening understands nothing; "there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked;" it is always an enigma for them until God judges. The certainty of what God is cannot be found in this inexplicable Providence.

The sinner, man needs something; then Jesus appears. Is Jesus sufficient for a witness? Does holiness lack in Him? Was He not jealous enough for the glory of God?—Could a poor soul be more so than Jesus was, all holy as He was, all zealous for the glory of His Father. He who came, from God Himself, in the midst of sinners, was full of love. Impossible to find more love and grace than in Him; impossible to find any thing but the Faithful Witness. One may trust in Him, for there is no uncertainty in His testimony. He is the Faithful Witness. God could say: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

I have found the Faithful Witness, and in receiving Him I glorify God and give thanks for Him. In coming to Jesus, we leave all, that is the practical effect; we abide in the truth, we have found God such as we are; that is to say, in whatsoever state of sin a soul may find itself, there is no more guile. (Ps. xxxii.) Such as this soul is, it is itself before God also, such as He is; not a God who has been deceived, but, in His Faithful Witness, the One who, when sin has abounded, has caused grace much more to abound.

Impossible that Jesus should not be the light of every sinful soul, whatever be its state. He is the True and Faithful Witness; and this is precious, that He is the light which lightens every man that comes into the world, whatever be the state of the man. Christ is *love;* the greater sinner I am, the more need I have of Him. Moreover, the heart which has understanding in the ways of God, says: Christ is the First-born from the dead. He who had the power of death could not detain Him, neither could the anger of God, for that was glorified in the bursting forth of His justice, in His death; and that same justice was to raise him up and bear testimony to Him. And there is the subject of our joy; it is that Jesus has manifested, as man, the effects of sin, and His power over all the effects of sin.

He is the First-born from among the dead, and the Head of the Church which is His body. (Col. i. 18.) He has manifested by His death and resurrection, that He has the power to raise us. He is the Head of the body. Such is He for us, the First-born, the Faithful Witness; and for the world, the Prince of the kings of the earth. He will then manifest and display all His power and His rights even toward those who will have denied Him.

He is the Faithful Witness as regards our sins, and it is our happiness that He has not hidden them from us. The imagination of men incline to the belief that it is necessary to add, on our part, certain sentiments to this testimony; and many fine discourses cherish this thought, and torment the soul; but by no means. Men imagine that there is I know not what process to be used to apply that to themselves. By no means. We must think through grace that Jesus is the truth, and all suitable sentiments come afterwards; impossible that there should be good ones before faith. If conviction of sin is not there, the man imagines there is some good in him. This conviction of sin comes by faith, not by intelligence; it is the efficacy of the work of Christ. I will give an example of it. When Peter preached to the Jews, (Acts iii.,) he said to them: "You have killed the Prince of Life; you have denied the Holy One and the Just." If they had not believed him, they would not have said: "Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?" If faith had not been in their heart, they would not have

believed themselves lost; when they believed in Jesus, a thousand things followed. Their peace flowed from their believing in the efficacy of the work of Jesus, which the apostle explained to them in answer to this cry.

There may be pious sentiments, but without faith there will be no results; but the certainty of salvation is a consequence which God reveals to me of the work of Christ. If God says to me, Thou hast killed the Prince of Life; well, by this means I know that all my sins are washed out. When God says, This is what I have had done, I have washed out all thy sins by the sin thou hast committed in killing the Prince of Life; faith alone can make me comprehend that. The heart torments itself while the thing is simple. It is to believe the witness that God has given of his Son. And this love which is boundless, this Jesus who is the Faithful Witness, let us receive Him as such, and as the image of the living God, who is always love.

THE EARNEST OF THE INHERITANCE.—Eph. i.

I find, dear friends, that the apostle appears to dwell here on the purposes of God concerning us. He speaks not so much of the means He has used, as of the blessing in which He will set us.

Doubtless, it is a good thing for our souls to understand well the means God has used to bring us to Himself, but this is in order that we may be occupied about the things to which we are called. It is in the enjoyment of these things that the Christian character is adorned, and that the soul believes. They pervade our whole being, and when the heart has laid hold of them, we are very much Christ-like, and much more in testimony, so that there is a point of attraction much stronger and more evident, through the power of the Holy Spirit acting in us. This is what we have to seek.

I speak of practical things; not merely of having been saved, but of having tasted of the "grapes of Eschcol," fruit of the land of promise, of that true Canaan, whereof faith says, *my* country. You remember, dear friends, that spies were sent by Moses to search the country into which God would make Israel enter; and that they brought back magnificent grapes, fruits characteristic of this desirable country. (Num. xiii.) This is the distinguishing character of *faith;* it realizes, it possesses by the Spirit the "earnest of the inheritance." Some had understood how it was with this land—a land which was not watered with the foot, (as the land of Egypt,) but which drank water of the rain of heaven—a land of hills and valleys, rich in every way, which the Lord their God cared for, on which the Lord their God always had his eyes, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year. (See Deut. xi. 10-12.) It was a figure of the heavenly country where all blessing abounds.

The privileged position of Israel was not merely to have been kept from the destroying angel by the blood of the Lamb; (Ex. xii. 13;) neither was it merely to have been secured from Pharaoh by the power of Jehovah; (Ex. vii. 3-5;) nor to have been kept by the cloud behind them, that their incensed enemies should not approve them, even as they were conducted by the same cloud when it went before them; (Ex. xiv. 19, 20;) but, moreover, this is what characterized Israel, that they were guaranteed by God that He would care for them in the wilderness, where they had to walk after having been delivered. *They were there with God.* But, alas! their hearts turned back always in thought towards the country that they left. They were, but too often, taken up with the onions and the cucumbers that they had left; (Num. xi. 5;) that is to say, with the carnal desires called the reproach of Egypt. (Josh. v. 8, 9.) Their *hearts* were not *circumcised.*

Dear friends, those who dwell in spirit in the heavenly country take the tone of it, and grow in the things wherein they find themselves. They can be in relation with God. They enjoy all that God has given, which is doubtless very precious; but, above all, they can enjoy God Himself. There is the immensity of the grace of Him who desires that we should always dwell near Him, and that we should know His thoughts and intentions. Yes; it is they who understand the best what is "worthy of the Lord;" and that is what we have to desire. (Col. i. 10.)

It is this of which the apostle desires to speak to us in the chapter which is presented for our meditation.

In the third and following verses he says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"—in Christ, the "head of the body." It is there that God places us. We know it, beloved; but we know it more in theory than in practice. "According as He had chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." It is not merely of the means (as I have said) that is here spoken, it is of the end that God has proposed to Himself; for it is said: "That we might be holy and without blame before Him in love."

That is the thought of God concerning us; He will have us *before* Him, and have us happy there, and for Himself. There is but one only sense in which God cannot suffice to Himself, that is, in His love; His love needs other beings besides Himself to render them happy. He will render others happy. He will have before Him beings who respond to what He is.

He places us before Him, "holy and without blame." It is what He is Himself. *He* it is who is holy. *He* it is, surely, who is blameless, for it is impossible to impute to Him any fault. *He* it is who calls Himself "*the Holy One.*" He it is who is "*love.*" Important and precious thought for us! He has willed that the Church be such, that He may take pleasure in her, and see before Him the reproduction of Himself.

He reflects Himself in His children, inasmuch as He places before Himself beings like unto Himself; it is rendering us happy as far as it is possible. He communicates to us His nature, and makes of us His delight.

To this end, He makes us "holy and without blame in love.' This is accomplished here below by the Spirit, although the effects are only found in their perfection above. For example, where is our place already here below? "Before Him." It is not a simple joy, it is the most precious thing that can be imagined, to be before Him! Adam, a sinner, fled *from before* God. (Gen. iii. 8-10.) We do not like to be *before* Him when unholy; but when the conscience is purified by the blood of Christ, we are truly happy "before Him." (See Heb. x. 19-22.) We must be holy—we must enter into the tastes of the divine nature—our nature must find its happiness *in being holy and without blame in love.*

We find in 1 John iv. 13 an expression nowhere else to be found in the New Testament. It is this: "He has given us of *His* (own) Spirit;" an expression powerful enough to make us comprehend how we are "made partakers of the divine nature."—(2 Peter i. 4.)

The apostle had already said: "He who keepeth my commandments dwelleth in Him and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us." (1 John iii. 24.) The presence of the Spirit was felt by the various effects of His power. It was the proof that God abode in Christians; but this passage of 1 John iv. 13 goes much further. It is evident, not only that God dwells in us, but that we dwell in Him, because He has given us of His Spirit.

As to Jesus, He says: "Believe me that I am in my Father and the Father in me." (John xiv. 11.) If He had not said, "I am in my Father," one might perhaps have formed to oneself an idea that God dwelt in a man to manifest His presence by the effects of His power. Jesus said: "In that day you shall know" (not only that the Father is in me, but) "that I am in my Father." (John xiv. 20.) He was one with Him in nature, with Him who dwelt in a nature purely divine, without making Himself man. Also, though in another manner, we know that He dwells in us and *we in Him*, "because He has given us of His Spirit." It was not, in the case of Jesus, a simple manifestation that God was there, (this is what the disciples might have supposed,) but they had not the idea that Jesus was in God, for that carried with it the participation of the divine nature; and this is what the apostle speaks of, (1 John iv. 13, which we have already quoted,) inasmuch as that applies to us; to wit, that the divine nature reproduces itself in the Christian; he has received of the very Spirit of God; it is a man who *loves*, and God is in him, and he in God. That which was granted was no less than the communication of the divine life, by which we dwell in Him and He in us, in order that we may be holy and without blame. What we shall be above should be our aim here below, not as an imposed task, but as being made partakers of the divine nature, to the glory of God. If we will realize these things, our thoughts must be above, according to the measure of the grace we have received. It is of great advantage to us to think of the things above, of the source, of Jesus, of the accomplishment of this purpose of God in the glory.

Verse 5. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." The apostle has always this adoption in view, that is to say, that God will have us for Himself, before Him, and by Jesus, according to the good pleasure of His will, as His children, and it is the glory of that grace which has placed us there. The apostle speaks afterwards of the basis, of the means which God has employed, on the certainty of which we may reckon, and he speaks of them as an assured thing. Here is the door by which I may enter; having passed through the door, in Jesus I have the certainty of being in the house. But it would be sad to have Jesus only as a door, however precious it may be to understand that "we have remission through His blood, namely, the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace." (Verse 7.)

If we have not the certainty of our entire acceptance and of the Father's love, we question at the riches of His grace, because we have redemption by His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. If I am in uncertainty, I do not enjoy this grace. I must cast myself entirely on God, on the power of Him who bids me enter. If I calculate, how can I calculate the riches of that grace? We cannot number our sins, and how much less the riches of the grace of the Lord. But it is this which has to be calculated; I say it for those who are in anguish, the only thing to be done is to consider the riches of the grace of God; it will be one means of drawing nearer to Him.

The Lord does more still than assuring us of His grace. He says, "wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence. (Verse 8.) He hath done all things from Himself. "Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He had purposed in Himself; that (it is always the dominant thought in St. Paul) in the dispensation of the fulness of times, He might gather together all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are upon earth, even in Him." (Verses 9, 10.)

There is the thought of God; He will "gather together all things in Christ," and here is the knowledge which is given us of His thought. He will "gather together in Christ that which is in heaven and that which is on earth," 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."

And here, dear friends, I beg your attention to the thought of the apostle, who says to us that God will "gather together all things in Christ."

The Church is to be his joint-heir, that is, the mystery or *secret of his will;* but He unites these things to promises which had been made on the earth, to the ancient promises made to Abraham, namely, the coming of the Messiah and the promise of the Holy Spirit.

The question was how to make this promise reach to the Gentiles. The Holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession to the praise of His glory. (Verse 14.) When the apostle says *us*, (verse 12,) he speaks of the remnant of the Jews, since afterwards he says "*you*," in speaking of the Gentiles. (Verse 13.) The "first" are not the Gentiles, nor the Jews as having believed before them, but those among the Jews who first believed, having got the start of the nation, and who are placed as the first-fruits of this same nation which hereafter shall believe, and which shall then say: "Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord." (See Matt. xxiii. 39, and Ps. cxviii. 26.)

They believed before they saw Messiah manifested in His power; they anticipated the manifestation of His glory. Take now the promise made in Joel ii.: "And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my Spirit on *all* flesh," &c. The presence of the Holy Spirit is the great thing for us, whether for enjoyment or for any thing else. It shall happen after these things. God speaks here of the time when He shall have re-established the Jews in their land, for He says: "My people shall never be ashamed, and it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh." This is after the blessing of the people, in order that they may enjoy it. But when the day of Pentecost is there, Peter says: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." (Acts ii. 16.) Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit only descended on a small number, because the nation had not received Christ.

It is evident, that was not the full accomplishment of this prophecy, for there were but few persons who believed in Christ without seeing; and those were Jews. But here, the Gentiles enter also by faith, and are "*sealed*." They do not receive the Holy Ghost after the accomplishment of the things foretold by Joel, for they are not yet accomplished; but some have anticipated all that by faith, and the Gentiles are also, "*to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made them accepted in the beloved.*"

The Holy Spirit comes down also upon the Gentiles to put the "*seal*" upon men and to give the "*earnest*" of the things that we have not yet, that we possess not but by faith. When God shall have accomplished all things, these will no more need of faith, nor of the "*seal*," the Holy Spirit will be no more given as the "earnest." No doubt, we shall, in heaven, be filled with the Holy Spirit to enable us to enjoy heavenly things, when they shall be present before our eyes; but there will be no need of a "*seal*" upon us, when we shall be in the glory, no need of "earnest" when we shall be enjoying the very things of God. What is presented to us in this passage is then the character that the Holy Spirit takes meanwhile, in those who first hoped in Christ, in order that they might be "to the praise of His glory," and made "partakers of the inheritance."

But, in the midst of a world knowing nothing of this thought of God, of this mystery of his will, which has caused his grace to abound towards us in all wisdom and prudence, I, a poor Gentile, I believe in all these things, in this purpose of God to *gather together all things in Christ*, in this special position of the Church, "holy and without blame *before Him*," and the object of his delights. He has "*sealed*" us together for that. The Church which has believed without seeing, shall be "before Him holy and without blame in love," because God has given her "of *His* Spirit."

The Church shall not only be blessed in His presence, but shall be also the expression of what God is, because God has given her of *His* Spirit. What is important in the position of the Church, for us Gentiles, is, that having faith we are there also, "having heard the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, in whom also, after that we believed, we were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." (Verses 13, 14.)

Afterwards, the apostle, recognizing all the saints as "one body" in Christ, desired; first, that their hope might be clear and intelligent; and secondly, that they might experience the power of the life of Christ. He desires first, that the saints may intelligently enjoy the calling of God, all the glory of "his inheritance in the saints," and then, verse 18, that they may know "what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

God has willed a special glory for the Church; and to return to her position before God, she is "holy and without blame in love."

Two things constitute our hope: first, what we are before God, and secondly, the position in which He places us above all things, for the possession of the inheritance that Jesus has acquired to the praise of his glory. That is what we are to seek into, and what is to be our every day occupation. I do not say to what extent the thing can be realized, but we must understand what God has meant to do in placing us so high. There are no clouds there; I say not, no difficulties, but when we are before God, close to Him, we feel that He wills all that, and that He wills that we be there, and that the cords of his love are drawn between Him and us; that He holds us. Dear friends, are our hearts occupied about these things? Do they realize this communion with God? Do they enjoy their privileges in Christ? In order to that, they must be on a good foundation; to enjoy, we must understand that we have "the forgiveness of our sins, redemption by the blood of Jesus;" we must have entered in by the door, quiet in the

presence of God; His love must be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which has been given to us. (Rom. v. 5.)

"Hope maketh not ashamed," (whatever be the difficulties,) "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." The Holy Spirit having been given us as a *seal*, and dwelling in us, it may indeed happen that we fail in many respects by our foolish negligence, but we are in the position to enjoy all.

What is special, is the Holy Spirit given as seal after we have believed, before the things themselves be accomplished. Thus, we are able to enjoy all that belongs to the Church, that "God has predestinated to the praise of His glory." Having the love *shed abroad in the heart*, I do not say, being assured of this love, (that is doubtless very much,) but the love being shed abroad in the heart, and enjoying this love, we have the assurance of being before Him "holy and without blame," and of possessing all the glory of the inheritance. I apply that to the practical state of my soul.

Oh! that Christians may be as in the house of their Father, tended, sustained; weak, perhaps; but, at least, let their Father's house be the place where in their weakness they grow, and that there they may savour what He has done for them!

Let us comprehend that the Holy Spirit has been given as the "*seal*," as the "*earnest*" of infinitely higher things. God places us before Him "holy and without blame," and He does it for the Church here below, because He wills to reproduce Himself in us. The Church is before Him in Christ, and we are called to be "*the followers of God as dear children*," (chap. v. 1,) by the power of the Holy Spirit, whilst passing through this world as others.

We may fail as to the testimony we are called to bear; but may God give us the intelligence to live in these things, and to walk therein! It is what He desires to do by His Spirit; and it is what He promises by the manifestation of His presence in the midst of us.

May God so fill us by His Spirit, that we may glorify Him, and walk as those *who first hoped in Christ!*

THE WISH OF PAUL IN CHAINS.—Acts xxvi.

It is much, dear friends, to say with Paul to Agrippa: "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." (Verse 29.)

There is what the apostle could say from the bottom of his heart to those who surrounded him, that they might be such as he was, without his bonds. He might have answered to Agrippa, who had said to him, "almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian:" (verse 28) "Would to God that thou wert." The answer would have been good and according to charity, but it would not have presented us with a state such as that expressed by the words of the apostle, whose heart, full of joy, overflows with this charitable wish. A happy heart does so naturally.

The apostle was pressed to say what he knew, that is, to express what was passing in a heart which enjoyed its position in God. His soul was so happy, that he could desire the same thing for others of which he had the consciousness for himself. Joy is always full of good will; divine joy, of love. But more, this wish describes to us the state of the apostle's soul, notwithstanding his circumstances. Notwithstanding his confinement, which had already lasted more than two years, his heart was completely happy; it was a happiness of which he could render himself a reason; and all that he could desire was that those who heard him, even the king, were such as he was, except those bonds.

Such is the effect of the strange happiness that is produced in a soul wherein Christianity is fully received. It possesses a happiness which in principle leaves nothing to be desired, and which is always accompanied by that energy of love which is expressed by this wish, that others were such as itself. We see moreover here, that it is a happiness that outward circumstances cannot touch; it is a fountain of joy springing up within the soul. The whole outward position of the apostle was but ill calculated to produce joy—it was long since he was prepared to expect bonds and tribulations; but none of these things moved him, neither counted he his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry he had received to testify the Gospel of the grace of God. (See Acts xx.)

Paul had been taken and led to the castle because of the violence of the people. He had been dragged from tribunal to tribunal. He had languished two years in prison, obliged to appeal to Cesar. And, to sum up his history, he was a man that might have been supposed to be worn, harrassed as he was, pressed on all sides by all that can break the heart and daunt the courage. But there is nothing of this: he speaks before the tribunal of what he came to do at Jerusalem, and not of his sufferings. He was in the midst of all these things, as he says himself, exercising himself to keep always a conscience void of offence before God and man. All the difficult circumstances through which he passed were idle to him, and did not reach his heart; he was happy in his soul; he desired nothing but this happiness for himself or others, and the happiness which fills with perfect satisfaction is surely a remarkable happiness. True, he was bound with chains, but the iron of his chains reached not his heart—God's freed man cannot be bound with chains. And he desired nothing else, neither for others nor for himself, save this complete enfranchisement by the Lord. All he could wish was that all might be altogether such as he was, without his bonds.

We are going to examine what gives this happiness, this tranquillity, which leave nothing to be desired. We may have joy to a certain point, but not peace, when there is something to be desired. In Paul was to be seen a perfect happiness. A free and ardent love was found in it. Doubtless, he had not already attained to perfection, as he said himself: "I count not myself to have apprehended;" but there was happiness and love. He possessed a perfect happiness, and, being "before kings and governors," surrounded by all their pomp, he wished for them that they might be *such as he was;* and his testimony was so powerful, that Agrippa could say to Paul: "Almost thou persuadest *me* to be a Christian."

Persons may be found here, all whose circumstances are painful, who have anguish of heart. Well, Paul was in a position to be "of all men most miserable;" not only did he suffer, but his work was stopped; he could not attend to what concerned the dear flock of the Lord; every spring of happiness that he might have sought in these cases as a resource failed him; and although, according to man, he might have had good reason to complain, he is there a model of happiness. That which he enjoyed was independent of all outward circumstances, for they were not what rendered him happy.

There are persons who imagine that if such and such circumstances met together, they might be happy, but that could not have procured Paul the happiness that he possessed; God alone was the source from whence he could have drawn it. We may have sorrows, but the happiness which we have just spoken of will not be troubled by them; and we have need, dear friends, of the firmness of this happiness, for if we knew the circumstances of this life, whether among the rich, or among the poor, we should see that sorrows never fail. But to return to relations with God; we are going to see the source whence Paul drew his happiness.

Before his conversion, he possessed not this happiness. His privileges as a Jew could not give it him. He had a good conscience as a man, but ill enlightened: he did things which he thought he ought to do against Jesus. (Verses 9, 10.) Conscience is so often falsified by education, (and that was his case,) that he followed its directions and obeyed its dictates; and, through that very thing, he opposed Christ with all his might. He did conscientiously what was the greatest possible iniquity. As for the rest, he was well instructed in the religion of his fathers. "Pharisee after the straightest sect," very active, and distinguished for his zeal. He had been taught at the feet of Gamaliel, he was directed by the high priest, (verse 12,) and in open war with the Lord Jesus. (Verses 14, 15.) With all our conscience, our religion, our learning, and the approbation of the doctors of this world, *we may be at open war with the Lord.*

The enjoyment of all these advantages does not hinder us from being bankrupt before God, and it is a terrible and painful thing to be bankrupt before God; and so much the more, as the things we have so much esteemed not only do not support us, but are found to have been the instruments of the blinding of our souls. Although the apostle had a good conscience, was pious and directed by wise men, all these advantages had served in the issue only to place him in open war against God. One may boast and glory, "no one can say any thing against us," (and it is the saying of

many people,) and finally one discovers all that has led us to make war against the Lord.

The flesh has its religion, as its lusts; it does every thing to hinder the conscience from meeting God. When Paul acted in the flesh, he was satisfied with himself, and, with the help of the good he did, that settled his affair. The religion that the flesh uses is put into the balance to make weight; if conscience says: "Thou hast not been quite what thou shouldst have been," this religion which adds certain forms, certain ceremonies, that the flesh can accomplish, puts the whole in the balance, tranquillizes itself, and rests there: this is not *faith*, for *faith draws nigh to God.* One has no religion before God, one has a conscience convicted of sin, and one is too much occupied about the judgment of God upon it to think of one's religion; rather, one has none; and there is not one person here who, if he were in God's presence, could think of *his religion.* Worldly piety only serves when we need it not. When we do need it, whether before the justice of God or on account of a broken heart, it is nought; it has only served as a means to turn us away from the consciousness of our need as sinners, which consciousness, through the grace which produces it, would have led us to the true remedy, to that which would have done us true service in the hour when it would have been necessary for us.

What made Paul happy? It was indeed the truth, but not immediately, for he found he had made war against God, when He met him on the way to Damascus. Hitherto he had been content, but no further. (See chap. ix.) The Lord Jesus manifests Himself to him in glory, and convinces him of sin. He is three days without eating or drinking, upset as he was by meeting the Lord; he was not then in the position to say: "I would that not only thou, but all that hear, were such as I am."

The Lord sends him to Damascus to hear the word of truth, and after three days' sufferings, produced by the conviction that this Jesus, against whom he wrestled with so much fury, was the Lord, this same Lord sends Ananias to him, and then we see how complete was his conversion. From an enemy he becomes the friend of Jesus, and the apostle of grace. That is what God does: of a persecuting "Saul" he makes a "Paul," powerful witness of the love of Jesus.

Paul had been conscientious and very zealous for the religion of his fathers; but, with all his conscience and his religion, an enemy of God. He was the most wicked, and, as he says himself, the "chief" of sinners. And, nevertheless, there he is; he becomes in three days the most remarkable apostle of grace—and how did that happen? It is a very simple thing. He had become acquainted with Jesus. He could not at once manifest what he would be; for he had been terrified at seeing the state of death wherein he was, but he had heard in his heart this voice of Jesus.

Jew or Gentile, it is all the same, while the soul is unstripped, the conscience unconvinced of sin, and the man has not understood that all his religion is but enmity against God. This conviction of sin does not come to all in the same way; there are different circumstances, but it must always be that the soul be naked, and that Christ reveal to this soul His relations with His own.

There are poor Christians, dishonored by those who are in consideration, designated by injurious titles: well, to these persons despised and pointed at because of their faith, the Lord reveals His relations with them in a manner most positive and clear. The revelation that Jesus made to Paul is, that they are entirely identified with Himself. He says: I AM *all those men whom thou persecutest.*

Paul sees the glory, and he is arrested; no doubt that it is the Lord. But this Lord is Jesus, who shews him that he persecutes Him in persecuting the Christians. "It is MYSELF," says Jesus, "whom thou persecutest."

There were in those days differences in faith, patience, and piety, amongst the Christians, but Jesus bears them *all* on his heart. He says: "It is MYSELF." And there is a complete revolution in Paul, learned, religious, and a persecutor. The more there is of religion of the flesh, the greater enemies we are to Jesus. The finer the outside, the more honest and brave I give myself out for, exactly so much the more I am God's enemy, and so much the more opposed to the grace of Jesus. He who wallows in sin will not pretend to be the friend of God, to be reconciled with Him.

But as for those who have believed, Christ identifies himself with them. In this room there are those who believe, and others who do not believe. Amongst those who believe there are (without doubt) many degrees of spirituality, but I can say of all these latter ones, "they are ONE with the Lord Jesus." It is evident that this simple truth changes all in the state of the soul—the being ONE with Him who is in glory.

Paul has been later caught up to the third heaven, and had precious revelations. When he was arrested on the road to Damascus, he had yet much progress to make, for he even thought himself lost, till Ananias had explained and made him understand what Jesus wanted of him. (See Acts xxii. 14.) Then Ananias said to Paul: "The god of thy fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." But from the moment that he truly knew the Lord Jesus, he was ONE with Him, and he knew it.

Whatever then might be the circumstances of Paul, whether at Jerusalem, at Cesarea, before Festus, or before Cesar, he could say: "*I would that you were such as I am, except these bonds;*" for he knew what he possessed in Christ. It was a question of this truth, the being ONE with Christ. Of course, Paul had yet a great deal to learn of the Lord, but in spite of that, he was ONE with Him; he had understood, that in persecuting the Christians, the beloved of Jesus, he was persecuting Jesus: "Why persecutest thou ME?" The nearer we are to the Lord Jesus, the better we understand that he who touches His brethren "touches the apple of His eye."

I will add a few words more on what we are in Jesus. All in us has been enmity against God, our religion, our works, our whole conduct, so that in this state it is impossible to please Him. It is sad, but, after all, it is true; Paul admits it; he no longer esteems what he thought was "*gain;*" on the contrary, he *looks upon it* "*as dung.*" But he understands that by faith all are ONE in Christ. Faith makes him take his place with them. He does not ask if he has faith, he does not begin a metaphysical discussion to know what faith is; but he becomes a *Christian*, because he believes that Christians are ONE with the Lord. And that is the life and joy of our souls, to comprehend that Christ has not asked us if we have faith, but that HE has said, I am ONE with thee.

All was sin in this world. There was no longer any means of entering into relation with God, and it was necessary, in order that these relationships should be re-established, that Jesus should come into the world to accomplish the will of God, and to manifest to sinful men the deep interest that God took in them. But in this case I have nothing to do but to weigh what Christ is for me, and that is all my business. I find in Him that which takes away all my mistrust, because He knows me altogether. He knows my sin better than I know it myself; in going to Him, my heart is free, because He knows all, and that He is come expressly for that. I find all liberty, all grace, and all goodness, in Him.

Moreover, knowing that He is God, I know Him as the Saviour God. And what a revolution takes place in the soul which knows that it has to do with the God who never denies Himself, and who is love! Not only is He come to relieve me, but more, to save me. And what is exceedingly precious is, that when I have met the man Jesus, I have met God; I am ONE with Him, not upon the cross, (there He had taken my place,) but in all His privileges. He has taken up the cause for me as a sinner, and has given Himself as propitiatory victim for sin. God cannot sue again for my salvation, because I am ONE with Him there in heaven; and if I torment myself, it is only with myself, for I cannot have the least uneasiness before God.

Satan has done all he could, but it is only to shew that his power is destroyed for ever; there is nothing remaining which can disquiet me before God. He has every thing to be the source of life and joy. I find all in Jesus, in whom "*dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*" I find in Him all grace for my need, my strength, and my righteousness.

Another righteousness has succeeded that of man; it is the righteousness of God. Christ is become head of all things, and all the glory is manifested at the right hand of God; as a consequence of the expiation which has been made for my sin. Thus all the fulness is manifested, and Jesus has said, being glorified, that He is ONE with us, and that He has sent his Holy Spirit to make us understand it. Christ has said of us: "It is I." And I have only to examine what Christ is, and to rejoice too in seeking to manifest what He is, since He has said of His own: "It is I."

The Holy Spirit is given to be in the heart of these poor worthless ones, the "seal" and the "earnest of the inheritance." When one has the Holy Spirit, is one not uneasy about sinning? Quite the contrary, for then we are ONE with Christ, who considers us as "*his flesh*," and who looks after us; sometimes, perhaps, He must wound it a little, but He does so because He cannot neglect it, since it is "His flesh." And the Holy Spirit makes us alive to all that, with which Jesus is not satisfied in us as being ONE with Him, his body; and the nearer we are to Him, the more alive we are to these things. Besides the fact of being ONE with Jesus, in order fully to enjoy this privilege, and that the heart might overflow with joy in the consciousness of possessing it, the Holy Spirit must not be grieved. If the heart of Paul had not been set at liberty, although the truth of his oneness with Christ remained, he could not have said: *I would that all should be such as I am.* His understanding would have recognized the truth of it, apart from sin; his heart could not have said it by the Holy Spirit; but the Holy Spirit is bruised neither by prison nor by every kind of tribulation. Nothing hinders Paul from enjoying the grace of Jesus. He was able to call himself happy in every circumstance, and to say to those who heard him: *I would that all were such as I am, &c.*

When Agrippa says to Paul: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," if that had been addressed to us, what had been our answer? Perhaps we should have said: "Would to God that thou wert!" but could we have said: "I would that thou wert such as I am," &c. That shews the inward happiness he possessed, Oh! happy is the man that can say that! and all can say it in Christ, for Christ has said of all: "It is I!" But, if we are not close to Christ, in Paul's state, we are not at liberty.

Alas! there may be many things in the life of the poor Christian which oblige Christ to chastise him, and there is a diversity in the manifestation of His love, but that changes not this truth. He is ONE with me. The Christian sees in God all goodness towards him, and, as a sinner, nothing but grace. There is in Christ the righteousness of God, the life of God, the glory of God, and that in Christ which declares him ONE with Him, and which says of him: "It is I." He has the Holy Spirit, that he may understand Him, and enjoy Him, and that he may know by this "earnest" that the fellowship and happiness of God are his for ever, and according to the sweetness of the peace which assures him of it. Is it then astonishing that, filled with love, he cries out: "*Would to God that those who hear me were such as I!*"

Being in the presence of God destroys whatever we have put to hinder the conscience from being alive. With all your religion, would you be naked before God, before whom every veil is rent? All that we put before us to hinder us from seeing God, all the cares, all the pleasures, all our religion, disgust us, when the conscience is awakened.

Are you content that your consciences should be naked before God? If it be so, Christ can say to you: "You are ONE with ME, and God is occupied about you, because you are ONE with ME," like those of whom he said: "It is I whom thou persecutest."

May God give us grace, dear friends, to comprehend this truth so powerful, so blessed to our souls!—(*Translated from the French.*)

REVIEWS.

APOCALYPTIC SKETCHES; OR, LECTURES ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION. Delivered in the Large Room, Exeter Hall, in 1847-48. By the Rev. John Cumming, D. D.

[The following review was communicated after the notice of Dr. C. (in No. 12) was already in the hands of the printer. The reader will observe how similar is the judgment expressed in both papers. The present article is inserted, not so much as bearing on a book already noticed, as because of the discussion of the general principles of interpretation.—Ed.]

THIS work is, in the main, little more than a reproduction of the *Horae Apocalypticae* in an attractive style, and more suited to the general class of readers than that critical and elaborate exposition.

The author freely confesses how much he is indebted to Mr. Elliott, whose Horae he affirms "will occupy a place in reference to unfulfilled prophecy, that Newton's *Principia* has occupied in reference to science." Indeed, so closely does he imitate, that all the mistakes in the original picture are found equally in the copy; the error and inconsistencies of the principles of interpretation adopted by the writer of that school, only being rendered more plain by his want of skill.

The chief of them may be briefly mentioned before proceeding to discuss the general merits of the work. 1. History is taken to be the just and sufficient interpreter of prophecy, by which the blessed office of the Spirit of Truth in guiding into all truth, and shewing things to come, is obscured or lost sight of, and events are viewed as they strike on the human mind, in their character and importance, instead of according to the estimate of the divine mind. They are read from and judged of from a very wrong point of view, and in dependance upon a wrong means of elucidating the thoughts of the Spirit of God, presented in prophetic scriptures, and which is calculated to confuse or lead astray. 2. As a consequence of the former error; the symbols are understood to be applicable to, and explained by, emblems of national, local or historical import, being always selected with a reference to the age, the country, or the manners and customs of the people, supposed to be prefigured in this prophecy. This is carried out to an extent enough to make any spiritual mind recoil, not only at the positive absurdity of many instances given of this supposed rule, but at the descreation which there seems to be, however unintentional, in bringing down the thoughts and instructions of the blessed Spirit of God into the most remote and even trifling minutiæ of detail, in reference to the historic insignia of the nations upon the earth.* 3. The doctrine of allusive contrast (already alluded to in the review of Mr. Birks' work) which proceeds on the supposition that what the apostle saw represented in heaven, was exhibited there in contra-distinction to the events which were passing on the earth at the time. It may easily be seen that the two last mentioned errors flow out of the false principle first noticed, by which the Spirit of God is made merely a sort of chronicler, in dramatic representation, of events about to be transacted upon the earth. The Spirit of truth writes on historical subjects, or rather, as an historian and antiquarian, appears to give lessons in these two branches of human and polite learning, a familiar and accurate acquaintance with which Mr. Elliott has now shewn to be requisite.†

Hence, it naturally follows as an inevitable conclusion, that the Revelation could not be understood or explained without the aid of history, and until the nations intended to be symbolized had appeared, and the origin whence they sprung, and the emblems by which they were to be distinguished, had come to light. The Revelation given by Jesus-Christ to his servants proving to be *no revelation to them*, nor capable of being made use of, until the course of succeeding ages should develop the historic course,—peculiarities which the ingenuity and research of Mr. Elliott have at length unravelled. By this means the mind of man is raised, and its unaided sufficiency to rise to some fellowship with the mind of God, every where denied in the New Testament, is in principle assumed. There we find: "The natural man receiveth *not* the things of the Spirit of God . . . neither *can* he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The spiritual or renewed mind is degraded below the level of its capacities, just as much as the natural mind is elevated beyond its powers. The scriptures, on the other hand, tell us: "He that is spiritual discerneth all things;" "we have the mind of Christ," and remind us of the sufficiency of this, aided by the Holy Spirit in the interpretation of the Word of God. "What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God."

If, in order to behold these visions in the body of the Apocalypse, the apostle John had to be introduced into *heaven*, a *door* being opened there for him to enter by, and being called by a voice up there, and if he takes particular care to tell us that immediately he was *in the spirit*; is not that sufficient to inform us that, to be rightly understood or interpreted, as well as to be seen in the first instance, they must be viewed from heaven rather than earth, and upon heavenly and spiritual principles, such as the Word of God affords, rather than earthly or historic, and that one must be led entirely by the Holy Spirit in the application of them, or in unfolding their meaning? The difference which this makes in Scripture inquiry (and, I may add, enjoyment) can hardly be over-estimated, or the different effects which result in the formation and development of the Christian character. An illustration of it may be given from two passages in the Old Testament. In the prophetic description given of the fall of Babylon, (Is. xxi.) a watchman is set to declare what he *sees*. "For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth." His position is taken, and his occupation arises from the events happening around him; it is for this end he watches. Tidings from afar are brought by different parties; he listens with outstretched neck to catch the first announcement. (Verse 7.) With unremitting diligence he continues his employment, and utters from time to time the news as they reach him. (Verses 8, 9.) Appeals are made to him for information in those remarkable words: "Watchman, what *of the night?* Watchman, what of the night?" All his supplies are drawn merely from the passing occurrences of the day. His thoughts rise no higher. In the present day, the newspapers would afford such an one sufficient

* We may give, as instances of this: the bow in the hand of the rider on the white horse in the first seal, is interpreted as the Cretan origin of one of the Roman emperors symbolized in that period. The tails of the horsemen, chap. ix, the horsetails adopted as the Turkish ensign or standard. The voices of the thunders the apostle was not to write, chap. x, the thunders of Rome, in the shape of bulls, anathemas, excommunications!! The unclean spirits, like frogs, chap. xvi, are said to save their source in France, because an ancient banner of one of her Clovinian kings had three frogs emblazoned on it. The key of the bottomless pit, chap. ix, is an *allusion* to the pretensions of Mahomet to open heaven to his followers, and the emblem, in consequence, borne by them, and graven on the gate of justice in the Alhambra!!

† See the third edition of his work, vol. i., pages 111, 115, 116.

elements for his position and occupation. He eagerly desires what passes in the distance to give timely notice of it, or to augur therefrom what the political horizon may threaten, or what national convulsions may be likely to evolve.* But no principles for the Christian's guidance are to be gathered from this watchman, no heavenly maxims that can be applied to surrounding circumstances, as a clue to guide in the labyrinth of worldliness and apostacy through which the believer has to walk with prayerful, watchful steps. Happily for him, he has something superior to this, the prophetic Word of God, which as he daily uses and applies, he finds that he does well to *take heed* unto it as unto a light that shines in a *dark place*—a light from above, from Him who is the Father of lights—whereby the narrow path is discerned in the midst of the dark and ensnaring forms of evil which characterize those last days. When the unclean spirits are abroad, he has the suited warning of the Lord's *speedy* return, and to keep his garments more closely round him, lest, through carelessness and worldliness, his pilgrim, heavenly, and separate character be lost sight of, and his shame become a spectacle to the world. (Rev. xvi. 15. Compare Phil. iii. 18-21. Luke xii. 33-35.) Of this kind is the place assumed by the prophet Habakkuk, and re-assumed by the apostle Paul in the Hebrews. "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch *to see what he will say unto me*." This is the Christian's proper place and employment. Here he finds the light and guidance he seeks; here the Lord, in answer, communicates His gracious instruction, and the energies of the soul, occupied therein, are all quickened by it, "that he may run that readeth it." The soul is carried forward in the power of hope, though all the expectation raised thereby is not *at once* fulfilled, "for hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we *with patience wait for it*." The coming of Christ is the main object of hope to the soul of the believer, around which, as a centre, all other prophetic truth arranges itself. His place is on the watch-tower; he waits for God's Son from heaven; he is on the look-out for that event. "For yet a little while and he that shall come will come, *and will not tarry*," and, living by faith, he will not draw back, for he has already the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, within himself. (Heb. x. 37-39.)

Another grand error common to Mr. Elliott and this author—and arising from neglect of the important introduction to the rest of the visions furnished by chapters iv. and v., and which are the first of the μετὰ ταῦτα, or things that were to come after chapters ii. and iii., on which Mr. E. lays so much stress, and which are evidently preparatory to the subsequent events—is the idea, to use the words of that writer, that "the subject matter of the book is the continuous fortunes of the Roman world and Christian Church from the time of the Revelation, being given to the end." This, of course, affects the aspect of the whole, and there might be more reason for it if chapters iv. and v., of which Mr. E. makes very little matter, were expunged. In the addresses to the churches we find the failure of the Church as God's witness in the earth; it is then disowned and set aside; the last is spued out of Christ's mouth. Then, whether the subsequent visions of the Revelation are viewed in their past or future application, they evidently refer to the preparatory action of the throne of God, to enforce ultimately the rights of the rejected Christ over this earth, in his titles as the Lamb slain, hidden in the throne of God, (compare Luke xix. 11, 12. Ps. cx. 1,) the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David: these, as any one may see from other passages of Scripture, are titles of exclusively millennial reference, and give their character to the actings of God's providence throughout the book. The testimony given in it by different agents will, by careful examination, all be seen to have this bearing, and to affect the rights of God on the earth disowned by man, as has been shown in the Notes on the Apocalypse, in the early numbers of *The Prospect*.

Defective as this system of interpretation, which we are examining, appears to be, as a system, and erroneous as we have seen the principles are on which it has been conducted, yet there can be little doubt, at least on the mind of one who holds the principle of double fulfilment, inculcated in previous numbers of this journal, that some, if not many, of the *main* features of the past application of the visions of the Apocalypse are rightly used, while the details are as evidently incorrect.† The Spirit of God has certainly employed the protestant interpretation, as it has been called, to fortify the minds of the children of God against the seductions of popery, when that was the chief evil they had to contend against; so that we should be far from condemning it as purely mischievous. In the present day, however, other evils are abroad, and light is breaking in, in reference to that which is beyond; that fulfilment having had its use, and now being well nigh run out. For a time it did well, and was serviceable; certainly it will not by itself suffice now. Evil is being rapidly developed; the tares are ripening for judgment, as well as, through the grace of God, the wheat to be gathered *into the garner*. The future application alone throws light on the present moment and present circumstances, shewing us the final course and judgment of that evil by which we are now surrounded. Thus it is discerned and avoided, and the people of God are separated from that which is contrary to the thoughts and glory of Christ, whom they love and wait for from heaven. Whatever tends to lead away from this, will only be found, at the present moment, to be injurious, instead of helpful, to those Christians who listen to it. Of this we may be sure, that very few will now be satisfied that the shaking of the "powers of the heavens," and the terror consequent thereon, described as taking place on the opening of the sixth seal, (compare Matt. xxiv. 29, 30,) has been exhausted in the application which has been made of it to the overthrow of paganism, and the establishment of Christianity in the Roman empire.*

The truths of the Gospel are copiously intermingled with these lectures on prophecy, no opportunity being lost of insisting on their value. This gives the book an interest peculiarly its own, and removes much of the dryness of the system of interpretation which Dr. Cumming has adopted. Before concluding this review, Dr. Cumming's strange idea that Gog and Magog, who are gathered up against the beloved city at the close of the millennium, on the loosing of Satan from the bottomless pit, are the wicked dead who have been raised, requires some comment. Surely, it is a grave mistake to invest those who have quitted their bodies anew with responsibility, and the power to add to the evil deeds done in the body. This is dangerous ground to get upon, especially as the opportunity of doing evil is generally and correctly linked with that of receiving good. What would his Romanist opposers, against whom he is so vehement, say to this? We may ask, with what propriety can dead people, just raised, be called "Gog and Magog," or "the nations in the four quarters of the earth?" Moreover, what warrant can he find for transposing the resurrection of the wicked, (related in verse 12, as taking place *after* the close of all, *before* the great white throne, the heavens and the earth having fled away, and no place being found for them,) to some indefinite period previously, in which they are not mentioned at all in the chapter as having left their graves?

Αλφα.

THE APOCALYPSE INTERPRETED IN THE LIGHT OF "THE DAY OF THE LORD." By the Rev. James Kelly, M.A., &c. Vol. I.—1849.

London: James Nisbet & Co.

AN opinion has been already given as to the *Lectures on Subjects connected with Prophecy*, and the pamphlet entitled *Apocalyptic Interpretation*, by the same author. While to some it must be matter of regret to see various errors of those works re-asserted in the present volume, many will rejoice to hear that several mistakes no longer appear, and that there are, in general, clear views of the position and hope of the Church, so indispensable to all progress in understanding the Revelation.

It is not my purpose at present to notice more than the remarks on Rev. i. The views of ἀποκάλυψις, (page 3,) of διὰ τὸν λόγον, (page 7,) and of the wailing in verse 7, (page 22,) seem to me to be errors, though not of equal importance to those which I now proceed to examine a little more fully.

From papers in different numbers of this journal, it may have been gathered that the conviction of the reviewer is, that Rev. iv.-xix. describes the principal characteristics, heavenly and earthly, of the period which elapses from the rapture of the Church until its return in glory with the Lord coming in the clouds of heaven. Mr. K. agrees as to the thing itself, but differs in that he conceives "the Lord's day" to be the divine designation not only of this remarkable epoch, but of that which embraces the seven Asiatic churches, to which he assigns a date nearly, if not quite, similar to that assigned to the seals, trumpets, and vials. In the preface, pages ix. x., we are referred to Is. i. 1, as illustrating "the Lord's day." But it is clear that Isaiah actually lived "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham," &c. The vision doubtless looked on to "the last days;" (chap. ii. 12;) but it was certainly in the days of the cotemporary kings of Judah that Isaiah saw these future prospects. So that the analogy confirms the idea that "on the Lord's day" was the actual date of the vision. And if Mr. K. will calmly compare Ezek. i. 1, viii. 1, xx. 1, xxiv. 1, xxvi. 1, &c., he may possibly be led to see that, as in the Revelation, God resumes many links with the thoughts and feelings of His ancient people, so have we a date and a place marked here, as in the captive prophet by the river Chebar. The dates are, invariably I believe, existing, and not future, days. As to ἡ κυριακὴ ἡμέρα, in Rev. i. 10,† (which

* Doubtless the world may be entertained by such an one, but the spiritual mind will be untouched, and seek to preserve its own elevation in the things of God unimpaired.

† Besides the reasons for this already adduced, there is no consistent interpretation of the symbols adopted by this class of expositors, but the harmony and definite certainty of symbolic language is neutralized, and the whole thrown into the utmost confusion. The sea, rivers, trees, grass, &c., for the most part, are taken literally, while to other symbols in the same trumpet or vial, as mountain, sun, moon, or stars, a symbolic interpretation is given, and even the *same* emblems are elsewhere explained as symbols.

* It is to be regretted that Mr. Elliott has not given further consideration to that view which gives the addresses to the churches in the Revelation an extension in their meaning over the present dispensation. He simply informs us, that such was the opinion of Vitringa, and more lately of Girdlestone, and then gives an outline of their systems. His main argument for the exclusively præterist view which he has adopted falls to the ground if, as there seems little doubt, this part of the book is rightly so applied.

† The criticism on ἐν πνεύματι is a mistake from inattention to the idiomatic differences of the two languages. The authorized version is quite right, "in the Spirit," *not* "in spirit;" see on a different theme 1 Cor. xii. 3, 13. Ephes. ii. 22, &c. On the other hand, if the Greek had been τῷ πνεύματι, it *might* have been rendered "in spirit," as it is very properly in the authorized version of Matt. v. 3, &c. i.e. "in *their* spirit." The presence of the article, as another has ably shewn, does not prove the Holy Ghost to be in question: it may or may not be. In this the article is supplied or omitted, according to the general laws of its usage.

Mr. K. applies to the future day of the Lord, others to an actual Lord's day, on which John saw the vision,) the direct evidence is this. The expression occurs but once in the New Testament, and never, I believe, in the Septuagint, whereas "the day of the Lord," which Mr. K. identifies with it, occurs frequently, but is always a different expression, ἡμέρα, or ἡ ἡμ. Κυρίου. On the other hand, "the first day of the week" (and not the Lord's day) is elsewhere the scriptural phrase for the day commemorative of the Lord's resurrection. But if the Greek ecclesiastical writers are to be considered—I will not say Spirit-taught interpreters of the Word of God, but competent judges of their own language, it ought to weigh gravely with candid inquirers, that in their earliest extant remains which allude to the subject, and habitually afterwards, they understood and employed ἡ κυριακὴ ἡμέρα as equivalent to the first day of the week, and not to the great day of the Lord.* Under such circumstances, would not Mr. K. have acted more wisely by not insisting so strongly upon the sense he attaches to the phrase? a sense which, if established, may corroborate his general outline, but which is by no means essential to that part of his book which is sound and valuable. Mr. K. could easily shew how little his view of the Lord's day, even if erroneous, as I believe it to be, affects the interpretation of the central portion of the Revelation, and a supplement to that effect, if handled judiciously, would relieve the difficulty which some must feel to sanctioning the book in its present shape. Apart from this, the Christian reader (comparing the author's "Lectures," pages 220 and seq.) will rejoice to mark, in pages 33-35 of the present work, the evidence of fuller light upon 2 Thess. ii. 2 of the present work.

Next, the notion that the seven churches, strictly interpreted, have nothing to do with the Church; that they have not existed, nor yet exist, and will appear, composed of an election of believing Jews, only after the Church of the first-born is gone to be with the Lord on high, seems to be not merely baseless, but calculated to bring into disrepute much truth which the author holds and teaches. To me it is a source of pain to see this idea, and the kindred one just noticed, so interwoven into the continuous interpretation, as to give the impression that, if *these* ideas be fallacious, all else is mere error. This, as already observed, is not the fact, but it behoves the author to guard the precious truth which he handles from being jeoparded by the exaggerated importance given in this volume to what is at least extremely doubtful matter.

The main argument (beside the deduction from that which most Christians will consider the false premise of "the Lord's day") seems to be, that the phraseology used in the inscription (Rev. i. 4) is of such remarkable latitude, from the absence of the substantive verb in the Greek, as to admit of the interpretation being referred to *future* churches. But if the intelligent reader compares the ordinary epistles, he will find that in Greek, as in English, the ellipse of the substantive verb makes not the slightest difference in the sense. If I say "to the brethren with you," or "to the brethren *who are* with you," the meaning is the same in either case: the former as much as the latter excludes any idea save that of brethren actually existing there. In point of fact, both forms occur repeatedly. Thus in Phil. i. 1 we have the participle once expressed, but in iv. 21, 22, we have it omitted twice. Will any one argue that οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ ἀδ. admits of more latitude than if expressed thus, οἱ ἀδ. οἱ ὄντες σὺν ἐμ.? Again, Ephes. i. 1 inserts, and Col. i. 2 omits, the participle; but is not every one who understands Greek shut up in the conclusion, that as the saints in the one case actually existed at that time at Ephesus, so did they, in the other, actually exist at Colosse? So in the last chapter of Col., the participle is wanting in four instances at least, but in every case the sense is as unequivocal as if it were expressed at full length. It is equally true of Rev. i. 4. The construction is as plain as possible, and the only possible meaning of the salutation is, that the seven churches did really and at that time exist in Asia. While upon this point, it may be remarked that the observations in pages 58, 59, are quite beyond the mark. A scholar, however little accustomed to critical research, ought not to have completely misapprehended the principle upon which the article is omitted, in Greek, though fairly supplied in the authorized version. The Greek article disappears before ἄγγελοι and ἐκκλησίαι in the latter clause of Rev. i. 20, *not* to point onwards to the future, but because the object is to explain what the symbols mean. The insertion of the article here would affirm the identity of the subject and the predicate, and the proposition would be reciprocal. This, however, is not the real object, which is to describe the symbols already seen. Hence in a proper predicate, as the article is omitted, and that even from ἑπτὰ ἐκκλησίαι, which had the article in both the previous occurrences. (Verses 4, 11.)

The observation on ch. i. 19 is obviously unsound. Mr. K. would read it thus: "Write the things which thou hast seen—*both* the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter, or *after them*." What John saw is distinguished from "the things that are," as the latter are kept apart from "what should be after them." One might as justly read the latter part thus: "The things that are, *even* the things that shall be after them."

A material and connected error, which mars the work as a whole, is the statement in p. 57, that "there is no reason for separating, as is generally done, the circumstances of the 'seven Churches' mentioned in the epistles, from the subsequent part of the book. On the contrary, they blend into each other, and form one great perspective of the future; as may be seen from the comparison of the following passages." The answer to these compared passages is brief and simple. There are certain blessings common to all saints, Jews, Gentiles, or the Church of God; as there will be certain common positions in glory, which in nowise neutralize special characteristics. The true question is, whether the saints described in Rev. ii. iii. do not form part of the one body, the Church? Is it not demonstrable, that these assemblies not only existed then, but enjoyed proper Church privileges?

I admit freely that the seven Churches are so pictured in the different Apocalyptic epistles, as to apply in an enlarged and protracted scope. True, at that time, they were intended of God, it appears to me, to have a verification upon a far more extended scale, as His mirror of the various phases of the existing order of things, as long as the Church was left here below. As a fact, this idea, variously applied according to the degree of spiritual discrimination, has been long familiar to the people of God. And Bishop Newton, (Dissertations, pp. 450, 451, Dobson's edition,) while he doubts the tenableness of such an application of the seven epistles, is compelled to allow that "the main subjects of this book are comprised of sevens, seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vials; as seven also was a mystical number throughout the Old Testament." What then are the reasons alleged in this instance against an usage so habitual elsewhere, and so harmonious with the Revelation itself? "It doth not appear that there are, or were to be, seven periods of the Church, neither more nor less." Evidently this is not an argument, but an assumption of the very thing questioned. *Why* does it not appear? Another might urge the same objection, and, perhaps, with equal weight against the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven vials. *God* has been pleased, we can but answer, to specify in each of these instances seven salient points, so to speak, as His complete account of each. If this answer satisfy as to the seven vials, why not as to the seven churches? Doubtless, more spirituality may be required for right discernment in the latter than in the former case, because one series relates to *external judgments* in the world, whereas the other series takes cognizance of such remarkable *spiritual conditions*, good and bad, in the history of the Church, as it seemed good to the Lord to notice. Hence *à priori* one might be prepared for a greater divergence of judgment among Christians in their adaptation of Rev. ii. iii. than in their views of any other parts of the book. If there had been, therefore, a considerable measure of truth in what he says, ("no two men can agree in assigning the same periods") the general principle would still remain undisturbed. But such is not the case. So exaggerated and misstated are the facts, that those who are little read in the opinions of men will be surprised to learn that there is, so far as I am aware, a very striking and decided agreement among most thoughtful Christians, so far as regards the first three or four churches. This, of course, I do not urge as authoritative in the least, but as an answer to the charge preferred against the view we are discussing. And is there, let me ask, in respect of the seven seals, trumpets, and vials, such an agreement as puts to shame the discordant repartition of the seven churches? Let dispassionate Christians read the *Horæ Apocalypticæ*, and answer. The latter part of that work enters elaborately into the history of Apocalyptic interpretation from St. John to Constantine; from the latter to the fall of the Roman empire; thence to A.D. 1000; from that period to the Reformation; then the Reformation period, and thence to the present time. The student will search there in vain for any such agreement. It is not denied that several writers may exhibit schemes of interpretation substantially alike and true: but, looking at the seals, trumpets and vials, might it not well be asked, what two men agree in assigning the same periods? The author of the work referred to is certainly well versed in the knowledge of what his predecessors taught, and yet dissatisfied with all previous commentators, even as to the seals and trumpets, he has proposed new arrangements of both. See particularly the notes on Rev. vi. vii. viii. x. xi.

On the other hand, while repudiating common consent as the test, or even a test, of truth, I know of no reflective Christian, among those who apply the seven churches to the state of the Church generally, who does not view the epistle to Ephesus as the declension of the Church in and after apostolic times; that to Smyrna, as the era of pagan persecutions; that to Pergamos, as the settling down into papal corruption; and it may be added, that to Sardis, as the Reformation-age. Vitringa indeed applied the latter (erroneously I think,) to the earlier witnesses, from P. Waldo down to the Reformation, which he supposed to be symbolized by Philadelphia. Again, Gill, from his denial of the premillennial advent, was induced to apply the picture of the Church in Philadelphia to what he calls the spiritual reign of Christ. But these and other exceptions do not weaken the fact that there have been and are states of the Church, which, in the judgment of many Christians, answer remarkably to the divine portrait of Rev. ii. iii.

No doubt, then, the churches existed in Asia as a matter of fact, and clearly the seven epistles were directly addressed to them, and had a real bearing upon them in the days of the apostle. In accordance with which view I am not disposed to deny that the Spirit of God may have intended us to gather from Rev. vi.-xix. a sketch of the dealings of God with the western and eastern empire; *first*, in its hostile pagan state; *next*, in its outwardly Christian profession; and, lastly, in its open revolt against God, opposing Christ in His priesthood, as it will eventually do to the

* The only other place where the adjectival form occurs is 1 Cor. xi. 20, Κυριακὸν δεῖπνον. Here there can be no doubt that the phrase refers not to one great occasion, past or future, but to a constantly recurring feast, celebrative of the Lord's death, and kept especially ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ, on the day endeared to believers by the Lord's resurrection.

last extremity, when it is a question of His rights as King. So far there is truth, as it seems to me, in the general protracted scheme of interpretation—the Protestant interpretation; but it is far from being the whole truth, or even of what is of most importance to the people of God in our day. It is a partial one-sided system, and, when urged, as its advocates are wont to urge it, as the complete fulfilment of the Revelation, requires to be met with decision, for truth ill-proportioned and misused may be as pernicious in its effects as positive error. There are weighty grounds which have led, and do lead, many spiritual men to the conviction that God by no means confines us to the past application of the book, and that these seven epistles describe the grand changes, and the apparent or real witness and conduct of the Church as judged of the Lord, so long as the Church abides on earth: the prolonged existence of that body which the apostle was actually conversant with. If this idea be well founded, which gives to us and to the Church at all times an especially near interest in Rev. ii. iii.; if the seven epistles be neither wholly past, and matter of history, or wholly future, and matter of peculiar moment to companies of converted Jews entirely apart from us, we are compelled to infer that, *according to this point of vision*, the chapters which follow begin to apply only after the Church has been actually caught up to heaven. Consequent upon that, and while the Church in symbol is seen above, the evil of man becomes more and more flagrant, the witnesses for God suffer, heaven-sent appeals and judgments appear with increasing intensity, until idolatry, rebellion and blasphemy reach their height, Christ and the saints come from the opened heavens, vengeance falls upon the apostates, and the reign of peace, and holiness, and glory, follows for a thousand years. In other words, chaps. vi.-xxii. (for iv. v. we may call the heavenly preface of this part of the book) are the things which must come to pass *after these*, i.e. after the complete history of the Church on earth terminates.

And if the first chapter of Revelation abounds in symbols, if from the fourth chapter to the end of the book we find the same style of prophetic teaching pursued throughout, why should chaps. ii. and iii. be made the single exception to a confessedly general analogy? Has the "tribulation ten days" (ii. 10) no meaning beyond that brief period and the limits of Smyrna? Is the doctrine of Balaam (ii. 14) a mere reiteration of the crafty, covetous policy of him who aided Balak? "That woman Jezebel," is she too no more than a literal female, or is there not a significant emblem in her who vexed the Church in Thyatira? And the hour of temptation coming upon all the habitable world to try them that dwell on earth, will it be insisted on that it is past? Or, will it not be allowed that this blessed promise to the Church of Philadelphia awaits a larger, fuller accomplishment than it has ever yet received? No! I feel increasing confidence that the seven epistles are of intimate moment to us. "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." And, though I do not deny the past application of Rev. ii. iii. to the seven churches in the time of John—an application which necessarily involves our applying Rev. vi.-xix. to the course of God's providence as regards the Roman empire; the other view, which attaches a prolonged existence to the things that are, so as to convey the Lord's complete estimate of the Church during her sojourn here below, commends itself to me as borne out by the evidence of the seven epistles themselves; and harmonizing with the general strain of the Revelation as a whole.

But whether the Christian adopts one or other, or both, of these views, it is certain that "the things *which are*" cannot be intermingled with "the things *which shall come to pass after these*." Take "the things which are" as the mere notice of churches long past, and having no particular relation to us, still "the things which shall come to pass after these" only began to apply when the former had ceased to apply. Take the things that are, emblematically, as the protracted history of the Church, as long as her earthly testimony lasts; here also the "things which shall come to pass after these" cannot blend into that which must pass away before their fulfilment commences. "The things which shall come to pass" are definitely stated by the Spirit to be subsequent to "the things which are." "The things which are" must have their course, whatever interpretation be admitted, before "the things which shall come to pass after these," i.e. "after the things which are" can possibly happen. For myself, I cannot but adopt a two-fold application; for "it is usual with the prophets," said Bishop Newton, (Diss. xxi.) "to frame and express their prophecies so as that they shall comprehend more than one event, and have their several periods of completion." A just remark this is, and to the common analogy the Revelation forms no exception. And the more assuredly the history of the world approaches the last great crisis, the more important it is, without denying the past application, to press the future, final and literal, accomplishment of the Revelation.

The first volume brings the reader to the close of Rev. vii.

A Sketch of Prophecy. By Sir Edward Denny, Bart.

Bath: Binns and Goodwin, &c.

This sketch originally appeared, the author tells us, as an introduction to the Millennial Hymns, and, having undergone a few alterations, it is now offered in this separate form. It presents the thread of prophecy with clearness and simplicity.

A Prophetical Stream of Time; or, An Outline of God's Dealings with Man, from the Creation to the end of all things. (With a "Companion or Key.") Composed and arranged by Sir Edward Denny, Bart.

London: James Nisbet & Co. Edinburgh: Johnstone. Dublin: Robertson. Bath: Binns & Goodwin.

It will be felt by every Christian that no subject can exceed in importance or interest that which the author has sought to set forth in this large and beautiful chart. It is a picture of the world's history, as furnished by God in Scripture; and inasmuch as known unto Him are all His works from the beginning of the world, and as He has revealed all that was needed for His people, or rather for His own glory, the author has simply followed the sure guidance of His Word, and therefore the outline embraces the future, as well as the past and present. More comprehensive in its range than any other chart which has yet appeared, it is so vividly illustrated by significant devices, and so simply and perspicuously described in the "Companion," that no Christian of moderate spiritual intelligence and acquaintance with Scripture need have the least difficulty in accompanying the author throughout. "This chart," he hopes, "may in some measure help to lead the Lord's people to see that, through Scripture, there is a marvellous oneness of purpose—that God's object from the beginning has been to convey blessing to us by educing good out of evil—that He has been fully prepared for failure in man, and that He has in the riches of His grace provided accordingly. The end here proposed will be happily ensured if it helps them to take larger views of the word than they have been accustomed to do; to see that there is something therein more than mere individual salvation to comfort the souls of the saints; that the redemption and blessing of the people of God as a whole, and then in the end the bringing forth of the new heavens and new earth out of the ruins of the old, will be the blessed result of His wonderful, and often, to short-sighted man, inexplicable ways. Such views of His word are those which give glory to Him, and make the heart happy." (Companion, p. 12.) Cordially can we join, and commend the work to all who have found peace through the blood of the cross. Those who value wide and varied historic research—those who read the Word of God in the light of human erudition will find nothing here congenial to their tastes; but if the grapes of Eschcol have weaned any from the cucumbers, and leeks, and onions, and garlic of Egypt, they may derive, in God's mercy, through this chart, some glimpses of the light, and comfort, and strength of the sanctuary.

The chart itself consists of a diagram representing the great stream of time from beginning to end, illustrated by devices, and explained by notes on both sides of the stream. The notes are twofold; first, those which are intended chiefly to trace the world's history, and placed close to the diagram; and secondly, those which are intended to develop God's principles in connection with man, as revealed in His Word, and placed at a further distance, distinguished from the former by numbers and headings. As to the companion, the diagram is a fac-simile of the stream of time in the chart, without either the numbered notes or devices, (except a very few slightly expressed.) The position, however, of the notes is marked by means of the number and heading of each; while that of the devices is shown by circles dispersed through the diagram. The last mentioned notes are collected together at the close; so that, by the diagram, the historic descriptions, and the numbered notes at the close, the chart itself may be easily studied.

First of all, is seen a circle of glory surrounding the Name of God—אלהים, which is meant to exhibit God in His own rest before the creation of the world, and before the ages and generations whose moral history is afterwards developed: God amid that Sabbath of rest which no sorrow can cloud, which sin cannot defile, and not only so, but there also counselling the redemption-blessing of those who, He well knew, would give ear to the lie of the serpent, and thus introduce sorrow and death into that world which He was about to create. The moral lesson, on one side, is man's weakness and failure, and on the other, the grace and faithfulness of God.

Next appears a starlike device, illustrating "the mystery" of the Church chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world: (compare Gen. ii. 18-24, with Ephes. v. 23-33,) a secret hid in God from the beginning, which was never revealed, till Christ, having been rejected by His earthly people Israel, and exalted to heaven, called out from the earth, by the Spirit sent down from heaven, a people for His name—neither Jew, nor Gentile, though taken out of each to form one body, Christ's body, (Col. i. iii.)—a peculiar people, whose origin, calling, standing, testimony, conflicts and hopes are heavenly. (Ephes. i.-vi.) On this glorious and most practical truth a little more distinctness might be wished for.

After this comes the earth, surrounded by the heavenly bodies, expressing creation. (Gen. i.)

Then, beginning the stream, we see the garden of Eden, (Gen. ii.) where Adam and Eve are enjoying God's favour before their transgression and banishment. From them we trace (Gen. iv. v.) their descendants, those to the *right* of the stream being the children of Seth, forefathers of God's elect people, Israel; those to the left being the seed of Cain, the murderer of Abel. Among the children of Seth, Enoch and Noah are especially noticed, the former as a type of the *Church*, the latter of *Israel*, (Gen. v.) the one caught up to heaven, and the other a preacher of righteousness, emerging from the waters of judgment to govern the earth wherein he had remained.

The first break in the line marks the fall, through the eating of the *Forbidden Fruit*, and then subsequently we have, not the glory of the Creator shining upon the world, but the *Serpent*, under whose dark dominion man was found, looking at his history as a whole. (Gen. iii.) Then, following the course of events, we come to another device, representing *The Flood*, (Gen. vi. viii.,) and another break in the line, in connection with which we have *Noah offering his Burnt Offerings*. (Gen. viii.) The *Sword of Justice* is here shown as the emblem of earthly government, instituted of God and committed to man to repress his corruption and violence. (Gen. ix. 5, 6.) But, alas! man is next uniting in an evil confederacy for self-exaltation in the earth and independence of God, seen under the device of *the city and tower of Babel;* sad foreshadowing of the full development of the same evil principles in the closing scene of this world's apostacy, when man, not merely straining to his utmost his own powers, but energized by Satan, shall cast off every restraint, and assume entire independence of God. Then "the man of the earth" will appear, but, in the height of his pride, he shall come to nought. For the Lord shall come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and Anti-Christ, with every other foe, shall fall before Him. The confederacy of men in the building of the tower only brings upon them the sure judgment of God; they sought to make a name lest they should be scattered, but upon their monument God writes Babel; their language is confounded, and they are dispersed as distinct nations over the earth. Still, even here, God looks forward to His own people Israel, (Deut. xxxii. 8, 9,) before Abram was born; and all the separation is arranged with a view to them. It is remarkable that in Gen. x. we see the same nations and tongues, which were afterwards connected with the Jews, or will be so in the latter day, under the wilful king, the Assyrian, and Gog. Here also we see an *Idolater offering sacrifice*, showing the marked sin of the world subsequent to the deluge. What remained for God to do in this rebellious, divided, idolatrous earth; for the very government which He had entrusted to man was corrupted, and thus was itself an instrument of evil? Leaving the world to be judged in due time, God introduces an entirely new principle: *He calls out Abram to take a place of separation unto Himself* from his country, kindred and father's house. And accordingly, from this epoch, the stream of history in the Chart breaks into two distinct parts, each running parallel with the other down to the end; the Jewish line being that to the right, while the great Gentile line pursues its course as before. This principle, then, separated one family to the acknowledgment of the true God; (Josh. xxiv. 2;) and the called people thenceforward became the great object of the care and government of God here below, and His witnesses among the nations.—Next, the *Two Swords*, with a *Cup* and a *Crown*, point to Abram's conflict with the associated kings and rescue of Lot, after which comes forth Melchizedek with the bread and wine to refresh the victors; evident types of Christ, whether *as the mighty warrior, leading forth the armies in heaven to conquest*, (Rev. xix. 11-21,) or as the royal priest, sitting down with His saints in the peaceful joy of the kingdom. (Rev. xx. 4.)

Passing by some points of interest, we come to the time when, led by the visible presence or glory of God, which is marked by the *red line*, the twelve tribes leave Egypt. Hitherto they had been as a family, but now they take their place as *God's elect nation*, voluntarily entering on a covenant of obedience to the law, instead of pleading the unconditional promises to Abram, as the ground of enjoying their privileges. Then, after devices illustrating the episodes of Balaam and Ruth, a break occurs in the line of Israel. God is rejected and a king chosen according to the flesh, who in his personal history foreshows the king of the latter day, succeeded by the true David. For the kingship of Christ over Israel was ever in the plan of God. Of this David and Solomon are the types: one in suffering and overcoming His enemies; the other in peaceful, glorious sway over a happy and obedient people. From the time of Saul, a *black line* is seen, denoting the earthly dominion committed to Israel first, but transferred at the time of the Babylonish captivity to the Gentiles, in the person of Nebuchadnezzar. Ephraim is shown in the Chart to have been twice led captive by Assyria, (2 Kings xv. xvii.) while Judah became afterwards subject to Babylon, the first of the four Gentile empires. This, the author remarks, "is closely connected with the state of things in the end; because Judah, when restored to their own land hereafter, will be found under the power of Rome—the last of the four beasts seen in vision by Daniel; (chap. vii.) while Ephraim, or the ten tribes, on the other hand, will then be dispersed among the nations, where they were scattered at first by Assyria. All which, it is evident, is according to the transgression of each, inasmuch as the sin of Judah was pride, in the first place, especially shown in the desire of Hezekiah to exalt himself in the eyes of the king of Babylon, (2 Kings xx. 12-19,) while their last act was the rejection of Christ, their promised deliverer from under the yoke of the Gentiles; whereas Ephraim's sin was idolatry, (Hos. viii. 4, 5; xiii. 12,) together with making a covenant with Assyria, (Hos. xiii.) but still more their revolt from the house of David, the anointed of God, under their first king Jeroboam—this being, in effect, THEIR rejection of Christ, who, they had been told, was to spring from this line. (1 Kings xii.) In the end, therefore, when Christ comes again, he will save the remnant of Judah from the power of 'the beast,' the last Gentile king, as well as the head of Jewish apostacy, the false Christ of the latter day; while Ephraim will be redeemed in another way, that is, after Judah, within the land, have been delivered from Anti-Christ, they will be brought home by the hand of the Lord out of those countries where they are scattered at present." (Is. xi. 11. Zech. x. 7-12.)

Turning to the stream, we see that the *black line* of power and *the crown* are taken from the Jews and transferred to the Gentiles. It is the commencement of that momentous period in the history of the world, in which the sin and judgment of the Jews make way for Babylonish, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman supremacy successively. The throne of David is temporarily cast down to the ground, and earthly dominion is given over by God to the nations, with whom it continues till the return of the Son of man and Son of David, who alone can administer it to the glory of God and the blessing of man. (Ps. lxxix. 19-23.) Three of these empires have passed away: the fourth, or Roman, awaits its revival in an imperial form, Rev. xiii. xvii. (divided too in the tenfold manner described in Dan. vii. 19-25,) when it will be judged and destroyed, because of the pride and blasphemy of its rebellious head.

Connected with the eventful change is the departure of *the glory of the Lord*. That glory, whose sole dwelling-place was in His sanctuary at Jerusalem, leaves the earth altogether after the captivity of Judah. (Compare Ezek. xi. 22-24.) It was never with the Gentiles, nor will it return to earth (Ezek. xliii. 1-9.) till, on the repentance of Israel, the Son of man shall return in the clouds of heaven, and the Lord shall be King over all the earth. In that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one.

Prominence is rightly given to this interesting period, the government of the world under the four beasts, designated by our Lord in Luke xxi, "the times of the Gentiles," καιροὶ ἐθνῶν. Daniel presents its history under a two-fold form. First, in Dan. ii., a vision of the great image *seen by Nebuchadnezzar;* and, secondly, in Dan. vii., a vision of four great beasts which came up from the sea, *seen by the prophet himself:* the former depicting the *external* character of Gentile supremacy in its successive developments and degeneracy, the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, with the feet part of iron and part of clay; the latter communicating to the man of God, the *internal* character of the same power, and hence also their moral bearing, and treatment of the saints. Coextensive with these four empires, (commencing with the prevalence of the king of Babylon, the golden head, and closing with the judgment upon their last phase by the stone cut out without hands,) the Jewish people are LO-AMMI; and therefore it is, that throughout the prophecy of Daniel, which is God's history of the times of the Gentiles, the Jews are called "thy people," (i.e. Daniel's people) and not "my people," for they have, during this interval, ceased to be the manifested centre and the sanctioned scene of the government of Jehovah on earth. Not that, even during the allowed period of Gentile mastery over the Jews, the providence of God has discontinued to watch over them, and to overrule circumstances for their final blessing through His mercy. Much less has God forgotten His promises of eventual exaltation here below, reserved for that poor people beloved still for the fathers' sakes; for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. It is clear that the return from captivity of a little remnant, chiefly of Judah and Benjamin, in no way conflicts with the fact that the nation was no longer owned of God as *His*. Hence we have this extremely partial restoration of the Jews (not of Israel properly so called) marked in the Chart. They return from Babylon and rebuild the temple and city, as recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah, but far from taking them captives whose captives they were, and ruling over their oppressors, they were not even relieved from servitude to the Gentiles. As the latter inspired historian says, describing their condition subsequent to their return: "Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it: and it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress." (Neh. ix. 36, 37.) As the former says, (Ezra ix. 8,) it was a little reviving God gave them in their bondage.

It was during the rule of the fourth or last Gentile empire that Messiah was born, and in the Chart we have the appearing of *the star* predicted by Balaam long before. But the Jews would none of Him. Alas! the tale of His sorrows, and formal rejection, and cross, is too well known to need repetition here. Up to this point, to which just importance is given in the diagram, the Lord was still lingering over the poor gainsaying people. But they discerned not the glory of Jehovah in the person of Jesus. He was despised and rejected of men. And when Jerusalem refused Christ in glory as she had spurned and crucified Christ in humiliation; when she scorned God's proffered remedy for all her guilt in Him who was exalted as Prince and Saviour to give repentance to Israël and forgiveness of sins, resisting the testimony, not of the twelve only, but of the Holy Ghost Himself, (Acts v. 7,) what could remain for the earth but the sure judgment of God to vindicate the rights of His Son,—cast out by the world but glorified at His own right hand? For the moment, however, righteous wrath lies in abeyance, and the break of God's dealings with the earth is answered, not by judgment so justly merited by man, but by a new, unprecedented, and surpassingly glorious purpose of God, the dispensation of the grace of God, the calling out from Jews and Gentiles of a body to share the *heavenly* inheritance of Christ: the calling of the Church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all!

And here, in my judgment, is the principal merit of the Chart. It displays even to the eye, in a very beautiful manner, the position of the Church, as being necessarily unearthly, founded upon Christ's rejection, and His session at God's right hand; united with Him by

the Holy Ghost thereon sent down, and accordingly enjoying and looking for blessings distinctively of heaven. On one side, the reader observes the unbroken line of Gentile power, as heedless of Christ as of the thieves that were crucified on either side of Him. On the other side, the Jewish line is seen interrupted by the cutting off of the Messiah. Within this gap, the Church of God appears upon earth, having no present portion here save the cross, but conscious of her oneness with Christ, looking forward for His coming, and the marriage-supper of the Lamb. The author rightly distinguishes between His coming to take the Church (1 Thess. iv.) and that which is called in Scripture "the day of the Lord," which is invariably connected with Israel and the earth, and therefore with judgment. He has learned with other students of prophecy, that *the coming* of the Lord, while it embraces *the day* of the Lord, is far from being identical with it. Thus, when the Son of man appears, and all the tribes of the earth mourn, it is clearly the day of the Lord, but it is also His coming or presence as Son of man. (Matt. xxiv.) And certainly the Church must be already with Him, for she accompanies Him, as His train or army, in the judgments which He executes, (Rev. xvii. 14,) and appears with Him in glory. (Col. iii. 4.) The *appearing* of Christ, accordingly, cannot precede, but must follow, the rapture of the Church; for *when* Christ, our life, shall appear, *then* (τότε) shall ye also appear with Him in glory. We must have been with Him before, for Christ and the Church appear together. But 1 Thess. iv. describes, not our coming and appearing *with* him, but *His* coming *for us*. That He will *then*, when coming for His saints, be manifested to the world, is not only without Scripture, but against it; for in that case He must appear before us and without us; whereas, the Word of God, as we have seen, states the contrary. But Rev. xix. 11-21 shews us that the saints not merely meet Him in the air, and thence return and appear with Him in judgment upon the earth: the armies which were *in heaven* followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And these hosts were manifestly saints, and not angels, for fine linen is the righteousness *of saints*. Hence it is clear that there is an interval during which the saints are caught up to the Lord, and are with Him previous to their appearing together—during which it is most important to observe, *the saints are with Him in heaven, whence they follow Him* subsequently, and come together for the judgment of the world. It is at this point of time, I believe, that the appearing takes place,—not merely the coming (though it be still the coming) but *the manifestation of the Lord's coming*, which destroys that wicked or Lawless One. Compare 2 Thess. ii. 8, and Rev. xix. 19, 20. In other words, Christ comes and takes the Church. After that, Christ and the Church appear at the same time. It is still the coming (or presence, παρουσία) of the Lord. The "appearing" falls under the more general term of "coming;" it is a part, and but a part, of His coming. When He comes to take the Church, He cannot have appeared; He comes and appears only unto them that look for Him. But the Church being now with Him, He and they appear after that, (how long after, is not my present purpose to inquire,) to the utter destruction of the beast, and the kings of the earth and their armies. This is what Scripture designates also as "the day of the the Lord," a day of sudden destruction. I do not follow up the distinction further here, only throwing out the remark that the right application of it is essential to any real understanding of the Revelation and indeed of prophecy in general.

The Church being removed from the scene, the Anti-Christ is soon revealed. He is destroyed when the Lord appears, and with Him the ungodly Jews and Gentiles, of whom He is the head. Christ exercises His rights as Son of David in connexion with the Jews, Son of man in connexion with men generally, and Head of the Church rejoicing with Him as His Bride. Of this three-fold glory of Christ, the author furnishes us with a striking sketch in the view of the millennial heavens and earth towards the close.

The Chart winds up, of course, with the end or everlasting state, when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father,—the new heavens and new earth, when the old pass away and there is no more sea.

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel: the Time fixed in the Purpose of God, at the Expiration of which the Jews, Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb, will Inherit the Land given to Abraham, their Father. (Plate 1.)

The Cycle of Seventy Weeks, shown in its Dispensational Aspect, through the whole course of God's Dealings with Israel and with Man universally. (Plate 2.) (With a "Companion or Key." By Sir Edward Denny, Bart.

London: James Nisbet & Co. Bath: Binns and Goodwin.

The following is the way in which Sir E. D. distributes the prophecy of Dan. ix., as regards Chart I.

THE PROPHECY.

(Verses 24-27.)

First Head. *Introductory and general, presenting the* whole period *at once without noticing the* threefold division *thereof.*

1.—Seventy weeks *are determined* (or divided) *upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish* (or restrain) *the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness,* (or the righteousness of ages,) *and to seal up the vision and prophecy,* (or prophet—see margin,) *and to anoint the most holy.* (or holy of holies.)

Second Head. *From the opening of the seventy weeks at the time of Nehemiah's return, to the rejection of Christ by His people, seven years, or a week,* "after" *he was first presented to Israel by the mouth of John, his forerunner, at the end of the sixty-ninth week.*

2.—*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah, the Prince shall be* seven weeks and threescore and two weeks.

3.—*The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.* ("In strait of times," see margin; or, as translated by Wintle and Purver, "in the narrow limit, or shortest of the times," meaning, according to them, the seven weeks above-named, as distinguished from the threescore and two weeks, that follow.) *

4.—*And after (the)* threescore and two weeks (above named) *shall the Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.* (the article "the" is here introduced, being found in the original.)

Third Head. *From the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, headed by Titus, the same people who hereafter will be subject to Anti-Christ,* "*the prince that shall come,*" *down to the end of the desolations thereof, at the second coming of Christ.*

5.—*And the people of the Prince that shall come* (i.e. the Romans in the reign of Vespasian) *shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood.* (This prince is neither Vespasian nor Titus, but the last head of this same people—the little horn or Anti-Christ—the beast to whom the whole revived Roman empire will in the end become subject. Rev. xvii. 12-17.)

6.—*And unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

Fourth Head. *The* "one week" *of Anti-Christ's power, the great crisis in Jewish history, ending at the second coming of Christ, with that foretold at the outset, namely, the acceptable year of the Lord, the time of Israel's redemption and glory.*

7.—*And he* (the prince above-named—i.e. the Anti-Christ) *shall confirm the covenant with many for* one week.

8.—*And in the midst of the week he* (having broken his covenant) *shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate,* (or upon the wing or pinnacle of abominations, i.e. idols, shall be a causer of desolation,) *even until the consummation, and that determined, shall be poured upon the desolate.* (desolator—see margin.)

Then in the remarks upon the first division, it is said (pp. 12, 13) "this great septenary period, as we shall see, is divided into three distinct parts,—seven weeks—threescore and two weeks, and one week; the first two of which follow in due continuous order without interruption. Whereas between the *last two*, namely the threescore and two weeks and the one week, a long interval occurs; these last two being separated one from the other by the whole period of Israel's dispersion, during which, in the account of the Lord, there is *no note whatever of time*, no reckoning of weeks or of years; a fact in their history which loudly proclaims (as I shall have occasion hereafter more fully to show) that Israel, for their sin in slaying the Just One, is rejected by God, and so lost sight of by him for a time as his people.

"Such, in its largest and more extended sense, is, I believe, the interpretation of the first part of our prophecy. Observe, I say, *in its largest and more extended sense*, because I am strongly disposed to believe that this passage, in the wisdom of God, is so framed as to be capable of being understood *in a double sense*. That is, that it not only points to the full and final redemption of Israel hereafter, but (as confirming the word of Jeremiah as to the termination of the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity) that it tells of the approaching deliverance of Judah, *in the days of Daniel himself*, from under the power of Babylon. If this be not the case, if no reference be here made to the case of his people at that time, how can the words of the angel be viewed as a direct reply to the prayer of the prophet? To me I confess it seems clear that Daniel not only felt for the sorrow and degradation of Israel at large, down to the latest age of their history; but that the generation then living, with all their national interests, were especially dear to his heart. And not only so, but I strongly suspect that his intercession was according to this; that his prayer had a *two-fold aspect*, being offered up in the first place for himself and his Jewish brethren cotemporary with himself, in whose behalf, observe, we hear him beseeching the Lord *not to defer* for his name's sake, and offered up also for those yet unborn, the faithful remnant, I mean, just on the eve of the millennial kingdom of Christ. And in accordance with this appears to be the reply of the angel who speaks in this passage, I believe, of the term of seventy weeks in *two distinct senses;* namely, seventy weeks of *days* in the one case, seventy weeks of *years* in the other. While the passage in question applies, in its *full extent*, to the *future*, because much more is predicted therein than can be said, as a whole, to be accomplished as yet."

Under the second division, the author seeks to resolve the question of the true commencing point. After noticing the view of

* This amended version, the justness of which I leave to more competent Hebraists to discuss, is so far important that, if true, it decides that the period of seven weeks is intentionally severed from the threescore and two weeks, as the time specified for the rebuilding of the street and the wall. After this period come the sixty-two weeks, and the cutting off of the Messiah. One week remains as to which full particulars are given in verse 27. Observe it is "*a*," and not "*the*" covenant. The covenant of Christ can in no sense be said to have been made *for one week*: that of the coming prince is made for such a period, and broken on his part when half the time is expired.

Dr. Prideaux, and others who reckon from the commission given to Ezra, (ch. vii. 12-26,) he rightly observes that this commission concerns the *temple alone;* whereas, the commission given to Nehemiah is as exclusive as regards to the city. (Neh. ii. 3, 5, 8, 12-17.) But the prophecy determines the latter to be the true commencement —"from the going forth of *the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem,*" and not merely the temple there.

Hence Sir E. D. gives the dates as follows: first, from Nehemiah's return in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes to Christ's birth, 457 years; secondly, from His birth to His death, 33 years.

But here is, in my judgment, the mistake of the author. He supposes an entire period of seventy weeks to close with the death of Christ: a supposition which is in no way disclosed in the prophecy, and quite contrary to any dates ever assigned to the interval in dispute. Now, it appears to me that the words of Daniel would lead much more naturally to the conclusion that the death of Christ occurred about, if not at, the close of the sixty-ninth week. "After the threescore and two weeks (i.e. in addition to the seven weeks just disposed of) shall Messiah be cut off." This statement would seem to define more fixedly to what point of the Messiah's life reference was made under the second head. Was it to His birth, to His baptism and ministry, or to His death? The fresh revelation connects *His cutting off* with the termination of the sixty-nine weeks. Sir E. D. argues (with others) that the indefinitiveness of the word *after* may mean *a whole week after*, and puts the death of Christ at the end of *a* (not the) seventieth week. "But where, it may be said, do we find this week in the prophecy? Nowhere, I answer. The Spirit of God leaves it wholly unnamed and unmeasured. In verse 27 we find a separate week, it is true; but this is distinct from that alluded to here. Though full space is here left, so as to allow for and let in, as it were, the seven years of John's and the Lord's mission on earth: these years, nevertheless, are passed over in silence, and so far as I know have escaped the notice of those who have considered the passage." (pp. 29, 30.) It is thus that the author proceeds to account for the silence of Scripture on a point of such moment. "Our Lord at his *first* coming, through the testimony of John, in the first place, and next in his own blessed person, was presented to Israel as having sole claim to the throne of his fathers. *On his part* ALL THINGS WERE READY; and he only waited for his people to own and receive him, as the consolation, the deliverer of Israel, in order at once to take to himself his great power and reign. True, it was decreed, in the secret counsels of God, that the Lamb should be slain, seeing that without shedding of blood there is no remission. Still, on the other hand, Israel was guilty of disallowing the claims of their king to his throne, of putting their Messiah to death; and for this they themselves have been rejected,—for this the Lord has given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

"At the *second* coming of Christ, on the other hand, his reception no longer depending, as of old, on the will of his people, but on his own irresistible grace, it will not be a question whether Messiah shall reign, seeing that his people shall be willing in the day of his power. The Spirit of God will make them thus willing. They shall look on him whom they have pierced; they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. And this will take place, as we gather from the prophecy, at the close of these seventy weeks of Daniel. Then the transgression of Israel will be finished—the Holy of holies anointed.

"And so also, if we look back to the cutting off of Messiah, we shall find also that this also occurred critically at the close of the very same period of time, just SEVENTY WEEKS after the going forth of Nehemiah's commission to restore and to build Jerusalem. This will be found to be true, if to the *seven and threescore and two weeks* aforesaid, we add the period of the testimony of John and of Jesus—the *unnoticed week*, as I term it, of Messiah's rejection."

The reader will observe that the theory of the cancelled week is owing to the fact that the author's mind was pre-occupied with the belief that seventy weeks were really completed at the cutting off of the Messiah. On the other hand, he saw clearly that the seventieth week *of Daniel* refers not to Christ, but to "the prince that shall come," and is wholly unfulfilled. This readily led to the idea that we are, because of Israel's sin in rejecting their king, to view a week as cancelled, its place to be supplied in the end by the week named in the prophecy; and the idea was confirmed by the supposed indefiniteness of the word "*after*," which seemed to leave room for the week.

But it appears to me that, ingenious as the fabric is, some of the statements strike the mind as being without Scripture, if not against it; others are in opposition to facts as clearly ascertained as the case admits of. Thus, the long period of three years and a half, assigned by Prideaux and Sir Edward D. to the ministry of John the Baptist, has little countenance from the Word of God. Next, it seems hardly fair, without some plain and decided evidence, to deny that our Lord was crucified A.D. 29. I do not mean, of course, that our Lord was not thirty-three years old, or rather more; for, according to the view which most commends itself to my own mind, He was born A. C. 5, or thereabouts; and such indeed is the opinion of Usher and Hales, although the former dates the crucifixion A.D. 33, and the latter A.D. 31, both giving to our Lord's ministry an extension of time unsupported by Scripture. But A.D. 29 seems preferable, not so much because the most careful of modern chronologers, as Clinton, Ideler, Benson, and Browne, have fixed upon it as the true, or at any rate most probable date, but because the existing data so strongly incline to that year. Thus, the only consular date of an event, not only of the nearest interest to thousands of Christians converted that same year, but recorded in the official *Acta Pilatii*, and referred to by early Christian writers repeatedly, is the year of the two Gemini; that is to say, confessedly A.D. 29. So Tertullian, (Adv. Marc. ii. 300,) Augustine, (De Civ. Dei xviii. 64,) Prosper, (Chronicon,) Lactantius, &c.—Next, Clemens Alex. reckons forty-two years from the crucifixion to the fall of Jerusalem, which gives A.D. 29 (or A.D. 28, as Jarvis supposes.)—The Canon of Hippolytus, and the era of Constantinople, both point to A.D. 29.—Again, the only years of Tiberius, assigned by ecclesiastical writers until Eusebius, are the fifteenth and sixteenth, that is, A.D. 29 or 30;* Tertullian and Sulpicius leaning to the former; Jerome, Hilary, &c., to the latter.† It is well to be noted, that this date does not really contradict Luke iii. 1, upon the hypothesis preferred here; because it is agreed that Tiberius was joined with Augustus in equal provincial authority two or three years before the death of the latter. That the Bible contains a similar computation elsewhere, is clear from the cases of Nebuchadnezzar, and of Jewish kings. It is observable also that ἡγεμονία, though indicative of course of supremacy, is not the strictly imperial word, but may well embrace that sort of deputed command which Tiberius Cesar exercised before he reigned alone. But this Scripture, on the other hand, seems to shut out the three years and an half assigned to John by Sir E. D., no less than the protracted ministry assigned to our Lord by Usher and Cuninghame.

Let us see how this date suits the prophecy of Daniel. Supposing we take the sixty-nine weeks to close about A.D. 29, the time of the cutting off of the Messiah, to what period are we brought as the starting point? Evidently A. C. 454, the precise date assigned by Usher and Petavius to the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. And this is the more remarkable, as both learned writers adopted a date for the Lord's death entirely different from that which seems to be warranted by the evidence which remains to us, as they also interpreted Dan. ix. 27 of the death of Christ in the middle of the seventieth week, which, I presume, biassed their judgment in the question of the date of the crucifixion, and led them to prefer that of Eusebius to the one which has unquestionably the weight of direct recorded facts, and is, I humbly think, most harmonious with the plain suggestions of the Scripture narrative. And so perhaps the author might himself allow, for in the Appendix, page 146, he recurs to the question of devoting a week, or seven years, divided equally, to the ministry of John and the Lord Jesus. "But how, it may be asked, is this proved? What chronological data have we in Scripture on which to ground this assertion? None, I unhesitatingly answer—none, at least, that I am aware." The author believes that it is a *moral* rather than a *chronological* question, and appeals to the harmony and consistency which the hypothesis gives to the subject, viewed, not in detached parts, but as a whole, as strongly leading to his own conclusion.

The sum of that which has been advanced would stand thus:—

The commandment to Nehemiah in the 20th year of Artaxerxes Longimanus	B. C. 454‡	= 483 ys. or 69 ws.
The probable date of the crucifixion of the Lord	A. D. 29	

If this be true, it corresponds exactly with Dan. ix. 26. The prophecy, like many others, is interrupted for a time. One week (verse 27) remains to be occupied with the bisected septennial covenant of the prince that shall come, who at the fulfilment of the last cut off and reserved week, will be destroyed by the re-appearing of the Messiah.

Whether, however, we receive or reject the theory of the forfeited week of grace, or of the various dispensational cycles of seventy weeks, which the author traces in plate 2, and which hinge mainly upon that theory, it must be allowed that Sir E. D. has done good service in extricating the last verse of Dan. ix. from the false glosses so often put upon it.

"The Prince, before named, having for the first three years and a half of his time reigned in peace over the Jews, he now, at the end of that time, that is, 'in the midst of the week,' as we here read, throws off the mask and discovers himself. He had acted as a deceiver at first, and now, having compassed his object, as in like instances has been always the case, he shows himself forth as a tyrant. He had set up at first, with a view to flatter his subjects, that species of worship, observe, which only would take with the Jews. But now this is all set aside; he causes the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the forty-two months, or three years and a half, spoken of in Revelation and Daniel, namely, the latter half of the week, he opens his mouth in blasphemies against the God of heaven, while he at the same time oppresses his people.

"These, according to the Lord's Word, will be 'the days of vengeance,' when God, through the means of this false one, 'the enemy and the avenger,' as he is termed in the eighth Psalm, will punish his people. This will be 'the time of Jacob's trouble,'

* Greswell, in his *Prolegomena ad Harmoniam*, prefers the date A.D. 30.

† Eusebius appears to be the first who abandoned the year, or years, assigned above, for the nineteenth of Tiberius in the fourth year of Ol. 202, marking that date also by the Phlegon eclipse of the sun. But it is agreed by astronomers that the Phlegon eclipse was a total solar eclipse, which occurred A.D. 29; so that the reference to it by Eusebius overthrows the date which he assigns to the Passion. Nevertheless, this self-contradictory error of the celebrated ecclesiologist obtained currency, and was followed by most until Sir I. Newton. Recent chronologers revert to an earlier date.

‡ If the vulgar chronology be adopted, i e. 445, there is a difference of nine years.—Prideaux takes the seventh year of Artaxerxes as the starting point, and supposes the seventy weeks to expire before the death of the Messiah thus:—Ezra's commission A. C. 457 + the Lord's life A. D. 33 = 490 years.

(Jer. xxx. 7,) 'the great tribulation,' so fearfully shown in Matt. xxiv. and in Rev. xiii., when the holy city shall be trodden under foot, the abomination of desolation set up, and the image of the beast—namely, that of this desolator himself—shall stand in the holy place as the object of worship, and when all shall be slain, who will dare refuse to worship the idol." . . . . .

"In the midst, however, of the blasphemies and abominations of these times, there will be an elect remnant, who, standing wholly aloof from the infidel nation, will be brought to look for the promised Messiah. This remnant, it appears, will be divided into two distinct portions; some who, standing forth in that day as champions of truth, will die for their testimony, of whom the two witnesses surely are samples; others who, true to the God of their fathers, in the end will be brought to know the crucified Jesus of Nazareth as the hope, the deliverer of Israel, to look on Him whom they had pierced, to mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and to be in bitterness for Him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. These last, having been preserved by the sheltering hand of the Lord through the dark times of Anti-Christ, will form in the end the seed or members of the redeemed nation; and at the voice of their cry, while suffering at the hand of their enemies, the Lord will awake, and come forth to their deliverance. At which time, he whom we here read of as having been used as a rod in the hand of the Lord will be in his turn judged. Man, in the person of this great wilful one, having been suffered to go to the full length of his native iniquity, and displayed the evil of the flesh in all its enormity, will now at length come to his end, and none shall help him. At the battle of Armageddon, so fearfully described in the book of Revelation, (chap. xix.) the powers of the earth, with this great apostate king at their head, are seen in personal conflict with Christ. And there his impious career is cut short—there Anti-Christ falls with all his confederates, both Jewish and Gentile. Thus then we reach the close of our period—the end of Anti-Christ's week—the last week of the seventy—the point when the Lord, who through their sin in rejecting his Son, has been estranged from his people for ages, will shew himself faithful to his ancient covenant with Abraham; and, returning again to the scene of his former presence on earth, will be known once again as the God of Jeshurun, the Rock of his people.

And now, in closing this part of our subject, there is one point more in reference to these subjects, of which I would speak. There are two actions in Scripture, both deeds of blood, which I take to be typical of that of which Israel is guilty, namely, the murder of Christ. The first of these is the slaughter of the people of Shechem by Simeon and Levi. The other is the yet deeper evil of David the king, with regard to Uriah. Not that I mean to determine whether Hamor the prince, or any one of Shechemites, is to be viewed as foreshadowing the Lord, or that Uriah was a type of him either. No; this is not the point, but each of these acts was a dark deed of blood, and as such well expresses the sin of the Jews in cutting off their Messiah.

The first of these actions is referred to in a most emphatical manner in the last words of Jacob, in Gen. xlix.: 'Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.' The other, in the fiftieth Psalm, where the Psalmist, in praying to be delivered from bloodguiltiness, connects his own sin, and the forgiveness thereof, with the building up of the walls of Jerusalem—with the good, the blessing of Zion hereafter, with the day when burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering shall be slain on its altar. In both of which Scriptures it seems that the sin of Levi and Simeon, with regard to the people of Shechem, and also that of David the king, with regard to Uriah, have the above typical import.

And now, in connection with this, let us look at Zechariah xii., where we find the congregation of Israel humbling themselves before God for their rejection of Christ. The houses of David, of Nathan, of Levi, Slimei, or Simeon, all mourning apart. Now what object, we may ask, in selecting these names above all others in Israel? The reason is this, I believe; these are especially fitted to take in and represent the *whole Jewish nation*, thus guilty from the king on the throne down to the least of his subjects. David, we read in the history, was guilty of killing Uriah, while Nathan was sent to reprove him. 'Thou art the man, thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite,' said he; but in Zechariah we find the houses of David and Nathan, of the *king* and the *prophet*, the *reproved* and the *reprover*, standing quite on a level, both taking shame to themselves, and owning themselves guilty of having pierced their Messiah. And so of Simeon and Levi: in the history, we find them conspiring to put their victims to death; whereas, in the prophecy, we find the children of these (that is, of *Levi* the *priest*, and of Simeon or Shimei, expressing, as I take it, the *people*,) coming forth to the light, and confessing their sin, having learned 'the secret of the Lord,' refusing, like Jacob their father, to come again into their own evil secret, casting away out of their habitation those instruments of cruelty which had come down to them as an heir-loom, so to speak, from their fathers; thus, in common with the princes and prophets above named, fulfilling the type on the day of atonement, when every one in the congregation of Israel was commanded to afflict himself on that day, on pain of being cut off. (Levit. xxiii.)

Thus we have reached the close of this part of our subject, having traced the history of the Jews from Nehemiah's return to the second coming of Christ, at the end of the seventy weeks. And what have we seen? Evil, nothing but evil, on the part of the creature; grace, wonderful grace, on the other hand, on the part of the Lord. That which appears to me to be especially sweet and profitable in these meditations on this ninth chapter of Daniel, is the application of the very same truth to ourselves as individuals which belongs to the Jews as a nation. How often, alas! do we find that we have but little heart for the blessing which the Lord graciously lays at our feet, just as Israel had at the first coming of Christ; the consequence of which is that, like Israel at present, we get awhile into deadness, darkness, and distance from God, and in the end, like the Jews in the latter day, under Anti-Christ, plunged into a sea of trouble and sorrow; all the result of our folly and sin in not walking in happy child-like obedience to God. Blessed, however, to know that such is not to be the end of the path, either of the saint in this dispensation, (however perverse in his ways,) or of Israel hereafter, but that full blessing is reserved by the Lord for both one and the other.

Such is the moral to be drawn from this prophecy, which so fully displays the aboundings of grace over the aboundings of sin. Happy is it to trace the gracious ways of the Lord with his people the Jews, and to know that the God of Israel of old is our God, our Father, the One with whom our souls have to do, who, notwithstanding all our shortcomings, will surely perfect his own blessed work in our hearts.

Well may we say, as we trace the Lord in his ways both with Israel and with the Church, in the words of St. Paul: 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of God? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.'"

The author considers that "the end of the age," in Matt. xiii. xxiv. &c., applies to the last week of Daniel. "According to this, I may be told then that the Church will be on earth *during the week* in the tribulation under the beast. To this I reply, that I believe it will be quite the reverse. The Church, I feel fully assured, will be caught up to the Lord before the week opens, before the Anti-Christ rises. How is this? it will be said. Are not the saints in this dispensation 'the children of the kingdom,' and has it not been just stated that they will be on earth to the end? Yes, the members of Christ's mystical body, the Church, are surely the children of the kingdom; but this is no reason that they are *exclusively such*. The children of the kingdom I take to be a phrase of very general meaning, embracing all the people of God between the Lord's first coming in grace and his second coming in judgment—between the cross and the glory. What the Lord means to say, I believe, is, that the wicked and the righteous (the latter meaning the *Church of God* in the first place, and then after they are caught up, the *Jewish remnant*, who will then be raised up,) shall continue together on earth till the end. That then, 'in the time of harvest,' that is, not at any precise point of time, but *during the week*, he will say to the reapers: 'Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.' This I take to be a *preparatory action* previous to their being actually burnt, and the wheat gathered in.

"Then there is another point. When the Lord speaks of the tares and the wheat, as thus growing together, as they are doing at present, we must view this as representing the condition of things, *as a whole*, between his first and last coming, without taking into account the fact that, during that time, generation after generation, both of the righteous and wicked, die off—that there is constant succession—incessant fluctuation, altogether different from that from whence the image is borrowed, seeing that, in the natural world, the very same seed that is sown in one month springs up and is reaped in another. But, on the other hand, when we actually come to the time of harvest, then we must lose sight of the past generations rising and dying, one after another, in constant succession, and look alone at the generation alive at the time. And these only will be dealt with in that day of Christ's coming. *These only*, I say, seeing that the wicked of former generations will not then be raised from their graves, but will be reserved for judgment after the thousand years are expired; (Rev. xx. 7-15;) while the Church of God, on the other hand, will have been caught up to heaven before the week opens. (1 Thess. iv. 16-18.) This then, I believe, quite determines who the wheat are at the time of the harvest, namely, the Jewish remnant—the righteous ones on the earth at that time. These, while the wicked are judged, will be spared, gathered into the barn, as we read in this parable. So far as it goes, it speaks of the deliverance and blessing of the righteous; but the parable does not touch on the glory of the children of the resurrection; this is reserved for the interpretation thereof, (in the forty-third verse,) where the righteous are seen as shining forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father; that is, not those upon earth in that day who will be in the kingdom of the Son of man, but those in the heavenly places, where the Father will be supreme."

ONLY IN THE LORD; OR, CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE. By Julia Puddicombe, &c.

Bath: Binns & Goodwin, &c.

A WORK containing wholesome observations upon a danger which often besets the young Christian of either sex.

A Chart, entitled The Feasts of the Lord, according to their order in Leviticus XXIII.; showing forth the whole purpose of God from everlasting, to the renewal and perfection of all things. By Sir E. Denny, Bart.

As the author observes, this and the "Prophetical Stream of Time" will be found to have much the same object, and while each is complete in itself, to throw out and receive light mutually; the latter presenting all the moral dealings of God in a *historico-prophetic* manner, and the former viewing them *typically*.

The general idea in his own words is this:—"The dispensational actings of God throughout the whole course of the world's history are expressed within the compass of this beautiful chapter, so that that portion of the year occupied by these seven feasts, from the setting apart of the paschal lamb in the first month, to the feast of ungathering in the seventh, may be viewed as expressing THE GREAT WEEK OF TIME, from the creation to the close of the millennial kingdom of Christ, while the remaining months of the year, after the feasts had concluded, and which, observe, are wholly unnoticed in this xxiii. of Leviticus, expressed, it appears, THE ETERNAL STATE; THE EIGHTH DAY at the close just giving us a glimpse, as it were, of *the end*, when Christ will give up the kingdom, when the new heavens and new earth will be created, and GOD WILL BE ALL IN ALL. THE SABBATH being distinct as to its character from the other six feasts, shewed forth the rest of man now walking by faith upon earth, and also of man hereafter, in the full fruition of God, and therefore, as marking this truth, it was repeated from one week to another, through the whole course of the year; the first seven months, as we have seen, being expressive of time—the unnoticed months at the end of eternity." "The above is the more enlarged view of this subject, because the three first of these feasts, it is needless to state, were fulfilled, when Christ came, and was rejected by Israel."

A copious list of Scriptures, casting light upon the nature of the feasts, is found in the margin, and a sort of running comment expressed in simple language.

This Chart, being inexpensive, may prove really serviceable to Christians whose circumstances may not admit of their purchasing the more costly chart; though it is right to add that it contains expressions here and there, which offend against the Scriptural idea of the one body, the Church. These the author has avoided more carefully in his later works.

"Things to Come," practically inquired into.—I. The Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.—II. The Coming of Jesus Christ, and the First Resurrection.—III. The General Resurrection and Last Judgment.—By the Rev. Christopher Bowen, M. A., Incumbent of St. Mary's, Southwark.—1849.

Bath: Binns & Goodwin. London: James Nisbet & Co.

This little work contains nothing very novel, nor does it present in a powerful way that which is already familiar to students of prophecy. Still it is, in the main, a true picture of the subjects whereof it treats, interspersed with profitable practical hints to the reader.

In pages 31 and sequel, the author examines an objection which is every day working more injuriously among those who read prophetical works. "They recall the several predictions of events yet to be accomplished by the world in its ungodliness. They see the Jew still a wanderer—still unrestored to his own land. They see not yet, in its full development of evil, the great apostasy—the confederacy of unbelief and dark superstition against the name of truth. How then, they ask, can Jesus come? Can He set up His reign of righteousness until all these things be accomplished? Now, brethren, if it were necessary to believe this, we should have, I grant, an obstacle most fatal to that spirit of watchfulness which God's Word so enjoins. But it is *not* required to believe that the people of God should have to await these previous events. *Let nothing take precedence in your minds of the coming of Jesus. Let it be even as at this moment. It may be so.* But how shall we resolve the difficulty. Even thus. There is an order in the arrangements of heaven as to the appearing and coming of the Son of man. Every part has its own time," &c.

It is true that the solution proposed by Mr. B. will not bear close scrutiny. For if Matt. xxiv. bear, as Mr. B. supposes it to bear, upon the Lord's coming to take the Church, it is positively certain that various and successive harbingers of His approach are found there, and, so far from being the clue, Matt. xxiv. is to some minds as great a difficulty as any other. It is true that the difficulty disappears the moment it is seen that the signs given in that chapter are *for Jewish disciples in the land previous to the coming of the Lord as Son of man*—a fact which in no way interferes with the truth, that *the Church, properly so called, has no sign afforded in Scripture to apprize her of the coming of the Lord to catch her to Himself*, a coming which she was meant to be constantly expecting. Such disciples I believe there will be, and the prophetic word of the Lord in Matt. xxiv. has to do with them who, after the Church is gone, will be found in Palestine during the tremendous trials from Anti-Christ, &c. For their deliverance and the destruction of His and their foes, the Son of man appears as described in Matt. xxiv. 27-31, and we know from other Scriptures, as Jude 14, 15, Rev. xix. 11-21, that when He thus comes to judge, the Church follows Him *out of heaven*, and appears with Him in glory. It is the period of the manifestation of Christ and the Church to the world, and not the time of her rapture any more than of His ascension. The following is added as a sample of what we can coincide with: "But what of them who shall be left? They who heeded not the Lord in His ascent, shall be blind to the ascension of the blessed children of God. The world will take no note. The wonder, if observed, will soon cease to be regarded. The world is fast learning to do without Christianity. Men will return to their customary employments, if indeed they shall have left them. . . . Iniquity, we may believe, will advance with giant strides, and everywhere abound. Then those remaining events shall occur as predicted. The Jew shall return to his own land in unbelief, and *there* be *again a mark for the world's hostility*. The Romish Anti-Christ shall come in remembrance for his final doom. Transgression will have come to the full, and apostate Christendom, the spurious wine of the earth, shall be cast into 'the great winepress of the wrath of God.' *Then* shall be the manifestation of the Lord as supreme in *His dominion*, coming to execute judgment on the ungodly. All His saints shall then be with Him."—Pages 34, 35.

The Religious World; or, These Last Perilous Times.

London: Seeley, Burnside & Seeley.

This book has some true notices of the prevailing perils of the day. But the writer never rises into an adequate judgment of the momentous questions which are handled. Neither is the remedy for such a state of things apprehended. The author has not yet understood the force of the word "let us go forth, therefore, unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." Hence you have the impression of one who is breathing an atmosphere more or less foul, rather than of one who cannot rest save in the light, and joy, and freshness of the presence of Jesus. The doctrine of the author is by no means always sound.

Past Fulfilment of Prophecy, a Guide to Future.

Bath: Binns & Goodwin. London: James Nisbet & Co., &c.

This book is little more than an outline of the prophetic system attempted to be reared by the unfortunate author of "Thoughts on the Apocalypse." Of course, it can be in no way commended. Many of its leading errors are refuted elsewhere in the present number of this journal.

The Mystery of the Kingdom traced through the Four Books of Kings. By Andrew Jukes.—Part I. The First Book of Kings.—1849.

London: James Nisbet & Co., Berners Street.

There is some ingenious accommodation of Scripture in this essay, but a fundamental confusion of the Church with the kingdom vitiates its reflections, its reasonings, and its applications throughout. It is assumed (page 34) that in the Kings we have the type of the different characters of *rule in the Church*. This thought is the basis of the present, and, it would seem, of the forthcoming, parts. If erroneous, as I fully believe it to be, the consequences, so far as it may have any, cannot but work mischief to the author of those influenced by such views.

Although I grieve to say so much, it is clear that the author has not the just scriptural idea of the ever-abiding presence and operations of the Spirit in the Church, and that the searching into the books of the Kings for analogies of that which is wholly unrevealed there, must mislead. That the Holy Ghost does hold what may be, truthfully I think, termed a vicarial place in the Church, and that He works in the body and in the individual members for the good of the whole, may not be foreshadowed in the Kings, but is most certainly revealed as characteristic of Christ's body in the New Testament. It is, therefore, trifling with, and unsettling, the faith, to substitute for a plain, positive revelation of God's mind a fancied, and perhaps fanciful, construction of types which, after all, may be proved to have no relation whatever to the subject matter in hand.

Hymns and Thoughts for the Sick and Lonely. By a Lady.

London: James Nisbet & Co. Bath: Binns & Goodwin, &c.

A Selection of Hymns for the Worship of Christians. Compiled in Clonmel.—1848.

Bath: Binns & Goodwin, &c.

The first of these works is especially designed for the use and comfort of invalids, and contains many thoughts expressed perhaps more easily and pleasingly, because they were for the most part composed without any view to publication. The writer, however sweet in spirit and earnest in desire, needs to be more thoroughly built up in the grace of God, as well as in the glory yet to be revealed.

The latter is a collection of three hundred and fourteen hymns, culled with judgment from books already in use among Christians, and is especially adapted for corporate worship. In general, each hymn has been preserved in its original condition, save where doctrinal error made a change highly desirable.

An Introduction to the Book of Job.—1849.

London: John B. Bateman, 1, Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row; J. K. Campbell, High Holborn, &c.

This little book is a fit companion of the "Introduction to the Canticles," by the same author. The chief point dwelt on is the fact, that the beautiful history of Job (solitary as he was and unlinked with the family of Abraham) is made to introduce the great actors, and to reveal the great truths which form the common faith of the elect.

"It is the story of an elect one, in early patriarchal days, a child of resurrection, set down to learn the lesson of resurrection. His celebrated confession tells us that resurrection was understood by him as a doctrine, while the whole story tells us that he had still to know the power of it in his soul. It was an article of his faith, but not the principle of his life." (Page 7.)—"Job was righteous, but he was not prepared for such shifting scenery as this. He loved the green spot and the feathered nest. Changes come, and changes are too much for him. But God, in the love wherewith He loved him, as his heavenly Father, puts him to school, to learn the lesson of a child of resurrection, to be 'a partaker of *His* holiness,' the holiness not merely of a right or pure-minded man, but the holiness of a dead and risen man, one of the pilgrim family, one of God's strangers in the world. (Heb. xii. 9, 10.) Job was chastened to be partaker of such a holiness as this. Not that trials and troubles, like his, are essential to the learning of this lesson. A very common method it is, indeed, with the heavenly Father, in His wisdom. But Paul set himself daily to practise that lesson, without the instructions of griefs and lessons in either body or estate. (Phil. iii.) In the fervent labourings of the Spirit within, he exercised himself in it every day. And so should we. We are to dread the Laodicean state, satisfaction with present condition or attainment. The Laodicean was not a Pharisee, or a self-righteous man of religion. He was a professor, it may be, of very correct notions and judgments, but in a spirit of self-complacency; he did not cherish increasing freshness and vigour in the ways of the Lord.

"'Arise, depart, for this is not your rest,' says the Spirit by the prophet. And why? Why is it not to be our rest? 'It is polluted,' he adds. He does not say, it is sorrowful, it is disappointing, it is unsatisfying, but, it is polluted. The quickened soul is to gather from the *moral*, and not from the *circumstances* of the scene here, its reasons for cherishing within it the power of Christ's resurrection. The dove outside the ark did not fear the snare of the fowler, but found no rest for the sole of her foot on the unpurged ground." (Pages 10-12.)

Another thing which is traced is the way in which the Spirit of God breathes the same language in the book of Job as elsewhere, though it is the most independent of any in the inspired Volume. This is instanced especially in the place given to *the person and duty of the kinsman.* (Compare pages 29-38.)

A Basket of Fragments and Crumbs, &c. Compiled by Major M. John Rowlandson.—1849.

Bath: Binns & Goodwin, &c.

This little book is a collection of thoughts on divine things, from many sources. But while it may be allowed that there is in it "substantial nutriment for the children of God," it would be too much to expect that it contains "no crudities."

Quaintness is all well where the ideas are true and strikingly expressed. Nevertheless, it should never degenerate into the semblance of lightness. From this fault the work is not altogether free, though it may suggest hints of value and of comfort to many souls. The sieve might be used to profit in a future edition.

ON THE MORMONS.

[In the language of the Old Testament, Jasher means upright, correct, authentic, — Mormon means deceit. The word is so used in Psalms xl. 1, l. 19, and lii. 1, as well as in other places. Spalding, the writer of the book of Mormon, afterwards brought forward by Smith, had been a preacher, and in reading for his sermons may have met with the word so explained, and have used it intentionally, to denote an invention, as we might call a collection of fables the book of Esop.]

What's in a name? there has been more
Than at first sight perhaps was read;
Imposture, by the name it bore,
Has warned us not to be misled.
Mormon, deceiving and deceived, —
Relying on a book absurd,
And written not to be believed,
Telling its falsehood in the word:
God's Bible, book of Jasher named, (Josh. x. 13.)
The book of truth and uprightness,
Mormon means lying; then, ashamed,
The folly of thy faith confess!
See, prophecy's fulfilment due,
Dupe of deceit so false and hollow,
In thee the words of Christ come true,
"False Christs shall rise, and many follow." (Matt. xxiv. 5, 17.)

K.

PSALM XXIX.

1. Give unto the Lord, ye sons of the mighty,
Give unto the Lord glory and strength.
2. Give unto the Lord the glory of his name;
Bow down to the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
3 The voice of the Lord on the waters!
The God of glory thundereth!
The Lord upon many waters!
4 The voice of the Lord in power,
The voice of the Lord in glory!
5 The voice of the Lord breaking the cedars!
Yea, the Lord shall break the cedars of Lebanon.
6. He shall make them also to leap like a calf,
Lebanon and Sirion like the young of the wild ox.
7. The voice of the Lord cleaving the flames of fire;
8. The voice of the Lord shall shake the wilderness,
The Lord shall shake the wilderness of Kadesh.
9. The word of the Lord shall rend the pine-trees,
And shall lay bare the forests,
And in his temple all are telling of his glory.
10. The Lord returneth to the overthrowing,
And the Lord shall sit King for ever.
11. The Lord will give strength to his people,
The Lord will bless his people with peace.

NOTES.

Verse 6.—The word rendered Unicorn in the English version has no relation to horns, but to the magnitude of the animal. It is said that the Arabs still call a large and fierce animal of the elk kind, by this name, but modern writers consider it to be the Onyx, Aurochs, or Wild Ox.

Verse 9.—Many of the Jewish commentators authorize this translation, as does Professor Lee in his Lexicon.

Verse 10.—This is the only passage where the word Mabul, here rendered overthrowing, occurs, except where applied to Noah's flood. It may mean any state of confusion, the root, being that of Babel, such as Noah's flood must certainly have caused; and as the flood of waters is no more to return upon the earth, some other confused state of things must be meant, probably that confusion caused by the domination of Babylon, and completed in her fall, on which confused state of the world, the Lord will return, to sit as King for ever.

A SONG FOR THE WILDERNESS.

This world is a wilderness wide!
I have nothing to seek or to choose;
I've no thought in the waste to abide;
I've nought to regret nor to lose.

The Lord is Himself gone before,
He has marked out the path that I tread,
It's as sure as the love I adore,
I have nothing to fear nor to dread.

There is but that one in the waste
Which His footsteps have marked as His own,
And I follow in diligent haste
To the seats where He's put on His crown.

For the path where my Shepherd is gone
Has led up to His Father and God,
To the place where He's now on the throne,
And His strength shall be mine on the road.

And with Him shall my rest be on high,
When in holiness bright I sit down,
In the joy of His love ever nigh,
In the peace that His presence shall crown.

'Tis the treasure I've found in His love
That has made me a pilgrim below,
And 'tis there, when I reach Him above,
As I'm known all His fulness I'll know.

And, Saviour, 'tis Thee from on high
I await till the time Thou shalt come,
To take him Thou hast led by Thine eye
To Thyself in Thy heavenly home.

Till then 'tis the path Thou hast trod,
My delight and my comfort shall be;
I'm content with Thy staff and Thy rod,
Till with Thee all Thy glory I see.

J. N. D.

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