

ZION'S WATCH TOWER

HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE.

"Watchman, What of the Night?" "The Morning Cometh."—Isaiah xxi. 11.

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ZION'S WATCH TOWER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

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PROSPECTUS

This is the first number of the first volume of "ZION'S WATCH TOWER," and it may not be amiss to state the object of its publication.

That we are living "in the last days"—"the day of the Lord"—"the end" of the Gospel age, and consequently, in the dawn of the "new" age, are facts not only discernible by the close student of the Word, led by the spirit, but the *outward signs* recognizable by the *world* bear the same testimony, and we are desirous that the "household of faith" be fully awake to the fact, that—

"We are living, we are dwelling
In a grand and awful time;
In an age on ages telling
To be living is sublime."

And not alone to help awaken, but to assist them to "put on the whole armor of God, that they may be able to stand in the evil day;" and, besides all this, that giving all diligence, they add to their faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, self control, [temperance,] brotherly kindness, charity; when, as a result of these indwelling and flourishing graces, they shall be God-like [godly].

But, recognizing the beauty and necessity of these *adornments* of the spiritual man, they fail not to recognize that the merit toward God lies not in these moral virtues, but in *Christ's perfect sacrifice*, and though adorned by all these gems of character, we could not be recognized as God's children now, nor permitted ever to enter His presence without *the robe of Christ's righteousness*, the "wedding garment" necessary to our participation in "the marriage of the Lamb."

Christians to whom an apology would be needed for directing

attention to these things, should blush and be ashamed. Everything desirable, hopeful and precious stands closely and ever connected with them. They embrace nearly all the great motives to faith, watchfulness, obedience, holiness.

If God has given us a revelation, and tells us that *it is profitable* for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work, where do so many Christians who profess to accept that Word of God as their rule and guide, get liberty to ignore more than one-half of it, thereby virtually saying *it is unprofitable*? When God has given us "a sure word of prophecy whereunto *we do well to take heed*," and when "the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to *show* unto His servants the things which must shortly be done," shall those servants feel under no obligation to seek to understand those heavenly messages?

Should they heed worldly men and a worldly church who deem it pious and wise not to bother with these things, who would have us put them aside as empty fables and curious stories, and strange imagery, which could only unsettle our minds and interfere with Christian work; or shall we heed God who declares "these sayings faithful and true" and says: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein?" Surely He knows what is best calculated to inspire "a *zeal* according to knowledge," and what is necessary that we "*be not soon shaken in mind*."

"To him that hath an *ear* to hear what the spirit saith unto the churches," ZION'S WATCH TOWER hopes to give assistance and encouragement. It is in bondage to no man, no party and to no creed but the Bible; yet in the bonds of love and sympathy to "all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity." It aims to represent "the chaste virgins," the prospective "Bride of Christ," and with them acknowledges only one master and head—Christ Jesus.

As its name indicates, it aims to be the lookout from whence matters of interest and profit may be announced to the "little flock," and as the "*Herald of Christ's Presence*," to give the "meat in due season" to the "household of faith."

It issues monthly, and if you desire its visit to your home, address at once as per notice on this page. If you have a neighbor or friend who you think would be interested in or benefited by its instructions, you might call it to their attention; thus preaching the Word and doing good unto all men as you have opportunity.

The terms, fifty cents a year, (postage paid,) are moderate; but to all interested and desirous of having it, who cannot afford to pay, we will *gladly send it free*, but you must ask that ye may receive.

IN RE "THE LAST TRUMP"

BRO. H. B. RICE, editor and publisher of *The Last Trump*, has been obliged by circumstances beyond his control to suspend its publication. Knowing that such a course was probable, we two months ago proposed to Bro. Rice that we would supply THE WATCH TOWER to his subscribers, instead of *The Trump*, up to the close of their subscriptions, and we invited him to speak to his old subscribers, and others of the *body of Christ*, through ZION'S WATCH TOWER.

He has accepted both propositions, sent the list of subscribers, and in an open letter to them says, "I will endeavor to contribute something to THE WATCH TOWER every month," &c.

As we are much crowded, we have published this letter as a *supplement*, and sent it to the subscribers of *The Last Trump*.

WHY WILL THERE BE A SECOND ADVENT?

That the second coming of our Lord Jesus occupies a prominent and important position in the teaching of the apostles and prophets, as well as of Jesus himself, is a fact that can scarcely fail to have been noticed by every Bible student. Yet, from various causes, very many of those who profess to love Him, and who we have reason to believe do, are not much interested in it. A few endeavor to figure it away by applying it to the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; others to the destruction of Jerusalem, &c.; all apparently forgetting the fact that in the last book of the Bible, written more than sixty years after Pentecost, and twenty-six years after Jerusalem's destruction, He that was dead and is alive speaks of the event as *yet future*, saying: "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me." And the inspired John replies: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Quite a number endeavor to satisfy themselves with the thought that it is a spiritual coming—that when any are converted, that forms a part of the coming of Christ, and that so He continues *coming* until all the world is converted—then, say they, He will have *fully* come.

They evidently overlook the fact that the world will not be converted *when* He comes; that the Bible, our only guide on the subject, declares that, "In the *last days* perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." That "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived;" and that Jesus gave special warning to His little flock, saying: "Take heed to *yourselves* lest that *day* come upon you unawares; for as a *snare* shall it come upon all *them*" (not taking heed) "that dwell upon the face of the whole earth, and they shall not escape."

Again, we may rest assured that when Jesus said, "All the tribes of the earth shall mourn and wail because of Him" when they see Him coming, He did not refer to the conversion of sinners—Do the tribes mourn and wail because of the conversion of a sinner?—And if it refers, as almost all admit, to Christ's personal presence on the earth, it teaches that *all* on earth will not love His appearing, as they certainly would do if all were converted.

But, "If I go away, I will come again," cannot refer to a spiritual coming *again*, because, spiritually, He never went away, as He said, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world," [age.] Therefore, Jesus taught His *second PERSONAL coming*. The word

MILLENNIUM

signifies one thousand, and is the term used by Christian people generally in speaking of a time future, when "*the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters do the sea, and none need to say unto his neighbor, Know thou the Lord? All shall know Him,*" &c. The time when there shall be no more curse; "when the wilderness shall blossom as the rose," and "streams break forth in the deserts," when "the tabernacle of God will be with men and He shall dwell with them," when Satan shall be restrained and righteousness shall control. "Then nation shall not lift up sword against nation," "nor learn war any more;" but "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks."

These prophetic pictures and statements are expected to have fulfillment some time by *nearly all Christians*, and they call it the millennial age because it is said (Rev. xx, 2-6) to be for a thousand years that Satan is bound and Christ reigns.

This far nearly all of the Church are agreed. They are *millennialists*, but there are *post-millennialists* and *pre-millennialists*: *post* signifies after, *pre*, before; so the former believe Christ will come after the millennium and the latter that He comes before it.

As these are the only views which contain sufficient truth to make them worthy of our consideration, we shall devote more time to them. All who believe in the *second* personal coming of Christ, should be interested in knowing what the general teaching of the Bible is on the subject. It is necessary, however, that we come to the consideration with a child-like mind, desirous of knowing how God has arranged the matter, and anxious to have the teachings of His word, and ready to lay aside *our ideas* and, as God's children, take His plan. Thus, let us inquire

WHY DOES CHRIST COME?

and examine briefly the arguments presented by both *Post-* and *Pre-millennialists*, comparing them with *the Word*—and *Plan* of God.

The first expect that through the efforts of the Church, the world will be converted, and thus the millennial age introduced, at the close of which the Lord will come, wind up earthly affairs, reward believers and condemn sinners. That to *convert the world, bind Satan*, make "the knowledge of the Lord to

fill the whole earth," and "nations to learn war no more," are the work of the Church *without* JESUS, and in her present mortal condition. When she has accomplished this great and difficult task, Jesus comes to wind it up, &c.

They have much Scripture, which taken disconnectedly, seems to favor this view. But even this, we believe, when God's word and plan are looked at as a whole, will be found to favor the other view, viz., that Christ comes before the conversion of the world; that the Church is now being tried, and that the reward promised the overcomers is, that they shall share in that reign: "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me in my throne." Rev. iii. 21. "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Rev. xx. 4.

There are two texts in particular used by our post-millennial brethren, to which we would refer: "This Gospel must first be preached in all the world for a witness. Then shall the end come." They claim this to refer to the Gospel converting the world before the end of the Gospel age. We pre-millennial believers claim that *witnessing* to the world does not mean converting the world, but as it reads, to witness or testify.

This witness has already been given. In 1861, the Bible Societies' reports showed that the Gospel had been published in every language of earth; not that all earth's myriads had received it. No; not one in a hundred of the twelve hundred millions have ever heard of the name of Jesus. Yet it has fulfilled the text—it has been a *witness* to every nation.

We understand that the object of the present witnessing is "To take out a *people* for His name"—the Church—who at Christ's coming are united to Him, and receive His name. Rev. iii. 12.

The second text is, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool." The thought generally gathered from this Scripture is, that in heaven God has a throne on which He sits continually, and that when "Christ sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," He sat down also upon the same throne. This is a misconception. The throne of God referred to is not an ivory or golden seat, but refers to His supreme authority and rulership, for "Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool," and Paul says, "God hath highly exalted Him [Christ], and given Him a name above every name." He hath given Him authority above every other, next to the Father. If Christ sits upon a material throne until His enemies are made His footstool [all subdued], then, of course, He could not come until the millennium was fully inaugurated. But if it means *the exalting to power*, it would not interfere with His coming and subduing all things unto Himself.

To illustrate: King William is on the throne of Germany, we say, yet we do not refer to the royal bench, and as a matter of fact, he seldom occupies it. We mean that he rules Germany.

Right hand signifies the chief place, position of excellence or power, and the words of Jesus to Pilate agree with this thought: "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Mark xiv. 62. He will be on the right hand *when coming*, and remain at the right hand during the millennial age.

There are able arguments possible on both sides, yet both are not true. We propose, therefore, to take a glance at the general

PLAN OF SALVATION.

to see which view is in harmony with it. In so doing, we shall find the relation and bearing of both the first and the second comings, and know where to locate.

First, then, has God a plan? All must agree that He has, although almost all are inclined to think and talk of His dealings as though He were dealing by a rule of chance, and governed entirely by circumstance. No; He that would condemn a man for building a tower without first counting the cost, shall He build and people a universe without counting the cost? No, brethren; "Known unto the Lord are all His ways from the beginning." God has a plan, a purpose, and we know that "all His purposes shall be accomplished." But how shall we find that plan? It is revealed to us in His word. "Search the Scripture," as Paul says, "Compare Scripture with Scripture," for

"God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

We are too much inclined to ask, What does my church say about any question, instead of What saith the Scriptures? Too much theology studied, and the Bible not enough. With the thought, then, that "The Scriptures are able to make us wise," that "the testimonies of the Lord are sure making wise the simple," let us examine.

We will not here discuss the question, *Why evil was permitted*. We take the fact which sickness, death, vice, &c., make so plainly and painfully evident, viz., Evil exists. Its existence is attributed in Scripture to the devil. Evil continues because Satan's power is continued. It will last throughout the present age, because "the devil is the prince [ruler] of this world" [age]. He will continue its ruler as long as he can, or until he is bound. He cannot be bound until a stronger than he takes the control out of his hands.

God, of course, can control him; and of Jesus it is written, "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me."

But while Christ has all power, for wise purposes He has not made use of it, permitting evil to reign and measurably control the world, and permitting the devil to be "prince of this world," or epoch. But the time is coming when "He shall take to Himself His great power, and reign," exalting His Church, giving her "power over the nations," so that instead of, as now, being "subject to the powers that be," she shall "rule the nations." But when will He thus assume control? When the Gospel Church, "His body," Ecclesia, is complete. Evil is now being permitted for "the trial of your faith," the perfecting of the saints. This time is synchronous with the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Rev. xi. 15. Here the mystery [church] of God is finished, and "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and His anointed" [church]. Now, we inquire, is this transfer of authority

FROM SATAN TO CHRIST

caused by the conversion of the nations to Christ through preaching the Gospel? We answer, No. At this time the nations are not converted (vs. 18), "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come." If converted, they would not be thus hostile, neither would God's wrath come upon them. On the contrary, God teaches in many Scriptures that a great time of trouble will come upon the nations. "Come, behold the desolations which the Lord hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth." This is the way God tells us He will make wars to cease. The next clause informs us that then He "will be exalted among the heathen and in all the earth." This chastisement of nations will be for their good, and is necessary to them as is the chastisement which God now inflicts upon His children, and it will have a good effect, for "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." It is in this new dispensation that, with evil restrained—Satan bound—the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters do the sea. The conversion of the world, instead of being due now while "the devil is the prince of this world," will, David says, be "When the kingdom is the Lord's and He is the Governor among the nations, all the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and the kingdoms of the nations shall come and worship before Him."

During the infancy of the human family—say from Adam to Moses—God treated his creatures like very young children. So far as we know, they had very little knowledge of their Creator's power or character. They had scarcely any revelation, the exception being the few cases where God favored special persons, as Abraham, Lot, &c., communicating to them by angels, giving to Abraham and Eve peculiar promises, which they could only vaguely comprehend.

The next age was to the Jewish nation a schooling season, during which God taught them to respect His promises and laws. They were yet minors, under age, therefore not treated as children, but kept under the law, their schoolmaster, Gal. iv.

While the Word of God was being written and committed to the Jews for keeping, &c., the remainder of the world seems to have been left in the darkness of heathenism. They bowed down to wood and stone, destitute of truth as they are today.

In Scripture the period from Adam to the flood is called "the world [age] that was." From the flood to the second coming of the Lord, "the world [age] that now is," and "the present evil world," [age], and the next is called "the world to come."

"The present evil world" contains three

SEPARATE AGES.

The Patriarchal, lasting from the flood to the death of Jacob; the Jewish age, lasting from the death of Jacob until the death of Christ, when He gave them up, wept over them, and said: "Your house is left unto you desolate;" the Gospel age, lasting from the resurrection of Christ, when He became "the first-born from the dead, and the beginning of the new creation," until the full company of "the Church of the First-born" is complete, and He comes. The time of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the resurrection and reward of prophets, saints, &c. Rev. xi. 16.

We know not how many ages may be in "the world to come;" but that there is more than one, we are sure, for Paul speaks of "the ages to come." Eph. ii. 7. The first of these alone is dealt with in Scripture, the millennial age, during which we live and reign with Christ a thousand years. Rev. xx. 4.

Having got an outline, let us look more particularly at God's doings and sayings, and, first, it will astonish you, doubtless, until you reflect, when I say, that according to His word, God has not exhausted His resources for the world's salvation; that, in short, He is not now trying to save the world, nor has he been during past ages. What has He been doing? "Taking out a people—Church—for His name." Don't think this wonderful, as it is only putting in a striking form what all Calvinists believe, among whom are Baptists, Presbyterians and others, viz., that God is now electing, or choosing His Church out of the world. Yes, and all our brethren who believe in free grace must admit, that if "all His purposes shall be accomplished," and "God's Word shall accomplish the thing whereto it was sent," if these Scriptures are true, God did not purpose the conversion of the world during the past six thousand years, else it would be accomplished. Neither did He send His word to convert the world up to the present time, else it *did not* prosper in the thing whereto He sent it. These two views have been a dividing point in the churches for centuries, viz.:

ELECTION VS. FREE GRACE.

We believe the Scripture to teach both, but that it requires the observance of "Heaven's first law," *order*, to rightly divide the word of truth on this subject.

First we will glance at Election. During the age preceding the deluge, there is no Scriptural account of God giving mankind any law, and very little light of revelation. One promise shines out, "The Seed of the Woman to Bruise the Serpent," and even this required future revelation in order to be comprehended. God had, however, a few patriarchs or servants who had light above the masses, as lamp-posts in a dark way.

The Patriarchal age had increase of light. It is now revealed that this seed is not only to crush evil [serpent], but to "bless all the families of the earth." Still God's Church is represented by one man, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, &c., &c.

These patriarchs were elected—chosen. "God called Abraham, and said," &c. Abraham, and not his kin, was called. His parents were idolators. He had "many sons and daughters," but only one is chosen. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Of Isaac's two sons, only one was chosen. "As it is written," says Paul, Rom. 8, 11 and 12, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (loved less). God chose before they were born, "that the purpose of God according to election might stand." Now, remember, I do not say that God elected one to go to heaven and the other to hell. No; far from it. That is the common misconception of the *Scriptural*, and when properly understood, *beautiful* doctrine of Election.

At Jacob's death another advance step in God's plan is taken, and typical or fleshly Israel is formed. From this time one man no longer represents God in the world; but a nation, all the sons of Jacob and their posterity. And now we have an elect nation or church, and God gives all His special blessings to it. Other and larger nations—Egypt, Chaldea, &c.—are passed by, left without light and without knowledge, while these are given to Israel. "What advantage, then, hath the Jew?" Much, every way, chiefly because to them were committed the oracles (laws and testimonies) of God. This is Paul's statement. God speaking to them, says: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." This people alone was recognized, and thus continued until Christ came. Yes; and after it.

During Christ's ministry He preached to them, and would not suffer His disciples to do otherwise, saying as He sends them out, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not." Why so, Lord? "I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." All his time was devoted to them until death, and here was His first work for the world, and

GOD'S GRANDEST GIFT,

not for Israel only, but for all, for "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man." And now, also, in the Gospel age, a certain sort of election obtains. Some parts of the world are more favored with the Gospel (which is free to all who hear) than others. Contrast yourself with your privileges and knowledge, with the heathen man who never yet heard the call. When this called-out company, (called to be "sons of God," "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ

our Lord,") is complete, then the plan of God for the world's salvation is only beginning. Not until then will the seed "bruise the serpent's head," and "bless all the families of the earth." For the seed is not Christ, the head, alone, but the Church, which is His body, as Paul informs us, Gal. iii. 29, "Which seed is Christ; and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." The same company are to bruise the serpent. Rom. xvi. 20. The very God of Peace shall bruise Satan under *your feet* shortly.

THE GOSPEL AGE

The Gospel age makes ready the chaste virgin (church) for the coming Bridegroom. When ready, the Bridegroom comes, and they that are ready are united. The second Adam and the second Eve become one, and are thus the beginning of the new creation, and then the glorious work of elevating mankind in general begins. The river of living water flows, and the work of the Church begins. In the next dispensation, new heavens and new earth. She is no longer the espoused Virgin, but the Bride. THEN "the Spirit and the Bride say come, and whosoever will let him come and drink of the water of life freely."

As Adam, the beginning of the fleshly race, was composed of man and the helpmeet taken from his side, as it is written, "Male and female created He them and He called *their* name ADAM," Gen. v. 12, so the "*Second Adam*," of whom Paul says the first "*was a figure*," or type, has a helpmeet taken from His side, and when she is fully formed and perfected, the Bridegroom comes and they go in to the marriage; they become one, "the new creation of God" (read Eph. v. 25, 30, 32), making in Himself of twain (Jews and Gentiles)

"ONE NEW MAN."

(Eph. ii. 15.) This new man we have found to be the seed "to crush the serpent's head." "The seed of Abraham," "in whom all the families of the earth shall be blest." That the Gospel age, so far from closing the Church's mission, was only a school of affliction to enable her, as well as her head, to be touched with a feeling of earth's infirmities, that they might sympathize with mankind, and during the millennial age assist them, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth," scattering the darkness of sin and ignorance, causing "wars to cease unto the ends of the earth." These are the "times of restitution," which Peter says are due when Christ comes. Acts iii. 17-19. For this "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting for the *manifestation of the sons of God*." Rom. viii. 22, 19. These sons are not now *manifest*. There are in Christ's flock many "wolves in sheep's clothing." Among the wheat there are many tares; but when in "the harvest" ("the end of the age"), they are separated, *then* shall the righteous *shine forth* as the sun in the kingdom of their Father—*be manifested*—and *then* to the groaning creation (mankind) shall this "Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing in His wings."

But let us leave this bright and pleasant picture of the coming day, of which, with the poet, we could say:

"Haste thee along, ages of glory,
Haste the glad time when Christ appears,"

and turning, look at a dark picture. Have you ever asked yourself, while rejoicing in the glorious opportunities to be offered to mankind during the millennial age—What about those who have died before the plan of God has thus reached its fullness? There have lived on earth since creation (six thousand years), about one hundred and forty-three billions of human beings. Of these the very broadest estimate that could be made with reason would be, that less than one billion were *Saints of God*—the Church—the Bride. What of the one hundred and forty-two billions who died out of Christ? What is their condition?

Atheism answers: They are eternally dead. There is no hereafter. *They will never live again.*

Calvinism answers: They were not elected to be saved. God foreordained and predestined them to be lost—to go to hell—and they are there now, writhing in agony, where they will ever remain without hope.

Arminianism answers: We believe that God excuses them on account of ignorance, and that if they did the best they knew how, they will be as sure of being a part of the "Church of the First-born" as is Paul himself.

To this last view the great majority of Christians of all denominations hold, from a feeling that any other view would be irreconcilable with justice, on God's part.

But, we inquire, what do the Scriptures teach on this last point? That ignorance is a ground of salvation? No; the only condition known in Scripture is FAITH. "By grace are ye

saved, *through FAITH*." Justification by faith is the ground-rock of the whole system of Christianity. When, by the jailor at Philippi, Paul was asked, "What must I do to be saved?" he answered, "I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be baptized, and thou shalt be saved."

Peter says, Acts iv. 12, "There is *none other name* under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," than the name of Jesus.

Paul reasons that a man must *hear the Gospel* before he can believe: "How shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard?" This—God's plan—that men shall be saved on account of faith, Paul says was to the Jews a stumbling block (because they expected salvation as a reward of keeping the law) and to the Greeks (the worldly wise) foolishness. But, nevertheless, it has "pleased God by the foolishness (in the eyes of men) of preaching to *save*

THEM WHICH BELIEVE."

I want to Scripturally close you in to the thought, that all who have *not heard* could not believe, and *not believing*, could not be a part of the Bride of Christ. But, you object, Paul, in the first two chapters of Romans, teaches "that these having not the law are a law unto themselves," and that this law which their conscience furnishes, is sufficient to *justify* them. No, I answer, you understand Paul differently from what he intended. Paul's argument everywhere is, that "all the world is guilty before God." "For if I had not known the law, I had not known sin. For by the law is the knowledge of sin." The law given to the Jew revealed his weakness, and was intended to show him that he was unable to justify himself before God. "For by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His (God's) sight." As the law thus *condemned the Jews*, so Paul says it is with the Gentiles also. Though ignorant of the law, they had light enough of conscience to *condemn them*. "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God," Rom. iii. 19, in order that eternal life may be seen to be "the *gift* of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," to every one that *believeth*.

Well, you answer, the Bible to the contrary, I believe and insist that God won't damn the world for ignorance. Now, let us see. Do you practice what you declare? Why do you assist in sending missionaries to the heathen, at a cost of thousands of valuable lives and millions of money? If they will all be saved—or even half of them—through ignorance, you do them a positive injury in sending a preacher to tell them of Christ, for we know that only about one in a thousand *believes* when the missionary does go to them. If your idea be correct it were far better that no missionaries should ever be sent. Before, nearly all saved; now, because of knowledge, nearly all lost. In the same way we might reason, that if God had left all in ignorance, we would *all have been saved*. Then, instead of the Gospel being *good news*, it would be more properly named *bad news*.

No, my brethren; *you do believe* that "there is no other name given whereby we must be saved." Your actions speak the louder, and speak rightly.

Now, suppose we look at these things just as God tells us of them, and leave the clearing of His character to Himself.

WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE 142 BILLIONS?

First, we answer, that you may be sure they are not *now* in hell suffering; because not only do the scriptures teach that full and *complete* reward is not given to the Church until Christ comes, "when he shall reward every man," but the *unjust* are to receive their deserts then also. Whatever may be their present condition, it cannot be their *full reward*, for Peter says: "God knoweth how to *reserve* the unjust *unto the day* of judgment to be punished," and He will do so. But the thought of so many of our fellow creatures at *any* time being lost, without having had the knowledge which is necessary to salvation, seems terrible, indeed, to all who have a spark of love or pity. Then, too, there are a number of Scriptures which seem hard to harmonize with all this. Let us see in the light of His dealings how shall we understand the statement, "God is Love," or "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish."

Ah, Lord, it seems to poor, frail humanity that if you loved the world so much, you might have made provision, not only that believers might be saved, but also that *all might hear*.

Again we read: "This is the true light that *lighteth every man* that cometh into the world." Lord, all our reason seems to say, not so. We cannot see how Jesus lighted more than a few of earth's billions. Yonder Hottentot gives no evidence of having been so enlightened, neither did the Sodomites and myriads of others.

Once more we read: "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man." How, Lord? we ask, If he tasted death for the one hundred and forty-three billions, and from other causes it becomes efficacious only to one billion, is not his death comparatively a failure?

Again: "Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all people*." Surely it is to but a little flock to whom it has been glad tidings, and not to *all people*.

Another is: "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." A ransom, then why should not *all* have *some benefit* from Christ's death?

Oh, how dark, how inconsistent do these statements appear when we remember that the Gospel Church is "a little flock." Oh, how we wish it would please God to open our eyes that we might understand the Scriptures, for we feel sure that did we but understand, it must all seem clear, it must all declare in thunder tone, "God is Love." Oh, that we had the key! Do you want it?—Are you sure you do? It is the last text we quoted, "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified *in due time*." Due time. Ah, now we see. God has a due time for everything. He could have testified it to this one hundred and forty-two billions in their life time. Then that would have been their due time; as it was not so, their due time must be future. We know that now is our due time, because it is testified to us now. Christ was a ransom for you before you were born, but it was not due time for you to hear it until years after. So with the Hottentot; Christ was his ransom and at the same time was yours; he has not heard it yet, and may not in this life; but in God's *due time* he will.

But does not death end probation? one inquires. There is no scripture which says so, we answer, and all the above and many more scriptures would be meaningless or worse,

IF DEATH ENDS ALL

to the ignorant masses of the world. The only scripture ever quoted to prove this generally entertained view, is, "As the tree falleth, so it lies." If this has *any* relation to man and his future, it indicates that in whatever condition of knowledge or ignorance he enters death, he remains the same until he is raised up again.

But can knowledge ever reach these billions in their graves while dead? No; God has provided for the resurrection of them all. For "as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive." As death came by the first Adam, so life comes by the second Adam. Everything that mankind lost in the first, is to be restored in the second. Hence, the age following Christ's second coming is spoken of as "the times of restitution."

Life is one of the things lost, and is to be one of the things restored. Mark me! I do not say eternal life is given them. No; Adam never had eternal life to lose; if he had it, he could not have died. He had natural life, lost natural life, and it is to be natural life that the second Adam restores. This is a certain sort of *salvation* that Christ accomplishes for all; but the *eternal* salvation, which believers receive, is entirely different. This enables us to use another text, which is little used except by Universalists, and although not Universalists, yet we claim the right to use all Scripture. It reads: "We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them which believe." All men are saved or rescued from the loss entailed on them through Adam, by having all those lost things, including natural life, restored to them. He is also the "especial Saviour of them which believe." For believers who now constitute the body of Christ are the happy recipients of the gift of God, *eternal* life. While those of the *world* are raised *natural* bodies, those of the *Church* are raised *spiritual* bodies, "neither can *they* die any more, but are like the angels of God."

Now we see that "the testimony in *due time*" explains all of those troublous texts. In due time it shall be "glad tidings of great joy to all people." In due time that "True Light shall lighten every man that cometh into the world," and in no other way can these scriptures be used without wresting. We take them to mean just what they say. Paul carries out the line of argument with emphasis in Rom. v. 18, 19. He reasons that as all men were condemned to death and suffered it because of Adam's transgression, so also Christ's righteousness justifies *all* to life again. All lost life, not of our own will or choice, in the first Adam; all receive life at the hands of the second Adam, equally without their will or choice.

When thus brought to life, and the love of God testified to them, their probation,

THEIR FIRST CHANCE,

begins, for we do not preach a *second chance* for any.

But Peter tells us, that "the restitution is spoken of by the

mouth of all the holy prophets." They do all teach it. Ezekiel tells us of the valley of dry bones, "This is the whole house of Israel;" and God says to them, "I will bring you up out of your graves, and bring you into your own land." This agrees with St. Paul, Rom. vi. 25, 26. Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles (the Gospel Church, the elect company "taken out of the Gentiles") be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved, or brought back from their cast-off condition. For "God hath not cast off His people whom He foreknew." They were cut off from His favor while the *bride of Christ* was being selected, but will return to favor when that work is accomplished.—Vs. 28 to 33. The prophets are full of statements of how God will "plant them again, and they shall be no more plucked up." This does not refer to restorations from former captivities in Babylon, Syria, &c., for the Lord says, "*In that day* it shall no more be a proverb among you 'the fathers ate a sour grape and the children's teeth are set on edge;' but every man shall die for his own sin." This is not the case now. You do not die for your own sin, but for Adam's—"As in Adam all die." He ate the sour grape, and our forefathers continued to eat them, entailing further sickness and misery upon us. The day in which "every man shall die for his own sin," is this Millennial or Restitution day. But when restored to the same conditions as Adam, will they not be as liable to sin and fall again as he was? No; they will be liable, but not *as liable*; they have learned in their time the lesson which God designed to teach to all, viz., "The exceeding sinfulness of sin." They will be prepared to appreciate the good and shun the evil, and the Gospel Church then glorified will be, "the kings (rulers) and priests" (teachers) of that new age, for "Unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the word (age) to come, whereof we speak," &c. Then through "the second Adam" and His helpmeet they may be begotten into their spiritual likeness.

But are we sure that God intends these blessings for any but the "people whom He foreknew" (the Jews)? Yes. He mentions other nations also by name, and speaks of their restitution. Let me give you an illustration that will be forcible:

THE SODOMITES.

Surely if we find *their* restitution mentioned you will be satisfied. But why should they not have an opportunity to obtain eternal life as well as you or the Jew? They were not wicked in the proper sense, for they did not have law or much knowledge. True, they were not righteous, but neither were you when God gave you your opportunity. Christ's own words shall tell us that they are *not as guilty* in His sight as the Jews, who had more knowledge: "Woe unto thee, Capernaum, for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom it would have remained unto this day." Thus Christ's own words teach us that they had not had their full opportunity. "Remember," Christ says of the Sodomites, that "God rained down fire and *destroyed them all*." So, if their restoration is spoken of, it *implies* their resurrection.

Let us look at the prophecy, Ezek. xvi. 48 to the close. Read it carefully. God here speaks of Israel and compares her with her neighbor, Samaria, and also with the *Sodomites*, whom He says, "I took away as I saw good." Why did God see good to take away these people without giving them a chance of eternal life through the knowledge of "the only name?" Because it was not their *due time*. They will come to a knowledge of the truth when *restored*. He'll save them from death's bondage first, and then give them knowledge. As it is written: "God will have *all men* to be saved, and to come to a *knowledge of the truth*." When brought to the knowledge, then, and not until then, are they on trial for *eternal* life. With this thought, and with no other, can we understand the dealings of the God of love with those Amalekites and other nations, whom He not only permitted, but commanded Israel to butcher. "Slay Amalek utterly—leave neither man, woman or child." "Spare not the little ones." How often my heart has ached, and yours, too, as we sought to reconcile this apparent wantonness on God's part with the teachings of the new dispensation. "God is love," "Love your enemies," &c. Now we can see that the entire Jewish age was a type of the higher, Gospel age; Israel's victories and conquests merely pictures of the Christian's battles with sin, etc. These Amalekites and Sodomites and others were used to illustrate, or to be "examples" "for our admonition;" and these people might just as well die so, as of disease and plague, and it mattered little to them as they were merely learning to know *evil*, that when on trial, "*in due time*," they might learn *good* and be able to discriminate and choose life.

But let us read the prophecy further. After comparing Israel with Sodom and Samaria, and pronouncing her worse, v. 53 says: "When I bring again the captivity [in death, all

are captives and Christ came to 'set at liberty the captives and to open the prison doors' of the grave,] of Sodom and Samaria, then will I bring thy captives in the midst of them." (These will be raised together.) In v. 55 this is called "a return to

THEIR FORMER ESTATE'

—restitution. But some one, who cannot imagine that God really could be so good or just, suggests God must be speaking ironically to the Jews, and saying He would just as soon bring back the Sodomites as them, but has no notion of either. Let us see. Read vs. 61-62. Nevertheless "I will remember my covenant with thee; I will establish it to thee." "Yes," says Paul, "this is God's covenant with them—they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." Rom. xi. 27-29. The 63d verse concludes the argument, showing that the promised restitution is not based on the merits of the Jews, Samaritans or Sodomites. "That thou mayest remember and be confounded and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." When God signs his name to a statement in this way I must believe it. "Saith the Lord God." And no wonder if they are confounded when "in the ages to come He shows forth the exceeding riches of His grace," (Eph. ii. 7), and many of God's children will be confounded and amazed also when they see how "God so loved THE WORLD." They will be ready to exclaim with brother Paul: "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

But some will inquire, How comes it that this has not been seen long ago? We answer, God gives light and knowledge to his people just as it is due. The world was left in almost entire ignorance of God's plan until the *Gospel* age, when Christ came, bringing life and immortality to LIGHT through the Gospel. The Jews up to that time supposed that all the promises of God were to and for them alone, but in *due time* God showed favor to the Gentiles also. Christians generally have supposed that God's blessings are to the church, but we begin to see that God is better than all our fears, and though he has given us the "exceeding great and precious promises," He has made some to the world also.

"The path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more, until the perfect day," and the fact that it now shines so brightly, and that we are able to see more of the beauty and harmony of God's word, is strong presumptive evidence that we are in the dawn of that glorious millennial day, when "we shall know even as we are known."

But we promised to harmonize those doctrines of the Church generally supposed to be antipodes, viz., CALVINISM, or *Election*, and ARMINIANISM, or *Free Grace*. Perhaps you already see how they harmonize themselves by simply recognizing the order of the ages and applying each text to the place and time to which it belongs. Let me then point out to you

INCONSISTENCY OF EITHER CALVINISM OR ARMINIANISM

when separated from each other. In doing so I do not wish to reflect on those who hold these doctrines. I shall merely call your attention to features which their warmest advocates must confess to be *their weak points*.

First—Calvinism says: God is all-wise. He knew the end from the beginning, and, as "all his purposes shall be accomplished," He never could have intended to save any but a few—the true Church, the little flock. These He elected and predestined to be eternally saved; all others were equally predestined and elected to go to hell, for "known unto the Lord are all His works from the foundation of the world."

This has its good features. It shows, and properly, God's Omniscience. This would be our ideal of a GREAT God, were it not that three essential qualities of greatness, viz., MERCY, LOVE and JUSTICE, are lacking, for none of these qualities find place in bringing into the world one hundred and forty-two billions of creatures *damned* before they were born and mocked

by protestations of love. No, no. "God is love," "God is just," "God is merciful."

Second—Arminianism says: Yes, "God is love," and in bringing humanity into the world He meant them no harm, only good. But Satan succeeded in tempting Adam; thus "sin entered into the world and death by sin," and ever since, God has been doing all He can to deliver man from his enemy, even to the giving of His Son, and though now, six thousand years after, the gospel has only reached a very small portion of those creatures, yet, we do *hope and trust* that within six thousand years more, through the energy and liberality of the Church, God will have so far remedied the evil introduced by Satan, that all may at least know of His love, and knowledge of God be co-extensive with the knowledge of evil.

The commendable feature of this view is, that it accepts the statement that "God is love." But, while full of loving and benevolent designs for His creatures, He lacks *ability* and *foreknowledge* adequate to the accomplishment of those designs.

While God was busy arranging and devising for the good of His newly created children, Satan slipped in, and by one stroke upset all God's plans, and in one moment brought sin and evil among men to such an extent that even by exhausting all His power, God must spend twelve thousand years to even reinstate righteousness to such a degree that man will have an opportunity to choose Good as *readily* as Evil, and the one hundred and forty-two billions of the past six thousand years, and as many more of the next, are *lost to all eternity*, in spite of God's love for them, because Satan interfered with His plans as God had not foreseen. Thus Satan, in spite of God, gets one hundred into hell to one God gets to glory. This view must exalt men's ideas of Satan, and lower their estimation of Him who "Spake, and it was done; commanded, and it stood fast."

But how refreshing it is for us to turn from these fragments of truth, as separately considered, and

SEE HOW HARMONIOUS

and beautiful they are when united. How, during the present and past ages God is *electing* or gathering, by the preaching of His word, the Gospel church. How He wisely permitted evil to come into the world, in order that He might develop His church, which, thus "being made perfect through suffering," might be prepared for her glorious work in the future; and how the *mass* of mankind, though not now on probation, are nevertheless getting a knowledge and experience by contact with sin which He foresaw they would be the better for; and, furthermore, how he took occasion, in connection with this, His plan, to show us His great love, by so arranging that the death of Christ was necessary to our recovery from sin, and then freely giving Him "to be a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the *whole world*," and then in the next dispensation—"The new heavens and earth" (Rev. xxi. 1-9-10 and xxii. 17)—when "the Spirit and the Bride say come, and whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely." He will show us His "*Free Grace*" in fullest measure.

Is not this the teaching of God's Word? Men never would have thought of such a *glorious plan* of salvation. Truly God has said: "My ways are not your ways, nor my thoughts your thoughts." Hereafter when we address Him "Our Father," may it call to our mind that His love and compassion are far greater than the pity of our earthly parents, and while we study His Word more and more, and seek to "*grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God*," let us ever remember that

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain.
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

Having seen how much of the great plan of God waits the coming of Christ for its accomplishment, and having, we trust, found *why* Christ comes, can we help loving His appearing? In our next we hope to examine with you what the Bible teaches of *How Christ Comes*.

"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

This question is one which every sincere Christian should ask and seek to answer. We should learn to love and value truth for its own sake; to respect and honor it by owning and acknowledging it wherever we find it and by whomsoever presented. A *truth* presented by Satan himself is just as *true* as a *truth* stated by God.

Perhaps no class of people are more apt to overlook this fact than the Christian. How often do they in controversy overlook and ignore *truth* presented by their opponents. This is particularly the case when arguing with an *infidel*. They

feel at perfect liberty to dispute everything he says on religious subjects. This is not the correct principle. Many infidels are *honest*—as anxious to speak and believe the truth as are Christians—and if in converse with them we ignore truths which they may advance, we not only fail to convince them of our *truths*, but put an end to all hope of reaching them; for our failure to admit the evident truth which they advance begets in them contempt for the one who is not honest enough to admit one truth because he does not see how it can be reconciled to another. Accept truth wherever you find it, no matter

what it contradicts, and rely for ability to afterwards harmonize it with others upon "the Spirit of truth, which shall guide you into all truth," as Jesus promised.

Truth, like a modest little flower in the wilderness of life, is surrounded and almost choked by the luxuriant growth of the weeds of error. If you would find it you must be ever on the lookout. If you would see its beauty you must brush aside the weeds of error and the brambles of bigotry. If you would possess it you must stoop to get it.

Be not content with *one* flower of truth. Had one been sufficient there would have been no more. Gather ever, seek for more.

Weave them together as a garland—"Bind them on thee as a bride doeth." "Bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart; so shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man." Prov. iii. 3.

C. T. R.

HE SEATS HER ON HIS THRONE

"Leaning upon her Beloved."—*Songs of Solomon*, viii. 5

Upon her loved One leaning;
For thus the Bride appears,
The wilderness behind her,
With all its sighs and fears.

For Him in hope she waited
And loving tears she wept,
E'en in the darksome shadows,
She watched while others slept.

She knew He would be faithful,
And in His Word she read,
That He was coming quickly,
She trusted what He said.

Ofttimes His precious promise
She told to those around,
To some it seemed good tidings,
To others empty sound.

Now, as the King of Glory,
He claims her as His own;
With hand for her once pierced,
He seats her on His throne.
M. R. J., Princeton, N. J.

"GOD IS LOVE"

This is the grand expression of the Bible—the keynote of Christianity. It is the foundation of the great plan of creation and redemption, and the underlying principle in the structure of the Word of God.

It is truth, *the* truth, as God is true, the embodiment of all other truths; so that whatever, rightly understood, is not in harmony with it must be false. "God is love," eternal and unchangeable. All that He has done or will do can but express His infinite fullness. All His attributes are moved and controlled by love.

"God is love." Many feel, as a result of education, that God hates them, but that Christ loves them; others believe that Christ purchased the Father's love. Both are answered by Christ's words: "God so loved the world that he gave his Son," &c. John iii. 16. Christ's work is not to purchase the Father's love, but to manifest it. *Practically*, if not as theologians teach, Christ's words are true: "I and my Father are one"—one in purpose and in work.

Christ prayed to the Father that the disciples might be one, "even as we are one." "As thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they may be one in us," &c. John xvii. 21. He could thus be called "Immanuel—God with us." "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." 1 Tim. iii. 16. God gave his Son. The Son "gave himself for us." Truly they are in harmony. The love of the infinite God could neither be created nor purchased, but it could be *shown*. This is one part of the work of the Son of God—to reveal the Father. To reveal his love is to reveal himself, for "God is love." Without Christ or out of Christ God cannot be known. The Father does not reveal the Son, but the Son reveals the Father, "For no man knoweth who the Son is but the Father, and no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." No theologian need attempt an *explanation* of the Divine Sonship of our Lord. "But it pleased the Father that in Christ should all fullness dwell,"—"All fullness of the Godhead bodily."—Col. i. 19, and ii. 9. He is the Word, the Truth, the personal embodiment of all that is good and true, and emphatically the Revelation of God. "The Word was with God and the Word was God." "The Word was made flesh." He took our nature, the "form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Phil. ii. 7. He of whom it was said, "Let all the angels of God worship him," [that must include Michael,] and "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever," (Heb. i. 6, 8), "left the glory he had with the Father before the foundation of the world;" "made himself of no reputation;" "was made a little lower than the angels;" "for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the *grace of God*, should taste death for every man." Heb. ii. 9.

Great condescension! Glorious love! Whose love? Both the Father's and the Son's, but primarily the Father's. "God so loved that he gave." The love *caused* the gift. "God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. v. 8. "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself, by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit: that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," &c. 2 Cor. vs. 18, 19. The hymn line, "My God is reconciled," has well been changed, "To God I'm reconciled." It is man that is out of order—away from home—and God is in Christ to win the wanderer back. God hates sin, but loves the man. One reason *why* He hates sin is *because* he loves the man, and sin destroys man's happiness and if persisted in will destroy the man himself. "Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help found," saith the Lord. "The grace of God, that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared." Grace is love and favor. God in Christ brings salvation to all men absolutely, so far as relates to the recovery of what was lost in Adam. "Who will have all men to be saved." "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." Thus, "We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of ALL MEN, specially of them that believe." 1 Tim. iv. 10.

He has not *only* redeemed man from what was lost in Adam, but has made higher attainments possible, brought salvation near, *within reach* of all men, and is the "author of eternal salvation to them that obey him." Heb. v. 9. He not only "gave Himself a ransom (to buy man back from death) for all," but it is "to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. ii. 6. He not only "will have all men to be saved" (from the Adamic penalty), but will also have them "come to the knowledge of the truth." Ver. 4. Thus, and in "due time" He is the "*true light* that *lighteth every man* that cometh into the world." John i. 9. All who have died without the true light, will be enlightened in future, and the words of the angel will be verified: "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Luke ii. 10.

The salvation from death is secured to all by the *Ransom*: the salvation from sin is made possible to all by the *light*, and all this is the *Father's* arrangement, through the *Son*, who is constituted Redeemer, and also the "*Head*"—"Firstborn" of a new race. He restores the old to all, and imparts the new to as many as receive and obey the truth.

How true it is, that: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." 1 John iv. 8. "Love is of God." Ver. 1. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him," (the Son.) (Ver. 9.) "Herein is love, . . . that He loved us," &c. (Ver. 10.) "We love

him, because he *first* loved us." (Ver. 19.) In view of so much testimony, who can doubt the *Father's* love, or believe that it was *purchased* by Christ's death? Christ's death meets a necessity of man in relation to man's forfeited life; hence He purchased *man*, and not God. God arranged it as a grand exhibition of *His* love for man. "Ye are bought with a price,

therefore glorify God," &c. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." We love the Giver and we love the Gift. "Whom having not seen, we love." Who can refrain from joining the grand chorus of the angels: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men?" Luke, ii. 14. J. H. P.

CHRIST'S PERSONAL RETURN

BY A LUTHERAN MINISTER

To attempt to prove that the Son of Man will really and personally come again to this world, may seem quite superfluous. It is a doctrine which orthodox Christians universally admit; and yet, perhaps, there is not another article of Christian faith so coldly and indefinitely apprehended. Few men embrace it as a reality. Few men lay hold of it as an efficacious truth. People deny it not, but neither do they feel it. They have so much preoccupied their minds with *imaginary, figurative comings of the Saviour*, in providence, in His Spirit, in His Word, and in His Church, that His only *real coming* has well nigh become obsolete—a dead letter.

It no longer comes upon the heart and conscience with its awakening and commanding power. We recite it, and sing it; but we do not effectually receive it. It is in our creed, but it cannot be said to be of our faith. If we entertain it at all, it is

at a great distance off. It cannot, therefore, be a matter of small importance for us to review our position and to endeavor to ascertain where we stand in regard to this *great doctrine*.

If we have been unconsciously saying to ourselves, "The Lord delayeth his coming," it is time that we should wake up to the fact, lest that day should come upon us *unawares*. Christ bids us "Watch, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." "As a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." And amid the tremendous heavings of society in our day, we are most solemnly admonished to look well to our hearts, and keep close to the directions of our Lord.

THREE WORLDS

The past, present and future of the family of man are all included in the "Three Worlds." The world that was before the flood, the world that now is, and the world to come.

The Greek word "Kosmos," translated *world*, as above, relates to the *order* or *state* of things, and does not refer to the literal earth, as some suppose. The same word is often used when the *people* are meant, as "God so loved the *world*;" "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the *world*;" "The field is the *world*" (Christ does not sow the good seed in the *ground*—mankind is His field of operation); "He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole *world*." Kosmos is thus used for the general "order" of things, or for the people, but we have yet to learn that the word is ever translated *earth*, or has that meaning. The nearest to it, perhaps, is when Peter speaks of these three conditions as three distinct "heavens and earth." 2 Peter iii. The first "perished" (came to an end), the second is "reserved unto fire," and will end also, but the third, or "new heavens and new earth," is the "world without end."

These three exist in the order of succession as above, *no two at the same time*, and the same planet, Earth, is the basis of all three.

The change at the flood was not so much physical as dispensational. The administration of God was changed, but the *earth*, with its "mountains" and consequent valleys, still remained. "The waters prevailed and all the *high hills* were covered." Gen. vii. 19. The ark rose above the mountains, carried on the face of the waters, and when the waters abated "the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat." Gen. viii. 4. The waters rose and fell, but there was apparently no change in the form of the earth itself. The trees seem to have remained in place, for had they been floating, the dove might have found a place "for the sole of her foot" (Ver. 9), and "an olive leaf plucked off" would have been no evidence that the waters were abating (Ver. 11).

A few of these simple things well noted, might help to dispel some of the exaggerated expectations of many as to physical changes in the "new heavens and earth" promised. "New" does not necessarily mean absolute perfection.

The first "order" is called "the *old world*," 2 Peter ii. 5. Then "This present *evil world*" must have been *new* at first. As the second "waxes old" and passes away, *another* new one comes on, "Wherein dwelleth righteousness." It has been thought by some that it must therefore be absolutely free from sin from the very first. This is an *evil world*, but there is *some* good in it, and when Satan is bound—limited—chained—it will be reversed. Righteousness will be the rule and sin the exception. "The sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." Isa. lxxv. 20. Sin and death go hand in hand, and neither shall be destroyed until the end of the thousand years: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." 1 Cor. xv. 26.

These three worlds are the basis of the Bible plan of salvation, and may therefore serve as a means of explaining the

Word in reference to the plan. If a statement of the Word belongs to any one of these worlds, it will be a perversion to apply it to another, or to what lies outside of them altogether.

To get the true import of anything revealed by the Spirit of God must be important, in order that the *designed effect* may be realized. Without an outline of the plan, it is not surprising that men have failed to "rightly divide the word of truth." If it be remembered that the "world to come" is not the "spirit world," or state of the departed in any sense, but a future state that does not begin until the second, or "present evil world," ends, many Scriptures will be plain. "Ye shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." The resurrection is at the last trump (1 Cor. xv.) during which time Christ comes, and the reward is given to "prophets, saints, and them that fear God's name, small and great." Rev. xi. 15-18. The reward is "eternal life" to them who seek for it "by patient continuance in well-doing" (Rom. ii. 7), and Jesus says, "in the world to come eternal life." This division of the Word, by the plan of the ages gives an intensity of interest in the coming of our Lord, for whatever man's state in death may be, it is clear that our *reward* is not due till he comes at the *beginning* of the world to come. Man does not go to it, but it comes to us. Those who died in the world before the flood did not thus reach the present world, which was then future, so neither can men reach the world to come by dying. Living or dead, we must wait for that period to come before we can be in it, as we wait from one day to another, and when the new period or day has come, those who have not died will be in the world to come as well as those who are raised from the dead, just as Noah passed from the old world into the new, having escaped death. It does not militate against this idea, that the saints are to enter upon a higher state than the nations, being raised in the "spiritual body," and made equal to the angels at the beginning of that world. The heavenly state of the saints, as the "Bride, the Lamb's Wife," and the earthly state of the nations, as the "blessed of the Lord," are facts of the world to come and in harmony with each other. If the saints are to rule the nations as promised, the nations must be there to be ruled. There are high and low, heavens and earth, in the future as well as in the past. In this present evil world, the angels—unseen, yet real persons—have a great deal of power, as "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Heb. i. 14. "But unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak, but . . . what is *man*, that thou art mindful of him?" This world is subject to the angels, but the future world is made subject to glorified man, Jesus being the head of the glorified body. The above proves that angels are not glorified men, and also that man will supersede the angels in administration of God's benefits to man in the flesh.

An understanding of much of God's Word is made easier by first having a "bird's-eye view" of the plan as shown by the "Three Worlds." J. H. P.

GOD'S "LITTLE WHILE"

Because of the shortness of human life, we act quickly ourselves and expect others to act so, and we can scarcely avoid carrying the same thought with us when we go to the investigation of God's Word.

We read—"Yet a *little while*, and He that shall come, will come." We think, as we look back at the eighteen centuries which have elapsed since his first advent, that it is not a "*little while*." No, to us it is a long while. Our ideas of long and short periods are drawn from our experience. When you were a child you thought as a child; you impatiently looked at an hour as a *long time*, and a year seemed an age if it intervened between you and some coveted object or enjoyment. Since you have grown to manhood or womanhood *years are short*; how quickly they fly. Your plans and arrangements reach out and embrace numbers of them.

We see then that a *long time* and a "*little while*" are accommodative terms, to be understood in harmony with the standpoint of the one using them. When Paul used these words he was God's mouthpiece, therefore the word is God's—and it is from His standpoint, in whose sight "a thousand years are but as yesterday," and "as a watch in the night." If we remember that He is *from everlasting to everlasting*, eighteen hundred years are but "a little while" to Him. In His sight it is only "a little while" since He created Adam.

Let us not be so impatient; there is plenty of time in eternity.

If we can get this standpoint of time—God's standpoint—it will assist us to see how "God is not slack concerning His promises." When God promised Eve that her seed should bruise the serpent's head, she doubtless supposed that God's promise had failed when one of her sons was slain and the other had become a branded murderer; and when Seth was born, as his name indicates, she thought him the promised seed. She came to die, and yet saw not God's promise fulfilled. Ages rolled on, floods came and went, Moses and Israel read the promise, but saw no fulfillment. *Had it failed?* No, four thousand years after, Jesus appeared on earth, suffered, died, arose, ascended. Was the promise fulfilled? No, only in part. Satan's head (vital part) is not yet *crushed*; he rears it higher than ever; his control is greater perhaps than ever before. Does God's promise mean *less* than it says? No, give Him more time; it is only "*a little while*" since He promised, and "*in the time*" it will *all* be fulfilled. Because He saw that we would wonder whether He is "*slack*" concerning His promises; and because Jesus counts us His friends, ("I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Jno. xv. 15,) therefore He kindly gives us through Paul, a clue as to how and when this promise will be fulfilled. Rom. xvi. 20, reads: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

This is the same promise made to Eve, and though Christ had died, Paul well knew that Satan was not yet bruised.

But God has not forgotten His promise; He will reform, but when? "*Shortly*." Ah, God's "*little while*" again. But why say under *your feet*? What had the Christians at Rome to do with bruising Satan? Had God's Word not said the *seed* should do it? And was not *Christ* this seed? Yes, Jesus is the *head* over this seed, but we are members of the body under this *head*, as we read: "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . gave Him to be the *head* over all things to the Church, which is His body." Eph. i. 17-22. He is the *head*, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. Col. i. 18.

Satan was permitted to bruise Jesus, the head. "He was *bruised* for our iniquity." He was made perfect through *suffering*, and *we*, the members of the *body*, must *suffer* with Him if we would be made perfect—must "*fill up* the measure of the sufferings of Christ." The Head suffered most, but we must be sharers of the suffering, if we would be glorified together.

Therefore, "count it all joy" and "think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as *ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings*; that when (*"a little while," "shortly"*) His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad, also, with *exceeding joy*." 1 Pet. iv. 13. Yes, we shall share in the "glory that shall follow," and part of that glory shall be to crush the serpent. Now he bruises our heel (ours are not vital wounds, they will all heal). We shall crush his head (a vital part, indicating the utter *extinction* of *evil*—when *death* shall be destroyed, and "him that hath the power of death, that is the devil"). As this has required time for its accomplishment, so have almost all the promises of God. Take

THE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM.

God had promised and sworn to Abraham, that his seed should be as the sand of the sea—innumerable—and Abraham believed it; but as years rolled on he and Sarah thought it a

long time. They were getting old, and yet had no child. Finally to help God to fulfill his promise, (how many Christians want to *FORCE* a construction on prophecy, in order to help God out of a dilemma and *help* Him to fulfill His word. Wait;

"God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

Yes, they would help God to keep His word,) and as Sarah was too old, her *maid* must bear the promised seed. This was a human way to fulfill, but God waited fifteen years until they were both old, so that both Abraham and Sarah laughed when they were told that they should yet have a son Isaac. "After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" But the answer was: "Is anything too hard for the Lord? *At the time APPOINTED . . . Sarah shall have a son.*"

O, that we could learn—

"It may not be my time,
It may not be thy time,
And yet in His own time
The Lord will perform."

Ages have rolled around, yet the seed of Abraham, although a nation and partially possessing Canaan for a time, have never yet had those promises to Abraham *FULFILLED*.

"I will establish my *covenant* between me and thee, and thy seed after thee." "And I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, *all the land of Canaan* for an *everlasting* possession."

But Paul shows us how that there was a deeper meaning than the surface promise couched in the utterances of God to the seed of Abraham. Not only the *fleshly children* but the *children of faith* have a share.

"Now, to Abraham and his *seed* were the promises made. He saith not, And to *seeds*, as of many; but as of one. 'And to thy seed'—which is *Christ*." . . . And if ye be Christ's (if you have been "baptised into Christ, put on Christ," become "members of His body,") *then* (and only *then*, no other way,) are ye *Abraham's SEED* and *HEIRS*; according to promise." Gal. iii. 16 and 29.

Here again we realize that God's "*little while*" is to man a *great while*; but surely and steadily the members of the body of Christ are being developed, and in *due time* they will be united to their Head, and with Him *glorified*—constituting in the complete sense "*the seed*"—and then, never fully until then, can it be true of Abraham and his seed:—"In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. iii. 8.) *Then* "A king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment"—[Christ, our Head, the King, and we joint heirs with Him]—and under that righteous reign and rule "all the families of the earth shall be blessed," for *then* "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth." But there are

PROMISES TO THE NATURAL SEED,

as well as to the spiritual, they never have and do not now possess Canaan as an "*everlasting possession*." The prophets tell us that "the Lord shall yet choose Jerusalem." Zech. i. 17. "I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem;" it "shall be called a city of truth." "The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing." "If it be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvelous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts." Zech. viii. 3-6. "At that time . . . I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem." "Then shall Jerusalem be holy." Joel iii. 1-17.

James shows that these promises lacked a fulfillment, Acts xv. 16, after showing the object of the *Gospel age* to be the taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name—the Church—His body, the seed. After recounting this, James says: "To this agree the words of the prophets, [or this is in harmony with prophecy.]" As it is written, "*After this* [after the seed is taken from among the Gentiles,] 'I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof.'" Yes, God has good things in reserve for his ancient people, and as Paul says, though they were "blinded" and "cut off" from the first position of heirs of those promises, yet "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel." How long, Paul? *Until* the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. [That is, until the entire Church, which James says God is taking out of the Gentiles, have all been taken out, and gathered into full sonship, as the seed of promise.] And, if they are blinded only *until* that time, it is evident that *at that time* the blindness will be removed. But Paul continues, "and so all Israel shall be saved," [not saved *eternally* as individuals, but saved—rescued—nationally brought back to power and grandeur]. But Paul goes to the prophets as his

authority, "as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, [the seed, head and body] and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, [fleshly Israel,] for this is my covenant with them." Paul then gives us his reasons for speaking so confidently, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." God's giving us the "high calling," and the promises on the higher plane, does not interfere with or hinder His keeping His promise to the fleshly seed, but all the more guarantees it.

Then he explains how it is we, who were once Gentiles, had God's mercy and truth revealed to us when and because natural Israel was blinded; so we obtained mercy through their unbelief; so "these have not believed that through *your* mercy they also may obtain mercy." Through whose mercy? *Yours*, the Church's. When the Church is all taken out and glorified, she is with Christ, her head, to mercifully and justly rule the world, and then Israel shall obtain *your* mercy. Rom. ii. 2-25.

O, that we could realize that every promise of God is sure,

in His own *due time*; it would give us childlike trust and confidence for everything, and not to accept them as *all sure* is to make God a liar.

Paul, as he looked forward and realized how in *due time* every jot and tittle should be fulfilled, and saw the greatness and majesty of God's plan, breaks forth in ecstasy and exclaims, "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" [Who knew that God's plan was so comprehensive and full.] And our hearts can say, Amen.

God knows the end from the beginning, and looking at the great clock of the ages, declares to us that the things we so much desire, shall be "*shortly*," "yet a little while." Let us look at things from his standpoint, and so

"Let the *little while* between
In its golden light be seen."

THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness unto His marvelous light." 1 Pet. ii. 9.

"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." Rev. i. 5, 6.

"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. v. 10.

"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." Rev. xx. 6.

The above scriptures clearly teach that a part, at least, of our work in the future will be to officiate as the priests of God. As the work of a priest is one of intercession and of instruction in righteousness, they as clearly prove that the glorious work of evangelization will go on, not only after the first resurrection has taken place, but even all through the "age of the ages." The fact that these offices of "king" and "priest" will exist, logically implies that there will be subjects to rule and learners to teach; otherwise the names would be meaningless and the titles an empty sound.

It is held by some, that the reign of the saints will consist of a very brief "reign of terror," during which—with Christ at their head—they will trample their enemies into the dust and utterly destroy them. We thank our dear Lord for a better hope. Our work will not be one of destruction, but of salvation. We shall rule as kings, even with a rod of iron; but the grand object will be to humble the nations, and so fit them for the reception of truth. "For, when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Isa. xxvi. 9.

What a blessed prospect! what a glorious calling! A royal priesthood!

Who that is imbued with the spirit of the Master; who that has but *tasted* that the Lord is gracious, could desire more agreeable employment than to show forth the praises of our Saviour King to those sitting in darkness? to bind up the broken-hearted? to proclaim liberty to the captive? to give beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for mourning?—

"To tell the old, *old* story
Of Jesus and His love."

To fit us for such an exalted and responsible position we require a peculiar training, and we feel warranted in claiming that the trials, temptations and discipline of this present life are for that very purpose.

Many a struggling believer, trying hard to overcome, buffeted by the enemy, tried by friends, weighed down by hereditary weaknesses in self, discouraged and faint, has cried out, from the depths of a loving heart: "Why, O! why this suffering? why this severe chastisement?" Let us glance for a moment at the pathway trod by the bleeding feet of the Master—our forerunner—and we shall find the answer.

"So, also, Christ glorified not Himself to be made a high priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art my Son. . . .

Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared: Though He were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which He had suffered, and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Heb. v. 5-9.

"For it became Him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Wherefore in all things it behooveth Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. ii. 10, 17-13.

"For we have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. iv. 15, 16.

The reason, then, that the Church is called on to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ is, that all the body, in like manner to the Head, may be trained to perfect sympathy and to perfect obedience through suffering. In this present time, we in all our troubles come to our compassionate High Priest with boldness, realizing that He, having been partaker of flesh and blood, can truly feel for us and pity us, so, in the age to come, we, the promised seed of Abraham, through whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed, (compare Gen. xii. 3; Gal. iii. 14, 16, 20;) shall go forth a royal priesthood, according to the order of Melchisedec, fully prepared to sympathize with the nations, to lead them to the paths of righteousness, and to encourage them in the way of life.

Shall we shrink then from our cross? Shall we seek to put away the bitter cup that is sometimes pressed to our lips? Surely not. 'Tis a loving hand that presents it, 'tis a loving heart (infinitely loving) that sees the need of it. No! It is but the Master fitting us for His work; training us for the priesthood; teaching us to rule ourselves that we may know how to rule others; opening our eyes to the weakness of our own flesh, that we may have patience with those over whom we are given authority. (Luke xix. 17, 19.)

Courage, then, my Christian brother or sister, seeking with weary step to run the narrow way. Heed not the rugged course; it is all hallowed and sanctified by the blessed feet of the Master. Count every thorn a flower; every sharp rock a milestone, hurrying you onward to the goal. Let every advancing step be a "Nearer to Thee;" every hillock in the road an "upward toward heaven." Keep your eye fixed on the prize. Soon—very soon—you may wear the Crown.

"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall reign with Him."

The consecrated cross I'll bear,
Till self it bears from me;
When Jesus calls, the crown I'll wear
For Him who set me free.

W. I. M.