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AN EXPOSITION

OF THE

TWENTY-FOURTH OF MATTHEW:

IN WHICH IT IS SHOWN TO BE AN HISTORICAL PROPHECY,
EXTENDING TO THE END OF TIME,
AND LITERALLY FULFILLED.

BY S. BLISS.

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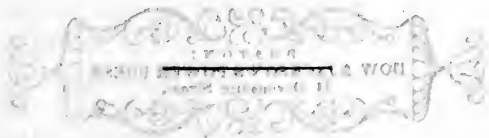
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INTRODUCTION.

THE object of the following pages is to present the reader with an unbroken and comprehensive view of the entire scope and plain signification of the 24th chapter of Matthew; than which, probably, no one chapter of the whole Bible has suffered more from the false and speculative interpretations of sceptical writers, or from the vain and selfish constructions of sectarian expositors.

The author of this work has sought to show, and, to our mind, with great clearness *has* shown, the true and simple intent for which the chapter under consideration was recorded. He has shown, that our Savior, in answering the inquiries of his disciples, gave them a brief *historical summary* of what should transpire among the nations—beginning with the indignation and wrath that should fall upon the Jews, effecting their utter overthrow and dispersion, and continuing on in his descriptive remarks far down the stream of time, even to the consummation of the “times of the Gentiles,” the glorious advent of the Son of man, the resurrection of the dead, and the infliction of the “*last end of the indignation*” upon the *desolating* and *beastly* kingdoms of the earth.

Universalists and others, to avoid the natural and necessary conclusions which must inevitably follow a

plain and *literal* interpretation of this chapter, have uniformly applied it to the destruction of Jerusalem; affecting to discern in that event a complete accomplishment of all its prophetic predictions. This work most happily, as we conceive, wrests from their hands this sophistical weapon, strips the specious covering of *apparent reason* from their flimsy arguments, and allows the language of the Savior to have its simple and obvious import; and to be regarded, not as a figurative or hyperbolic description of something to take place at the overthrow of Jerusalem, but a plain and positive statement of coming events, which were successively to transpire during the existence of generations then future, and closing up by distinctly assuring them that certain prominent and unequivocal *signs* upon the earth and in the heavens would precede his coming, and admonishing them to *watch* for the signs, and commanding them to *know*, when they were seen, that the end of the world, the harvest, when the tares would be burned and the "righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," was nigh, even at the doors.

By suffering the words of this chapter to have their obvious and literal import, a desideratum, hitherto unattained, is believed to be secured, and a portion of Scripture rendered plain and intelligible, which heretofore has been regarded as having a two-fold or occult and hidden meaning,—a very common error, which, through the labored efforts of mysticising and spiritualizing commentators, has led the church into a dark and intricate labyrinth of doubt and perplexity respecting some of the plainest and most glorious portions of the blessed word, which were written for our profit and instruction, that we "through comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

To such as are seeking to know the truth, and who are studying the prophecies with a view to *understand* them, and to be *ready* for the grand, crowning event to which they point the *waiting* soul, it is confidently believed this little work will prove salutary and useful. To such we cheerfully commend it, bespeaking for it a prayerful and patient perusal, as well as a careful comparison with the sacred volume, feeling assured that wherever such a use is made of it, it will serve to enlighten the minds, confirm the faith, and encourage the hearts of its readers.

O. S.

EXPOSITION OF
THE
TWENTY-FOURTH OF MATTHEW.

Verses 1, 2: *“And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily, I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.”*

In this prediction, our Savior evidently had allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and which had been predicted by Moses in Deut. xxviii. 49—53: “The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth, a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favor to the young: and he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed

thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land which the Lord thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee." Also in Levit. xxvi. 29—33: "And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you. And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors. And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste." Also predicted in Jer. xxv. 17, 18, 26, 29: "Then took I the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the Lord had sent me: to wit, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof and the princes thereof, to make them a desolation, an astonishment, a hissing, and a

curse; as it is this day. And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. For lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts." In Dan. viii. 24, and ix. 26: "And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." And in Zech. xiv. 2, 3; where all nations were to fight against Jerusalem and then those nations were to be destroyed.

After our Savior uttered this prediction, he appears to have immediately gone across the brook Kedron and ascended the Mount of Olives. Verse 3: "*And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*"

Mark says that "*Peter, and James, and*

John, and *Andrew* asked him privately," &c. The disciples seem to have supposed that when the buildings of the temple should be thus demolished, that the end of the world must come as a matter of course; and accordingly, they connected the fulfilment of this prediction, with the coming of Christ and end of the world; but our Savior corrected that error of the disciples and showed them that the end would not then be. We will here enquire,

1st. *What are we to understand by "thy coming?"*

It could not be the *first* coming of Christ, for he was then on the earth; and it must, therefore, be his second advent of which they enquired. That was not then to be an immediate event, for according to Luke xix. 11, 12, "He added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should IMMEDIATELY APPEAR. He said, therefore, a certain nobleman went into a *far* country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." When he appears, it will be to save all the righteous. 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." It will also be in the end of this world. Acts iii. 20, 21: "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heavens 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." He will come in a visible manner. Acts i. 11: "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." And Rev. i. 7: "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." It will also be to raise the dead and reward the righteous. 1 Thess. iv. 14—18: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words." 2 Tim. iv. 1, 8: "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." "Henceforth,

there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

2d. *What are we to understand by "the end of the world?"*

The word *αιωρος* here translated *world*, is literally *era* or *age*, from which many contend that the end of the Jewish age was intended. But that ended with the death of Christ. Gal. iii. 16, 19: "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. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." Heb. ix. 15—17: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." Then, according to the 11th of Romans, the Jews were broken off from the true olive tree, and

fell, by crucifying the Prince of princes, to a perfect level with all other nations. It could not, therefore, be the end of the Jewish age.

The use of the same word *αιωνος* in other parts of the New Testament, shows us that the *era* or *age* here spoken of must extend to the end of the *mortal* state, and resurrection of the dead. Matt. xxviii. 20 : "Lo, I am with with you always, even unto the end of the world." (*aionos*.) Matt. xiii. 40—43 : "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. (*aionos*.) 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. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Luke xx. 33—37 : "Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife of them is she ? for seven had her to wife. And Jesus, answering, said unto them, the children of this world (*αιωνος*) marry, and are given in marriage : but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (*αιωνος*) and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage : neither can they die any more : for they are equal unto the angels ; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now, that

the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." The *aionos* or *age* must therefore extend to the end of the world, and is rightly rendered *world*.

It is therefore evident, that in connecting the coming of Christ and end of the world with the destruction of Jerusalem, the disciples were deceived, and which is confirmed by the answer of our Savior.

Verses 4—14: "*And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be*

preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

The events here alluded to, seem to carry us down to the end of the world. The rising of nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, wars and rumors of wars, could not have been all fulfilled before Jerusalem was destroyed; for that city was destroyed in one of the very first wars of any note, which occurred after the prediction was uttered. But these predictions seem to be the same as Jeremiah predicted, Jer. 25th chap., when evil should go forth from nation to nation, among all the nations after the desolation of Jerusalem; and to the end of which, according to Dan. ix. 26, desolations are determined.

That the gospel has thus been preached in all the world, and we have reason to believe that it has been a witness to all nations, so as nearly to fulfil this prediction, the present state of the church and condition of missionary operations fully indicate. The gospel was preached in Asia in the first century, and in Africa in the fourth; since then, it has been preached in Europe, America, and in the isles of the Pacific; and at the present time it would be difficult to find a nation on the earth, where the gospel is not now being preached.

This prediction must therefore be about fulfilled, having begun on the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem, where the disciples were

commanded to tarry till they received power from on high; and having extended to all known lands in the order our Savior predicted. Luke xxiv. 47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." And when it is sufficiently preached so as to fulfil this prediction, "then shall the end come."

After our Savior has glanced down to the end of time, he begins with the destruction of Jerusalem, and gives a more minute prediction of the same events. He says:

Verse 15: "*When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand.)*"

We find by Dan. ix. 27, that after the seventy weeks, when the city and sanctuary were destroyed, that for the overspreading of ABOMINATIONS, he shall make it desolate even until the *consummation*, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. The word rendered *consummation* denotes *destruction, completion*; and is evidently the fulfilment of the prediction in Jer. xxv., which Daniel says he was considering, when the slain of the Lord shall be from one end of the earth, even to the other end of it, and they should not be lamented, nor gathered, nor buried. Till that time, Jerusalem was to be desolated by the overspreading of abominations, or more literally, *the armies of deso-*

lation, which the Jews were to know were near, according to Luke xxi. 20, when they should see "Jerusalem encompassed with armies."

Daniel speaks of the *abominations* in the plural, but our Savior says, when ye see the *abomination* spoken of by Daniel; so that but one of Daniel's abominations is alluded to. We learn, by Dan. xi. 31, that his abominations were the one to succeed the other; and that when the daily abomination was taken away, the abomination that maketh desolate should be set up, and from which time the 1290 and 1335 days in Dan. xii. 11, were to be dated. The *daily* was what hindered the revealing of the abomination that maketh desolate, as in 2 Thess. ii. 2—8: "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, 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 withholdeth 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." From the above texts, we learn that Jerusalem was to be desolated by those abominations, till the consummation, or end of the world. And by the record of Luke, of the same conversation of our Savior, that it was to be for a *definite* period of time: Luke xxi. 24: "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."

What are the TIMES of the Gentiles, which were to be fulfilled? Answer. The *times* that the enemies of Israel were to reign over them. God had made a covenant with Abraham, that HE and *his seed* should possess the land forever. Gen. xiii. 14—17: "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 forever. 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. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." Gen. xvii.

7, 8: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to 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; and I will be their God." This was confirmed to Isaac and Jacob, but has not yet been fulfilled. Acts vii. 5: "And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Heb. xi. 39, 40: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Neither was this promise to the carnal heirs of Abraham, but to them who are of the faith of Abraham. Rom. x. 11, 12: "For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him." Rom. iv. 3: "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Rom. ii. 28, 29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one

inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter: whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. ix. 6—8: "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Gal. iii. 6, 7, 9, 14—16, 28, 29: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. So then they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. 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. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The above covenant was an *absolute* covenant to all the household of faith; but, 430 years after the promise was made, the law was given, to be in force till Christ. This was a *conditional* covenant that "the man that doeth them shall live in them." And God promised the Israel according to the flesh, that, (Levit. xxvi. 2—17,) "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord. If ye walk in my statutes and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing-time; and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land. And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. And five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new. And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall

not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bond-men, and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright. But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you, I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain; for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you, and ye shall flee when none pursueth you."

If all these punishments did not reform them, they were to be punished SEVEN TIMES, and which is made the more emphatic, by being repeated *four times*. He says: Levit. xxvi. 18—39: "And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass: and your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the

land yield their fruits. And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me, I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins. I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number, and your highways shall be desolate. And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins. And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you: and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat and not be satisfied. And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you. And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto deso-

lation, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors. And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. And upon them that are left alive of you, I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall, when none pursueth. And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them."

During those punishments, the city and sanctuary were to be destroyed and desolated till the consummation, as predicted by Moses in Deut. xxviii. Jeremiah. xxv. Dan. ix. and Zechariah xiv.

We find, by Rev. xii. 6 and 14, that three and a half times is 1260 days. "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 threescore days. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." If, then, three and a half times is 1260 days, then seven times, being twice three and a half times, would be twice 1260 days, or 2520 days. If we can ascertain when these days commenced, we can ascertain when they will terminate.

We learn by Jeremiah when this dispersion was to commence. He says, (xv. 4—6:) "And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem. For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside to ask how thou doest? Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting." The fulfilment of this prediction is recorded in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3—11: "For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made

groves, and worshipped all the hosts of heaven, and served them. Also he built altars in the house of the Lord, wherefore the Lord had said, In Jerusalem shall my name be forever. And he built altars for all the host of heaven, in the two courts of the house of the Lord. And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizzards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger. And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name forever: neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes, and the ordinances by the hand of Moses. So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel. And the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken. Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the

thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon." This, according to the chronology in the margin of all Polyglot bibles, was B. C. 677. And the sins here recorded of Manasseh are the same as were predicted should be the cause of their dispersion. Then the independence of the Jews ceased; and 2520 years, the period of their dispersion, beginning B. C. 677, would terminate A. D. 1843.

In this same year also, according to Archbishop Usher, was fulfilled the prediction in Isa. vii. 8: "For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin: and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people." 2 Kings xvii. 20—24: "And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants, the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day. And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava,

and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof."

After Manasseh was carried to Babylon, he humbled himself and was restored to Jerusalem. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13: "And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him: and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God." He was, however, still dependent upon the Babylonians; and we learn by Neh. ix. that the nation never again recovered its independence.

After this nominal restoration of Manasseh, Jeremiah predicted that the Jews should be carried as a nation to Babylon. Jer. xxv. 8—12: "Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth,

and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations." The same was also predicted by Isaiah, x. 5—14: "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against a hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few. For he saith, Are not my princes altogether kings? Is not Calno as Carchemish? is not Hamath as Arpad? is not Samaria as Damascus? As my hand had found the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria; shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols? Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of

the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man: and my hand hath found as a nest, the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped."

This prediction was accomplished upon the Jews, in the reign of Zedekiah, because he rebelled against the king of Babylon. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 11—21: "Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord. And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel. Moreover, all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had compassion on his

people, and on his dwelling-place : but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age : he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes ; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon ; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia : to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths : for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years."

God had promised to David, that he should never want a son to sit upon his throne. Psa. lxxxix. 20—37 : "I have found David my servant ; with my holy oil have I anointed him : with whom my hand shall be established : mine arm also shall

strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah." But now for the sins of the Jews, the crown was to be taken from their kings to be no more restored, until the second advent. Ezek. xxi. 24—27: "There-

fore thus saith the Lord God: Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings your sins do appear; because, I say, that ye are come to remembrance, ye shall be taken with the hand. And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end. Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." In the fulness of *times*, the kingdom was to be restored to Israel, and the throne given to Christ, the heir of David. Isa. ix. 6, 7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 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 forever." 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. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

During this captivity in Babylon, and while the enemies of Israel reigned over her, the *time* of this subjection, and the succession of *nations* that were to have the *dominion*, were more fully revealed to Daniel. In the 2d chapter of Daniel, it was revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, in his vision of the great image, that after him should arise *another* kingdom inferior to him, and another *third* kingdom of brass, which should bare rule over all the earth, and the *fourth* kingdom should be strong as iron, which should break all those in pieces. The fourth kingdom was then to be *divided*, as symbolized by the *toes* of the image; and in the days of those kings the God of heaven was to set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, but should break in pieces all those kingdoms, and stand forever.

The same four kingdoms were again presented to Daniel in the 7th chapter, symbolized by the four beasts. He was assured that the *fourth* beast was the FOURTH KINGDOM, out of which ten kingdoms were to arise, and another one after them diverse from them, into whose hands the saints of the Most High were to be given for 1260 years. After that, it was to make war against the saints, and prevail against them, until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom, who

should possess the kingdom forever even forever and ever.

In the 8th chapter, the kingdom of *Persia* and *Grecia* are expressly mentioned by name; and Daniel is shown that the Grecian kingdom was to be divided into four parts towards the four winds of heaven, when the HORN OF ROME should arise, wax EXCEEDING GREAT, stand up against the Prince of princes, destroy the holy people, and give both the sanctuary and host to be trodden under foot to the end of the 2300 days.

The time of the commencement and length of the days, Daniel did not understand, until the seventy years, as predicted in Jer. xxv., were fulfilled, and the king of Babylon and that nation punished. This was when Belshazzar made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, (Dan. v.) and there came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.*" In that night the seventy years were ended, Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans was slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom.

After the Persians were possessed of the kingdom, "that the word of the Lord might be fulfilled," the Lord stirred up the spirit of the Persian kings to build again the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, and restore the Jews to their own land. Important concessions were made by Cyrus and Darius, so that the

temple was rebuilt and dedicated. And in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, when the Medo-Persian kingdom was in its meridian glory,—as symbolized by the ram pushing in every direction, with its horns at their greatest height, when first seen at the commencement of the vision of the 2300 days,—he gave permission to Ezra in a letter, and decreed that all they of the people of Israel in his realm, might go up to Jerusalem and do *whatsoever* it might seem to Ezra and his brethren good to do. This decree gave Ezra unlimited power, was accompanied with a grant of all the treasures east of the river; and a command that whatsoever Ezra should require should be done immediately. Under this decree, the city, and wall thereof was built “even in troublous times.” According to the marginal chronology, this decree was given B. C. 457. The walls were completed under Nehemiah, who went up from Babylon with the last of the captives that returned, and at that time the Jewish nation stood the highest in the favor of the Persian kings; yet we learn from Nehemiah that they were then servants, and had been from the days of the kings of Assyria. Nehemiah prayed and said, (ix. 32—37,) “Now, therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our

priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the *time of the kings of Assyria* unto this day. Howbeit, thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly. Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them. For they have not served thee in their kingdoms, and in thy goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works. 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 yielded 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." If they were *servants* when they stood the *highest* with the kings of Persia, then at no period from the captivity of Manasseh, at the commencement of the seven times, B. C. 677, were the Jews again independent.

Although Jerusalem was again rebuilt, yet it was destined to be once more desolated, as our Savior predicted in the commencement of the 24th of Matt., and which, according to Daniel and Jeremiah, was to be final.

Jeremiah says, (xxv. 15—38,) “For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me, Take the wine-cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations to whom I send thee to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. Then took I the cup at the Lord’s hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the Lord had sent me: To wit, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them a desolation, an astonishment, a hissing, and a curse; as it is this day. Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people. And all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod, Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon, and all the kings of Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the isles which are beyond the sea, Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all that are in the utmost corners, and all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert; and all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes; and all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth; and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. Therefore thou shalt say

unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at their hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Ye shall certainly drink. For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts. Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth: for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations; he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground. Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves

in the ashes, ye principal of the flock; for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel. And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape. A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and a howling of the principal of the flock, shall be heard: for the Lord hath spoiled their pasture. And the peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the Lord. He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion; for their land is desolate, because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger."

The desolations here predicted were to begin with the desolations of Jerusalem, and extend to the end of the world. This prophecy, Daniel, in the first year of Darius, (see 7th chap.) had been considering, for it contained the prediction of the seventy years which ended when Darius took the kingdom, and Daniel evidently supposed that the 2300 days ended with them, and that the sanctuary was then to be cleansed, for he prayed, Dan. ix. 17: "Now, therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake." But the angel Gabriel was sent to inform Daniel that seventy weeks were cut off, beginning with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, B. C. 457, to the anointing of the Most Holy, or *Holiness of Holiness*; that after that, the people

of the prince that should come would destroy the city and sanctuary; that to the end of the war, which, according to Jer. xxv., was to result in the destruction of all nations, desolations are determined; and that for the over-spreading of abominations, they were to make it desolate till the consummation, and that determined should be poured upon the desolate, which, according to the same chapter that Daniel was considering, would depopulate the earth, when the Lord should forsake his covert as a lion. The sanctuary could therefore not be cleansed till the end of the world, and the 2300 days must extend to the same time; and beginning B. C. 457, would end A. D. 1843, with the end of the *seven times*.

Our Savior, therefore, in the chapter under consideration, cautions the disciples that when, according to Luke xxi. 20, they should see Jerusalem compassed with armies, to know that the desolations thereof,—which were to extend to the consummation and the end of the seven times,—were nigh. Therefore he says:—

Verses 16—20: “*Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains; let him which is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day.*”

In obedience to this injunction, we are told that the Christians fled from the city, before its final destruction, to the mountains of Pella, and escaped the calamities which fell upon their countrymen. But had their flight been in winter, they would have been subjected to the inclemency of the season; and had it been on God's holy day they would have desecrated the Sabbath of the Lord.

Verse 21: "*For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*"

When shall be great tribulation? Ans. During the overspreading of abominations which were to desolate Jerusalem till the consummation. It was to be a tribulation, such as never was before, and never should be again. According to Jeremiah xxv., this tribulation was to begin on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and extend to all the kingdoms of the world which are upon the face of the earth; it was to begin on the city which was called by the name of the Lord, and to end with a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, when the Lord hath forsaken his covert as a lion. According to Daniel 9th, it was to begin with the destruction of the city and sanctuary, and to end with the consummation, to which time desolations were determined; and according to the 12th of Daniel, it was to end with the time Michael shall stand up, those written in the book are delivered, and many that sleep in

the dust of the earth awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt, and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament. According to Zech. xiv., it was to begin with all nations fighting against Jerusalem, and to end when the Lord shall go forth and fight against those nations, and his feet stand on the Mount of Olives, and the flesh of men consume away while they stand upon their feet, their eyes consume away in their holes, and their tongues consume away in their mouths. And according to our Savior, it was to begin when Jerusalem should be compassed with armies, and to end when the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled, and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Till that time, nation was to rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, as the history of the world has shown to have been fulfilled.

Verse 22: "*And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*"

Although those days of tribulation were to continue till the consummation, yet they were to continue till that time, only on the wicked; for they were to be shortened for the ELECT'S sake, and them alone. Thus, in past ages, the church has passed through most

fiery trials, and under Papal tyranny alone, according to the Religious Encyclopedia, more than 50,000,000 of lives have been slain, besides the millions who have suffered by Paganism. But in the last century their persecutions ceased, and the church has had truly a glorious period of latter day glory. "*The Tribulation*" began to subside in the reformation under Luthér, but continued to rage in a measure until the days of Wesley and Whitefield; since which there has been no very general war against the church, and *apostolic* revivals began to prevail, and great numbers were gathered into the church. But how little was done during the dark ages to spread the gospel! Had those days of darkness and persecution continued till the consummation, there would have been comparatively no flesh saved; but now multitudes have been brought into a state of reconciliation with God. While therefore the tribulation of the wicked is not at an end, and they will all wail because of Christ when he shall come, and the slain of the Lord shall be from one end of the earth even to the other, in "the last end of the indignation;" yet all will be delivered whose names are written in the book, and they will be in safety, till the indignation be overpast. For the *elect's* sake, those days are shortened.

Verses 23—26: "*Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false*

Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not."

When were false Christs to arise? Ans. During those days of tribulation; and we are informed by history, of more than fifty persons who arose at various times, from the destruction of Jerusalem, till the persecutions of the church ceased, who claimed to be the Messiah. But Christians were commanded to go after none such; for Christ would come in such a visible and glorious manner that none could doubt his presence.

Verses 27—28: "*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. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together."*

Wherever we are, we shall be sure to behold his coming, and his all-seeing eye will be sure to penetrate our hiding-places. There will be no ignorance of the fact when he comes, that one should apprise another; all will see him. As certainly as the eagle by instinct finds his prey, so will all the saints find their Lord in the air.

Verses 29--31: "*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 days of tribulation were shortened for the elect's sake in the last century; immediately after which the sun was literally darkened, as our Savior predicted, and the moon did not give her light.

This was fulfilled to the letter, in 1780, when, on the 19th of May, the sun was supernaturally darkened from morning till night, and even into the night. Dr. Webster says that "that was a remarkable day. Candles were lighted in many houses; the birds were silent and disappeared, and the fowls retired to roost. The Legislature of Connecticut was then in session at Hartford. A very general opinion prevailed that the day of judgment was at hand. The House of Representatives, being unable to transact their business, adjourned." There have been several other days of the kind since; one in France, in 1788; one in England, in 1806.

The moon did not give her light; for in the night following, although there was at the

time a full moon, (the moon having full'd the 18th,) "it was so dark that a sheet of the whitest of paper, six or eight inches from the eye, was equally invisible with the blackest of velvet." The sun was darkened, and the moon did not give her light.

The stars also have fallen from heaven. The following is the record of a scene which occurred on the night of Nov. 13, 1833, copied from the Connecticut Observer of Nov. 25th, 1833:—

"THE FALLING STARS.—The editor of the Old Countryman makes a very serious matter of the 'Falling Stars.' He says:—

"We pronounce the raining fire which we saw on Wednesday morning last, an awful *type*—a sure *forerunner*—a merciful SIGN of that great and dreadful day which the inhabitants of the earth will witness when the SIXTH SEAL SHALL BE OPENED.

"The time is just at hand—described not only in the *New Testament*, but in the *Old*; and a more correct picture of a *fig-tree casting its leaves when blown by a mighty wind*, it was not possible to behold.'

"And again:—

"Many things *now* occurring upon the earth tend to convince us that we are in the "LATTER DAYS." This exhibition we deem to be a type of an awful day fast hurrying upon us. This is our sincere opinion; and what we think, we are not ashamed to tell.

“ ‘Men may, and have, called us enthusiastic. We care not if they call us fanatic and mad, so that we feel that they are mistaken. Fearing neither the face of human clay, man’s arm, nor man’s voice, while we obey human laws, and love and fear God, and have the evidence within that we are beloved in return, we WILL go on our way rejoicing. Nor would we go on alone. Hence we WARN all to turn to the Lord while YET he is near.’ ”

The following extracts from “OBSERVATIONS ON METEORS,” by Prof. Olmstead, of Yale College, will show the nature and extent of this wonderful phenomenon :—

“The *extent* of the shower of 1833 was such as to cover no inconsiderable part of the EARTH’S SURFACE, from the middle of the Atlantic on the east, to the Pacific on the west ; and from the northern coast of South America, to undefined regions among the British possessions on the north, the exhibition of shooting stars was not only visible, but everywhere presented nearly one and the same appearance.

“The duration and maximum, or period of greatest display, were characterized by a similar uniformity. In nearly all places, the meteors began to attract notice by their unusual frequency as early as eleven o’clock, and increased in numbers and splendor until about four o’clock, from which time they gradually declined, but were visible until

lost in the light of day. The meteors did not fly at random over all parts of the sky, but appeared to emanate from a point in the constellation Leo, near a star called Gamma Leonis, in the bend of the sickle.

“A similar phenomenon was witnessed on the 12th of Nov., 1799, and at the same season of the year in 1830, 1831, and 1832. The meteoric shower was repeated on the morning of Nov. 13th or 14th, for several years, but on a scale constantly diminishing until 1838, since which period the exhibitions have been too little remarkable to be worthy of particular notice.

“I feel assured that this is no atmospheric or terrestrial phenomenon, but that these fiery meteors come to us from the *regions of space*, and reveal to us the existence of worlds of a nebulous or cometary nature, existing in the solar system, and forming constituent parts of that system. Nor are these conclusions built on mere hypothesis, but are necessary inferences from certain facts.

“Those who were so fortunate as to witness the exhibition of shooting stars on the morning of Nov. 13th, 1833, probably saw the *GREATEST DISPLAY of celestial fire-works that has ever been seen since the creation of the world*, or at least within the annals covered by the pages of history.”

“This is no longer to be regarded as a terrestrial, but as a celestial phenomenon; and shooting stars are now to be no more

viewed as casual productions of the upper regions of the atmosphere, but as visitants from OTHER WORLDS, or from the planetary voids."

"Subsequent inquiries have led me to the belief, that the body was so distant as hardly to exhibit any apparent parallax, but was projected on very nearly the same part of the sky by all observers. This fact at once shows that the source of the meteors was far beyond the atmosphere, and confirms the preceding conclusion that it was wholly independent of the earth."

That this shower of falling stars was just such a display as ancient writers expected to witness, in the fulfilment of this prophecy, is proved by the following quotation from Thomas Burnet's "Theory of the Earth," printed in London, A. D. 1697. Speaking of the signs which will precede the coming of Christ, he quotes Matt. xxiv. 29, and after speaking of the darkening of the sun and moon, he says, "the *last sign* we shall take notice of, is that of the *falling stars*. 'And the stars shall fall from heaven,' says our Savior." He then shows that the *fixed* stars can never fall, neither the *planets*; and that the only stars which will ever fall, will be meteoric, or *shooting stars*, and adds, "No doubt there will be all sorts of fiery meteors at that time; and amongst others those called *falling stars*, which, though they are not considerable, singly, yet if they were multi-

plied in great numbers, falling, as the prophet says, as *leaves* from the vine, or figs from the fig-tree, they would make an *astonishing sight*." He says that "we need not look upon these things as hyperbolic and poetic strains, but as barefaced prophecies, and things that will *literally* come to pass;" and that "*we are not to recede from the literal sense without necessity*, or where the nature of the subject will admit of a literal interpretation."

If it be objected that meteors are not stars, I ask whether the objector thinks that the star which went before the wise men of the east to the place where the infant Savior lay, was a fixed star? Or does he think that when the "stars fall from heaven to the earth, as the fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when shaken of a mighty wind," (Rev. vi.) they will be those fixed stars; one of which would drown our globe in a sea of fire? If not, they must be just what we have witnessed; and the text has been fulfilled.

Thus the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" is answered, and when those events are witnessed, is seen the sign of the Son of man in heaven.

The wonderful appearances in the heavens are spoken of in many places in the prophecies, as signs of the last days. One of the most remarkable predictions of the kind, is found in Joel ii. 30, 31: "And I will show

wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come."

This and similar predictions have been strikingly fulfilled, in the astonishing displays of the AURORA BOREALIS of these last days.

Prof. Olmsted says of such displays in the heavens, that "The *present generation* may consider itself privileged in having witnessed *grander displays of fiery meteors*, than are to be found recorded on the pages of history." "In displays of the *Aurora Borealis*, also, we have been similarly favored. Such visitations of this spectacle, as we have enjoyed since Aug., 1827, to the present time, are by no means of constant occurrence."

The *Aurora Borealis* seems to be of modern origin. The Rev. Henry Jones, of New York city, says:—

"There appears to be no real ancient history of these phenomena, or none anciently written and published, recording their previous existence. For several years, I have sought at the most probable places, and of the supposed most probable individuals, for some such history which was ancient, and especially in a book which was itself ancient; but have not yet been able to find one of the character. And why not, if these phenomena have been on record in all ages? As soon

as they have been seen in modern times, they are found in history! And why not before, if they had been witnessed?

“There are, to be sure, many apparent authentic histories of the wonderful appearance of these lights in London, March, 1716, and for aught I know, as Dr. Halley and others say, they may have been seen in some places still farther back, yet the book printed farther back, which speaks of them, is not found. A large “Dictionary of Arts and Sciences,” in one volume, published about eighty years ago, which gives a full account of these phenomena, records their first occurrence at London, March, 1716, as above, and states that the oldest inhabitants there, had not previously seen or heard of them. The author of the Dictionary concludes his account, by giving a long list of the writings he had found on the subject, the oldest of which was a magazine in London, for 1716, and the next were files of the same magazine for ten years following, with other works afterwards written. If these things were so, could the Northern Lights have been common in all ages? Certainly not.

“After all that can be said against the modern origin of these ‘wonders,’ &c., as ‘great signs’ of the Lord’s now near coming to judgment, we have his own immutable testimony, that they are not the common events even of the first ages, but that they are rather ‘wonders’ of the ‘last days,’ and

‘signs’ of the coming of ‘that great and terrible day of the Lord,’ now specially near at hand.”

“The following account is copied from the New York Commercial Advertiser of Oct. 22, 1839, showing a wonderful exhibition of these phenomena in London, a few weeks before that date. These were also seen in this country on the same night, but far less remarkable:—

From late London Papers.

“‘London, Sept. 5, [1839.]—Between the hours of ten, on Thursday night, and three yesterday morning, in the heavens, was observed one of the most magnificent specimens of these extraordinary phenomena, the falling stars and Northern Lights, witnessed for many years past. The first indication of this singular phenomenon was ten minutes before 10, when a light crimson, apparently vapor, rose from the northern portion of the hemisphere, and gradually extended to the centre of the heavens, and by 10 o’clock, or a quarter past, the whole, from east to west, was one vast sheet of light. It had a most alarming appearance, and was exactly like that occasioned by a terrific fire. The light varied considerably; at one time it seemed to fall, and directly after rose with intense brightness. There were to be seen mingled with it volumes of smoke, which rolled over and over, and every beholder seemed convinced that it was a “tremendous conflagra-

tion." The consternation of the metropolis was very great; thousands of persons were running in the direction of the supposed awful catastrophe. The engines belonging to the fire-brigade stations in Baker-st., Farrington-st., Watling-st., Waterloo Road, and likewise those belonging to the West of England stations—in fact, every fire-engine in London, was horsed, and galloped after the supposed "scene of destruction," with more than ordinary energy, followed by carriages, horsemen, and vast mobs. Some of the engines proceeded as far as Highgate and Halloway, before the error was discovered. These appearances lasted for upwards of two hours, and toward morning the spectacle became one of more grandeur.

"At two o'clock in the morning, the phenomena presented a most gorgeous scene, and one very difficult to describe. The whole of London was illuminated as light as noon day, and the atmosphere was remarkably clear. The southern hemisphere, at the time mentioned, though unclouded, was very dark; but the stars, which were innumerable, shone beautifully. The opposite side of the heavens presented a singular but magnificent contrast; it was clear to extreme, and the light was very vivid; there was a continual succession of meteors, which varied in splendor—they appeared formed in the centre of the heavens, and spread till they seemed to burst. The effect was electrical. Myriads of small stars

shot out over the horizon, and darted with that swiftness toward the earth, that the eye scarcely could follow the track; they seemed to burst also, and to throw a dark crimson vapor over the entire hemisphere. The colors were most magnificent. At half past two o'clock, the spectacle changed to darkness, which, on dispersing, displayed a luminous rainbow in the zenith of the heavens, and round the ridge of darkness that overhung the southern portion of the country. Soon afterward, columns of silvery light radiated from it—they increased wonderfully, intermingled among crimson vapor, which formed at the same time, and when at full height, the spectacle was beyond all imagination. Stars were darting about in all directions, and continued until four o'clock, when all died away.' ”

“The writer of the above account, it will be seen, makes no allusion to the fact, that such ‘alarming’ appearances are foretold in prophecy as ‘*great signs*’ of the Second Advent at hand. And though it may be that he knew, or thought of no such thing while writing, he has described the phenomena as being an exact fulfilment of the many prophecies of these very things. He speaks of them as something ‘wonderful’—‘singular’—‘extraordinary’—‘a vast sheet of light’—‘most magnificent’—‘alarming’—‘a terrific fire’—‘awful’—‘a tremendous conflagration’—‘volumes of smoke’—‘columns of silvery

light'—'intense brightness'—'producing very great consternation,' &c., which the Almighty had previously foretold, and described them as '*wonders in the heavens*'—'*blood and fire, and pillars of smoke*'—'*fearful sights and great signs from heaven,*' '*before that great and terrible day of the Lord come.*' Just so sure then, as the Lord cannot lie, and would have us, as little children, to understand him to mean as he says, these now fulfilled wonders and signs admonish us, together with many other signs fulfilled, that Christ's coming is verily '*near, and even at the doors.*'

“Again, on the evening of January 25, 1837, there was a remarkable exhibition of the same phenomenon in the various parts of our country, as our readers will doubtless recollect. Where the ground was then covered with snow, the sight was grand and 'fearful' in a most unprecedented manner. In one place, situated near a mountain, the people who witnessed the scene, informed us that it resembled '*waves of fire rolling down the mountain.*' And generally, so far as learnt, the snow covering the ground, appeared like fire mingled with blood, while above, (as the apostle says,) '*the heavens being on fire,*' resembled so much the prophetic description of the last day, that many were amazed; the children beholding it were affrighted, and inquired if it were the coming of the judgment;

and even the animals trembled with much manifest alarm."

Furthermore, the fact, that but a short period since, any remarkable phenomenon in the heavens caused universal consternation and alarm, proves that such were no common occurrences. Otherwise, they would have been regarded with as much complacency as was the rising of the sun, which the ancients supposed to be an actual ball of fire. On the contrary, the present generation have become so familiar with such scenes, that they have ceased to excite alarm. The venerable Noah Webster, in a late article, says:—

"In the evening of March 20th, 1782, an extraordinary light spread over the whole hemisphere, from horizon to horizon, north and south, east and west. The light was of a yellow cast, and wavy. The waving of the light was visible, and some persons heard, or imagined they heard, a slight rustling sound. I then resided in Goshen, Orange county, New York, and stood half an hour on a bridge over the Wall Kill, to witness this extraordinary phenomenon.

"In the year 1786, a great part of Europe was for weeks overspread with a haziness of atmosphere which caused great consternation. Churches were crowded with suppliants. At the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century, those lights were not seen for a long period, and

when they re-appeared, about the year 1817, our ancestors, who had not seen or heard them, were all alarmed, and actually supposed the day of judgment was come.

“During my life, I have been so much accustomed to see northern lights, falling stars, so called, and fire balls, that they have long since ceased to excite my curiosity.”

Such frequency of these occurrences within THIS GENERATION, compared with former ages, is strong confirmation of their being the signs predicted of the last days. Thus, the “great signs” and “fearful sights” that are predicted in the Scriptures of truth, seem to be all fulfilled, as well as those which our Savior declared should precede his coming.

Verses 32—35: *“Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”*

As sure as the leafing out of the trees is an indication of summer, just so sure, on the fulfilment of those signs, are Christians to know that the coming of Christ is near, even at the doors. It is not a mere permission to know it, but our Savior commands them to know it; not only that it is near at the doors, but

that this generation, the generation that shall witness these events, shall not pass away until all these things be finished. Seventy years are given as the age of man, and sixty-three of those years have passed away since the darkening of the sun, the living witnesses of which are not all gone from the stage.

Although, when all these signs were fulfilled, the church were to know, yet, before these events they were to remain in ignorance of the time. Accordingly, our Savior said :—

Verse 36: “*But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.*”

Mark adds neither the Son, but my Father only. This cannot denote that no man or angel, or the Son ever will know before the event; for then our Savior would not know when he was to come, until he arrived. Neither does it say no man ever will know, but only, no one then knew; otherwise it would contradict the previous text, that we are to know when we see all these things.

One thing is very clear, that then the Father only knew, and as our Savior said, Acts i. 7, it was then in the Father's own power; but it was afterwards given to Christ, who sent his angel, and signified it to John, who made a record of it. Rev. i. 1—3: “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 and signified it by his angel unto his servant John : who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein : for the time is at hand.”

At the time of Christ, the book of Daniel was also sealed up, and was to remain so to the end of 1290 days, from the taking away of the daily, in A. D. 508. Dan. xii. 9—13: “And he said, go thy way, Daniel : for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly : and none of the wicked shall understand ; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thou thy way till the end be : for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.” The 1335 days from the taking away of the daily, A. D. 508, extend to 1843, or 45 years beyond the 1290, which appear to have ended in 1798, from which time the seal was to be removed, that the wise might understand. It, therefore, does not follow that that which could not be

understood while it was closed up and sealed, and while it was in the Father's own power, will also remain obscured after the seal is removed, the Father has revealed it, and the signs have been seen by which they were to know that it was at the doors.

Verses 37—39: "*But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*"

Noah preached the coming flood 120 years, but they would not believe. Those that were lost had an opportunity to know, but they that were saved alone believed, and entered the ark, while the flood came and carried away all the scoffers and unbelievers, and none others. Even so shall it be in the day the Son of man is revealed.

Verses 40, 41: "*Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.*"

The one will be caught to meet the Lord in the air, the other will be left to perish.

Verses 42—44: "*Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the*

house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

If God has given us the watch, how important it is that we should heed the admonition, and watch that our house be not broken up. Our Savior says, Luke xii. 35—38: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the lord, when he cometh, shall find watching; verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants." He also says, that if we will not watch, he will come upon us as a thief, and we shall not know at what hour he will come.

Verses 45—47: "*Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily, I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods."*

Those who prove faithful servants, will

receive a glorious crown, which it would seem should prompt all to be found in the way of their duty, teaching each appropriate truth in its due season, unmoved by the fear or favor of those about us. The condition of such will be blessed: and this blessing is heightened, when viewed in contrast with the reverse of the picture.

Verses 48—51: “*But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*”

The 25th chapter of Matthew is a continuation of the discourse recorded in the 24th; and begins with the declaration of our Savior that, at his second coming—to which the 24th chapter carries us—“*THEN shall THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN be likened* unto ten virgins which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom; and five were wise and five were foolish.” This was to be the condition of the kingdom, not in the days of the apostles, but at the second advent.

“While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept.” This has been true of the whole church; and so profound was this slumber, that all Christendom had ceased to

look for an immediate return of the Savior, and many supposed he would never return. In the midnight of this stupidity was first preached "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." Thus it had been predicted; and before Christ could come the second time, his coming must first be preached.

The consequence of such proclamation, we learn by our Savior, will be that all will arise and trim their lamps. The lamps of the *wise*—who, according to Daniel, will shine as the brightness of the firmament—will give an abundance of light; but the lamps of the foolish, (wicked,) although trimmed, will contain no oil, and give no light; but will be gone out. They will go to buy, but will go to the wrong place; will place more dependence upon the opinions of men, than upon the word of God; and having no faith in their Bibles, no grace of God in their hearts, will not be in readiness when the Savior comes. It will therefore be said of them, (xxv. 10—13,) "and while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not. Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

Our Savior then compares the kingdom of heaven to a man travelling in a *far* country, who delivered his goods to his servants according to their several ability, to occupy in his absence. And when their Lord *returned* he called those servants, and reckoned with them, and rewarded them, as they had been faithful or unfaithful in his absence. He then adds, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

That will be the closing up of the grand drama of this world's scenes. Then the "*seven times*" will be ended. The "2300 days" will then be completed, and the "sanctuary cleansed." Then Daniel will stand in his "lot" at the end of the "1335 days." That will be the day of "Jubilee," when the

“great trumpet will be blown,” and “the mystery of God finished;” and then the “fulness of times” will have come, in the dispensation of which, God will have gathered “together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.”

That is the great and momentous period to which the prophets and apostles looked, and for which end they were inspired; and then they will all have received their reward. The “heathen” will then be given to Christ “for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession;” and there will be “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.” “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;” “and the saints of the Most High will possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.” God, having taken out of the Gentiles “a people for his name,” will then have returned, and “will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and will build again the ruins thereof, and will set it up.”

Christ, "the Son of the Highest, whose right it is to reign," will then have come, and will receive "the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end:" and "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." That will be the time when the kingdom will be restored to all Israel,—not those alone who are of Israel, but those also who are of the Gentiles,—and her enemies will no more have dominion over her. David will never more want a son to sit upon his throne forever; for the kingdom of God will then have come, and will be set up. Its territory will be the earth; its subjects all the redeemed, of whom it is said, "the meek shall inherit the earth." Its king will be the **LORD OF GLORY**; and its capital will be the **NEW JERUSALEM**.

All things that offend will then be gathered out of the kingdom. The earth will be restored to its Eden state; and the curse will be removed from it; so that instead of the thorn, will come up the fir-tree; and instead of the brier, the myrtle; the wilderness will be like Eden, and the desert like the garden of the Lord. And there will be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain. The covenant that God made with our father Abraham, will then be consummated; the tabernacle of God will then be with men,

and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

With such a prospect in view, who will not strive, if by any means he may attain unto the resurrection of the dead?

and for the first time in the history of the world, the people of the United States were united in a common cause. The people of the United States were united in a common cause, and for the first time in the history of the world, the people of the United States were united in a common cause.





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IF YE BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD.

WHEN CHRIST, WHO IS OUR LIFE, SHALL APPEAR, THEN SHALL YE ALSO APPEAR WITH HIM IN GLORY.

THE JOYFUL MESSAGE.

COMFORT, ye ministers of grace,
Comfort the people of your Lord;
O lift ye up the fallen race,
And cheer them by the gospel word.

Go into every nation, go,
Speak to their trembling hearts, and cry,
Glad tidings unto all we show;
Jerusalem, thy God is nigh.

Hark! in the wilderness a cry,
A voice that loudly calls, Prepare!
Prepare your hearts, for God is nigh,
And means to make his entrance there!

The Lord your God shall quickly come;
Sinners, repent! the call obey:
Open your hearts to make him room;
Ye desert souls, prepare his way.

The Lord shall clear his way through all;
Whate'er obstructs, obstructs in vain;
The vale shall rise, the mountain fall,
Crooked be straight, and rugged plain.

The glory of the Lord displayed
Shall all mankind together view,
And what his mouth in truth hath said,
His own almighty hand shall do.
