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Having the everlasting Gospel to preach
unto them that dwell on the Earth.

GOD'S MESSENGERS.

Showing the Hand of God in Christian
Union as Revealed in Prophecy.

BY
E. O. BENNETT.

"The sixteenth century was an epoch of a great separation. The nineteenth must be one of great union."—D'AUBIGNE.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

IN presenting this little volume to the public, I do it with much anxiety but not without some hope that it may leave

“Footprints on the sands of time,
Footprints, that perhaps another
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
Some forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing shall take heart again.”

That it will be satisfactory to all I cannot expect. But if it is the means of bringing hope to some lone pilgrim, who has long been praying “Thy Kingdom come,” and weeping over the desolation of Zion, and her long apostasy in sectarian bondage, I shall feel amply paid for my labor. To all, of every clime, denomination, or color, this book is affectionately dedicated, hoping that in the hands of Him who prayed that all his people might be one, it may do something to advance the great movement for Christian union, which is now agitated with so much zeal.

I feel conscious that we are on the threshold of some great revolution in the Christian world, and wish to throw my mite into this great work.

I think we may already hear the sound of a going

in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that God is going before us to remove the greatest obstacle to the advancement of His Kingdom.

If we look back a single decade we can see a great change in the moral world. Infidelity is assuming an aggressive form. It has made its attack on the church in every land. It is organizing for battle. There is no discord in its ranks. Where can you find anything more at variance than materialistic infidelity and spiritualism, but they unite their forces to overthrow Christianity. We may be near the battle of the great day, which I think is not a battle of carnal weapons, but a moral conflict of infidelity against Christianity. Revelation says, "He shall gather them together, Gog and Magog." This implies organic union. Infidelity has been abroad in the land from the earliest Christian era.

England had a Bolingbroke, France a Voltaire, Germany a Baur, and America a Payne, but it has been only a few years since organic union has commenced. We find those of the most antagonistic sentiments, from the spiritualist to the materialist, from the most subtile philosopher to the agnostic, all in this army, and presenting a solid front against the Christian religion. This should teach the Christian soldiers to unite their forces against this subtile foe.

The oncoming years have in store for us much of good or evil for the church. Christianity must either conquer or go down in the vortex. We have a valiant host marshaled in the field, and if there is unity of action and concentration in our work victory will turn on Israel's side.

“To-day the noise of battle
And then the victor's song.”

The last decade has wrought a great change in favor of union. Christians now feel not only the policy, but the necessity of organic union, and are looking about for means to carry it out.

The subject of Christian union has rested on my mind for many years. In youth I hoped for the day to come when all denominations would give up their distinctive creeds, and come together in one grand organic union. What a glorious day that would be! But I have now abandoned the dream of my youth. I begin to think such an event will never occur, at least in our day. The moral inertia of these great Christian denominations is too strong for the moral force that can be brought against it.

Great reforms seldom begin in this way. They often have a very small beginning, and appear to the world insignificant. This makes the hand of God more visible in the movement.

Some tell us when the old fogies die the young generation will be more liberal, and more favorable to union, but this does not seem to be realized, for the old fogies indoctrinate the young fogies so that when they grow up they become old fogies. Children are taught that all that is good and noble is inherent in their own denomination and is found in no other. A mother in San Francisco heard her little daughter saying some hard things about the Jews, and she rebuked her, telling her she should not say such things about the Jews, for Jesus was a Jew. “Why,” said the little girl, “I did not know that, I thought he was a Congregationalist.”

Christians have long been praying and laboring for union and died without the sight, but their prayers and tears have been remembered.

This is one of the greatest reforms in the Christian church. We are led to ask the question, "Will not so great a reform be noticed in prophecy?" The fall of Babylon was foretold hundreds of years before it was destroyed, and Cyrus the conqueror was even called by name. Will not the destruction of mystic Babylon also be foretold? We think this is done in Daniel and Revelation.

We have been holding conventions, and writing and theorizing about Christian union for more than half a century. But in the eve of the nineteenth century there is a loud and urgent call for *action*. Horace Greeley said the way to resume specie payment was to *resume*, so I think the way to promote union is to *unite*.

The reformation in the sixteenth century had long been working—agitated by godly men, who had given their lives for Christianity. The sacrifice and devotion of these heroes of the cross was the foundation work of the great reformation. Their prayers and tears and blood were to be rewarded, but the time had not yet come. All was ready when God sent his messenger in the person of the undaunted Monk of Wittenberg to begin the practical work of reformation.

The great work of the union reform has been done, or clearly marked out. The paper called the *Church Union* and other agencies have been at work for twenty years, and they have achieved great results. The doctrinal basis has been settled,

which is in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty. The theory and discussion about any other basis is useless, for there can be no other doctrinal basis for Christian union.

The evils of a divided church cannot be denied. The rivalry and strife between the different denominations is the source of great evil to the cause of Christ, and the waste of money, and ministerial labor in sustaining so many supernumerary churches is immense. It is safe to say that in our own country the labor of three thousand ministers is useless, and the expenditure of three millions of dollars a year is worse than wasted.

In this book I have used all possible brevity consistent with a fair development of my subject. I have not dwelt at length on the evils of disunion, nor the blessings of union, only sufficient to illustrate my subject.

Let us come together on the common basis of the essential doctrines of the Gospel plainly revealed in the Bible, and a glorious day will dawn on the Christian world.

May God grant me length of days to see the work of Christian union on the highway to success. When all who love Christ will be one in name, and one in heart, valiant in the defense of the Christian faith, and waiting for the Lord's appearing. Then can I say, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

E. O. BENNETT.

ROGERS, Ark., May, 1897.

GOD'S MESSENGERS.

CHAPTER I.

DANIEL'S PROPHECY.

IN all the prophecies of the Bible there is none so full of interest to us as the prophecies of Daniel; none that gives us so clear an insight to the world's history. Too little attention is paid to these wonderful visions of that inspired prophet, to whom God gave the message reaching down to modern times.

Some of these prophecies were to be sealed up until the latter days, when "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." These prophecies pointed out so clearly the time when the Messiah should appear that the Jews were looking for him at the time when He appeared. John says, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"

It gives an epitome of the great events to take place in the world. And history abundantly attests the truth of these predictions.

Daniel was taken captive in the first year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, when he was probably about twenty years old. His wisdom in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream first brought him into notice by the king. He was exalted in the

empire, and so highly was he favored that succeeding kings made him prime minister of their kingdoms.

The great burden on his mind was to know the future welfare of his people the Jews, and the final triumph of God's people. He gave an outline of the national events to take place in the world, the rise and fall of empires as landmarks to show God's dealings with his people. Thus Babylon is first brought to view when she took part in the captivity of the children of Israel.

If we bear in mind the leading theme of the prophecies of Daniel we can better understand the language. We have no evidence in all his writings that he was anxious to know the destiny of the world nor the time of its end. Thus when he speaks of the "time of the end" he evidently does not mean the end of the world, but the time of the end of these things of which he is speaking, as it relates to the church or his people, or the sanctuary, and not the end of the world as some are inclined to think. This is clearly seen in his wonderful prayer recorded in the ninth chapter. He had been reading the prophecies of Jeremiah, and had found that the time of the captivity of his people was near an end. And in his prayer he confessed the sins of his people, and the justness of their punishment. Then he prayed for light, and information in regard to their future, and before the prayer was ended an angel was sent to give him the needed information.

His interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's image to represent the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires, history tells us followed each other

just as predicted. This vision is repeated in the seventh chapter with some additional information.

At the close of the eighth chapter Daniel records a vision of great importance to the Christian world in our day. In all the visions, which embraced four hundred years and more, no mention is made of *time*. He does not tell the time occupied in the rise and fall of these four great empires. But in the thirteenth verse we have a change in the style. Time is brought to view. He says, "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation to give both the sanctuary, and the host to be trodden under foot. And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." The subject here brought to view is not one of succession, but *how long?* when will these things be?

Daniel heard two celestial beings talking with themselves, intended no doubt for his instruction. They were talking about *time*. These celestial beings were talking about the future of the church as connected with the world's history. Daniel, and through him the whole world, may listen to these messengers of God concerning the great events brought before us in these visions.

This seems to be a general statement concerning the longest period of time on record, without giving the date of the beginning of the period. It merely covers the whole time in which he was to give the events taking place in the intermediate time of which he was soon to speak. Thus Macaulay be-

gins his history of England by saying, "I propose to write the history of England from the accession of King James II. down to time which is within the memory of men still living." So the angel announces his subject, giving the scope of the vision, and the event to take place at the end of this period. Then Daniel heard a voice between the banks of Ulai which said, "Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision, so he came near where I stood and when he came I was afraid and fell upon my face, but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man, for at the time of the end shall be the vision. Now as he was speaking with me I was in a deep sleep, my face toward the ground, but he touched me and set me upright. And he said, Behold I will make thee know what shall be in the end of the indignation, for at the time appointed the end shall be."

Here it is important to notice that the angel was commanded to make Daniel understand the vision. Then if he did not do it he failed to fulfil the celestial command, which we cannot believe he would do. Then if he did not understand the vision this time we must expect the explanation to be made at some subsequent time. But did he make Daniel understand at this time? He had given the length of time of this prophetic period reaching down to modern times, and told the event to take place at the end of the two thousand and three hundred days, which was the cleansing of the sanctuary. The angel had just begun to make Daniel understand what should take place at the end of this prophetic period. He had given him

the outlines of the vision, when Daniel was overcome by the strain of excitement which he had been under, and fainted, so the angel could make no further revelations to him at this time. The angel had given no date for the beginning of this long period, by which he could reckon the time of the end and understand the vision. He says at the end of this communication with the angel, "And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up and did the king's business, and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it." And this closes the vision. If then he was not made to understand the vision, and he himself acknowledged that he did not, the angel did not obey the celestial command, unless he made him to understand in some subsequent vision. He was told that the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true. There can be no doubt that this refers to the twenty-three hundred days, as this is the only place where time is spoken off. The language is similar to that used in Genesis, where in giving an account of the creation it is said "the evening and the morning were the first day." Here this term evening and morning is used to denote a period of time, perhaps a very long period. So here it must refer to a period of time, which he says is true, showing the great importance he attached to this long prophetic period. As this vision closes with a confession from Daniel that he did not understand the vision, we must look for the needed information in the next chapter relating another vision.

Daniel was commanded to shut up the vision. The reason given was that "it should be for many

days." How did he obey this command? He did not do it by leaving no record of the vision; on the other hand he recorded the exact words of the angel so plain that any one for these thousand years could read it. Did Daniel then obey the angel's command? We think he did. The term shut up, or seal up, in the Bible means to make obscure so that it could not be easily understood. A book that is obscure or hard to understand is called a sealed book. In Isaiah xxix.11 we have this language, "And the vision of all is become unto you as a sealed book which men deliver to one that is learned saying, Read this, I pray thee." In this case the book, or the parchment roll as the books were then, was not sealed, but it was hard to understand. This then was the command given to Daniel to make it obscure or hard to understand. The reason given for sealing it up was "for it shall be for many days." Now if Daniel was obedient to this command he did this.

In the next vision the angel gave another period allotted to his people reaching to the coming of the Messiah, which was to be seventy weeks, but he did not leave this period in obscurity, but told just when it should begin, which was from the going forth of the command to restore and to build Jerusalem so that any one could reckon the time when Christ should come. And the Jews did compute the time very exactly, and were looking for the Messiah just at the time when he appeared. Daniel was not told to seal up this vision, because it was soon to take place, and it was important that the Jews should know the time of his appearance.

We must conclude that the angel did make Daniel understand the vision, for we cannot believe that the angel would be disobedient to the celestial command; then why did he not record it so that all could easily understand just as he did the vision about the coming of Christ? We reply the reason was because he was commanded to "shut up the vision."

What would have been the probable result if he had plainly given us the date of the beginning of the twenty-three hundred days when the sanctuary should be cleansed? They would have computed the time when this would take place, just as they did the coming of the Messiah. How the world would have been convulsed about the event of cleansing the sanctuary! They would have wondered and theorized, and worried, about the great event soon to take place. Volume after volume would have been written on the subject, and all this labor and anxiety would have been of no avail, for with all their wisdom they could not have found out what the cleansing of the sanctuary referred to, without the facts in history to guide them as we now have.

But it was wisely sealed up to the time of the end—that is, to near the end of this long time of prophecy. But when the end came the vision was opened, and we think the opening of this book is noticed in the Apocalypse, which we think is a sequel to the book of Daniel.

But we must now notice the length of time indicated by the twenty-three hundred days. First we can see that it was not literal days, for that would make only a little more than six years, a time far too

short for the accomplishment of any great work, so we must conclude that the language is figurative. The next period to days measured by the sun is years, so we conclude that years are meant, each day for a year, making twenty-three hundred years.

For this mode of interpretation we have ample proof in the Bible. In Num. xiv. 34 it is said, "After the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days each day for a year." And in Ezek. iv. 6, "And when thou hast accomplished them lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Juda forty days. I have appointed thee each day for a year." Ezekiel also symbolizes a year by days in the Babylonian captivity. Bishops Newton, Kirby, Scott, Keith, and others adopt this mode of interpretation. But the most conclusive proof of the correctness of the year-day principle is that when it is applied to the seventy weeks it exactly tallies with the account of the appearance of Christ.

CHAPTER II.

KEY TO THE VISION.

FIFTEEN years had passed away since the last vision recorded in the eighth chapter. Revolution had shaken the empires of the world. Another king had taken the place of the proud King of Babylon. Cyrus had long since been called as God's messenger to do this work, and the prophet had even called him by name. The Medo-Persian king had usurped the throne of proud Belshazzar. The time was near when captive Israel was to be released from bondage, and permitted to return to their beloved land, for which their hearts had yearned for so many long years. While Daniel was burdened with the labors of prime minister of one of the greatest nations on earth, he still found time to study God's promises, as revealed by his prophets. Seventy years of captivity had not weakened his zeal and longing for the restoration of his people to their beloved city, Jerusalem. Not fearing the king nor the watchful eye of his enemies, his window was open toward Jerusalem when he prayed for their deliverance from bondage.

He had found out, by studying the prophecies of Jeremiah, that the time of the deliverance of his people from bondage was near at hand. Jeremiah

had said (chapter xxv. 12): "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 iniquities." This had been accomplished and the end was near. Daniel was God's messenger to proclaim this decree of the Almighty to the people. Thus, when any great event in fulfilment of prophecy is about to take place, God has raised up some messenger to announce it to the world. Sometimes they are chosen from the great and renowned of earth, sometimes from the humble walks of life. John was called to announce that the time had come for the Messiah to appear, and he knew well his mission. The unlearned fishermen of Galilee were God's messengers to bear the gospel to the world.

Daniel knew by the study of books that the time had come to vindicate God's promises to his people in their deliverance from bondage. His strong faith in God's promises and his zeal for the welfare of his people may be the reason why he was so often "called dearly beloved."

In the last vision the angel had communicated a long and important period, at the end of which the sanctuary should be cleansed. As the angel had as yet given him no date from which to calculate the twenty-three hundred days, and as the sanctuary was spoken of, and he did not yet understand the vision, it would be natural for him to suppose that this referred to the restoration of the temple service, for the sanctuary had been desolate and the temple laid waste. But he could not reconcile the long period of twenty-three hundred days with that

event, which according to prophecy was so near at hand. And in this perplexity, and his ardent desire to know what was allotted to his people in the future, we find him making that remarkable prayer recorded in the ninth chapter. He begins by confessing his sins and the sins of his people. Then, in reviewing God's care and signal deliverance of his people in times past, pleads for his aid in restoring them again to their favored land and worship at Jerusalem. In this prayer he remembers the sanctuary, which had been made desolate.

While he was yet speaking, we are told, Gabriel appeared to him, and again assured him that he was greatly beloved.

Fifteen years had passed since his last visit, but Daniel knew him to be the same angel who had appeared to him in the first vision. He says, "It is Gabriel, whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning," doubtless referring to the communication recorded in the eighth chapter. This is the next vision of which we have any record, which the prophet had with the celestial visitor. Hence, we may expect him to explain to him that which he did not understand in his last visit. He had now come to give him skill and additional knowledge. Gabriel speaks, and says, "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding," as if he had said, "In my last visit, I was obliged to leave you without making you to fully understand the vision, because you could not endure more, hence you were perplexed, and I did not make you understand as I was commanded to do, therefore

I am now come, O Daniel, greatly beloved, to give you understanding, therefore understand the matter and consider the vision."

This could have reference to nothing but the vision recorded in the eighth chapter. If Gabriel had come to make him understand the vision in the eighth chapter we may expect him to begin with that part of the vision which he did not understand, namely, that relating to *time*.

He begins by saying "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city." He says nothing about the empires of the earth, as represented by the image and the beasts, but begins with *time*, just the thing Daniel did not understand. He begins with a statement precisely similar to that of the twenty-three hundred days recorded in the eighth chapter, where he was broken off by Daniel's sickness, but giving a different period of time, and telling what should be at the end of this period, just as he had done at the end of the twenty-three hundred days, when the sanctuary should be cleansed.

This shorter period would end with the time when God's covenant with the Jews as his peculiar people should end, and the Gentiles be brought in.

This time was given very definitely, but as yet there was no key given by which he could understand this period any more than the twenty-three hundred days.

They both stand in the same relation, for there was no starting point given from which to compute the end. So the angel's message was not complete.

But in the twenty-fifth verse he gives the key to unlock all these periods of prophetic time.

He says, "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, the streets shall be built again and the walls even in troublous times."

Here, then, we have the grand starting point of all these lines of prophecy. Then if we can find out the time of the going forth of the commandment we can easily compute the termination of the twenty-three hundred days, when the sanctuary is to be cleansed.

CHAPTER III.

DATE OF THE PROPHETIC TIME.

HAVING shown in the last chapter that the ninth chapter of Daniel is an explanation of the eighth chapter, as well as giving additional information in regard to the future history of the world, and that all these lines of prophecy started at the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, it will now be in place to ascertain the time of the going forth of this commandment. On this point we have abundant testimony. There are many events mentioned in this prediction to test the correctness of our chronology.

There are three events which have been claimed by different writers as the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. First, the decree of Cyrus for the rebuilding of the house of God, B.C. 536, Ezek. i. 4; second, the decree of Darius for the prosecution of the work which had been hindered about seventeen years; third, the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus to Ezra, B.C. 457, Ezra vii. There was also a permission given to Nehemiah to assist in the work, or a letter of introduction which could not be called a decree, which we may suppose would be written and signed by the king.

The decree of Cyrus could not be the commandment in question, for that pertained simply to the temple at Jerusalem, but the commandment was to restore and build Jerusalem, not the temple only, but the whole city. This decree was B.C. 536.

If we take sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years, which was to extend to the Messiah the Prince, it falls short fifty-three years of reaching even to the birth of Christ. The work which Cyrus did was dictated by the Lord. He was called to do this work a hundred years before his birth, and his decree was a step in the work of restoration, but it was too limited to meet the requirements of prophecy. Seven years after this Cyrus died, and was succeeded by Cambyses, called in Ezra iv. 6 Ahasuerus.

The work of rebuilding being hindered by enemies, Darius having come to the Persian throne, and finding the decree of Cyrus among the records of the kings, reaffirmed the decree of Cyrus, with some additional promises.

But this decree was only seventeen years from the decree of Cyrus, and therefore fails the specifications of prophecy. The decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus, given B.C. 457, meets all the requirements of the prophecy recorded in Ezra vii. This Artaxerxes was the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther, which accounts for the favor he showed the Jews. This decree was drawn up in formal order and was called a decree. It was written not in Hebrew but in Chaldaic.

Thus says Prof. Whiting: "We are furnished with the original document by virtue of which Ezra

was authorized to restore and rebuild Jerusalem." He gave him full and ample power for the work of rebuilding Jerusalem and restoring the laws and government of the people. No such power was given to any other person. And we have a remarkable declaration in Ezra vi. 14 showing that all of these decrees are taken as the command to restore and build Jerusalem. He says, "And they builded and finished it according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia." Here the three decrees of these kings is called the commandment when the work of rebuilding was finished. Then the commandment went forth in the sense of prophecy.

Now if we can determine when this decree went forth we have the key to this long line of prophecy reaching down to our times. As we have ascertained that the decree to restore and build Jerusalem, and to restore the temple worship, and the civil institutions by the decrees of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia, and that it was completed and went forth when Artaxerxes Longimanus gave the commandment to Ezra to carry out the work. The next question to solve is, What year of the world was this? Ezra says it was in the seventh year of the king, Ezra vii. 8. What year then was the seventh year of Artaxerxes' reign? The following is a concise answer to the question, taken from the *Advent Herald*:

"The Bible gives the data for a complete system of chronology extending from the creation to the birth of Cyrus, a clearly ascertained date. From

this period downward we have the undisputed Canon of Ptolemy and the undisputed testimony of Nabonassar, extending below our vulgar era. At the point when inspired chronology leaves us, this canon of undoubted accuracy commences, and thus the whole arch is spanned.

“This canon places the seventh year of Artaxerxes in the year B.C. 457, and the accuracy of this canon is demonstrated by the concurrent agreement of more than twenty eclipses. This date we cannot change from B.C. 457 without first demonstrating the inaccuracy of Ptolemy’s canon. To do this it would become necessary to show that the large number of eclipses by which the accuracy has been repeatedly demonstrated has not been correctly computed, and such a result would unsettle every chronological date, and leave the settlement of epochs and the adjustment of eras entirely at the mercy of every dreamer, so that chronology would be of no more value than guess-work.

“Now the commencement of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus was B.C. 464, is demonstrated by the agreement of above twenty eclipses, which have been repeatedly calculated, and has invariably been found to fall on the time specified. Before it can be shown that the commencement of his reign is wrongly fixed it must first be shown that those eclipses have been wrongly calculated. This no one has done or even will venture to do. Consequently the commencement of his reign cannot be removed from this point.”

It will thus be seen that the date of the seventh year of Artaxerxes rests largely upon the record of

history respecting eclipses, and the testimony of astronomy as to the time when these eclipses occurred. Of the accuracy with which the dates of eclipses may be settled Prof. Michel says:

“Go back three thousand years—stand upon that mighty arch-tower, the temple of Belus in old Babylon, and look out. The sun is sinking in eclipse, and great is the dismay of the terror-stricken inhabitants. We have the facts and circumstances recorded. But how shall we prove that record correct? The astronomer unravels the devious movements of the sun, the earth, and the moon, through the whole period of the three thousand years, with the power of intellect. He goes back through the cycles of thirty long centuries and announces that at such an hour, and such a day as the Chaldean has written that eclipse did take place.”

Respecting the authority of the canon of Ptolemy, Prideaux says: “But Ptolemy’s canon being fixed by eclipses, the truth of it may at any time be demonstrated by astronomical calculations, and no one has ever calculated those eclipses but hath found them fall in the right time where placed, and therefore this being the surest guide which we have in chronology, and it being also verified by its agreement everywhere with the Holy Scriptures, it is not for the authority of any other human writing whatsoever to be receded from.”

Thus we find the date or starting point of all these prophetic periods to be the seventh year of Artaxerxes, 457 B.C. We shall not take time to examine in detail all the intermediate predictions in this chapter, but we find that they all harmonize

with this date as a starting point. This is the strongest confirmation that it is correct, and that it was the date from which the Jews calculated the time when the Messiah should come.

It is as if the angel had said to Daniel, in this visit, "In answer to your prayer I have now come to finish my work and to give you the starting point of the twenty-three hundred days." And Daniel no doubt understood the connection of this visit with that recorded in the preceding chapter, and he no doubt would have made it plain to the reader had he not been commanded to shut up the vision. A portion of this time I have given is allotted to your people and the holy city Jerusalem, and this period, comprising seventy weeks, is the first four hundred and ninety years of the twenty-three hundred days. Some writers contend with good authority that the word translated "determined" should have been translated "cut off." If this rendering is the correct one it shows very clearly that the meaning is that this time is cut off from the twenty-three hundred days, so that it is clear that this is the time referred to. Thus we can see by following out the predictions, and comparing them with the events which history tells us have taken place, that the date of the beginning and mode of interpretation must be correct.

We are now prepared to enter more fully into the investigation of this long line of prophecy of twenty-three hundred days. And here we wish to state that as the angel spoke twice of this period to Daniel and told him that it was *true*, it shows it to be of much importance. But if there is no starting point to this

period it is entirely useless, and may as well not have been uttered. But as all Scripture is given for our instruction, there must be some way of understanding it. We do not claim any originality in this chronology. It is in substance that of William Miller. We have presented some of his statements and method of calculation, as they are so little known in this day. While he was mistaken as to what the sanctuary referred to, we believe he was correct in his chronology. It has stood the test of criticism by scholars for half a century, and it has never been refuted.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TERMINATION OF THE TWENTY-THREE HUNDRED
DAYS.

WE are now prepared to notice the events attending the termination of this long prophetic period. If we subtract 457 B.C., the time when these lines of prophecy began, from 2300, it will leave 1843 as the time when it would expire. This was the time first set by William Miller for the end of the world. But upon more mature reflection it was found that it must extend into the following year. For it would take four hundred and fifty-seven full years before Christ, and eighteen hundred and forty-three full years after to make the twenty-three hundred years. Therefore, if the days commenced with the very first day of 457 B.C. they would not terminate till the very last day of 1843. But we have evidence that they did not commence with the first day of 457 B.C., but some portion of that year had elapsed before the decree went forth. It is thought from the history of the times that it was in the autumn of the year 457 B.C. when the edict went forth. Thus we are brought to the autumn of the year 1844 as the point where the twenty-three hundred days terminated, so that this was the year when the excitement was so high in regard to the end of the world.

God has never left his church without a faithful messenger to proclaim his will to the world when some important epoch was at hand. Many men living can well remember the wave of excitement that swept over the whole world from 1840 to 1844—a movement such as the world had never before seen. In different parts of the world Christians of all denominations joined in the great outcry. It went to every missionary station on the globe. Treasures were poured out in abundance to advance the cause. A host of ministers, some of the most learned and godly of the land, spent their time and talents in its vindication. And what did all this mean under the guiding hand of an overruling Providence? Not that the end of the world had come, but that this long prophetic period had expired.

The people were greatly disappointed when the end did not come, but this does not prove that the hand of God was not in it. The vital point in this movement was true, namely, that the time had come, God's long predicted time had arrived, and it was meet that some such event should mark the announcement. If in 1844 the last prophetic period did end, that fact would be sufficient reason why God should be in the movement, notwithstanding the mistake of his servants.

Daniel says, "Men shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." This, no doubt, refers to the time of the fulfilment of this prophecy. Some interpret this to refer to the time when men should travel on fast railroad trains and visit the whole world, and science and learning should be promulgated, and scattered over the world by the

printing press. But the prophet says nothing about these swift messengers, and nothing about science or inventions. But they shall run, and knowledge shall be increased. Knowledge of what? Of the things relating to the fulfilling of this prophecy. It means they shall be enthusiastic in carrying the news of the supposed end of the world—just what was witnessed in the Millerite excitement. They had advanced knowledge of the chronology of this prophecy. Knowledge had been increased when William Miller made the calculation. The world had known the prophecy ever since it was uttered, but now they had increased knowledge in regard to the time of its fulfilment.

Had Mr. Miller understood the cleansing of the sanctuary to be a moral work his followers would not have had so much enthusiasm in spreading the news, and his interpretation would probably have been rejected. They would have said the time is too near, there is not time for a great moral renovation. Mr. Miller's mistake was a great factor in making the great announcement of the termination of this long line of prophecy. Why was the excitement so general, and so many intelligent men engaged in it? Was it because Mr. Miller had made the prediction that the world was to meet its doom at that time? This would be placing a light estimate on the intelligence of the people. No, it was because Mr. Miller's predictions had caused them to study, and examine the reasons for the conclusions in his chronology, and they failed to find any fault with his reasoning, so they were forced to accept his conclusions in regard to the time as correct, that

the time had come for the sanctuary to be cleansed. Some thought it would be a moral cleansing, but as they looked around they could not see the indications of any event likely to take place which could in any sense represent the moral cleansing of the sanctuary. Therefore, in this dilemma it was natural for them to fall in with Mr. Miller, that the earth was the sanctuary which was to be cleansed by the fires of the last day.

God sometimes uses the mistakes and blunders of men to carry out his great plans in the government and destiny of the world. We cannot see how the event of the expiration of this long line of prophecy could have been so signally and so universally proclaimed had not Mr. Miller and his associates made such a mistake in interpreting the meaning of the sanctuary. That, as they supposed, the world was so near its end was what gave zest to the movement.

Some may start up with holy horror at the mention of William Miller. Why, they say he was that impostor who created such an excitement about the end of the world in 1844. There may be many like the writer, who well remembers the Millerite excitement in his boyhood, but who, after the time passed, and the world still rolled on in its steady course, and the seasons went and came as usual, dismissed the subject from their minds with the assumption that Mr. Miller was wrong in all his calculations, not even taking the trouble to inform themselves in regard to the foundation on which his chronology was based as to the time of the fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel.

By reading the life of William Miller, we find him to be eminently a man of God, and well qualified by his meekness and disregard of the world's opinions to be God's messenger in proclaiming the end of this prophetic time. That he made a mistake in thinking the sanctuary symbolized the world is apparent to every one, but his chronology has stood scientific criticism for half a century and no one has been able to show the fallacy of his logic. This is strong evidence that it is correct. We think these calculations were original with him. There is a tradition that a minister in Scotland came to the same conclusions early in this century. But as Mr. Miller's library was limited, probably he had no knowledge of these writings. At least he first gave extensive publicity to it.

The late George Bush, professor of Hebrew and Oriental literature in New York University, in a letter addressed to Mr. Miller in 1844, made some very important admissions relative to his calculations of the prophecies of Daniel. Professor Bush says: "Neither is it to be objected to, as I conceive, to yourself, or your friends, that you devoted much time and attention to the study of the chronology of prophecy, and have labored much to determine the commencing and closing dates of its great periods. If these periods are actually given by the Holy Ghost in the prophetic book, it was doubtless with the design that they should be studied and probably in the end understood, and no man is to be charged with presumptuous folly who reverently makes the attempt to do this. On this point I have myself no charges to bring against you. Nay, I

am ready even to go so far as to say, that I do not conceive your error on the subject of chronology to be very wide of the truth. The taking a day as the prophetic time for a year I believe is sustained by sound exegesis, as well as fortified by the high names of Mede, Sir Isaac Newton, Kirby, Scott, Keith, and a host of others who have long since come to, substantially, your conclusions on this head. They all agree that the leading periods mentioned by Daniel and John do actually expire *about this age of the world*, and it would be a strange logic that would convict you of heresy for holding in effect the same views, which stand forth so prominent in the notices of these eminent divines. Your error, as I apprehend, lies in another direction than your chronology. You have entirely mistaken the nature of the events which are to occur when these periods have expired. This is the head and front of your expository offending. That the close of the twenty-three hundred days of Daniel, for instance, is also the close of the period of human probation, that it is an epoch of visible and personal second coming of Christ, of the resurrection of the righteous dead, and the desolation of the present mundane system. The great event before the world is not its physical conflagration, but its *moral regeneration*. It will be found to be a spiritual coming in the honor of his gospel, in ample outpouring of his spirit, and the glorious administration of his providence." From this we understand that Prof. Bush looked for the conversion of the world as the event to mark the termination of the twenty-three hundred days, which we conceive to be eminently

correct, though perhaps not just in the way he had marked out.

Mr. Hinton, who wrote at the time, said: "It is possible we may have reached the goal of the world's moral destiny. It indeed is our deliberate opinion that we are in the general period of the termination of the twenty-third century alluded to by the prophet, and that the events alluded to in the phrase, 'then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,' are now actually passing before us."

It cannot be made to appear that the movement of Mr. Miller and his associates could not be a fulfilment of prophecy because they were disappointed on the very point of their highest expectations. But prophecy was fulfilled, we think, not only in their proclamation to the world, but also in their disappointment, as we shall notice hereafter.

The prophet Zachariah uttered these words about five hundred years before their fulfilment: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation, lonely and riding upon an ass."

In the fulfilment of this prophecy when Christ was riding into Jerusalem in this humble manner expressed by the prophet, the chosen twelve, and the shouting multitude cried, "Hosanna to the son of David." They did not understand the nature of Christ's kingdom. They thought when they shouted their hosannas that he was to be a temporal king. Their mistake was as great, as we look upon it, as was that of Mr. Miller and his ad-

ming crowd, but this did not prevent its being a fulfilment of prophecy.

Prophecy is generally given in symbolical language, and it is often so obscure that it cannot be understood until the time has expired, and historical events are compared with the symbols of prophecy. And it is worthy of note that these impressions come in answer to prayer. Although it was doubtless the intention of God to make Daniel understand the vision, there was a delay of about fifteen years and then the explanation came in answer to his earnest prayer. Before a few years previous to 1844, the prophecy of Daniel respecting this long period was but little studied, and the obscurity in regard to the beginning prevented its being understood.

As the date of the beginning of this prophecy is so important to our conclusions, we will recapitulate a little. Let us state briefly some things which cannot be doubted. One of these facts is that the date of the beginning of the seventy weeks, which was B.C. 457, leads to some of the most important events predicted, and they have been fulfilled to the letter by using this date as the key. It will not do to say they are only coincidences. The one respecting the advent of Christ, and the time when the Messiah should be cut off. The fulfilment of these predictions all came in the right time. As these interpretations are so unquestionably established, had the twenty-three hundred days been recorded in connection with the seventy weeks, no one could have doubted that the time expired in 1844, and the

result would have been a long period of useless anxiety.

The only question in dispute is this: Is the vision in the ninth chapter an explanation of that in the eighth chapter of Daniel, which we think we have shown to be a fact. And we think we can see good reasons why the connection was not made clear as we have already suggested. Had the two visions been in the same connection, the end of this period could have been as easily computed as that of the coming of the Messiah. This would have been too specific to have met the ends and needs of prophecy. It would have caused a long period of needless anxiety and fruitless search for the explanation. Therefore Daniel was instructed to shut up the vision, and in this manner it was sealed up until the "time of the end," or near its termination in 1844. We have an irresistible inference that the vision in the ninth chapter is an explanation of the vision in the eighth, because at the close of this vision Daniel confessed that he did not understand, and the angel was under command to make him understand it. Then if the eighth chapter is all we have to guide us in the interpretation, it is useless for any one to attempt the solution of the problem. We could not understand it any better than Daniel did, and it may as well have been omitted. We cannot think God would thus trifle with Daniel and all the world through him.

It was the intention of the holy oracle that some time the seal should be broken, and the world know the full import of that important message that the angel called the attention of the prophet to the sec-

ond time lest he should forget it, by saying, "And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true, wherefore shut up the vision, for it shall be for many days." Therefore we infer that the angel did make him understand in a subsequent vision, and the vision in the ninth chapter is the next on record, which must contain the needed instruction. So that the twenty-three hundred days rests on the same foundation as the seventy weeks. If the sanctuary was to be cleansed in 1844 it is important to inquire what is symbolized by the sanctuary.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE SANCTUARY.

WILLIAM MILLER and his associates thought the earth was the sanctuary, and that it would be cleansed by the fires of the last day. Time has demonstrated this theory to be incorrect, for half a century has passed and no material change has taken place in the physical world.

The question is still asked: What did the angel mean by the sanctuary which was to be cleansed in the last days? The only other theory that has been largely promulgated in the world is that held by the Seventh-day Adventists. We can only give their theory a brief review.

As near as we can understand it, they believe that there is in heaven a literal tabernacle, after which the one set up in the wilderness was a model. As this tabernacle contained two rooms or apartments, a discussion prevailed in the early church for a long time whether the one in heaven likewise contained two rooms. But the sentiment prevailed that there were two. In the outer court the priest stood to offer sacrifice for the sins of the people, and in the inner apartment, or the holy of holies, called the sanctuary, the priest entered once a year to cleanse the sanctuary, by the symbol of the scape-goat, which was to be sent out into the wilderness.

So they believe that Jesus stands in the outer court of the tabernacle above as our great high-priest to make atonement for sin.

But when the day of judgment began, which they call the *investigative judgment*, Christ passed from the outer to the inner court or sanctuary to cleanse it, and put the sins of the people on the scapegoat, the devil, as the priests put the sins on the goat in the earthly sanctuary. This work began, according to their theory, in 1844. An animated controversy arose in the early church as to whether the door of mercy was shut when Christ entered the sanctuary, but it was finally decided that the door was still open, and would be until all had an opportunity to hear the message they were proclaiming. Then if they still refused to hear their message, and accept Christ in his new official relation, the door would be shut.

And now Christ is passing judgment on mankind, and cleansing the sanctuary. They think this process has been going on for half a century, and when the work of cleansing the sanctuary is finished, and the investigative judgment comes down to the present generation, then the end will come. Which event they say will be in this generation; but they have been saying this for half a century. We quote from a book called "The Sanctuary," written by Prof. Uriah Smith, and published by the Advent Publishing Company, at Battle Creek, in Michigan, which is accepted as a standard work by that church.

"Therefore we are held inevitably to the conclusion that at the end of the twenty-three hundred days in the autumn of 1844 the ministration of the sanc-

tuary above was changed from the holy to the most holy place. Then the temple of God was opened in heaven and there was seen in the temple the ark of the testament, Rev. xi. 19. Then the Ancient of Days did sit, as the prophet Daniel saw, Dan. vii. 9. Then, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, Christ, our priest and mediator for man, Dan. vii. 13, 14, opened the solemn judgment. scene of verses 9 and 10 of Dan. vii. Then the seventh angel sounded, and the work of finishing the mystery of God began, Rev. x. 7. These are the sublime events involved in the cleansing of the sanctuary which then commenced. In the scene now presented before us, we behold the climax of the grandeur, glory, and sublimity that center in this great subject. And already for nearly thirty-three years this work has been going forward. We understand, beginning with the human race at the opening of the world's history, the examination passes down through succeeding generations in consecutive order, till at length the cases of the last generation, the living, are reached, who come last into the investigative judgment and the work closes. And what generation has the work now reached? Has it come down to the age of Noah? of Abraham? Has it come down to Job? of Moses? of Daniel? Has it reached the age of the apostles and the early Christians? Are their cases now in review before the great tribunal above? Has it come down to the setting up of papacy, to the dark ages, when the Waldenses and other few faithful witnesses in obscurity and concealment kept the light of God's truth alive in the world? Has it come down to the

great reformation in the time of Luther? of the Wesleys? We know not. We know only that it is passing down somewhere through these generations, and rapidly approaching the time when our destiny will be decided forever. And here we now stand waiting—may we not also say preparing?—but with considerations of such thrilling interest even as our view of this subject does not end. We go forward a little in the future, and behold the sins of all the righteous loaded upon the head of the antypical scapegoat to be put away forever. We see Satan bound and the saints free forever from his power.”

This theory is so manifestly at variance with scripture representations of the attributes of God that we shall take but little time in noticing it. If we are to take all the imagery of the Bible literally, then some of these passages quoted in support of this theory would have some weight, but the Bible is full of figures which cannot be literally interpreted, but only intended to illustrate some important truth. In the description of heaven, the golden streets and jasper walls are probably only figures to illustrate the glory and grandeur of the home of the righteous, and the lake of fire and the worm that never dies are figures to portray the misery of the final abode of the wicked.

One thing is worthy of note—that is, that all the other scenes in these prophetic visions have their fulfilment on earth. The seven weeks or forty-nine years bring us to the time when the building of the city was completed. The sixty-nine weeks or four hundred and eighty-three years extend to the appear-

ing of the Messiah. They are all fulfilled on earth. They were given for man and not for angels, and were fulfilled where man could witness them. But the prophecy of the twenty-three hundred days, which was also given for man and not for the benefit of angels, Mr. Smith takes away from earth and locates in heaven, away beyond the sight or knowledge of man, where no mortal eye can witness it. Reason revolts at such an interpretation. We are to look to history to see the fulfilment of prophecy, and not to the Bible. Mr. Smith says the interpretation of the sanctuary is purely a Bible question, and tells how many times sanctuary is used, and what it means. While he acknowledges all the other language in these prophecies is symbolical, he insists on making the sanctuary literal. In the quotations we made from his book, the investigative judgment has been going on for half a century and may continue a hundred years longer. Then God has been half a century finding out who are entitled to eternal life, for *investigative* means finding out. This is such a gross representation of Deity that we wonder how any one can accept it. How different from this is the language of Paul, "We shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye!"

If neither of the two theories is reasonable, the question comes to us, What does the sanctuary symbolize? The primitive signification of the term sanctuary is "a holy place." There may be no place on earth that can literally be called a holy place. While we may not find literally a holy place on earth, what is there that bears the strongest analogy to the

sanctuary? What, then, is meant by the sanctuary? We answer, the Christian Church. The sanctuary was the place where God held communication with man. It was the place where man could approach his Maker. So the church is his chosen instrumentality to make known his blessings to the world, where he is wont to meet his people with the blessings of his salvation. Here Christians meet to worship, and he has said, "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." They here receive his especial blessings. Then we believe the analogy is good, and the evidence strong for the belief that the sanctuary spoken of by the angel symbolizes the Christian Church. It is thus used in Ps. cxiv. 2, "Judah was my sanctuary." Daniel called Jerusalem the holy mountain because the temple service was held there. The term sanctuary is often used now to denote the place of worship, and we sometimes use the term church interchangeably to mean the place of worship, and the organized body of Christians who meet there for worship, so in this prophecy the sanctuary means the church or the organized body of Christians. This Christian Church embraces all who acknowledge Christ as the corner-stone of the church, for Christ said, "On this rock will I build my church." Then we believe the Christian Church is to be cleansed in fulfilment of this long line of the prophecy of Daniel.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT IS MEANT BY CLEANSING THE SANCTUARY.

WE have shown in the last chapter that the Christian Church was the sanctuary referred to in the prophecy of Daniel, which was to be cleansed at the end of the twenty-three hundred days. We will now inquire what there is in the church that most needs cleansing. We could mention many things where the church fails to exhibit to the world the power and beauty of the Christian religion. We find worldly mindedness and conformity to the world in the church; a desire for display in costly houses of worship; a want of liberality to benevolent institutions. And sometimes we find unworthy members who disgrace the Christian religion in their unfair dealings with the world. We sometimes find church-members who favor the open saloon. We could make a long list of charges of things that need to be reformed. But these things are only defects of unworthy members of the church, and cannot be charged against the church as an organized body. The constitution of the church forbids such things. There is no whisky church, constitutionally so. They all advocate temperance in their rules and laws. Then these defects cannot be the great evil from which it is to be cleansed. It must be something incorporated in the constitution of the

organized body—something that is a part of the church. Then what is the great evil which is interwoven into the very warp and woof of the church, and is seen and felt in all its working, doing more to hinder the progress of the gospel than all other evils combined? We answer, sectarianism. Every denomination in the world, with a few exceptions, has this characteristic. By sectarianism we mean the dividing lines in the churches that separate one body of Christians from another. It is as universal as the Christian religion. The rivalry, emulation, and strife among the different denominations amounts to a real warfare. In view of these things it is no wonder that the angel, inspired by prophetic vision from the holy spirit as he looked down the many centuries of time and surveyed the Christian world as it exists to-day, should tell Daniel, “Unto twenty-three hundred days, then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.” This evil is fostered more largely by the ministers and officers of the church than by the laity.

At the Methodist annual conference of Arkansas a representative of the press said in an address to the ministers present, “What are you here for? I suppose you will say to make Christians; yes, but you are here to make Methodists.” We have seen that sentiment acted out too often, but have never before heard such a bald-headed declaration made in a church conference.

If a member of certain churches should sing in public worship:

“Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,”

he would be turned out of the church, not because there is anything unchristian in singing such songs, but because it is against the rules of the church. That song cannot be found in the psalms of David, and we do not permit any other to be sung in worship. If you apply to a Baptist church for admission, and do not believe that immersion is the scriptural mode of baptism, you will be rejected; they will say: "We cannot receive you; if there is no other church near, or one you can conscientiously join fellowship, you will have to live without the church and get to heaven the best way you can. We can't break the rules of our church even if it results in the loss of your soul." Not because it is unscriptural to be baptized in any other way, for the Bible lays down no *mode* of baptism. No precept can be found in all the Bible to that end. But as a church they have drawn the inference from reading sacred history that immersion is the proper mode, and will admit no other; but others draw a different inference, and which is right?

The different denominations all profess to be fighting under the same banner of the Prince of peace, and all have the one end in view, namely, that of bringing the world to Christ. But they waste half their ammunition in fighting with each other. Sectarianism does not express exactly the meaning we intend, but we use it for want of a better word that can be easily understood. The Christian should be a sectarian in the sense of being a zealous advocate of the Christian sect, in distinction from the sect of skeptics and infidels.

We do not call a man a sectarian because he is a

zealous advocate of his church, but because he advocates a sectarian church. What we mean by a sectarian church is one that has in its organic rules the elements of a division of the Christian family. We do not find fault with a church because it is a denomination. There cannot be a church without its being a denomination. Every church must have a name by which it is identified, that is its name or denomination.

In apostolic times the church was simply called the church; that sufficiently distinguished them from the Jewish assemblies, and they were further identified by the name of the place where they were located, therefore the church of Corinth was the denomination of that church. There may be many Christian churches in the same place, therefore they must have a name to identify them, and this is the name or denomination of that church. There is no harm in being a denomination, but the harm is in being a sectarian denomination.

Every church except a few local union churches have some rules or doctrines in their creed, either written or enforced by practice, to exclude from membership some who give evidence of being Christians. And no church can exclude such from its fellowship without incurring the judgment Christ pronounced upon him who offends one of these little ones.

Divisions began in the church in the days of the Apostles. The church at Corinth became divided, and for this Paul charged them with being carnal. The Corinthian brethren surely had as much reason for following Paul, or Apollos, or Cephus as we have

for following Calvin, or Luther, or Wesley. The charge of carnality rests with equal force upon all the sectarian churches as it did on the church of Corinth. Christ prayed that his people might be one. Will that prayer never be answered? We think it will. The reason given is that the world might know that He was the Messiah, the sent of God.

The difficulties in the way of Christian union to some seem insurmountable, but when the hand of God is seen in the movement these difficulties will vanish like a frail structure before a mighty current. Some ministers urge a spirit of union and friendship among the different denominations as a remedy for this evil. This is certainly commendable, but this will never heal the evil. As long as sect interests clash, this evil spirit will continue. It must be so from the very nature of the case. We must eradicate the source of this evil, which like a great cancer is eating out the vitality of the church.

This sectarian spirit is a great obstacle to revivals. Christians sometimes seem to be united in revival efforts. They seem at the time to be engrossed in the important subject of bringing souls into the kingdom, but after the revival is over, and the work of receiving the converts into the churches they take it all back. The world can hardly comprehend a disinterested action. Hence, they are on the lookout for some selfish motive for the efforts and labors of Christians in revivals. They say all they want is to add to their church, and build a fine house that will eclipse the other churches, and help to support their pastor. They adopt Napo-

leon's motto: "Every man has his price." Satan replied to the Lord, "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land."

We were once engaged in a revival when all the churches in the place seemed to be united; and the greatest revival that was ever in the town seemed to be near at hand. The scoffers were silenced, they could see no selfish motive for the zeal and sacrifice Christians were making. But in the midst of the revival one of the pastors opened the doors of his church, and urged all the converts to join his church. When the scoffers said, "I told you so—all they want is to build up their own church; they care nothing about the salvation of men." The evangelist with tears in his eyes announced that his work here was done. The reason Christ presented for the union of His people was that the world might believe. If we preach the gospel of peace and good will to men, we must act in harmony with our teaching, or the world will not believe the gospel. It will not suffice to say we are united in the same great end, the conversion of the world. The potent fact still remains we are divided—divided in name, in organization and in creed, and wasting the Lord's money in sustaining so many supernumerary churches.

Let us look for illustration of this wicked waste of means to some of the small towns in the West. In a town in Iowa, containing about one thousand inhabitants, they have six churches, viz: Baptist,

Methodist, United Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Adventist and Disciples. All have comfortable houses of worship. They all preach substantially the same doctrine of salvation through Christ, and there is a good degree of fraternity existing between them. They sometimes hold union prayer-meetings, and unite in revival efforts. There is nothing that divides them except the mode of baptism and some speculative theology. The churches are all poor. The Methodists have regular services, the United Presbyterians have preaching half the time, and others occasionally, and three pulpits vacant. If all these churches would sustain a minister at a salary of \$600 a year, it would cost \$3,600 a year. One large church would hold all that usually attend worship. Thus, if they were united in one church, it would save \$3,000 a year in that little town, and the people would have better religious privileges. And when we consider that there are hundreds of towns similarly situated in the West and in the East, the waste of means becomes enormous. And this is not all: such a union would save the labor of five ministers, who could labor in destitute places or in the foreign fields. Thus, there is a waste of the Lord's money, a waste of ministerial labor, and a waste of religious influence.

It has been estimated that there is a waste of two million dollars annually, and the time of three or four thousand ministers in our own country, and probably as much in England. With such an additional force in our foreign missionary and home work, the world could soon be converted to Christ. This work of unifying the churches is no

fancy picture. It has been done in some places, and can be done in others if the people have a mind to the work. And what peace and harmony it would bring, and such revivals would sweep over the land, as the world has never seen!

Then look at the expense of sustaining so many boards of benevolent institutions, especially the missionary organizations. A large per cent. of the funds collected goes to run the machinery of these institutions. We do not think the officers are overpaid, but they must all have a living, and this comes out of the missionary funds. If they were all united it would take but little more than it does to run one of these sectarian institutions. This would not only reduce the expense, but it would relieve a large number of ministers to labor in other fields, for which they are so eminently fitted.

It is urged as an objection to this union, because all the churches have their missionary institutions established and could not change them. But they could soon be reorganized, and some of them need this very much. They have gone off on side issues, and have united medical with Christian missions. This brings in the elements of discord, as there are so many different schools of medicine. But all Christians, of whatever name, believe in sending the gospel to the heathen. But some say, there is a necessity for the different churches because all do not believe alike. We do not reason thus in worldly matters. There is a wide difference in minor details of work in all branches of trade, in farming and in mechanics. They differ in many things, but it is not thought necessary for this reason to

divide them into classes as long as they all agree in fundamental principles. If we should carry out this classification in the churches to its fullest extent, we suppose there would be but one in each church, for it is hard to find two persons who believe exactly alike in all things.

But there is a common ground on which all evangelical Christians can and do stand together. The essential doctrines of the gospel now held by all evangelical Christians are substantially the same, and they have been held by the churches for nearly nineteen hundred years, and doubtless will be to the end of time. On minor doctrines, not plainly revealed in Bible which do not affect moral character, there will probably always be a difference of opinion, and it is not necessary that it should be otherwise.

The army illustration is often used to defend a divided church, but there is no analogy whatever. They say we are all fighting for the same end under the same great captain, Jesus Christ, and the different churches are like the different regiments in the army. On the battlefield it is necessary to have different companies under different captains for better discipline and for more effective work. So they say in the Christian work by the different churches, they can do more effective service than they could if all were in one church. This illustration holds good in reference to churches of the same denomination in different localities. They are all equipped and maintained from the same source, and two churches will not be organized where but one is needed. But the illustration does

not hold good in regard to the different denominations. In order to make the analogy good, the regiments in the army should all have a different uniform and equipment. They must all be made expressly for them, no matter what it costs the government; they must not come from the general storehouse. And no other officer must have any control over them whatever, and they must have the privilege once in a while of pointing their guns to the other regiments and giving them a round or two just to present their supremacy.

The evils of sectarianism in mission work is strongly set forth by Rev. William Clark, in a letter to the *Church Union*, dated January 9, 1886, headed "Sectarianism and Mission Work in Italy," and the same spirit is manifested in foreign fields at the present day. Mr. Clark says:

"In 1868 I wrote from Milan after a five-years' residence in Italy as follows: In the present Italian churches there is nothing to prevent the co-operation of all who desire to evangelize this country, whether Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians, but can aid these churches and co-operate together in the evangelization of Italy. But for any one of these bodies to bring in its own ecclesiastical systems, there would be not only a failure, but confusion, rivalry, and sectarian quarrels, and the work of reform would lose its power, and be dishonored in the eyes of the Italian people. Having rejected the papacy and all its forms, and possessed with a desire and determination to go back to the New Testament Church, they wish now to be left free to know the truth of

God. They resolved to shun dogmas of whatever church. They wish to know the gospel, and be called an evangelical Italian church, and not Waldensian or Wesleyan, or Presbyterian, or Baptist, or Congregational. They wish no denominational name.

“This I wrote eighteen years ago, and at that time there was no more promising mission field in the world than Italy. In 1871 was the meeting of the Third Assembly of the Free Italian Church; I had at that time sustained a theological school at Milan for some years, with twenty students and five professors, and during three years two hundred Italian young men had applied for admission to the school. In this assembly in 1871 twenty-two evangelists and preachers were connected with the Milan school. In an article in your paper recently I said: In Italy we have the striking example how, by multiplication of Christian sects, Christian enterprise is enfeebled and paralyzed. It is here clearly seen how sectarianism is earthly and contemptible as papacy, and criminal in principle. The Milan School was closed by sectarian pressure. Mission committees of different denominations in America and England sent their agents into Italy to force upon the Italians their denominational names. The wishes and protestations of the Italian churches were disregarded, and poor as were the members in the first years of the Italian reform, in order to receive aid from Protestants of other lands they were required to subscribe to denominational creeds, and in some instances they were even threatened with the withdrawal of their evangelists

and teachers, unless they adopted the tenets of the sect that supported them. Thus was strife and rivalry in these sects that came to prey upon the poor Italian churches, and no effort was spared on the part of each sect to fish out as many as possible from the originally prosperous and large Italian churches. Thus the churches, abandoned by every mission agency and church in the world with one exception, because it would not be sectarian, has been preyed upon by sects, and kept lean and poor for the last fifteen years; for what says the last report of its last assembly in 1885? 'Only three more churches than in 1871.' Had sectarianism never visited Italy, or had mission committees of different denominations in America and England been willing to drop the sect, and aid the Evangelical Italian Church, I most firmly believe that to-day there would be at least two hundred flourishing and self-sustaining churches. Such are the fruits of sectarianism in mission work in Italy.

"WILLIAM CLARK."

"FLORENCE, Italy, Jan. 9, 1886.

"I ought to make an exception in regard to the Presbyterians of Scotland, who, like the Good Samaritan to the one who fell among thieves, they came to the Italian church that had fallen among foreign sects of strange denominations, like the man among thieves. They came to this church, and have shown it great kindness, binding up many of its wounds, and keeping it from actual starvation. But this church, though small and thus severely tried in these past years, has still the wonder-

ful vigor and spiritual life of former years, and is doing a most noble work.

“WILLIAM CLARK.”

We might fill volumes on the evil working of this sectarian spirit, but no doubt the reader can fill up the details from his own memory. So strong is this spirit implanted in the churches by educational bias that no earthly arm can break it. To do this we think was the object of the prediction of the angel in regard to cleansing the sanctuary. There is vital energy enough in the Christian religion, and the noble band of Christian soldiers, to reform this evil. And we think the hand of God will soon be revealed in this work as it has not been in the past. We have many valiant soldiers of the cross who are ready to fall into line when they hear the Divine command.

We think the Christian world is ready for this movement. D'Aubigne, that eminent Christian writer, and his associates made an effort for Christian union half a century ago, and when they became disheartened and were obliged to give up the work, said, “the time has not yet come, but it will come in this century.”

We may be living in that favored time he so ardently looked for. Great advance toward unity has been made in the last decade. Christians begin to see the necessity for union to meet the evil tendency in the world toward skepticism and infidelity.

CHAPTER VII.

DATE OF THE CLEANSING.

WE have considered in the last chapter what is meant by cleansing the sanctuary, which we considered to be eradicating sectarianism from the Christian Church, which is the greatest hinderance to its progress in the world. We must now consider the date of this cleansing. Half a century has passed since the termination of the prophetic period, and sectarianism is still rife in the churches to day. The movement for union has been slow, as is the beginning of all great reforms.

Sectarianism is so interwoven into the very warp and woof of the Christian churches and institutions that the reform must necessarily be slow in its infancy. But in looking back fifty years we can see much to encourage us. While there has not been much practical work done as yet, by the agitation of the subject we have become convinced of its necessity and of its practicability. Many things in regard to the work have been established, and there is no longer needed any more theory.

Let us look back fifty years and see if we can ascertain the time when this cleansing process began. Prophecy does not always take notice of events when they are in a full state of development.

The prophecy of Daniel that "From the going forth of the commandment to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah shall be seven weeks," and threescore and two weeks does not reach the time when Christ was working his miracles, and the joyful crowd was crying "Hosannah to the son of David," but to the time when he was little known in the world at the beginning of His ministry.

Then we may look for this cleansing to be noticed, not when it has great power in the world, but when it first appeared to manifest itself notably in public in an organic capacity. We have no faith in anything short of an organic union. There is one fundamental principle of Christian union without which it cannot exist. That is the doctrinal basis of union in essentials only, and liberty in non-essentials.

The different branches of the Presbyterian church might unite and still be Presbyterians. The Methodist divisions might unite and still be Methodists, but no general union can be effected in this way. When did this union movement first appear in the world in an organic form? Doubtless the idea of union has existed in the minds of Christians for centuries, but it was never developed as an organized force in the world.

In 1837 a young man by the name of George Williams appeared in Bridgewater, England. He was converted at the age of sixteen, and was so full of the Holy Ghost, and so devoted to the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom, that God chose him as His messenger to accomplish a great work for Christian union in fulfilment of this long line of prophecy. He soon became anxious that all his

associates should partake of the joy and happiness which he possessed. His labors were signally blessed in the conversion of his associates.

In 1841 this young man went to London and engaged as a clerk in a dry goods establishment. He found eight young men, among whom there was but little religious feeling, the majority of them being indifferent to religion, and some very profligate. Here a great zeal for Christ characterized his efforts. He found among his fellow clerks a few professed followers of Christ. They gathered for prayer and Bible study in his bedroom. As a result of his faithful work among his comrades many were converted, and soon the bedroom became too small for the meetings.

One day, Mr. Williams, in company with Edward Beaumont, a convert in the little bedroom, on their way to Surry Chapel, suggested the organization of the Young Men's Christian Association, making it non-sectarian, to include Christians from all evangelical denominations, a union on the essential doctrines of the gospel. Here we think we have the first notable effort for organic union in Christian work on the true basis of Christian union. When was the organization made which laid the foundation for a union of all believers in Christ?

It was in 1844, just the year that the angel had foretold to Daniel two thousand and three hundred years before, that in that year the sanctuary should be cleansed.

This society has been blessed of God as perhaps no other society has. This association now owns property in this country to the amount of four

millions or more. It has perhaps done more for union among the different denominations than all other agencies combined. It has demonstrated beyond refutation the practicability of union in Christian work.

Mr. D. L. Moody says: "The Young Men's Christian Association has under God done more in developing me for Christian work than any other agency." God has watched over this society and kept it free from sectarian bias. Similar associations were formed in the sixteenth century in Germany, France, England, and elsewhere, but they did not long survive, as they lacked the grand principle of union which characterized the Young Men's Christian Association.

The next step in this reform in England was the organization of the Evangelical Alliance. This movement began about the time of D'Aubigne's campaign for union in 1843 and 1844, but the society was not organized until 1846. This society has the same doctrinal basis as the Young Men's Christian Association. In 1844 D'Aubigne made his great speech on Christian union before a meeting of Swiss ministers at St. Gall; 1844 was a great epoch of awakening on the subject of Christian union. In order to show the great earnestness of this godly man let us make an extract from his preface to the American Tract Society's edition of the "History of the Reformation." He says, "The sixteenth century was an epoch of a great separation, the nineteenth must be one of a great union. If external unity is not a unity of organization what then is it? It cannot be denied, Christian union has become a great

fact at the present day. In some countries this cause is more advanced than in others, but everywhere it exists, it advances, and will still advance. For myself I have not ceased for several years to appear everywhere the advocate of Christian union in conjunction with my friend and colleague, Dr. Gaw, Sr. I so announced myself in the numerous meetings which were held in Genoa in 1838 and 1839, and also in 1845 this thought was one on which I chiefly dwelt in addresses delivered by me in England and in Scotland. In Germany, at Stuttgart, October, 1845, after suggesting a motion on this subject in the general meeting of the Gustavus Adolphus Society, where there were delegates from all Protestant countries in Europe, I believed it my duty to insist on the true nature of union.

“I look then with lively interest upon every institution which can contribute to the realization of this thought, and in this respect I must express my entire sympathy with the American Tract Society, which includes Christians of various denominations—Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and others strictly united in the truth necessary to salvation, and differing only on minor points. If Christians should unite with other Christians in the same city, the cities would soon unite with other cities in the same country, and the countries with other countries in the same world which God has honored and rescued from rebellion and death by the sacrifice on the cross, and soon the earth would be filled with the knowledge of the Lord. For a long time the necessity of an evangelical union has been felt. There have been at-

tempts at ecclesiastical union, as at Charenton in 1631, at Thorn in 1608, at Cessel in 1661, in Persia during the eighteenth century, and in 1817. All these attempts indicate a need, but without ability to supply it, because the time appointed by God was not yet come."

From these quotations we can see the zeal of D'Aubigne for Christian union, but the time, as he thought, had not yet come. But we think the signs of the times indicate that the time has now come for the great epoch of union. Public sentiment is turning in favor of union.

If we turn to America we can see that this date was the epoch of a great revival of the union work. There is in Missouri a faithful band of Christians engaged in earnest union work, called "Churches of Christ in Christian Union." They have three or four hundred churches in that State, as well as many in adjoining States, and in Ohio. They began their work in 1843, but held their first State council in 1844. So we see that this date was the beginning of the union work in an organized capacity, both in England and in America.

The American Sunday-School Union has done much to advance the union work, and there is a great future of usefulness before that society. When the union churches multiply, and establish union Sabbath-schools, they will need no other publishing house for their Sunday-school literature. This society was organized a few years before the Young Men's Christian Association, but it had not developed much power until this time. We might also men-

tion the American Tract Society, which is a powerful factor in the union work.

Among the agencies which have produced the change in sentiment in favor of union we must not forget the paper called the *Church Union*, which has been published a little less than twenty years. Although it is only theoretical it has done much to awaken Christians to a sense of the evils of a divided church. The conservative course which that paper took was perhaps the best at that time, as the people were not ready for anything more radical. The necessity for organic union is deeply felt in the Christian church, and they are looking to find the path that leads to it.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE UNITED CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

IN the beginning of every great reform there is in the minds of some people a disposition to fly to the opposite extremes, when they become aroused to the magnitude of the evil to be reformed. In the temperance reform in its infancy some became so enthusiastic in the cause that they even chopped down their apple trees because intoxicating cider was made from apples. Thus some people have become so tired of so much priestcraft and ecclesiastical machinery, that they have come out against all church organizations and creeds, either human or divine. But this is not wise or scriptural, for the Apostles had organized churches. Matthew gives us the course to be pursued in church discipline. This could not have been done without an organized church.

How often the Apostles speak of having our names written in heaven. This figure was probably suggested by Christians having their names written in the church books. So they were exhorted to have their names also written in the Lamb's book of life.

A writer in the *Church Union* says: "Three-fourths of the Christians believe that men can no

more organize a new church than they can create a new world." If he means by this broad assertion that no one can organize a Christian church on a new foundation, then we agree with him, for Paul says: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid in Jesus Christ." But the organization of a church is man's work. God never organized a church, and if man had not done it there would be no churches to-day.

Christian union is not a new work; it has been a long time forming, and we believe the time has come for its development. Germany was ready for the Reformation when Luther and his co-laborers began their work. The Reformation doubtless would have gone on if Luther had never been born. When there is a necessity for some work God can always find the right men and means to do it. The Reformation had been progressing for centuries, and men had been burned at the stake for its defense. The labors of Wycliffe in England, of Huss in Bohemia, of Savonarola in Italy, Wissel and a host of others in Germany, had brought the public mind to a point where only a practical beginning was needed to precipitate a great religious crisis. They only needed a leader, and God found that leader in the brave and dauntless Luther.

D'Aubigne says of this work: "All was ready. God, who prepares his work through ages, accomplishes it by the weakest instrumentality, when His time has come. To effect great results by the smallest means—such is the law of God. This law, which prevails everywhere in nature, is found also in history. God selected the reformers of His church

from the same class whence He had the Apostles. He chose them from among that lower rank, which although not the meanest, does not reach the level of the middle class. Everything was thus intended to manifest to the world that the work was not of man but of God."

Any one who has read the Christian literature of the day cannot fail to see the great change that has taken place in favor of Christian union in the last half-century, and more especially in the last twenty years. D'Aubigne, after his failure to accomplish Christian union in 1844, said, "the time has not yet come," and doubtless this was in a measure true. The time has not now come, and will not probably come within a hundred years, in the way that he had marked out, and for which he so ardently labored. He supposed the work could be done by holding conventions, and persuading all the denominations to give up their distinctive creeds and come together on a union basis. That plan has often been tried since his day, and as often failed. From the congress of churches held some years ago, and the enthusiasm manifested in the union work, one would think the good time was near at hand; but resolutions and good talk was all that was accomplished. This was the youthful dream of the writer, but he has long since abandoned that plan as impractical and hopeless.

Some people are zealous, and ready to do some great work for Christianity and the world, but they want it to be a great thing. The servant said to Naaman, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing wouldst thou not have done

it?" Some men having the real welfare of mankind at heart are not willing to wait for what they call the slow process, but they must do some great thing to decide the object at once. John Brown had high and worthy motives for the liberation of the slaves. His zeal and intentions were good, but his judgment was wrong, and his impetuosity resulted in a sad failure.

This is not the way reforms generally begin. Christianity was nurtured on the shores of Galilee by a few illiterate fishermen. The fishermen's craft that rocked on the waves of Galilee was the cradle of Christianity. The Young Men's Christian Association did not come in with the sound of a trumpet. It began in a small bedroom in London. The originator was not a renowned man with a D.D. or LL.D. to his name, but only a clerk in a dry goods store. The American Board of Foreign Missions was planned under the lee of a friendly haystack, whither the little band of students were driven for shelter from a storm. The Christian Endeavor was organized in the parlor of Dr. Clark, in Williston Mission Church, and it has met with phenomenal success. Not because the organization was perfect, but because it met a long-felt want in the church for something to enlist the young people in Christian work. It has been organized about fifteen years, and it is now planted in almost every country on the globe, and contains more than a million members. The constitution of the society is sectarian. Its members are amenable to the church to which it belongs. It was organized by a Congregational minister, and for a while it was considered

a Congregational institution. Other churches soon organized similar societies, but we believe the constitution is the same. A Congregational minister in Iowa organized an Endeavor Society in a small town, the first that had been in the place. A young lady of this church said to the pastor, "I have got the consent of some Methodist ladies to come into our society;" but he said, "No, that will not do, it is a Congregational society." A more liberal spirit now prevails, but the society is amenable for its acts to the church to which it belongs. They hold yearly interdenominational meetings, but this does not make them union societies. The denominational Sunday-schools hold union meetings, but this does not make them union Sunday-schools. The exhortations given to them in these yearly meetings is "be loyal to your church." This sectarian bondage deprives them of doing the good they might do if they were independent, and not handicapped by their churches. Speakers at these meetings feel this deeply, and speak of it as far as they dare to do so. They have a good time at these meetings and get a great deal of enthusiasm for their work, but nothing is done of a permanent character. They cannot plan for general Christian work and send out evangelists as the Young Men's Christian Associations do, because they are amenable to the different churches to which they belong.

The Christian Endeavor Society is not undenominational. It cannot be. The cardinal principle of every society is loyalty to its own church. There is no co-operation, no common work, no bond of

organic union, and there can be none according to the constitution.

If they were not thus handicapped a wide field of usefulness would open up before them, similar to that done by the Young Men's Christian Association, and they could be much more efficient in many fields of labor than that society, because they have the help of the young women, which is no small factor in this day.

We hope the time is not far off when the Christian Endeavor, the Epworth League, and Young People's Societies will unite and be called Young People's Christian Union, organized on the same doctrinal basis as the Young Men's Christian Association and Women's Christian Temperance Union. Then instead of endeavoring to do Christian work they would do it, and instead of being in league with Epworth they would be in league with Christ.

The prejudice of the Jews against the Gentiles could not have been overcome by concerted action in the synagogues. But God pointed out the way as He is now pointing out the way to Christian union to overcome sectarian prejudice. But some are saying as Peter did, "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common or unclean." Peter was directed to a single family who were ready to embrace Christianity. And that small beginning, which was at first accepted with many fears and doubts, was the means in the hand of God in bringing the Gentiles into the fold.

There are many who would be willing to work for union if they could do it without in any way injuring their own denomination, but this they hold

paramount to every other consideration. Quite recently a society was organized in New York called "Brotherhood of Christian Union." But one special provision was that it should in no way interfere with the established churches. Such societies may be multiplied until the churches are organized to death, and no permanent good will be accomplished. Nothing can cleanse the churches but that which will root out the sectarian spirit from the churches. We do not advocate church union, for a Christian church might unite with one that denied the foundation of the Christian religion. That would be church union, but it would not by any means be Christian union.

In a small town in the West there were a number of families of different denominations. They wanted meetings, but none of them were strong enough to support a church of their own denomination, so they concluded to unite and have a union church. They went to work and put up a comfortable house of worship, and employed ministers of any denomination they could obtain. It was agreed that they should come in as Baptists, and Presbyterians, and Methodists, and Congregationalists. There was a kind of mechanical union. They all worshipped in the same house, heard the same sermons, and sat in the same seats. All went on smoothly for a while and they thought they had solved the problem of Christian union. But after a time jealousies arose. The Presbyterians thought they had too much Methodist preaching, and the others thought they did not get their share, and things went from bad to

worse until it culminated in the burning of the church.

The less we have of such unions the better. This case has been often told by ministers to prove the impracticability of Christian union. But the truth is there never was a union. It was like putting oil and water in the same cup, and when you shake it there is a kind of mechanical union, but they will soon separate because there is no chemical union. But when you add alkali it makes a chemical union, and a new substance is formed which we call soap, which contains none of the three former ingredients. This church was like the oil and water. But when you add organic union it is like the alkali to the oil and water, and the Methodists, and the Baptists, and the Presbyterians, and the Congregationalists are all dissolved into a brotherhood of Christian fellowship.

We have many local union churches which have as much prosperity and harmony as the other churches, which is sufficient to demonstrate the practicability of union churches. It is now out of the time of experiment. These local churches have filled a local necessity. But they are isolated and lose the power of Christian fellowship with other churches, which is a great loss. There is a greater bond in Christian fellowship than we are wont to acknowledge. There is a sacred fire that unites our hearts in one. And these churches cannot counsel with other churches and plan for effective Christian activity in the world. They have a feeling of loneliness; as one has expressed it, "they belong to nobody, and nobody belongs to them." What we want is a brotherhood of these union churches, so

they can have Christian fellowship, and advise with each other, but not to legislate for them.

We have often asked the question, What is Christian union? and have received various answers. One says it is an undenominational church, but there cannot be such a church, for every church must have a name by which it is identified, and to distinguish it from other Christian Churches, this is its name or denomination. Another will tell you it is a church that has no creed but the Bible. That sounds well enough, but it does not work well in practice. For the Universalists and the Unitarians claim to take the Bible for their creed. The Bible plainly teaches the essential doctrines necessary to salvation. Then let the union church take these plainly revealed doctrines and formulate them into a creed, such as all evangelical churches hold, and nothing more. The most important of these, and the one that really comprehends the whole, is the recognition of Christ as the divine Saviour of the world.

The definition we give of a union church is this: A church founded on Christ, and having no lines to divide the Christian family. A church that accepts all who give evidence of being Christians. A sectarian church is one that has rules to bar from fellowship a part of the Christian family who follow not us. Every church that has this dividing line is sectarian, for sectarian means division or cutting off.

Several attempts have been made for organic union, but they have made but partial success. All of them, so far as our knowledge goes, have some hobby to carry. There is quite a large and earnest body

of Christians in the Eastern States called National Christian Union, but their hobby is faith healing, and they have laws which make them sectarian. There is a faithful band of Christians largely represented in the Western States, and they are making commendable progress, but they have rules that keep many Christians from the fold because they cannot subscribe to their gag laws.

We claim the United Christian Church to be rudimental of the Universal Church in three particulars. First its name. We must all be called by one name. "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow." This name is not sectarian. And it designates the nature of the church. It is a Christian Church. It also includes the idea of unity for which Christ prayed that his people might possess. We think no fault can be found with the name. Christians have long been praying for the time when there would be but one united Christian Church. Then let us take this for our name until the millennium comes, when all Christians will be one; then we can drop the adjective and call it the Christian Church.

Some say it will make another denomination. We concede this, for it has another name to distinguish it from all other Christian Churches, but it can never be a sectarian denomination while it holds the basic principles of the constitution, for it has no dividing lines that separate a part of the Christian family.

The names of most of the churches do not indicate that they are Christian Churches. Christ named His church. He says on this rock (that is Peter's confession, "thou art Christ, the son of the living

God") I will build My church, and we have no right to give it any other name. Church names often only indicate the government of the church. Thus Episcopal church implies that it is governed by an episcopate. The Presbyterian by the presbytery, the Congregational by the congregation. The Lutheran church implies that they are followers of Luther. The Wesleyan that they are followers of Wesley. Baptist implies that the central idea of the church is baptism. The church called the New Lights has a legal right to the name of the Christian Church, because they first obtained a charter under that name. But we do not think any one of the many Christian churches has a moral right to that name, and they will never generally be called by that name outside of their own denomination. If one church is called the Christian church it implies, if language means anything, that the other churches are not Christian churches. If one is seen with a parcel on the streets, and he is asked, "Where did you buy that?" and he says, "I bought it at the brick store"—if this man is thought to be an intelligent and well-posted man, and one who knows how to use the English language, it will justly be inferred that there is but one brick store in the place. It would have been proper for the church in Apostolic times to be called the Christian church to distinguish it from the Jewish church.

In the name United Christian church we concede that there are other Christian churches, but they are sectarian Christian churches. But this is the only united Christian church in the world, and we look for the day when all the Christian churches

will be one ; then we can drop the term united and call it the Christian church in distinction from the churches that are not Christian.

Second, the doctrinal basis. That is a unity on essentials only. The creed or articles of faith should contain the essential doctrines of the gospel plainly revealed in the Bible, and nothing more. These doctrines are embodied in the creeds of all the evangelical churches. They are few in number, and plainly stated in the word of God. They form the life of the Christian faith, and govern all his actions in religion. There are many other doctrines in the Bible which are important, and should not be neglected, for "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." But such doctrines as are not clearly revealed should be relegated to private interpretation. On these questions perhaps there always will be a difference of opinion, and every one should be "fully persuaded in his own mind." Some are inclined to sneer at the term non-essential. They say there are no non-essentials in the Bible. If they use the term as synonymous with of no "importance," then we agree. But if our salvation depends on the way we interpret the teachings of the Bible on the mode of baptism, then we can never be assured in regard to our salvation until we stand trembling at the golden gate, bowed down with dark forebodings of the future, and the Judge bids us walk in. A belief in doctrines not clearly revealed in the Bible, such as the mode of baptism, cannot be essential to our salvation, as they do not affect Christian conduct. But

he who rejects Christ and his teaching gives plain testimony that he is not a Christian, for we cannot call a man a Christian who denies the foundation of the Christian religion, and such should not be recognized as a member of a Christian church, for a church is a company of believers. There cannot be a church without a creed, for a church that does not believe anything is not a church, but an agnostic society. The creed should be a summary of the vital doctrines formulated for convenience to test the faith of the candidate for membership. We could not rehearse the whole Bible to him for his acceptance, therefore the need of a summary of the essentials to ascertain whether he is a Christian or an infidel. No one should be rejected who gives satisfactory evidence of being a Christian. We are fallible and prone to make mistakes, but we should use our best judgment enlightened by divine wisdom. These dividing lines in the churches are stumbling blocks over which many fall into perdition.

There is nothing new in this doctrinal basis. It was announced many years since, by whom is probably not known, in this motto, "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty, and in all things, charity." But we reject the latter clause "in all things charity," for the subject under consideration is *doctrine*. The Christian is under no obligation to exercise charity or love for all kinds of doctrines. There is no possible basis on which Christians can unite than on essentials only. The third rudiment of the universal church is the government of the church. The independent government is the only practical form for the union church. The Congregationalist and

Baptist churches have tested this form of government for two hundred years and more, and they have maintained as high a standard of purity, order and harmony as any other church. Every church should make its own laws and regulate the forms of worship. The government need not necessarily be congregational. They may have ruling elders, similar to the home government of the Presbyterian church, from whose decision there is no appeal. If a majority think they can be more edified by Episcopal ritual, let them adopt it. If they prefer the form of the Methodist church, let them adopt that. The mode of baptism should be optional with the candidate.

The Bible gives us no form of church government. Mosheim says: "Neither Christ himself nor his holy Apostles has commanded anything clearly or expressly concerning the external forms of the church, or the precise method necessary by which it should be governed. The church in early times was entirely independent, none of them being subject to foreign jurisdiction. But each church was governed by its own rules and its own laws, for though the churches founded by the Apostles have this particular deference shown them that they were consulted in difficult cases, yet they had no judicial authority over them, nor the least right to enact laws for them."

We are often confronted with this objection: it would not do for all Christians to belong to one church, for they would in time use their concentrated power to corrupt the church, as the Catholic church did when they had all power in their hands,

and the result was disastrous to the purity of the church. If the union church had concentrated ecclesiastical power this objection would have some force. But in an independent government this objection is fully met. All the churches combined would have no more ecclesiastical power than a single church. These three articles we think contain the elements of the United Christian Church, which will be the universal church. When Christ comes He will not then find a divided church. We cannot reconcile the scene of a divided church with the glory and triumph which will accompany that event. His prayer that His people might all be one will be answered. Should He come to-day what a scene our churches would present in their divided condition and hostile attitude to each other! What a mockery to the Kingdom of the Prince of Peace, with each church vying with each other as to who should give Him the most royal welcome! Some would not even allow open doors because they do not unite with them at the Lord's table in communion. Would He not give them a look of sorrow as He did to Peter after his denial.

We do not think the end of the world is so near as some imagine, for there is a great work to be done before the church will be prepared to appear as a bride adorned for her husband. It may take a long time to cleanse the churches of this demon of division—perhaps a hundred years. The arm of man is too weak, but when the “hour of God's judgment has come” this Babel of sectarian apostacy will fall, and they will stand afar off and cry, “Alas! alas! that great city, Babylon, that mighty city, for

in one hour is thy judgment come." Half a century has passed since Christian union has taken an organic form, and how little has been done for unity.

Any body of Christians organized into a church in harmony with the following constitution will be in full fellowship with the United Christian Church :

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

*Articles of Incorporation Adopted at Rogers,
Arkansas, May 1, 1897.*

Art. 1. This church shall be called the United Christian Church.

Art. 2. The creed of this church shall contain the essential doctrines of the Gospel plainly revealed in the Bible, and nothing more.

Art. 3. The government of this church shall be independent. Each church shall make its own laws, but no law shall be made to exclude from membership any one who gives satisfactory evidence of being a Christian.

Art. 4. Credible evidence of a change of heart, and having accepted Christ as the divine Redeemer according to the terms of the gospel, shall be the only test of membership.

Art. 5. This church shall hold a district council semi-annually, and a State council yearly, and a national council every leap year, and a world's council every decade, beginning with 1900.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

IN presenting a few thoughts on this subject we do not do it because we think it of such paramount importance, but because there is probably no other theme which is productive of so much discord in the churches. We shall not present it in a controversial spirit, but our design will be to prove that we have no precept in the Bible on the mode of baptism, therefore the mode is non-essential. But a Christian is at liberty to practice any mode his conscience dictates.

Baptism is a symbol of regeneration by the Holy Spirit. This rite stamps the work of regeneration as by hieroglyphics. It is not left to the changing form of words, but this beautiful symbol will always remain the same in all ages of the world. It symbolizes that mysterious work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, dead in sin, and brought to life in the spiritual resurrection.

One thing may as well be considered as settled for all time, that is that Christians can never come to an agreement on the scriptural mode of baptism. If we wait for this we may wait till the last trumpet shall sound before we unite. This subject has been in controversy for more than two hundred years, and

we are no nearer an agreement than when we began. We have eminent Christian scholars on both sides, and we cannot expect any new light on the subject that is authoritative. We have no precept on the mode of baptism in the Bible. All we have are inferences drawn from sacred history. Even if it could be shown that the early Christians and that Christ himself was immersed in baptism, which cannot be done, then the subject would not be settled, for our climate and mode of living is so different, and style of clothing is not the same as in oriental countries. What was proper in a warm climate, where the people wore but little clothing, might not be proper in a cold climate where much clothing is needed for protection from the cold, and where the water is frozen a great part of the year.

There is one thing we should remember which some are prone to forget, that it is not the custom of the early Christians we are to follow, but the inspired precepts of the Bible, and in absence of any precept we are not bound by the mode or custom of the early Christians. The gospel is intended to be universal—no country is excluded from its blessings. If immersion in baptism had been commanded in many cold regions of the frozen North, in Greenland and in many other cold regions, baptism would be well-nigh impossible, for they do not even wash their hands for the want of water. The Christian religion does not require impossibilities of any one. The cold climate, we suppose, is the reason why the Baptists do not have missions in Greenland. Then if there were no other churches the poor Eskimos would have to live and die without the gospel.

The Lord's supper is just as sacred an ordinance as that of baptism, and it stands in the same relation to us—both stand on the command of Christ. We are quite sure that we know the manner in which that was taken. The narrative tells us that it was taken in an upper room, and we also know the custom of the Apostles and those living in that age was to partake of their meals in a reclining posture. But we do not know of any church that thinks it necessary to follow this custom of the Apostles in taking the Lord's supper. If it is the custom of the Apostles we are to follow, let us have another church formed to carry out this custom; it might be called the reclining or upper-room church.

We know that baptism was administered in the name of the trinity, and that water was used as an emblem of cleansing; further than this we have only inferences drawn from sacred history. Then why should this subject cause so much discord, and rend the churches in fragments.

If a minister believes that immersion is the scriptural mode of baptism, it is his privilege to teach it, but if he fails to convince the candidate for baptism that he is right, then his responsibility in the matter ends. He has no right on this account to refuse him church fellowship, and he cannot do so without incurring the judgment Christ pronounced against those who offend one of these little ones. This discrimination is a sin against God, and in this day of gospel light and knowledge "the hour of God's judgment has come," and such offenders will incur a weight of guilt that will be as a millstone about their necks.

We have in the case of Christ's injunction in regard to feet-washing a plain illustration that it is not the custom of Christ and his Apostles that we are to follow. We have here a plain injunction of Christ himself, "Ye ought also to wash one another's feet." This is a direct injunction and not a strained inference as in the mode of baptism, but a direct injunction of Christ himself. But there are not many churches that follow this custom, although it stands on the same basis as that of the Lord's supper and that of baptism. In regard to the supper he said, "This do in remembrance of me." And in regard to baptism he said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." And in feet-washing it is said, "After that he poured water into a bason and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet." But in the latter case custom and climate has changed the moral obligation literally to obey this injunction. No one can say the same is not true in regard to the mode of baptism, even if we admit that immersion was practiced or that Christ himself was baptized in this manner.

But the spirit of the injunction is just as binding on us as it was on the Apostles, that is we should be willing to condescend to perform any act of kindness or service to our fellow man that is needed, even to washing their feet if it would be received as an act of kindness. But our climate and our mode of dress is so different that it cannot be obligatory

on us. Here is a clear case where climate and custom entirely changes the moral obligation. In that warm climate, where the people wore no shoes, and a friend came in tired and dusty from his long walk, it was a great relief to have his feet washed with cool water, and it was received as an act of hospitality and kindness. But if a friend now comes to us and we proceed to take off his shoes and stockings and wash his feet it would be received as an offense rather than an act of kindness. Custom and climate has changed the obligation, and may it not be thus in the mode of baptism?

An ancient document in Greek has lately been found dating back to the early part of the second century, called "the teaching of the Apostles." Its genuineness has never been questioned. We do not mean by this that it comes to us with the same authority as the Bible, but that it was written at the time given, and by those who professed to know the teaching of the Apostles, and who may have listened to Paul or Peter. It says this was their teaching, "If thou hast not running water baptize in other water, and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if thou hast neither pour water upon the head thrice in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit." This shows that as early as the times of the Apostles, and perhaps with their sanction, water was poured upon the head in baptism.

But some say we have direct teaching because "baptizo" always means to immerse. But this assertion is not true. Lexicographers give a variety of definitions to "baptizo." Parkhurst gives this definition: "Baptizo from Bapto, to dip, to immerse, to plunge,

to wash one's self, to be washed with, or in water in token of cleansing." Donegan gives it "to dip into, to sink, to immerse, to wash, to lave." "Baptizo" is a generic, and not a specific word, just as the word to kill means to take life, but it may be done in various ways. A man may be killed by drowning, or by poison, or by shooting, and in many other ways.

"Baptizo" does not always mean to immerse, either in classic or in New Testament Greek. We could make many quotations from classic Greek where it cannot mean to immerse. In Achilles Tatius we read, "What crime have we committed so great in a few days to be baptized by such a multitude of evils." "But he baptized by danger sinks." And in Canon Narrat, "Having baptized Alexander by much wine." And again in Plutarch, "Baptizing out of great wine jars." And in Heimerius, "For there fighting he baptized all Asia." And in Jewish Antiquities, "And baptized by drunkenness into insensibility and sleep." In all these quotations and many more that might be made the word "baptizo" is used and cannot possibly mean to immerse.

And in the New Testament the same is true. John says, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me—he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." In I Cor. x. 1, 2, we read, "That all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea." Pharoah and his host were immersed in the sea, but the Israelites were not. We do not know what this means, but the strongest probability is that it rained on them from the cloud. And in I Cor. xv. 29,

“Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead.” In these passages “baptizo” could not mean to immerse.

The reason why “baptizo” was not translated was because there is no single word in the English language that has the same meaning. Immerse would not do, for a man may be immersed without being baptized. Some years since the Baptists made a translation of the New Testament and rendered “baptizo” by the word immerse. But they soon got ashamed of it and we believe it is now out of print. Their own scholars said it could not stand, for while they believed that immersion was the true mode of baptism, immerse does not give the meaning of the word. No argument can be based on the Greek preposition *επι*, for that word sometimes means on, upon, near by. And even if into is the best translation it proves nothing for immersion, for in that warm climate, where the people wore no shoes, it would be natural to go into the water and dip it up.

In the Catacombs of Rome, to which the early Christians were driven by Nero in the first century, there is a drawing made by those Christians on the rock walls, in which the baptism of Jesus is represented. Jesus stands in the water and John with his hand puts the water on his head. Did not these Christians in the first century, while John, the writer of Revelation, was still living, know how the Lord was baptized better than we who live in the nineteenth century?

The text so often quoted to prove immersion in Rom. vi. 4, “We are buried with him by baptism

into death," we think has no reference to immersion whatever, because there is no analogy between the two. It simply means like as death and burial mark the change from an earthly to an eternal life, so baptism is a symbol of a change from a life of sin to a life of holiness—from the old to the new life. Christ was not buried as we bury our dead. His body was laid on a rocky shelf in a stone cave. Was that like immersion? Not at all. There is no analogy between this and putting a man under the water.

The position taken by some on baptism in regard to Christian union is unreasonable. They say inasmuch as we do not recognize sprinkling or pouring as valid baptism, but all the other churches accept immersion as valid baptism, for when they receive members into the church who have been baptized by immersion they do not baptize them again, therefore we have here a common ground, and let us stand on baptism by immersion as a common ground in Christian union. About two-thirds of the Christian world do not believe that immersion is the scriptural mode of baptism, although they accept it as valid baptism because they do not regard the mode essential. Shall this large majority come over to the minority and baptize by a mode they do not think to be scriptural. There can be no other basis of union than liberty of conscience in the mode of baptism.

Besides the engravings in the Catacombs of Rome, made in the first century, we have others made at different periods. In the dome of the baptistry at Ravenna, built A.D. 454, is the representation of John

baptizing Jesus in Jordan. John is standing on a rock holding in his hand a shell from which he is pouring water on the head of Jesus. We have also a representation of the baptism of Constantine, A.D. 324. The emperor is in a bath and Eusebius is administering the rite of baptism by pouring.

These engravings prove that the early Christians did baptize by pouring, for their pictures must represent the customs of the times. It is folly to say the artists made fancy pictures which they had never seen or heard of. And as we have no record of any discussion on the mode of baptism, one of two things must be true. Either they never did baptize by immersion, or that they did not think the mode of sufficient importance to merit discussion. We are forced to adopt one of these conclusions. But some may say they may have had controversy on the subject, but no record was made of it. We have the record of controversies on almost every phase of Bible doctrine, but nothing on the mode of baptism.

The subject of infant baptism was warmly discussed. Justin Martyr, who was the earliest writer after the Apostles, held a discussion with Typho, a Jew, on infant baptism. Augustine held a short controversy with Pelagius. In his reply Pelagius says, "Men slander me as if I denied the sacrament of baptism to infants. I never heard of any, not even the most impious heretic, who denied baptism to infants." Orogen, who lived eighty-five years after the death of John, says, "the custom of baptizing infants was handed down from the Apostles." These quotations are sufficient to show that similar subjects

were discussed, but nothing on the mode of baptism. If it had been we should have had some record of it. Then why should the churches be torn asunder on this non-essential.

The moving cause of all this controversy is not that people are so anxious that others should believe as they do on the mode of baptism, but the foundation lies in church rivalry. We prove this assertion in this way. Many churches whose standard is sprinkling or pouring will baptize by immersion if the candidate desires it. The Methodist church has many in its fold who have been baptized by immersion. Do the other members turn a cold shoulder to them, and regard them as black sheep in the fold? Not at all. After they have been received as members the mode by which they were baptized is forgotten, and there is no jarring or discord on this subject. But if a Baptist can make the people believe that immersion is the only valid mode of baptism he will likely get them in his church. This is the sum and substance of the whole controversy. The union church will have no trouble on this ground.

CHAPTER X.

THE APOCALYPSE.

REVELATION opens to our view scenes of grandeur and glory beyond the conception of the human mind. No other book gives the tired and afflicted Christian in his dreary pilgrimage through life such vivid outlines of his happy home in heaven. The pictures though symbolical carry the mind through scenes of grandeur and beauty that language cannot portray. It takes us up from this world of sorrow, and lifts us by its sublime imagery into the new Jerusalem.

Revelation is something shown or opened up to the mind. It is not, as some seem to think, a mystery which none but God can comprehend. Moses says in Deut. xxix. 29: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things which are revealed belong unto us and our children forever." John says: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein." The object of the book, as stated by John, is to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. Therefore we have nothing to do in interpreting this book with events which transpired previous to the writing of Revelation.

John, who had been banished by the tyrant

Domitian to the isle of Patmos, had found a quiet place on the island to meditate and pray on the Lord's day. What a fit time for Christ to reveal these glorious things which should take place in the world on the day of the week on which he arose from the dead, and finished the great work of the world's redemption.

Patmos is a rocky island in the *Ægean* Sea. The traveler to-day is shown a grotto about halfway up the mountain where John is supposed to have witnessed these grand revelations. The object of the *Apocalypse* is prediction or revealing things to come. These appeared to John in pictures and symbols, and represented to us in words. It gives us an outline of the history of God's people from his time to the end of the world. The conflicts, and rise and fall of nations, is given only as landmarks or guides for us to follow in tracing the history of the Christian church, and to point out its most notable epochs. It is not a history of the world at large, but that of the church. If we keep this in mind we can better understand the language.

Many of these symbols relating to the history of nations have been satisfactorily interpreted. The fulfilment has been clearly pointed out by reference to the history of the world, especially the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," by Gibbon. Albert Barnes, in the preface to his notes on *Revelation*, says, "Beginning with this aim, I found myself soon insensibly inquiring whether, in the events which succeed the time when the book was written, there was not historical facts of which the emblems employed would be natural and proper symbols, on

the supposition that it was the divine intention in disclosing these visions to refer to them, and whether, therefore, these might not be a natural and proper application of these symbols to these events. In this way I examined the language used in reference to the first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth seals, with no anticipation or plan in examining one of the seals, and in this way also I examined ultimately the whole book; proceeding step by step in ascertaining the meaning of each word and symbol as it occurred, but with no theoretic anticipation as to what was to follow. To my own surprise I found, chiefly in Gibbons' 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' a series of events recorded, such as seemed to me to correspond to a great extent with the series of events recorded, such as appeared to correspond to a great extent with the series of symbols found in the Apocalypse. The symbols were such as might be supposed would be used on the supposition that they were intended to refer to these events, and the language of Mr. Gibbon was often such as he would have used on the supposition that he had designed to prepare a commentary on the symbols employed by John. It was such in fact, that, if it had been found in a Christian writer, purposely writing a commentary on the book of Revelation, it would have been regarded by infidels as a designed attempt to force history to utter language that should conform to a predetermined theory in expounding a book full of symbols.

“So remarkable have these coincidences appeared to me in exposition that it has almost seemed as if

he had designed to write a commentary on some portion of this book, and I have found it difficult to doubt that that distinguished historian was raised up by an overruling Providence to make a record of these events which would ever afterward be regarded as an important and unprejudiced statement of the evidences of the fulfilment of prophecy. The historian of the 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' had no belief in a divine origin of Christianity, but he brought to the performance of his work learning and talent such as few Christians possess. He is always patient in his investigations, learned and scholarly in his references, comprehensive in his groupings, and sufficiently minute in his details, unbiased in his statements of facts, and usually cool and candid in his estimates of the causes of the events which he records; and excepting his philosophical speculations, and his sneers at everything sacred, he has publicly written the most candid and important history of the times that the world possesses, and even after all that has been written since his time, his work contains the best ecclesiastical history that is to be found. Whatever use of it can be made in explaining and confirming the prophecies will be regarded by the world as impartial and fair, for it was a result which he least of all contemplated that he would ever be regarded as an expounder of the prophecies of the Bible, or be referred to as vindicating its truths."

We regard Mr. Barnes' conclusions in the main as correct and scholarly, but some events have transpired since his day that had he known them would doubtless have changed his expositions of some of

the symbols. The Revelation was written in a time of persecution from the world, and internal troubles was soon to overtake the church. Heresies, and divisions, and corrupt doctrines and practices might be expected. A time of great darkness would come over the church, so great that some might be in doubt as to whether the feeble church would not become entirely extinct. The faithful Christian was to be sorely tried in coming ages. The Revelation was designed to meet this emergency by furnishing assurance that the gospel would finally triumph, that "the Gates of Hell should not prevail against it." Everything in the book gives assurance of the universal reign of righteousness, that the redeemed shall be delivered from the persecutors and enter into the gates into the city.

By the symbols and figures of this book we cannot overlook the similarity of Revelation with that of Daniel's prophecy. The same language is often used, and the same events represented by Daniel's symbols are repeated and more minutely unfolded, so that we must look upon Revelation as being a sequel to the prophecy of Daniel, and to unfold some events soon to take place. Daniel traced with minuteness the history of God's people down to the establishment of the Christian church, and outlined some events which reach down to our times.

John takes up the history from the infancy of the church, and carries it to the end of human probation. The little horn of Daniel, which most Protestant commentators make to represent papacy, which was the persecuting power which was to "wear out the saints of the Most High." Daniel

does not give the time of the appearance of this power nor the time when it would close, but he gives the time of its continuance, which was a times and a half. Like Daniel, John does not give the date of the rise and fall of this power, but he gives us the duration five times; this shows the great importance he attached to this subject. He gives the time in the same figure as Daniel: time, times and a half, but generally in months, weeks, and days, but all the different symbols represent twelve hundred and sixty years. This time times and a half must be the lifetime of this persecuting power. When this period ends this little horn will never again have the power to persecute the Christian church, although it may exist to the end of time.

We cannot begin the date of this persecuting power when the Church of Rome was organized, for it was probably established by Paul or Peter. Its apostasy from the true faith was gradual; many centuries elapsed before it became a persecuting power to "wear out the saints of the Most High." This period did not arrive until the pope had secular power. This date may be fixed at the time when the Emperor Justinian conferred the title and power of universal bishop on the pope in 533. This edict, however, could not be enforced until the Ostrogoths, the last of the three powers, were plucked up, which event occurred in 538. Then the helpless saints were truly under the power of the pope. This gave him the power to punish the heretics. This date then may be placed as the beginning of the twelve hundred and sixty years so often noticed in prophecy. This period then would terminate in 1798, when BIRTHIERA,

a French general under Napoleon, at the time of the French Revolution, subjugated Rome and took the pope prisoner, and for a time papacy was abolished, the pope dying in exile. When Bonaparte came into power he deprived Pope Pius of his power. This subjugation was completed by Victor Emmanuel in his revolution for a united Italy. Then the civil power of the pope was taken away, as Victor Emmanuel said, "never more to be restored."

Many of the symbols in the Apocalypse refer to this power and its final overthrow. From this we can see that Revelation is a sequel to the prophecy of Daniel. We may, therefore, expect to find in this book a notice of the long period predicted in Daniel of twenty-three hundred days. Having given us a history of the infant church, and traced its progress through its days of darkness and persecution, and opened to our view the glory of its final triumph, and having given us many particulars in regard to Daniel's prophecy, we cannot think he would overlook the longest prophetic period on record, and one that the angel thought to be of so much importance that he called Daniel's attention to it the second time.

We think the vision in the tenth chapter of the angel with the little book open, having one foot on the land and the other on the sea, and cried as when a lion roareth that time should be no longer, was significantly fulfilled in the Millerite excitement, and their sore disappointment.

Many commentators, among them Albert Barnes, have attempted an explanation of the little open book in the angel's hand, but have failed to give a satisfactory explanation. Mr. Barnes thinks it rep-

resents the Bible in the convent which Luther found and opened up to the world, and he makes this vision to represent the Reformation in the time of Luther. But the burden of the angel's message that time shall be no longer forbids such an application. And that book, chained in the convent, was a large book, perhaps the largest made, so it could not have been called a little book.

We think this little book contained that part of Daniel's prophecy yet to be fulfilled, which might well be called a little book. It was the opening of Daniel's prophecy of the twenty-three hundred days, and the disappointment of that people who looked for the end of the world in 1844.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LORD'S DAY, OR CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

JOHN tells us these visions appeared to him in the isle of Patmos while he was in the spirit on the Lord's day. This was undoubtedly on the first day of the week, or the Christian Sabbath. The word here translated Lord's occurs only in this place and in I Cor. xi. 20, where it is applied to the Lord's supper. It properly means pertaining to the Lord. It is evident that this refers to the same day, which was distinguished from all other days of the week, and which would be well known to his brethren by the use of the term Lord's day. If the Jewish Sabbath was intended he would have called it the Sabbath, for this was the term always used to designate that day.

The term was used generally by the early Christians to denote the first day of the week. It occurs twice in the Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians A.D. 101, who calls the Lord's day the "queen and prince of all days." As John died A.D. 98, this Epistle was written only three years after his death. It is evident that it was customary in John's time to call the first day of the week the Lord's day. Theodoret, in speaking of the Ebionites, says, "They keep the Sabbath according to the Jewish law, and sanctify the Lord's day in like manner as we do."

The title was doubtless given in honor of the day when the Lord arose from the dead. The day was thus early distinguished so that the mention of it by John would be easily understood. Therefore this day comes to us with Apostolic sanction.

The church historian Eusebius, who had all Christian literature on the subject at his command, is quoted by Stewart as saying in his commentary on Ps. 91: "The word (that is Christ) by the new covenant translated and transferred the feast of the Sabbath to the morning light, and gave as the symbol of the true rest, namely, the Lord's day the first day of the light in which the Saviour obtained the victory over death, and this day we assemble after an interval of six days and celebrate the holy spiritual Sabbath, even all nations redeemed throughout the world, and do the things according to the spiritual laws which are decreed for the priests to do on the Sabbath. All things whatsoever that is done was their duty to do on the Sabbath; these we have transferred to the Lord's day as more appropriate to it, because it has precedence, and is first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath. It is traditionally handed down to us that we should meet together on this day, and it is ordered that we should do these things announced in this Psalm."

Theophilus says, about A.D. 161: "Both custom and reason challenges us that we should honor the Lord's day," and he goes on to tell us how to keep it. Dionysius, writing to the Romans A.D. 170, says: "We celebrate the Lord's day," and he tells us how it was observed by Christians.

Augustus says: "The Lord's day was observed by

Christians, and began to be celebrated as the Christian festival." Atheniensus says: "The Lord has transferred the feast of the Sabbath to the Lord's day." Eusebius says: "The resurrection or the Lord's day is observed at this time throughout all the world, for by the new covenant was transferred the feast of the Sabbath." Justin Martyr lived from A.D. 110 to A.D. 165. He had every opportunity of knowing what was the teaching of the Apostles in regard to the Sabbath. Therefore when he states "that the custom was to observe the first day of the week, and that Jesus was crucified on the day before Saturn, and on the day after Saturn, which is the day of the son having appeared to his Apostles, he taught them these things which we have submitted to you." Certainly his testimony cannot be set aside, for it was too early for the churches to have lost the Apostolic teaching concerning these facts.

Therefore we may conclude that the custom of keeping the first day of the week as the Sabbath was received from the Apostles. From these quotations, and many more which might be made from the early fathers of the church, some of them co-laborers with John, we must conclude that the first day of the week was regarded as the Christian Sabbath, and called, as John did in the isle of Patmos, the Lord's day. We shall dwell a little on this subject, as it will help us better to understand some things we wish to notice further on.

The term Sabbath day means rest day, and nothing more. It does not point out any specific day of the week. The first mention made of a rest day is found in Gen. ii. 23: "God blessed the seventh

day and sanctified it. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and rested on the seventh day from all His works which He had made."

What day was this that God sanctified and blessed? It could not have been the weekly Sabbath, unless we regard the days of creation to be days of twenty-four hours each. But geology tells us that the world is much older than the date of the creation of man as given by Moses. So that the creative days before the earth was fitted up for man must have been long cycles of time; then the rest day must correspond to this period of time called days. Then we may now be living in God's rest day that he sanctified and blessed. Then the day that God blessed has no connection with the weekly Sabbath, only that it was a rest after six days of labor. We do not know that it was then given to man as a rest day; if it had been we should have had some account of it in the Patriarchal age. But in all their wanderings we have no mention made of the Sabbath until the children of Israel had come from the land of Egypt. We have nothing either by precept or example requiring the observance of the Sabbath from Adam to Moses. This is presumptive evidence that it was not observed.

The number seven is mentioned by Noah and others, but there is no evidence that it was observed as a day of rest. The number seven has been conspicuous throughout the world. Many have been the efforts to explain it. Cicero calls it "*omnium fere nodus*," the bond of all things. It probably had its origin in the six days of creation and the seventh

of rest. The first mention of the Sabbath as a rest day for man was after the Israelites had been delivered from Egyptian bondage, recorded in Ex. xvi. 23: "This is that which the Lord hath said. To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." Moses does not speak as if he had obtained it from tradition, but by a direct revelation from the Lord, as he had received the other forms and ordinances.

It was afterward given to them with the commandments in the decalogue in these words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." This is the whole of the commandment, the rest is only explanatory. There is nothing said about the day of the week on which this should be observed. It was only after six days of labor. There is nothing in the commandment requiring any certain day of the week, so that those who work on the seventh day and rest on the first and keep it as a holy Sabbath, which is our national rest day as well as that of nearly all the nations of the earth, do more literally keep this command than those who keep the seventh day.

This day was given to the Jews on the seventh day of the week. The Bible plainly shows that it was given to them exclusively as a nation, and not to the Gentiles. This is clearly seen from the language, "The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout *their generations.*" It was confined to their generations. That the Jewish Sabbath was abolished in Christ is plain from Col. ii. 16, 17: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a

holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." It is claimed that this does not include the weekly Sabbaths. But where there is no exception made in the Bible we have no right to make any. It is in the plural Sabbaths, and must include all the Sabbaths unless an exception is made. The Sabbath was not abolished, but the Jewish Sabbath was. The command "Remember the rest day, to keep it holy," will never be abolished as long as men live on earth.

The rest day was given to man to meet his physical and moral necessities. Christ teaches this doctrine when he says, "The Sabbath was made for man." Man needs one day in seven to rest his physical nature, and there is no less need of this day of rest to meet his moral and spiritual wants.

It is claimed by some that the Sabbath was instituted as a memorial of the finished work of creation. This idea is derived from the explanation of the fourth commandment. "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day." But we cannot look upon this as giving a reason for the institution; it is only referred to as an illustration that God observed this law and thereby set an illustrious example for us to follow. If we regard the word "for" as introducing a reason, why not make the same interpretation in regard to the word "for" in the command just preceeding, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain, 'for' the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain." Does any one think the "for" in

this commandment introduces a reason why we should not take the name of God in vain. No one can reasonably take this ground and hold that profanity is no sin, for it brings us into condemnation, and we will be held guilty. It only introduces the results of disobedience, and that is no reason why it should be obeyed. Then why should we insist that the "for" in the next command introduces a reason for the institution of the Sabbath. The reason for the Sabbath is that man needs it, and not as a monument of the finished work of creation. Christ does not say the Sabbath was made for a monument, but he tells us plainly that "the Sabbath was made for man." The monumental idea of the Sabbath is well-nigh abolished when we consider the days of creation as long periods of time—science teaches this. Moses says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." How long this was before it was fitted up for man he does not tell. If the Sabbath of twenty-four hours is memorial of the rest after creation, it is so only symbolically. Hence the idea that some entertain that in keeping the seventh day of the week they are keeping the identical day on which God rested has no foundation whatever.

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," is moral in its nature because founded in our moral and physical well being, and he who violates that law is guilty of breaking God's law. But the day of the week on which it is observed is not moral only so far as the hand of God directs. The fourth commandment is just as binding on us as it was on the Jews.

One thing is worthy of notice here: Christ repeated in sentiment or by direct quotation all the commandments but the fourth. Why was this omitted in His teaching? We cannot reasonably say that it was an accidental omission. But in all His precepts to His Apostles he never instructed them to keep the Jewish Sabbath, but He was often accused of violating it. We can see no reason why He did not instruct His disciples to observe the Jewish Sabbath, unless it was that it was so soon to pass away, and such teaching would confuse them when they found He showed a preference for the first day of the week by meeting with them on that day after His resurrection. As the seventh-day Sabbath was to be abolished at His death there was no reason why He should instruct them to keep the Jewish Sabbath.

In looking over the world's history we find that the first day of the week is observed as the Sabbath almost universally, and is sanctioned by law, therefore, in keeping this rest day, or Sabbath, we keep the fourth commandment more literally than do those who keep the seventh day. This cannot be denied, for it is the rest day, or Sabbath. There is nothing in the command about the day of the week that shall be kept as the Sabbath.

The only question in dispute is, Has the Lord's day divine sanction? God has honored the first day of the week more than any other day. On this day Israel was led out of Egypt, manna fell in the wilderness, law given to Moses from Mount Sinai, tabernacle set up, Aaron entered the office of high priest, Jesus arose from the dead, He appeared to

his disciples, the Holy Spirit poured out on the day of Pentecost. Why was not all this done on the seventh day? Never was such a stamp of divine honor placed on any other day of the week. It is no wonder Eusebius said it is more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath.

The world with a few exceptions observe the first day of the week as the rest day, or Sabbath. How came this change? So great a change must have had some good foundation. The Seventh-day Adventists claim that the pope made the change. On this supposition they have built many fine castles, and on this foundation they have built their interpretation of prophecy, and by it have pointed out the wreck and desolation of almost every institution in the world. All this would be very fine if it were only true. How do they prove this? We listened an hour to a lecture by the president of the general conference of Seventh-day Adventists with all the patience at our command, while he was endeavoring to prove by Catholic catechism that the pope made the change. Would they accept this as any authority on other subjects? We think not. Would they accept the doctrine that the pope was the vicegerent of Christ with power to forgive sins, because it is taught in Catholic catechism? Yet they quote it to prove that the pope changed the Sabbath. Suppose we should attempt to prove what is called the doctrine of original sin by quoting from the New England primer :

“ In Adam’s fall
We sinned all.”

or from Josh Billings :

“ In Adam's sin
We all pitched in.”

Our proof would be just as good, for our authority is just as good, but we do not believe we should get much credit for our logic. History tells us that Robert Fulton invented the application of steam for the propulsion of boats, but if some one could show that steam was used for this purpose long before Fulton's day, it would entirely invalidate his claim to the invention. So if we can show a single instance where the first day of the week was observed as the Sabbath centuries before there was a pope his claim cannot stand. This we have in the case of Constantine, a historic record that no one dares to dispute ; it is even found in our school histories.

Constantine was converted and joined the Greek church in the early part of the fourth century. We have no knowledge that he ever changed his church relations. In regard to his sincerity Mosheim, one of our best authorities on church history, says : “ The sincerity of Constantine's zeal for Christianity can scarcely be doubted, unless it be maintained that the outward actions of men are in no degree a proof of their inward sentiments.” We may find many things in his life that seem inconsistent with what we in this day think proper for a Christian to do. But much of his conduct may be attributed to his heathen surroundings.

About A.D. 325 he made a law for the observance of the first day of the week as a day of rest and worship. History tells us the reason why he made

this law was because so many of his subjects already observed the first day of the week as a day of rest, and called it the Lord's day. He required his armies to maintain devotional exercises on that day. And courts of judicature were not to be held on that day, and suits and trials were not to be held. And all shows and theatrical exhibitions, dancing and other amusements were strictly forbidden. Nothing can be clearer than that he desired to have the day observed as a Christian Sabbath in honor of the risen Saviour. He once called this day the venerable day of the sun, but we must remember that a large part of his empire were sun worshippers, and like a wily politician he called it the venerable day of the sun, thus appealing to their cherished custom of sun worship, as they could not appreciate the day as a Christian memorial. No pretended reasoning can change these historical facts.

There is abundant historic evidence that the day was changed long before the days of Constantine, who reigned more than a century before the Church of Rome ever had a pope. In the manuscript recently found, called "The teaching of the Apostles," it is stated that Sunday was observed as a day of rest one hundred and fifty years before Constantine. It can easily be proved by the writings of the early Greek and Latin fathers that the early Christians kept the first day of the week, and when the Church of Rome became corrupt Pope Leo retained the ancient custom, and made more rigid laws for the observance of the day than any one in authority before him.

All the most authentic writers on church history

agree that it was the usual custom of the Apostles and early Christians to keep the first day of the week instead of the Jewish Sabbath. Dr. Priestly says such notions as Christians should observe the Jewish Sabbath in the days of the Apostles was unheard of, except among the Ebionites, a class of Judaizing Christians, if Christians at all, who kept the Jewish Sabbath. With this exception all Christians up to the fourth century were unanimous in calling the first day of the week the Sabbath, or Lord's day."

CHAPTER XII.

THE ANGEL PROCLAMATION.

WE find in Revelation the history of the people of God represented in a series of visions. Most of the events symbolized in these series of visions follow each other in chronological order. Between the sounding of the sixth and seventh trumpets we have an important announcement made by an angel, recorded in the tenth chapter.

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book open, and he set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot on the earth. And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth; and when he had cried the seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, ‘Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.’ And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that

therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, 'Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.' And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, 'Give me the little book.' And he said unto me, 'Take it and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.' And I took the little book out of the angel's hands and ate it up, and it was in my mouth sweet as honey, and as soon as I had eaten it my belly was bitter."

John calls this another angel, for he had seen other angels similar to this one in former visions. He had seen the seven angels who blew the seven last trumpets, and he had heard six of them give their blast, and only one remained yet to sound.

This vision is thrown in between the sixth and seventh trumpets, indicating that another series of visions was to begin between these trumpets, and he records the first before giving the last trumpet. This message was in a measure explanatory of the seventh trumpet which was to announce the universal dominion of Christ's kingdom. And this message was to remove the greatest obstacle to the spread of the gospel, to prepare the world for the final blast of the seventh trumpet, which closes all terrestrial work.

He is called a mighty angel, symbolizing the great work he was to accomplish. His coming implies some divine intervention in the affairs of the church. From the description given of this angel some have concluded that he was none other than the Son of God. Some things in the description of this angel are significant of the mission he was to fulfil. A rainbow was upon his head. The rainbow is an emblem of peace. This implies that he was not a messenger of war, as some of the others were, but his message was one of peace, and the effect of his coming would be like the breaking out of the sun after an angry storm. It is a beautiful symbol that the storm which has been raging is over, and all the turmoil and agitation will cease. The beautiful reflection of the rays of light from the falling drops of water cannot be produced until the clouds have passed away, and the sun has come out.

It is a pledge that the war of the elements have ceased, and the sun will smile again on the earth. This rainbow on the head of the angel was to announce that peace and good will would result from his mission.

The angel had in his hand a little book *open*. This book being open implies that it was once closed or sealed. Where have we a record of a book being sealed? We find the record in Dan. xii. 4: "But now, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end." The language implies that at that time it should be opened. And as the closing of the book was mentioned in prophecy we may expect that when the events should take place the opening of the book would also be noticed

in prophecy. There is no other book spoken of in prophecy as being sealed to a certain time, except that in Daniel, and we have no account of its being opened except in Revelation, and as this book is a sequel to the book of Daniel the inference is almost irresistible that this is that little book which contained that part of the prophecy of Daniel which was not yet opened.

The Greek word "Biblaridion," translated "little book," is found nowhere in the New Testament except here, referring to the book in the angel's hand, showing that it is something distinct from an ordinary book on account of its diminutive size. The word "Biblion," denoting an ordinary book, is often used. This would entirely preclude Mr. Barnes' application of this book to the large volume chained in the convent which Luther read. He interprets this vision of the angel to apply to the Reformation in the time of Luther. But we find many difficulties in this interpretation. The only symbol in any way favorable to his theory is in making the little book to apply to the Bible which was opened to the world by Luther and his co-laborers, for we cannot doubt that the Bible was the foundation stone of the Reformation. It was the Bible that changed Luther from a haughty papist to a humble Christian. He says: "I was a monk, and a most mad papist, so intoxicated was I, and drenched in papal dogmas, that I could have been most ready to murder, or assist others in murdering, any person who should have uttered a syllable against the duty of obedience to the pope."

But we meet with many difficulties in applying

this little book open in the angel's hands to the Bible chained in the monastery at Erfurth. There were but few books in those days, and perhaps this Bible was among the largest books at that day. The word translated "little book" was chosen to denote something that was peculiar in the size or form of the book, to distinguish it from the ordinary books of that day. This of itself is sufficient proof against Mr. Barnes' application. But if it represents the book of Daniel, it is just such a description as we should expect would be made. We are not to suppose that all the prophecy of Daniel was in that little book, for much of the prophecy related to the four great empires which had already passed away. And that relating to rebuilding Jerusalem, the coming of the Messiah, and bringing in of the Gentiles had all been fulfilled, and it is not necessary then to suppose that anything was in the book but the prophecies which are still in the future, or that which was sealed up to the time of the end. This could well be called a little book.

But the strongest evidence against his theory is the language used when he was instructed by the angel to eat the book. We suppose by eating the book is meant that of receiving its contents and carrying out its import. The effect of receiving this book was to be first sweet then bitter. But in the Reformation the exact reverse was the result. When Luther and his co-laborers first made known the truth of the Bible it caused bitter persecution. So great was this persecution that all the faint-hearted recoiled from the assault of papal fury. Had it not been for the unflinching

moral courage of Luther he would have yielded to the fury of papal assault. No better illustration of moral heroism can be found than that of Luther at the Diet of Worms. Bitter persecution was felt by all the Reformers. Erasmus was perhaps Luther's equal in intellect, but he lacked courage to carry out his convictions. D'Aubigne says: "By his conversation and by his writings Erasmus had prepared the way for the Reformation more than any other man, but he trembled when he saw the approach of that very tempest which he had himself raised. He would have given anything to restore the calm of former times, even with all its dense vapor. But it was too late, the dike was broken. Ultimately Erasmus knew not what party to adopt. None pleased him and he feared all. 'It is dangerous to speak,' said he, 'and dangerous to be silent.'"

These troublesome times was the result of Luther's opening the Bible to the world. But when peace was restored, and the arm of civil law protected them, how sweet was the quiet repose! They could read God's word, which was like honey to their taste. Thus we see the order was reversed—it was first bitter then sweet.

And the manner in which this proclamation is made: the angel with one foot on the sea and the other on the earth, crying with a loud voice, indicates that his message was intended for all the world to hear, but the Reformation was confined to a few countries in the East; it was not intended for all the world.

And the burden of his message was that time should be no longer. Mr Barnes interprets this

“the time is not yet,” and thinks it was intended to check the Reformers in the belief that many held that the world was near its end. If this was the intent it was a total failure, for none of the Reformers interpreted the message of the angel as referring to them and their work, consequently the warning was entirely useless.

We are surprised that so many intelligent ministers should interpret this message of the angel, announcing that “time shall be no longer,” to mean the end of probation or time on earth. It is only the result of superficial investigation. Any one can easily see by examining it that it cannot possibly mean the end of the world, for the seventh angel had not yet sounded, and as all the other trumpets represented a long period of time we may suppose this would also continue a long time. Then to say before the seventh angel had sounded that time on earth was ended would be the worst confusion, and destroy all the chronological order of the book of Revelation.

Jamieson and Brown, in their commentary on Revelation, says on this point: “What Daniel was told to seal up till the time of the end, St. John, now that the time is at hand, is directed to reveal.”

We can also see the identity of these books by the proclamation of the angel that they both refer to time. The question was, “How long shall it be to the end of these wonders,” and the angel with the open book proclaims time shall be no longer. This is the strongest evidence that the little book in the hand of the angel represents the prophecy of Daniel. This book was to be sealed up to the time of the

end. If, then, this little book in the angel's hand represents the same book, then it follows that the time of the end began when the prophecy of Daniel was opened or explained by William Miller, a little before 1844.

That prophecy of Daniel was opened to the Jews a long time before its fulfilment concerning the coming of the Messiah. John the Baptist knew that the time had come, for he asks the question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another." There is no prophecy on record from which this computation could have been made but that in Daniel. But the long period of twenty-three hundred days was to be sealed up to the time of the end.

The Seventh-day Adventists interpret this to mean the end of the world, but there is no warrant for such an interpretation in the language. We have no reason to believe that Daniel had any solicitude about the end of the world. He says nothing about it in his prayer for light and knowledge, but the burden of his soul was not to know the time of the end of the world, but what awaited his people and all of God's Israel in the great future. The angel says to him, "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days, for yet the vision shall be for many days." This must have referred to the long period, for the prophecy referring to the advent of the Messiah was only a little over five hundred years. This compared to the long time of twenty-three hundred is very short, so that it could not have reasonably been called many days. And this is the

expression used in speaking of the vision to be sealed up.

The time of the end is used before this, and cannot mean the end of the world; so here we have an explanation of the term "time of the end." It says: "And at the 'time of the end' the King of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and many ships." This prophecy has long since been fulfilled, but it was to take place at the time of the end—that is, the end of this prophetic period. So this prophecy was sealed up to the end or near the end of this period. As Jamieson and Brown, in their commentary, say: "What Daniel was told to seal up till the time of the end, St. John, now that the time is at hand, is directed to reveal."

By being sealed up we understand that it was rendered obscure, so that it was not comprehended or understood by man until the appointed time. But at the proper time, when its fulfilment was near at hand, God raised up one to be his messenger to make known to the world that the time had come, or in the language of the angel, "time should be no longer."

We think this messenger was William Miller. Many men had lived before him far his superior in mental ability and skill in science and learning, and not inferior to him in piety and zeal for God's glory. But they did not solve the problem, because, as D'Aubigne said in regard to Christian union, God's time had not yet come. We have reason to believe that God puts it into the minds of men to fulfil his prophecy. In Revelation xvii. 17 we read: "God

hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

This angel proclamation, we think, was fulfilled in what was called the Millerite excitement in 1840 to 1844. This was a notable period, as all can testify who witnessed it or have read the history of those times. It compassed the whole earth in a short space of time. About seven hundred ministers of all denominations in England and about three hundred in America embraced the faith. They had made a great mistake in regard to the event to occur at that time, but this only helped to spread the proclamation of the angel, who spake with a lion voice, for all the world to hear, that the time had come for this long line of prophecy to end, and the prophecy was fulfilled. The universality of this movement is in harmony with the manner in which it was announced, with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth. This book was to be sealed up to the time of the end, not at the end. This interpretation was made about 1838, or perhaps a little earlier. Thus by such feeble instrumentality was the message carried to the remotest corners of the earth.

The cry that the angel made with a lion voice was that "time shall be no longer." This cannot mean, as some have interpreted it to mean, that time on earth should cease with this proclamation, or that the world should come to an end, for the next verse speaks of the days of the voice of the seventh angel, which was yet to take place. And the seventh trumpet may be many years in sounding. It must mean that the prophetic time should extend no

longer, or the long period of Daniel's prophecy would terminate. Henry, in his commentary on this passage, says: "There should be no longer delay in fulfilling the predictions of this book."

The instruction given to John in regard to the little book further sustains the views we have taken: "Go and take the little book, which is open in the hand of the angel, which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel and said, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it up, and it was in my mouth sweet as honey, and as soon as I had eaten it my belly was bitter."

John in the vision represents the Christian people who should be actors in the scene. How well was this fulfilled in the career of Mr. Miller and his associates! It would seem that no prophecy ever had a more significant fulfilment. Those who became convinced of the correctness of Mr. Miller's calculations were so inspired by the new discovery that many of them did not stop to consider whether he was also correct in the event to take place at the end of this time. This made their disappointment more bitter.

John says: "In my mouth it was sweet as honey." How fitly this symbolizes the triumphant course of the Millerites. How sweet to their minds was the ease with which they made converts to their theory. No one could find any arguments to overthrow their theory as to the time when the twenty-three hun-

dred days should expire. Some even ran away from the meetings for fear they would be converted to Mr. Miller's doctrine. It was one continuous scene of joy and rejoicing, like the triumphal march of a conquering army. It was a joyful time for them when the message announcing the end of the world made such commotion among all classes of society. Mr. Miller rose from obscurity to fame as if by magic. Invitations to lecture came to him from all parts of the country. He delivered about three thousand lectures on the end of the world and was greeted with enthusiasm wherever he went. Revivals of religion were witnessed in all the country, and it seemed to them that the millennium had come. They were ready to exclaim with the Apostles, "even the devils are subject to us." As the time drew near the interest increased. It was to them sweet as honey.

Then 1844 came, and many got their ascension robes ready, waiting to hear the sound of Gabriel's horn. But the year passed, and no signs of the end. Then the thought came to them with stinging force, We have made a mistake. And how bitter was the disappointment when the time passed and the end did not come! Mr. Miller did not long survive the disappointment. How significantly does this fulfil the angel's prediction, "It shall make thy belly bitter."

This angel message is thrown in between the sixth and seventh trumpets, and is explanatory of the message of the seventh trumpet, which is yet to sound. That trumpet announces the universal triumph of the gospel.

As this message comes in just before the last trumpet, it shows that it has a close relation to it. It reveals something which is to be an agent in bringing in the universal reign of the Redeemer, announced in the seventh trumpet. In the seventh verse of this chapter, before the message is finished, he says: "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound the mystery of God shall be finished." The seventh trumpet may continue to sound for a long time, but the mystery of God should be finished in the beginning of this trumpet.

In order more fully to comprehend the connection of this message with the seventh trumpet we will notice the meaning of the "mystery of God." In Eph. i. 9, 10, we read: "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself. That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him."

Here the mystery of his will was the power of the gospel to subdue all things, and to bring them in one in Christ. Here the unifying power of the gospel is clearly set forth. Also in the third chapter, 4, 5, 6: "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ. Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and prophets by the spirit. That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."

Here the mystery of Christ is said to be the power of the gospel to bring in the Gentiles to the one fold of God's people. From these and other passages we learn that the mystery of God was the revelation of Christ to the world as a saviour, and the conquering and unifying power of the gospel.

The first grand display of this mystery, or the power of the gospel to conquer prejudice, was when Cornelius and his house were converted. Knowing the great prejudice of the Jews against the Gentiles, God had prepared Peter for that event by the vision of clean and unclean beasts, and commanded him to slay and eat. But Peter refused, like Christians when urged to join the union gospel feast. "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." But when this was repeated three times he was convinced that the hand of God was in it, and how soon his prejudice was removed. This leads us to hope that when Christians see the hand of God in Christian union they will not call it unclean, but, like Peter, will yield and say to the union movement that is waiting at the gate, "I am ready."

When Peter related these events to the church at Jerusalem their astonishment knew no bounds. At first we imagine they replied to him as did a venerable Congregational minister in Iowa to the writer, after having presented to him the cause of Christian union. He remained silent for a moment, then lifted up his eyes and exclaimed, "*Preposterous!*" But after Peter had concluded his narrative they saw that God was in the work, and how soon they were satisfied, and exclaimed, "Now we know of a truth that God is no respecter of persons. Then hath

God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

The prejudice of the Christian churches to each other is perhaps just as strong as that existing between the Jews and Gentiles. That was conquered by the gospel which was called the mystery of God. Then the next great exhibition of this mystery of God will be to subdue the prejudice between the divided churches, and bring them all into one, so there shall be one fold and one shepherd. This last victory was to be just as the seventh angel was beginning to sound. Hence, the propriety of inserting this angel message just before the seventh trumpet, which is to make the announcement that it is done. And the voices in heaven said: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." The mystery of God was to be finished in the "days of the voice of the seventh angel, when He shall begin to sound, as He hath declared by His servants the prophets." That was declared by the prophet Daniel as the event to take place at the end of the twenty-three hundred days.

And now we may expect to see this prophecy fulfilled, and the world will witness the unifying power of the gospel which was predicted as the finishing work of the mystery of God. There is no greater mystery to the unbelieving world than to see prejudice and ill feeling of long standing among professed Christians turned to love and fellowship by the gospel of Christ. God is about to show to the sectarian churches the mystery of God, and the unifying power of the gospel in breaking the iron

bonds of sectarian prejudice. God is about to open the heavens and let down the grand exhibition of His design for the unity of His churches, as He did to Peter in the sheet of clean and unclean beasts.

The churches will at first cry out, "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common or unclean. I have never taken the Lord's supper with any other church. I do not believe in baptism by pouring or sprinkling, therefore the Presbyterians and Congregationalists are unclean. I don't believe in the doctrine of election and foreordination, therefore the Presbyterians are unclean. I don't like so much ecclesiastical machinery, therefore the Methodists are unclean. I don't like to have the church named after Wesley, therefore the Wesleyans are unclean. I don't like to have the church called after Luther, therefore the Lutherans are unclean. I don't believe in singing human productions in worship, therefore those churches who sing such songs are unclean."

But God is opening the heavens and letting down this mixed multitude to our view, and saying: "What God hath cleansed call not thou common or unclean." Come out from the barren pastures of sectarian bondage and feast your souls on the love and Christian fellowship of the United Christian Church.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SEVEN THUNDERS.

“AND when he had cried the seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.”

Perhaps no part of this prophecy has given more trouble to commentators than the seven thunders. It occupies a very conspicuous position in this vision. It must symbolize something of great importance to the Christian Church, or else it would not have been given. Probably the reason so little attention has been directed to it is the fact that in our common version the definite article *the* is omitted and rendered “when he had cried seven thunders uttered their voices.” As it reads seven thunders uttered their voices it was supposed that it meant the sound of seven thunders was heard, having some connection in some way with the seven trumpets.

But when we read it as it is in the original Greek, *the* seven thunders uttered their voices, it changes the meaning entirely. It either implies that it refers to something well understood or something that would be understood by the description when it was pointed out. Benzel supposes that it refers

to some Jewish opinion, but says that he has not been able to find a vestige of it in Lightfoot, or Schoettgen, or Mosheim.

The new version supplies this omission, and makes it read *the* seven thunders uttered their voices. Many commentators ignore the subject altogether, and say that as John was not permitted to tell us what they said, it is useless for us to try to find out anything about them.

The most unreasonable suggestion we have met with on the subject is in Dr. Wheaton's commentary. He says: "John heard seven thunders, and was about to translate them into human language—a thing he could not do—and the voice from heaven arrested him in trying to do an impossibility." This, we think, is making a burlesque of Revelation. If we concede John to be an intelligent man we must not interpret his actions to be that of an idiot.

There is nothing more clearly to be seen than that the seven thunders uttered an intelligent message that John understood, for he was about to record it. Mr. Barnes makes this remark: "The reason for the insertion of the article *the* must therefore be found in some pre-eminence which the seven thunders had, in some well-known fact, about them; in something which would at once suggest them when they were mentioned—as when we speak of the sun, the moon, the stars, though they might not have been distinctly referred to before; it may be used in a specific sense as denoting something that would be well understood by applying the number seven to it."

This message was so important that a voice from

heaven instructed John in relation to it. The Greek signifies they spake their own voices or message—that is, voices peculiar to themselves. Mede very justly remarks on the term “write them not:” “Keep silence, because it was not designed that the meaning should be known then, but should be disclosed at some future time.” It is evident that they were a group of people, for none other could speak in human language so that John could understand it, and there was something about them or in their message that caused John to name them the seven thunders.

In giving an explanation of this angel message we cannot reasonably omit to notice the seven thunders, and show some event of which they are symbols. Another thing we must keep in mind is that they are in close proximity to the angel proclamation, for John intended to record what they uttered before he had told what the message was. So that in looking for the thing symbolized we must find it soon after the disappointment in 1844.

Half a century has passed since that time, so that it is too late now to look for something in the future to represent it. As they uttered their voices immediately after the cry of the angel, it is made, as Mr. Barnes says, as a response to that message, and we think it is made as a protest to the angel message.

The task before us now is to find a company of people that will answer the description that appeared on the stage of action soon after the disappointment in 1844, who had some characteristic about them or in their teaching which caused John to name them the seven thunders. We cannot believe that this

vision would have been given to John unless it was intended for some good to the church; to believe otherwise would be trifling with revelation. If it can never be understood it is of no use to the Christians, or to anybody else. If, then, it was of no use to the early Christians, and has not been since, for we have no knowledge that it has ever been so applied in any way, either for the comfort or upbuilding of the Christian faith, we must look for something in the present or future to answer to the description made known in the vision.

During the excitement about the end of the world there was no distinctive church of the Advent faith, but many believers in the doctrine were found in all the churches. But when the time passed and the earth was not cleansed by the final conflagration, they dismissed the subject from their minds, thinking the whole thing was a delusion. Mr. Miller died about four years after this, never faltering in the belief that his chronology was correct, but where the mistake was he could not tell. He died in the triumph of the Christian faith.

Josiah Litch, a prominent writer in the Advent movement, said: "The chronology of the period of twenty-three hundred days has passed, according to the best light to be obtained on the subject, and where the discrepancy is I am unable to decide, but of this we shall know more in due time.

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

But there were some more persistent than the masses, who set to work to find a way out of the

difficulty. It was apparent that a mistake had been made in one or both of the following points: either the period of twenty-three hundred days did not end at the expected time, or the cleansing of the sanctuary was not to be the conflagration at the coming of Christ. While there was a possibility of their having been mistaken on both these points, a mistake on either one would be sufficient to account for the fact that the Lord did not then appear.

This class of believers in the Advent faith, on a careful survey of the whole subject, became impressed with the strength and harmony of the arguments on the chronology; felt satisfied that the mistake was made in the subject of the sanctuary and its cleansing. Then the difficulty stared them in face. What is meant by cleansing the sanctuary? What event is now taking place in the world that can in any way answer the prophecy? They could not see any signs of a moral cleansing going on, but the reverse seemed to be true. Wickedness abounded on every hand, perhaps enhanced by the lull after the moral cyclone.

In this dilemma they invented the theory that the cleansing mentioned by Daniel was not to be done in an earthly sanctuary, but one in heaven, of which the Jewish sanctuary, which was set up in the wilderness, was a model. And the cleansing of this sanctuary in heaven began in 1844, and is still going on, which they call the investigative judgment. Although they do not set any time or day in the year for the end of the world, they have been teaching for half a century that it will come in this generation. Those who made this theory did not think

it would take the Almighty so long to find out who were entitled to eternal life. They thought one generation would be ample time. The length of this delay is beginning to be a great strain on their structure, which must soon cause it to fall.

Having settled this point they rallied their forces together for aggressive movement. The Seventh-day doctrine became connected with the Advent movement in 1844, the very year predicted by this angel proclamation.

Mrs. Preston, a Seventh-day Baptist from the State of New York, moved to Washington, New Hampshire, where there was an Advent church. From them she received the doctrine of the soon coming of Christ, and in return instructed them in reference to the seventh-day Sabbath. This was in 1844. Nearly the whole church immediately began the observance of the seventh day. This was the first Seventh-day Advent organization. This doctrine began immediately to be agitated among the Adventists, and in a short time they all began to observe the seventh day.

Among the early advocates of the doctrine was Elder Joseph Bates, a sea captain. He published the first tract on the subject in 1845. Then came Elder James White and wife; he was a man of good intellect, and had charge of the Seventh-day Adventist publishing house. Then came Elder J. N. Andrews, who wrote much on the seventh day, and wore himself out in the work. They now number about thirty thousand, with three or four hundred ministers and one thousand or more churches. They show much wisdom in the large use they make of

5010
1919

the printing press. They have a publishing house in Battle Creek, Michigan, worth \$150,520; also one in Oakland, California, worth \$150,000. The number of pages printed at these two houses in one year is 43,866,473. They have colleges in Battle Creek, Michigan, in Massachusetts, in Nebraska, California, and in Washington. From these statistics we can see the great work they are carrying on.

The burden of their message from Australia to Sweden, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and in all their books and sermons, is the seventh-day Sabbath. If you take the number seven from their creed you take all the thunder out of their system. So they may be appropriately called the seven thunders. They began, as we have seen, in the year of the fulfilment of the angel proclamation, and there was no other sect that began at that time that could in any way answer the description of the seven thunders.

Some years since the writer became acquainted with a carpenter in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, who was strong in the Advent faith. He said, as he was at work on Sunday where many people were passing on the way to church: "I made all the noise I could." I asked him why he liked to disturb so many as they were going to church. He replied, "They are first-day worshippers, I will *thunder seven* in their ears with my saw and hammer." He was literally one of the seven thunders. Mr. Barnes says, "It must denote something that would be well understood by applying the number seven to it."

The number seven is the distinguishing feature of the sect, in which they antagonize the other churches.

The life and vitality of the church is controversy; when this dies out in many places the church dies out. Advent churches were organized in many places in Iowa, about twenty years since, with a large membership, but many of them are now very feeble, and some disbanded. Elder Bates, president of the general conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, said he thought they made a mistake in their first work in having too much of the *fighting element*.

We are not permitted to know just what the seven thunders uttered, but we may suppose it was the same protest we hear from the Adventists all over the land to-day. *Not the first but the seventh.*

From the position we have taken it is easy to understand the reason why John was not permitted to record what the seven thunders uttered. Had the protest against the Lord's day been recorded, what the result would have been to the infant church no one can tell. There was at that time a large and influential sect, called the Ebionites, who professed the Christian religion but taught many Jewish customs, among them the Jewish Sabbath of the seventh day, instead of the Lord's day; they were called Judaizing teachers, and they gave the early Christians much trouble. They would probably have received the message of the seven thunders as a voice from heaven protesting against the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, and the result might have been the destruction of the Christian Sabbath altogether. The church was then in its infancy, and could not so well withstand agitation as it can now. So here we have the key

to unlock the vexed question which has so long perplexed the world, why John was not permitted to write the message of the seven thunders.

We understand that John received two distinct commands in relation to the message of the seven thunders. One was not to write it, and the other to seal it up. We have already stated that to seal up meant to make it obscure, so as not to be easily understood. Thus the prophecy in regard to cleansing the sanctuary was sealed up by separating the vision from the date of the beginning. And we also showed good reasons, for the angel said, "It shall be for many days;" and it would put the Christian church to useless perplexity for all these long years as to the event that was to take place at the time of the end. And when the time came and passed and no sign of anything unusual, infidels would have said, Now where is your great prophecy about cleansing the sanctuary?—it is all a total failure. But as it was sealed up and made obscure no such charge could be made about the prophecy, and the failure was laid to the mistake of man. This throws some light on the subject before us.

John was commanded to seal up the message of the seven thunders. We do not know that the name seven thunders was given to John, but he named them from the message they uttered, just as he represented the scene in the sixth trumpet, "Out of their mouth issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone." This was as it appeared to him in the vision. So John gave the name of the seven thunders from something they uttered in their message. If he had not been instructed to seal it up, as well as not to

write it, he would most likely have named them the seventh-day thunders, but this would have been but little better than to record what they said, for every one knows that the seventh day is the Jewish Sabbath. The Ebionites would at once have concluded that their message was a protest against the change from the seventh-day Sabbath to the first day. But John sealed it up, as he was commanded to do, by calling them the seven thunders, which rendered it so obscure that it would not be understood until they actually appeared on the stage of action.

Many things in Revelation are obscure, and probably will not be known until they are fulfilled. The prophecy of the destruction of Babylon says: "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." We learn from this that Babylon, or the power represented by that symbol, will not be destroyed by moral means, and that its destruction will be terrible and complete, but how it will be done no one can tell; it may be by the destructive engines of war, or by a cyclone, or an earthquake. But those who live to witness it will doubtless see the fitness of the symbol.

Some may say, if it was not best for the church to know the message uttered by the seven thunders, why was it necessary for the vision to appear at all? In reply we would say: First it was necessary for John to know the mind of God on the subject of the Lord's day, and he doubtless made good use of this knowledge, for he is the only Apostle who speaks of

the Lord's day. He probably wrote the preface to the Revelation after he was released from banishment and at his home in Ephesus, when the vision of the seven thunders was fresh in his mind; so he tells us he saw the vision on the Lord's day. We find also that the co-laborers with John zealously contended for the Lord's day, as we have before noticed. This may have been the great agency in overcoming the Ebionites, for we hear but little about them after this time.

And secondly, it was important for us in this day to know the divine will in regard to the Christian Sabbath. Thus we see that this body of Seventh-day Adventists appeared just at the right time, and the character of their teaching corresponds well with the description given in the vision, and nothing else could fill the description at that time. And if Mede is correct in his remarks that John was not permitted to write the message because it was not intended that the world should then know it, but it would be known in the future, we may now find a solution of the mystery that has puzzled the world for eighteen hundred years. The message of the seven thunders comes in as a protest to the angel proclamation, just as the Seventh-day Adventists to-day antagonize the other churches by denouncing the Christian Sabbath and proclaiming the seventh-day Sabbath. There is no essential difference in their creed from the other churches except this, and when they come into the union fold, with all their push and zeal, they will be a valuable auxiliary to the Christian work, and hasten to accomplish the

first angel message to preach the gospel to all people.

There is no evidence that this vision of the seven thunders was understood in the past history of the church, for no commentator has pointed out the thing represented by this symbol worthy of notice. Then if it is not now fulfilled it will be at some future time, for it would be against the wisdom of God and economy of His works to seal up a book that was never to be opened. We cannot believe that so important a vision will never be understood.

Henry, in his commentary on this vision, says: "He was to conceal what the seven thunders uttered because the time had not yet come."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIRST ANGEL MESSAGE.

“AND I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made the heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”—Rev. xiv. 6, 7.

In order fully to understand the visions in Revelation we must bear in mind that the primary object of this book is to point out the principal epochs in the history of the Christian church. It was written “to show unto his servants the things that must shortly come to pass.” The political history showing the rise and fall of empires is given to guide us in following the chronology of events in history. Six of the seven trumpets represent six epochs in the political world that can clearly be pointed out. There is an essential agreement in regard to the chronology of these events by Keith, Barnes, and many others on the age of the world they represent, differing only in minor details. The first four trumpets represent chiefly the downfall of the Roman Empire. The events in these trumpets are

clearly pointed out in Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." It is the last thing that the infidel historian would have thought of, that his history should have been used to explain Revelation. Mr. Keith makes this remark: "None could elucidate more clearly, or expound them more fully, than the task has been performed by Gibbon. The chapters of the skeptical philosopher that treat directly of the matter need but a text to be prefixed and a few unholy words to be blotted out to form a series of expository lectures on the eighth and ninth chapters of Revelation. Little or nothing is left for the professed interpreter to do but to point to the pages of Gibbon."

The fourth trumpet leaves imperial Rome in its downfall without an emperor, a consul, or a senate; and in the fifth trumpet the scene is changed. The overthrow of the Roman Empire opened the door for the Mohammedan power. There is a uniform agreement among expositors that the fifth trumpet applies to the Saracens and Turks. Constantinople was besieged for the first time by Chosroes, King of Persia.

The sixth trumpet represents the Mohammedan supremacy, and brings the history down to the first half of the nineteenth century. We are now living in the interval between the sixth and seventh trumpets. The seventh trumpet is probably soon to begin to sound, for it is said the mystery of God shall be finished when the seventh trumpet shall begin to sound.

John stops recording the chronological history of the world to notice other scenes to take place before

the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and introduces the angel with the little book, which begins a new series of visions of important epochs in the church. This angel announced that the time had expired, or in his own language, "time shall be no longer." The time when the sanctuary should be cleansed is at hand.

Then the next angel, in the fourteenth chapter, gives us an insight into the means to be used in cleansing the sanctuary in the proclamation, "the hour of His judgment is come." The time had come when the hand of God was to be seen in the work, and this will be more marked each year as God's judgment is visited on the sectarian churches.

And this is the message of the first angel. We call this the first angel of the series of three mentioned in this chapter, although John did not number the first and second; but the third is mentioned, and a third implies a first and second. John calls it another angel, because he had seen similar angels before.

These three messages have a close relation to each other, giving different events in the history representing the different stages in the progress of this cleansing work. This series of three is as clearly marked as are the seven trumpets, and they follow each other in chronological order. A new epoch of events is introduced by this angel making the proclamation. The hour of his judgment is come.

The burden of these messages is the fall of Babylon and the events preceding it. The first angel announces the beginning, or initiatory measures, of this fall, or the agency to accomplish it, namely, the ever-

lasting gospel. This fall is the result of the proclamation of this gospel, and reveals to us the mystery of godliness. The second angel simply announces that the mission of the first angel had been fulfilled. The judgment of God had been visited on the sectarian churches, and had cut off the supernumerary churches, and cleared the way, and enlarged the funds for the spread of the gospel, and it had been carried as on the swift wings of an angel, and been preached to all classes and conditions of men on the earth without regard to rank, sect, color, or character, and the result is, Babylon has fallen.

An important question for us to decide is what period of the world's history does this angel represent. He has the everlasting gospel; it is no new gospel, but the same gospel that Paul, and John, and all the Apostles preached. It was called everlasting because its truths have always existed, and they are eternal truths which will forever remain unchanged, not being subject to fluctuations like human creeds. The redeemed will always dwell with rapture on the everlasting gospel.

This angel cannot represent the ordinary advancement of the gospel, for all these visions in Revelation point out some new development or change in the ordinary history of the Christian church. This angel then must represent some signal development of God's power in the affairs of the church, some new movement which is to carry the gospel with great rapidity to all the world.

It cannot refer to the first dispensation of the gospel by the Apostles, for the gospel had already been preached until it had reached many countries

before John saw the vision. About half a century had passed and witnessed a signal triumph of the gospel. John says the Revelation was to show to his servants the things which would shortly come to pass, not the things that are passed. He was charged by the angel to "write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter."

This message cannot apply to the early history of the church, for there was no noted event that took place in the early history of the church of which this could be a symbol. Papal supremacy soon obscured the light of Christianity, so that symbol could not have had his fulfilment prior to the Reformation. And it could not have been fulfilled in the Reformation, for that work was confined to a small portion of the country, it was not a world-wide movement. But this was to be universal to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. And this belongs to a series of angel messages that was to take place after the sounding of the sixth trumpet—just the period we occupy to-day.

A favorite theory with some is that this angel represents the missionary societies. Some ministers take this for a text from which to preach a missionary sermon. The description of the angel is very appropriate for such a discourse. "Having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth," but the vision has no application whatever, for the burden of his cry, and the real object of his appearing, is to proclaim the hour of his judgment is come, and no missionary can make this proclamation. Thus we must conclude that this angel

does not represent the missionary societies, for there is no analogy in the leading feature of his message. Then the missionary work is not a unit, as we have before shown; every church has its own society, which is separate and distinct in every feature from the society of other churches. This is one of the great obstacles which this angel is to remove, which will result in the fall of Babylon. But in this vision the gospel is represented as being carried by an angel flying in mid-air, where nothing could obstruct his course, and it would be carried with great speed. In order to symbolize the conflicting missionary societies there should have been a company of angels, and they should all carry swords to symbolize the warfare they were to wage with each other.

As this angel message is a continuation of the same theme as the angel with the little book, which was to announce the cleansing of the sanctuary, or the union of all the Christian churches, this angel must symbolize the movement for a united Christian church, which is to carry the glad news of salvation to every nation and people on the globe. That this angel fitly represents the union movement we shall endeavor to show. His flying in the air indicates that he will meet with no obstacle incident to travel on the land. No river or mountain can hinder his progress.

If the clog of sectarianism were removed from the churches the gospel could in a short time be carried to every people and nation in the world. Heathen lands are now ready to receive the gospel. Much patient labor has been done in preparing the way, by building churches, and translating the Bible

into the native languages. All this work has been done by self-denying missionaries, and if all the churches would act in harmony the world would be startled by the great revival of Christianity all over the world. There is a similarity in the manner in which the proclamation is made by this angel and the one with the little book. He cried as when a lion roareth, and this angel cried with a loud voice, indicating that it will be heard in every part of the earth.

The first sentence of the message is a rebuke to the sectarian churches. "Fear God and give glory to Him." The churches do not do this: they give glory to men, even in the name of their church. They are named in honor of some man who was instrumental in founding the church or creed, to whom they give the glory, and perpetuate his glory in the name or doctrines of the church. The angel's injunction is to give glory to God, rather than to your church founder, or creed, or human doctrine.

The name of the church is not of such small import as some seem to think. We must remember the significance of a church name and what it implies.

Christ said it was His church. Then if He has named it no man has a right to give any other name, and in doing so man is honored and God is dishonored. We cannot avoid the conclusion that there is much in a name. The names of men often decide their earthly destiny.

Moses did not enter the promised land because he used the pronoun I, instead of the Lord. It was a small thing, as some say about church names, but in this he gave glory to himself instead of God,

which shut him out of the promised land. And may not many on account of not giving glory to God in the name of their church be shut out of the kingdom. God pronounced His judgment because they gave glory to men, and not to Him who made the fountains of waters. It is not a small matter when Christ said, "On this rock I will build *my* church, and you say my church is Wesley, or Luther, or Methodist, or Presbyterian, or Baptist, or Episcopal, or Congregational.

The angel will say to such, with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come, and worship Him that made heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." The name of the church has a wonderful effect on the members.

I once attended a Baptist church where I was a stranger. After the sermon an elderly man came to me, and with his face beaming with smiles he grasped my hand, and looking in my face said to me: "Are you a Baptist?" I replied, "No, I am a Congregationalist." He dropped my hand as if he had hold of a snake. His countenance instantly changed and the smile vanished. The name Congregational had a similar effect on him to that of the drug on Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. These church names keep up church rivalry, and foster enmity, and hinder Christian fellowship. God's judgment is now resting on all such churches, and He is speaking to them by this Christian union movement, and saying worship God.

Some church members fear the church discipline more than they do God.

A lady in Crawfordsville, Iowa, read that beautiful hymn of Ray Palmer :

“ My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary.”

She was so much impressed with the sentiment of the hymn, and her heart was so filled with a Saviour's love that she wept because her church would not let her sing it in social worship. She longed to sing of redeeming love, but she could not find the name of Jesus in her church psalmody. She feared the church more than she did Him who made the earth and the fountains of waters.

The reason given is the hour of His judgment is come. This cannot mean the general judgment at the last day, for the gospel was to be preached to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. This great work is to be done by man, for God has committed this work to him. It is a great work, and must consume a long time in its accomplishment. It would not do for them to preach that the final judgment had come, and probation ended. The time is definite, an hour is but a small part of a day ; it is equivalent to saying, His judgment has come. Even the Seventh-day Adventists do not interpret it to mean the end of the world, although they are looking for that event at any time. But they call it the investigative judgment which has been going on for fifty years and is not yet finished.

We think it is God's judgment against some form of iniquity in the church that is hindering its progress. Similar language is often used in reference to certain forms of iniquity. In Romans i. 32, it

says: "Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death." And in I Tim. v. 24: "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment." And in Rom. ii. 2: "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." And in Rev. xviii. 10, saying: "Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come." This sin, we think, is sectarian apostacy, called by the second angel Babylon.

There may have been a time in the infancy of the church after the Reformation, as it was just emerging from the Romish church, when the divisions were much more justifiable than now, that there was need of reform. D'Aubigne says Luther held many doctrines that would shock the people of the present day. They saw the need of reform, and thought a division of the church the only means to accomplish it. They had less light than we have now; the printing press was limited in its influence. The apology for division in the church in its formative state does not now exist. The vital doctrines of the gospel are established and cannot be changed.

There is no truth more clearly taught in the Bible than that a man is judged according to the light he has, and that within his reach. When Paul saw the idolatry at Athens he said: "The time of this ignorance God winked at, but now commands all men everywhere to repent." Idolatry was no less a sin formerly than at that time, but on account of their want of knowledge God passed it over lightly. But now light had come and Christ was preached

to them, and they would be held responsible for their idolatry.

There was a time, half a century or more ago, when a man could use intoxicating liquor as a beverage, and still have a clear conscience, and stand with an unblemished character in the church. The great evil of intemperance was not unfolded, and as liquor stimulated the system and put them in a condition of more satisfaction with themselves and the world, they thought it was a good thing. The writer can well remember, when a boy about six years old, Rev. Ethan Osborn, his namesake, came to our house on a pastoral visit, and the bottle was empty, and one of us was sent to Fairton, New Jersey, to have it filled to treat the pastor. It was then common for a minister to take a dram before going into the pulpit; and they were good men, notwithstanding, and God blessed their labors. This habit did not affect their Christian character, for they had not the light we have on the evils of intemperance. We could not now indulge in such habits and maintain our Christian integrity.

We regard the sin of sectarianism in the same light. As so much light is being shed on the evils of divisions in the church, by ministers and the press, we believe the time will come, and that not far in the future, when a Christian cannot maintain his standing before God and man and give his influence to a sectarian church. We believe the hour of God's judgment is near, and will soon be manifested in those churches that turn a deaf ear to the union movement. Barrenness and dearth will prevail in

these churches, and revivals will cease. Like the worshipers of Baal, who in their distress cried, "Oh, Baal, hear us!" they will in their forsaken condition call on God, but no answer will come. There may be some indications of God's judgment even now. Last year in forty-three hundred and ninety-five churches there were no additions by conversions. Nearly all the great revivals occur when the different churches unite. Mr. D. L. Moody and all the most successful evangelists will not hold revival meetings unless the churches will unite. In a town where the writer lived all the four churches, one after another, held revival meetings—first the Methodists, then the Disciples and Congregationalists—but with little success, having no converts except from the families of the church. The Baptists, seeing the failure of all the other churches, sent to another State and procured the best man they had in the field. He labored hard with his great ability for three weeks, with but little success. If all the churches had been friendly enough to unite in the meetings there might have been a great work done, as there has been in other places. In times of ignorance God may have winked at the sin of sectarianism, but now that light has come he commands all men to repent of this sin, or His judgment will overtake them.

If this angel is not now flying in the heavens and crying the hour of his judgment is come, we think his voice will soon be heard. The signs of the times indicate it. The impression is on the minds of many Christians that some great display of God's mighty

power in reviving His cause in the world, and in bringing thousands into the fold, is near at hand. Many eminent Christian scholars and writers have expressed this sentiment, but no one has marked out the line of work, or the agency which God will bless for this end. General Booth, in his farewell address, said, "There is a prevalent feeling in the churches and among Bible students that something is going to happen, that God is going to come out of His place to work mighty things in answer to the longing desire for some great upheaval and great arising among the people. I wish He would come. I have prayed that He would rend the heavens and come down to help us." Mr. D. L. Moody has made similar remarks. We are told that God puts it into the minds of His people to do His will. Perhaps this is a divine impression.

If this great upheaval is near at hand it is an interesting question what agency will be used to promote it? We can see nothing in all that man can do in this work so likely to be blessed in producing it as Christian union.

There is nothing that stands so much in the way of the car of salvation as a divided church and rivalry among Christians. When this barrier is broken down it will let in such a flood of light from the great source of light and life that the people will stand in awe of the approaching splendor. Already we can see indications that this is maturing. God is wonderfully blessing union revival efforts. The people are turning to this as the only means to save the church from an ignominious defeat. The

result of this union would soon be felt all over the world, and skeptical men would feel the force of the influence and acknowledge that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, and the world would soon be converted to Christianity.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SECOND ANGEL MESSAGE.

REV. xiv. 8: "And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

This is the first time Babylon is mentioned in Revelation. It plainly indicates the theme of these three angel messages. This cannot refer to ancient Babylon, for that splendid city had many years since fallen, as the prophet foretold, never more to be rebuilt. It must therefore symbolize mystic Babylon. The name Babylon means confusion, because it was built near the site of the tower of Babel, where occurred the confusion of tongues. The word Babel, or Babylon, when used symbolically, means confusion.

Most commentators apply the second angel message to the fall of papacy. But there is a great inconsistency in this interpretation, for the message of the third angel is almost universally applied to the Romish beast. Can both of these visions apply to one and the same thing. It would be just as reasonable to make two or more of the seven trumpets refer to the same period and to the same events. If the second angel records the fall of the papal power,

why should the third angel give warning to the people against worshiping the beast, or receiving his mark in their foreheads. The warning comes too late if the papal power had already fallen. A similar angel is announced in the eighteenth chapter, who proclaims the fall of Babylon, which we think must refer to papacy. If then the second angel refers to the same Babylon why should the fourth angel have appeared and announced the same thing when Babylon had already fallen. And at the time of the proclamation of the fall of Babylon in the eighteenth chapter a voice was heard from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." If this is the same Babylon spoken of by the second angel it would be too late to call on the people to come out if Babylon had already fallen. After a house has fallen it is too late to call on the people to come out. And John seemed to anticipate the probability that the mistake might be made of confounding the two, he calls this, referring to popery, Babylon the *great*. This term is not applied by the second angel, and a marked distinction is kept up between them.

No physical calamity was pronounced by the first fall of Babylon. It was a moral calamity, because she had made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornications, or apostacy from her lawful spouse. But the second fall of Babylon was followed by the most direful calamity imaginable. Hence we conclude that this angel announces the downfall of Protestant Babylon, or sectarian apostacy.

The first angel proclaims the rapid spread of the gospel by the United Christian Church, and the next angel proclaims that the work is done and Babylon had fallen. Where in all the world can we find anything more fitly to represent Babylon or confusion than the rivalry among the different Christian sects? We could not select a better term to express it than confusion. It is more apparent, because it is done in the name of the Prince of Peace. In churches laboring for the same end, the subjugation of the world to the dominion of Christ, we should look for harmony and concert of action, both morally, financially, and organic—just as we see on the battlefield all officers and soldiers act in concert for the subjugation of the enemy. But it is not thus with the different Christian sects. They strive for supremacy, and seem sometimes to forget the enemy they are fighting.

Is it any wonder that it is so hard for the heathen to understand the nature of the Christian religion amidst so much confusion. The only wonder is that Christianity has made so much progress as it has in heathen lands. A Presbyterian minister in Oklahoma found one of his Indian converts dead drunk. After he was sober the minister tried to show him his sin in getting drunk. He said to him: "You ought to be ashamed to be seen drunk, as you profess to be a Christian." The Indian replied: "Uncas no Christian; he only a Presbyterian." He did not think one had to be a Christian to be a Presbyterian.

Most commentators consider the woman upon the scarlet-colored beast to represent the Church of

Rome. She is called the mother of harlots. If she is a mother she must have offspring. Who are her offspring if it is not the churches that came directly from the Church of Rome after the Reformation? They are the Lutherans, the Episcopalians, and the Presbyterians. The other churches are granddaughters of the harlot. And there are many forms and titles of the Episcopal and Methodist churches borrowed from the Roman Catholic Church, which show their relationship.

And even our translation of the New Testament has a remnant of saint worship in the prefix of saint to the Apostles. It would be just as proper and just as Scriptural to say Doctor Paul, or Doctor Luke, as Saint Paul and Saint Luke, for doctor means a teacher, and we all regard Paul and Luke as teachers of theology, but either is adding to God's word, and John says if any one add to these things God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And some churches show their tendency to saint worship by leaving out Christ and calling their church after some great man who is their patron saint. The patron saint of the Methodist Church is Wesley. Many of their places of worship are Wesleyan chapels, their institutions of learning Wesleyan universities, and the Epworth League is called after the place where their patron saint lived. The patron saint of the Presbyterian Church is John Calvin, that of the Lutheran Church is Luther, and that of the Church of the Disciples is Alexander Campbell.

The churches show their relation to the harlot in their apostacy from the original Church of Christ

by their sectarian divisions. So they may justly be classed with Babylon, which the second angel declares has fallen.

We cannot tell how soon it will come. It is a great city. There will be weeping and wailing when it comes,

CHAPTER XVI.

ISAIAH'S PEACEFUL REIGN.

WE shall close this volume with a more pleasing vision, which is generally called Isaiah's peaceful reign: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Many interpret this vision to represent the time when nations shall be at peace with each other, when they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and nations shall learn war no more. But the language will not admit of this interpretation; for the prophet says, in concluding this vision: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my *holy mountain*, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." These symbols of strife and destruction were to be found in God's holy mountain. This

term holy mountain cannot by any legitimate interpretation be made to mean the world at large. A single instance cannot be found in the Bible where it is thus used. The law was given on a mountain. It is used as a symbol where God dispenses his blessings to his people. Daniel says: "O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain." The church, then, or God's people, is represented by God's holy mountain. The church, then, is the place where we may look for a fulfilment of this vision. Is there anything in the churches in any way represented by these wild beasts and their quarrelsome nature? Can we answer in the negative? We find many things in the churches that too well carry out the analogy. We sometimes see such expressions as this in print in regard to the different churches: "They are like a set of Kilkenny cats." Paul calls those who make disturbance in the church "wolves." He says: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

One denomination will establish a church in a small town where there are already too many struggling churches, supported largely by foreign aid. This new church expects to build up their church by devouring from other churches, because they see some among them of their own brand. But these churches are all preaching the same gospel. The object of the new church is not to enlarge the gospel

field. This is lost sight of, but they want to get a church of their own brand. This looks wolfish not sparing the flock.

We shall not attempt to classify these animals in a personal way, perhaps nothing of the kind was intended by the prophet, but he only grouped together these animals and beasts of prey in their changed condition to give the Christians a vivid impression of the happy day that awaits the church. We rejoice to see that the unfriendly feelings between the churches is not so strong as it used to be. The time has been when we should be almost as much surprised to see a Presbyterian minister sitting in a pulpit with a Methodist minister as we should to see the wolf lie down with the lamb. And even now to see a Baptist minister with his flock partaking of the Lord's supper with a Methodist congregation would look like the lion and cow feeding together and their young ones lying down together.

This happy day we hope is coming to the churches when there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain. Visions of the future pass before us, radiant with the sunlight of immortal glory. All the scenes of strife and turmoil have passed away. All the ills and woes of the afflicted church that disgraced her fair name have fled at the sight of the conquering Immanuel. All now is peace.

The first angel messenger has finished his work, and God's judgments have executed the divine command. Babylon has fallen, that great city that made all nations drink of the wine of fornication of sectarian apostacy. Those who bewailed her down-

fall have ceased their lamentations. The tears of sorrow have been dried. All God's people dwell together in one fold, and their shepherd leads them.

It made a great commotion among the churches. They built higher their walls and barred their gates to retain the flock, but their efforts were vain. The handwriting on the walls said, "Thou art weighed in a balance and found wanting."

Look down on the field of conflict. The lion and the wolf who have been fighting and devouring, not sparing the flock, but chasing their prey out into the cheerless fields of infidelity, have lost their ferocity and persecuting power, and now dwell together in harmony and love.

Crash upon crash we hear the downfall of Babylon. Scattered all over the land are the fragments and ruins of the once opulent temples. But we look and behold a beautiful temple is rising in the midst of the disolation, fair and harmonious in all its parts—more beautiful than anything that has graced the earth since Christ walked the shores of Galilee.

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." God's judgment has been visited on the sectarian churches, and the supernumerary churches have been united, and the millions that supported them have been poured into the treasury of foreign missions.

The angel with the everlasting gospel is flying swiftly over the land, untrammelled by sectarian barriers, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation,

and kindred, and tongue, and people, and a "nation is born at once."

The second angel comes with a message of gladness and good news, crying: "It is done, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city." His work is finished. He soars up to heaven and

"Claps his triumphant wings and cries,
The great transaction is done."

THE END.

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