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1. Jesus Christ - Advent, Second

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Jones







THE SCRIPTURES SEARCHED:  
OR  
CHRIST'S SECOND COMING  
AND  
KINGDOM AT HAND;

INCLUDING

“THE RESURRECTION”—“DAY OF JUDGMENT”—“END OF  
ALL THINGS”—“NEW HEAVENS” AND “NEW EARTH;”

TOGETHER WITH A GLORIOUS AND EVERLASTING

MILLENNIUM:

WITH PRESENT FULFILLING PROPHETIC SIGNS, THAT NOW, “IT IS NEAR,  
EVEN AT THE DOORS;” NO MAN KNOWING “WHEN THE TIME IS.”

**IN EXPOSITORY DISCOURSES,**

MAKING THE BIBLE ITS OWN INDEPENDENT INTERPRETER.

BY HENRY JONES,  
AUTHOR OF “PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETING THE PROPHECIES.”

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“Hearken diligently unto me”—“Search the Scriptures”—“Prove all things”—  
“Comparing spiritual things with spiritual.—BIBLE.”

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NEW-YORK:  
PUBLISHED BY GOULD, NEWMAN & SAXTON,  
Corner of Fulton and Nassau Streets.

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MDCCCXXXIX.

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Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1839,

BY HENRY JONES,

In the Clerk's office of the District Court of the Southern District of New-York.



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## TESTIMONIALS.

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It will be seen that the following papers, or most of them, though not designed to recommend this book, were given to encourage certain other discourses and labors of the author, with which he has endeavored to make this work harmonize.

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PHILADELPHIA, June 30, 1838.

The Rev. Henry Jones has preached several times in my Church, and at the Commissioners' Hall at Southwark, [District,] to solemn and respectable congregations. As near as I can learn, his views have led the people more thoroughly to investigate the scriptures, and to feel that their great business here, is to prepare for eternity.

His explanations of the kingdom of heaven, and of prophecy, seem to give great force to the Gospel system, and to bring new motives to christian action. Ministers who adopt them cannot but be powerful in their appeals.

Mr. Jones has also published a work on the "Principles of Interpreting the Prophecies," which shows much research, and which is highly spoken of by Ministers of all evangelical denominations. I have read it with much interest.

ALBERT JUDSON,\* Pastor 1st Pres. Chh. Southwark.

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The subject of Prophecy is one of deep interest to the Church of Christ, and has, I am convinced, been too much overlooked by ministers and people since the reformation. It is a matter of thankfulness to God, that he is exciting some of his ministers to preach on this subject, and to awake the attention of the churches to it. The downfall of "Anti-Christ"—"the coming of Christ," and "the kingdom of heaven is at hand,"—are subjects of deep and awful interest to all. I have heard Br. Jones preach—read his book and conversed with him, and can heartily bid him "God-speed," and recommend him in his work, to all that love our Lord, in his appearing and kingdom.

WM. RAMSEY, Minister South-st. Pres. Chh.

Philadelphia, June 30, 1838.

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*From the [New-York] GOSPEL WITNESS, June 14, 1838.*

[A Baptist Paper.]

By a letter from Philadelphia, we learn that the Rev. Henry Jones is engaged in delivering lectures on the kingdom of Christ and the

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\* Since dead.

duty of searching the Scriptures. Having been employed in the same business while in this city, he was heard with much interest, and we believe that many professors of religion were brought to feel that they had too much neglected the word of God. Being personally acquainted with Br. Jones, and appreciating the importance of his labors, which are wholly gratuitous, we are constrained to commend him to the attention and kindness of our Baptist brethren.

If there is an enterprise which, above all others, accords with the principles which have characterized our denomination, it is that of attempting to arouse the christian community to the great duty of searching and taking heed to the sure word of prophecy.

We never expect that any *real union* of the saints will be effected until they pay that supreme deference to the PURE WORD OF GOD, which its immense importance demands. Whoever labors to bring men to this point, labors in what we consider as *emphatically the Baptist cause*, or if the reader prefers a different phrase, he labors in the cause of God and truth.

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WILMINGTON, Del., July 13, 1838.

I take pleasure in stating to my friends, and to my Baptist brethren especially, that I have been acquainted with Br. Jones for more than five years. I believe him to be emphatically a man of God.

In regard to his "Principles of Interpreting the Prophecies," I can only say, that so far as I have examined the work, I think well of it. My prayer is, that "the Oracles of God" it contains, may have free course and be glorified.

Br. Jones has now been a week in our city preaching and visiting from house to house. He has been well received by believers of all denominations. Of course we cannot precisely agree on all points, (for what two can?) but as an humble, prayerful, self-sacrificing servant of the Master, he may be sure of the prayers of

His unworthy brother in a precious Redeemer,

CHARLES W. DENISON, Pastor 2d Bap. Chh.

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Having been personally acquainted with the bearer, Rev. H. Jones, for several years, and been permitted to listen to his preaching—to peruse his "Principles of Interpreting the Prophecies," lately published, and his ten manuscript discourses on Christ's second coming, I feel prepared to bid him God-speed in his present labor of calling special attention to the faithful study of the prophetic, as well as other parts of the Bible; and would say, also, that having paid more than ordinary attention to these subjects myself for a few years past, that I believe his views, both written and printed, are in the main scriptural and correct, and such as I think have been too much overlooked and neglected by the Church for a long time past.

C. HAVEN, Pastor Bap. Chh. Lowville and Denmark.  
Denmark, Lewis Co., N. Y., Nov. 1. 1838.

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

I have examined the twenty-four Principles laid down by the Rev. Mr. Jones, in his book for the illustration of the scriptural Prophecies. They appear to me reasonable, just, and scriptural.

I have also examined the manuscripts of four of his lectures on the second coming of Christ, and have been deeply interested with them. I think them plain, pointed and scriptural.

It has been my pleasure, also, to hear Brother Jones in my pulpit, on the above-mentioned subject—his manner of treating it was judicious and candid—and his arguments weighty and powerful. I have had some previous acquaintance with Br. Jones—and commend him as a worthy man, and faithful minister of Christ, of the Congregational denomination.

May the Lord bless and prosper his attempts to awaken attention to the coming of our Lord, which will be “as a thief in the night.”

JAMES L. HODGE, Pastor 16th Baptist Church.

New-York, Nov. 20, 1838.

I fully concur in the above recommendation as far as it refers to the twenty-four Principles of Interpreting the Prophecies, by the Rev. Mr. Jones. The Lectures I have not seen, but having listened to a public address, I was satisfied his views were plain and scriptural.

WESLEY C. HUDSON, Minister Meth. Epis. Church.

Bloomfield, N. J., Jan. 16, 1839.

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Having had an interview with the Rev. Mr. Jones at my house, and fully and freely examined his views of the Holy Bible respecting the Prophecies; Promises; Millenium; second coming of Christ; Day of Judgment, &c., I am happy to say, that they perfectly harmonize with my own—so that I am prepared to give a hearty approval, and bid him God-speed in his sacrificing labor of love.

By request, Mr. Jones delivered two lectures in our church on the above subjects, which were highly interesting to myself and people, and, as I believe, unanimously approved.

I have read his “Principles of Interpreting the Prophecies,” and am much pleased with the work. Several of the most respectable persons in our congregation and village have obtained the book; and I would recommend it as an excellent help to the *reading* and *understanding* of the Scriptures, to all, especially to Christians and Ministers.

I have examined several of his lectures in manuscript form, on the coming of Christ; the “*Signs of his Coming*,” &c., which I believe are much called for, and will be valuable to the church of God. I really hope that Br. Jones may find a *cordial reception* among the *dear people* of Christ, of every name, and in every place, where Divine Providence shall direct him in the work of the Lord.

J. MORRIS PEASE, Pastor Meth. Epis. Church.

Fair Haven, Ct., Jan. 28th, 1839.

Having read the Rev. Mr. Jones' book, entitled "Principles of Interpreting the Prophecies;" attended two of his public discourses, and also having had several short interviews with him at my own house, I heartily concur in the sentiments expressed by Mr. Pease in the above: and feel a confidence in recommending the above named work to all, as an excellent *help* to the reading and understanding of the sacred Scriptures, and heartily wish him God-speed in his sacrificing labor of love.

J. B. BEACH, Pastor Meth. Epis. Church.  
Woodbury, Ct., April 5, 1839.

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The Rev. Mr. Jones, from New-York, spent nearly a week in this place, and preached at different times on the Prophecies of Christ's second coming and kingdom. He was heard with interest, and a number of his books were purchased. He has ample testimonials from the Association to which he belongs, and from a number of Ministers in the cities of New-York and Philadelphia, as to his christian character and ministerial standing. On my short acquaintance with him he appears to be a devoted servant of Christ, and has evidently studied the Prophecies with intense interest. Whether his views are correct or not, his preaching and conversation may lead ministers and others to a more careful reading of the Bible, and study of the Prophecies, and may awaken a new interest in the different classes of hearers.

ZEPHANIAH SWIFT, Sen. Pastor Cong. Church.  
Derby, Ct., March 7, 1839.

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This certifies, that the Rev. Henry Jones, has preached to the people of my charge, several times, upon the interpretation of the prophetic writings, and has been listened to with deep interest. His principles of interpretation are, in my opinion, worthy of careful and prayerful examination.

O. B. BUTTERFIELD, Pastor Congregational Church.  
South Britain, Ct., March 22, 1839.

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This may certify, that the Rev. H. Jones, the author of a little work on the "Principles of Interpreting the Prophecies," has been spending several days in this vicinity, delivering lectures in illustration of his Principles, very much to the edification of many who love the word of God.

His scriptural mode of teaching, and reasoning, comparing scripture with scripture, has greatly interested those who have heard him in this place. I believe that all who listen to his instructions become convinced that he is a truly devoted and prayerful student of the Bible. As the result of his lectures to the people of my parish, I think that not a few will study the Holy Scriptures with increased interest, and to better advantage than heretofore.

W. H. WHITTEMORE, Pastor Congregational Chh.  
Southbury, Ct., March 21, 1839.

This certifies, that the Rev. H. Jones has labored among my people as expressed above, and with similar results as it respects my own impressions and views, and those of my people.

WM. J. BOARDMAN, Pastor Congregational Chh.  
Northford, Ct., April 9, 1839.

Rev. Mr. Jones has delivered one lecture to my people, which excited much interest among them, and met with my cordial approbation.

L. GRIGGS, Pastor Cong. Chh.  
North Haven, Ct., April 10, 1839.

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The Rev. Henry Jones, the bearer, appears from the testimonials he carries, and from the acquaintance I have had with him, to be a man of pious, humble and amiable character; a great friend and prayerful student of the Bible: eminently scriptural in his preaching and conversation; and deeply engaged in the important object of awakening the public attention to the steady and systematic reading of the Holy Scriptures.

He carries, moreover, for sale, a treatise from his own pen, on the interpretation of the Scriptures, which exhibits great knowledge of the sacred volume; and is well calculated to enlist the christian mind profitably in the highly important study.

JOHN FORD, Pastor Pres. Chh.  
Parsippany, N. J., July 8, 1839.

Having had nearly a week's acquaintance with the Rev. Mr. Jones, and heard several of his lectures, and paid some attention in the mean time to his published treatise on the principles of interpretation, I can unhesitatingly subscribe to the above recommendation of Mr. Ford. And from the knowledge I have of Mr. Jones, his character, manner, and object,—his prudence, piety and consistency, I should cheerfully welcome his further labors among my congregation, and bid him God-speed wherever else he may be called.

R. F. CLEVELAND, Pastor Pres. Chh.  
Caldwell, N. J., July, 1839.

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N. B. Several other ministers of the different orders in New-York, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania, have furnished testimony of the above character and on the same points.

## SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES RECOMMENDED.

THE undersigned, ministers of the Gospel and Christian editors of the city of New-York, recommend to our brethren generally, in the ministry, and other friends of the Bible, the adoption of some plan by which to secure, as far as may be, a general interest among the people of their parish or connection, in the daily study of the Holy Scriptures, which shall be equal at least to reading them through once a year.

The printed plan\* of doing it, which is hereunto annexed, giving more variety and interest to many readers, both parents and children, than a more successive course, strikes us favorably. We would, therefore, suggest to those editors who may harmonize with these views, the utility of publishing in their several papers this printed plan, in such a form as will be likely to give their readers the most advantage of it in their thus reading the Bible through; and also, of opening their columns, to some practicable extent, for appropriate communications on the subject, which we trust the friends of the Bible will occasionally furnish.

In regard to those who may not be able to procure a copy of this plan, and yet would join in reading the Bible through yearly, we would suggest the plan of their going carefully through it by course, from Genesis to Revelation, until a better one can be obtained; reading three chapters a day on week days, and five on the Sabbath, which will finish the work once a year.

In case of others who are already studying, or prepared to study the Bible more thoroughly and profitably than can be done by either of these plans, it will be understood, that these suggestions are rather designed for the benefit of others, not yet thus prepared for the study of the sacred volume.

*New-York, March 13, 1838.*

SIGNED by 70 ministers and christian editors of New-York, 46 of Philadelphia, and many elsewhere, of 12 or 15 different denominations.

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\* This "Plan" is too long for insertion here.



## RESOLUTION, &amp;c.

RESOLVED, That we highly approve of the published *Recommendation* and "*Plan*" of more than 100 ministers of the cities of New-York and Philadelphia, in behalf of the daily study of the Holy Scriptures, which plan is "equal at least to reading them through once a year."

Adopted by the General Association of N. Y., (Congregational,) at their session, at Brighton, Munroe Co., Aug. 21, 1839.

A true copy. Attest, SAMUEL GRISWOLD, *Scribe*.  
PINDAR FIELD, *Register*.

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 AUTHOR'S APOLOGY.

The general and profitable *study and use of the Holy Bible*, has been a ruling object of pursuit in preparing this work, rather than the presentation of a favorite theory on a particular subject, as some may have done who have written on prophecy. A call is seemingly made for such undertakings, from the long standing dreadfully fallen condition of the church, as to her spirituality, or vital godliness, while her enemies, with the god of this world, are greatly prevailing, and exalting themselves to the heights of heaven in pride and rebellion against the Most High. These evils appear to have resulted, in a great measure, if not wholly, from a want of the Bible really *used* as "the sword of the Spirit," in the church, in their warfare, which "is not carnal, but spiritual"—"not against flesh and blood, but *against spiritual wickedness in high places.*"

It is believed, that while the church shall continue to make so little use of the Bible as her special means of grace, she will remain cast down and trodden under foot, prophesying only "*in sackcloth.*" It is also believed, that if she will awake from her long midnight slumbers, and betake herself to the word of God, as did the first christians, she may then, in answer to her co-operating prayers,

receive the gift of the Holy Ghost—put on the armor of God, and become powerful against her enemies as an army with banners.

Under these circumstances, surely, we might look for the sudden and powerful preaching of the everlasting Gospel to all nations, kindreds, people and tongues, with the general pouring out of the Spirit of God, as foretold by the prophets of the Old and New Testaments; which must be done to prepare the way for the glorious coming of the Son of man in his kingdom.

“THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AT HAND,” is made the leading subject of these discourses, not as something novel, and convenient for speculation, but rather, *First*, On account of its having been apparently more *neglected* in the general preaching of the Gospel, for ages past, than any other subject of such vital interest. *Secondly*. Because it appears to the writer to have been the all-absorbing and most awakening subject of discussion in the preaching of *Christ*, and the *inspired teachers* before and after him. *Thirdly*. Because, from having made this, more or less, a subject of public discussion, to a considerable extent in various congregations, for two years past, I am confident of calling *more attention* to the word of God with it; and doing more towards effecting the great object in view, than should I take a different subject in the short compass now before me. And, *Fourthly*, Because it has appeared that there is more *popular error* on this subject than on any other, which greatly divests the church of her spiritual armor, and hinders the otherwise natural power of the word to awaken, convert, and save the souls of lost men.

I have chosen the EXPOSITORY MANNER of presenting the great subject in these discourses, not for the sake of peculiarity or innovation, but, *First*, Because of having tried the experiment of thus presenting divine truth, for some years past, I am in hopes of *effecting more* in my *object* of promoting the profitable study of the Bible in this way, than by pursuing the present more popular course of laboring to edify without exposition. *Secondly*, Because it appears to have been the *only method* of exhibiting the power and spirituality of the Bible, and impressing it on the conscience by *God's ministers*, whose methods of

preaching are shown us in the scriptures. And, *Thirdly*, Because I have even hoped, that by this humble attempt at exposition, simple and destitute of every species of human adorning, *many others*, more efficient in the holy profession, might be provoked, in their love and good works, more *thoroughly* and *successfully* to adopt and prosecute the ancient and pungent method of preaching and expounding the Gospel of the kingdom.

The **BREVITY** observed in these discourses, in the discussion of many important things, is for the purpose of saving the time and expense of the reader, and to afford more advantages for the general searching of the scriptures in the shortest compass, in his gradually leaving human helps in searching altogether.

In regard to the general **DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM**, as presented in these discourses, the writer is aware of deviating from the long beaten track of our modern fathers in some very important points. To this course he feels that he has been driven, not from a love of differing in sentiment from superiors, nor a desire of being accounted on earth as a reformist, but from the force of divine truth, in studying more faithfully than before, the "*First principles of the oracles of God*," by which to make the Bible its own interpreter.

Wherein my **POSITIONS** shall be found **DIFFERENT** from those generally received on the same question, they are offered only with the kindest feelings, with much diffidence, and a becoming respect to the views and feelings of good men who may differ from them, asking, also, the favor of kindness in return; for, with kind feelings, those who differ in sentiment may the sooner unite their views; while even those most in agreement in theory, are naturally made to think differently from each other by the spirit of disaffection.

But, as it respects the author's private interests, or reputation, in a state of mortality, he feels that he has none in prospect to gain or to lose; and that, so far as such comparative trifles are concerned, it matters not how much, or how little public favor shall be shown him in regard to the work now offered; professing rather the heart fixed on treasures and honors of the kingdom at hand, which

are infinitely more excellent, glorious and durable. Under these circumstances the author is "*not careful*" in regard to any strictures which may be made upon the work without misrepresenting it, being confident that the more it shall be criticised, in the full examination of its scripture arguments, the more will the object be promoted for which it is so expressly prepared, *viz.* to call attention to the great neglected truths of the kingdom of God, contained in almost every part of the Holy Bible. H. J.

*New-York, Sept. 27, 1839.*

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### STARTLING FACTS.

*Exposing spiritual wickedness in high places, particularly in the present long standing and general neglect of SEARCHING the Scriptures, even in the church.*

In searching by Bible agents to furnish supplies, as a general thing, through the country; how often have they found one-tenth, one-eighth, one-sixth and one-fourth of the families, without a whole Bible in their houses! yea, frequently of professors too.

Such destitutions have been declared to exist again, within six years after, on searching for re-supplies in the same sections.

The increasing, and already overwhelming flood of human writings, not awakening and converting like the Bible, engrossing the time and thoughts of the people, shows that they cannot so study and meditate the Bible like our godly fathers, who had almost no writings of any kind but the Bible, with equal time daily for study.

What a proportion there is, if it were searched out in our christian communities, young and old, who have never even once read the Bible through in their life, when ten or fifteen minutes a day would be time enough to read it through every year!

How has the Old Testament been treated as a dead letter of Jewish rites, &c., leading many to wear out their Bibles with the use of the New Testament, defacing the Old, only on the surface!

How many pious and able parents, like unbelievers, have never furnished their children, each one with a Bible, till they became of age! And how many are still doing so, though improvements here, it is believed, are great of late!

How many families, even of the church, who have little or no reading of the Bible daily, morning and evening, with prayers!

How many congregations have excluded the reading of the scriptures from their worship on the Sabbath, and other occasions! Though here again improvements are increasing.

How many business professors of religion, and others, devote not one-tenth part so many minutes daily to the serious private study of the Bible, as in receiving their perishing meat three times a day!

How very few of the best of us could now accurately repeat the short summary of the law of God in the ten commandments! And how many know not the chapter nor book containing them!

How many of the church would be troubled, if suddenly called on to repeat a passage accurately from the Bible, to prove a doctrine perhaps of their own creed!

How many, and among the most respectable in our congregations, do not know the order or standing places of the different books of the Bible, when even children can learn and say them from Genesis to Revelation, and back again, rapidly, with a very short study, when put to it!

How many of such persons, too, who could not, if called to do it, give the names of the twelve patriarchs or twelve apostles!

How many, too, would be brought to the blush, if called to read a chapter in an assembly, containing proper names, as in Chronicles, Nehemiah, and elsewhere, not knowing, for want of Bible study, how to pronounce such names!

These, and many other such things, show us how verily guilty we have probably all been, in our abuse of the blessed Bible, and how we have been too much asleep to think seriously what we have been about; though a brighter day, it is believed, is dawning, while it is certainly encou-

raging that so many are beginning to see and acknowledge such facts as these, which seemingly none thought of a few years ago.

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## METHODS OF MAKING THE BIBLE ITS OWN INDEPENDENT EXPOSITOR.

1. Every correct interpretation may be proved true, by showing its entire harmony with "The first principles of the oracles of God."

The author's views of these "*Principles*," are contained in his small work on the Prophecies, a sketch of which is contained in these pages.

2. Every correct interpretation may be so proved by properly comparing the whole passage of the connection together, carefully examining, and retaining in memory, all the leading things in it, so as to be able to make the comparison, when the clearest things in the passage, with the proper use of common sense, will naturally throw light on those otherwise more obscure. Just as a letter, or book of a human author is examined, to make it explain itself, so should we examine a passage or book of the Bible to see how it naturally explains itself.

3. Every correct interpretation may be sustained or determined by parallel passages brought from other parts of the Bible, by recollection of those who have them sufficiently in memory, and by faithfully prepared references of those who do not know of such parallel passages of themselves. The references in the Polyglott Bibles, Reference Bibles of the American Bible Society, and others, will be found useful.

4. The leading and great things of the Old Testament of vital religion, the judgment, the future state, &c., may be determined by examining carefully, and seeing how the New Testament explains it; for, in so doing, it will be found that the preaching of Christ, and other writings of the New Testament, are precisely like those of the Old, and apparently designed as a commentary, or paraphrase on the law and the prophets.

# PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

ABBREVIATED.

*With Scripture Proofs and Examples.\**

“Not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.” 2 Cor. 3, 6.



PRIN. 1. The words—“Jacob”—“Israel”—“Judah”—“House of the Lord,” &c., representing all those individuals or nations who even now, improve or abuse spiritual privileges.

PROOF. Rom. 9:6 11:26. Gal. 3:7, 29. Heb. 3:6. 1 Cor. 3:9. 2 Cor. 5:1. Eph. 2:21. Rev. 7:4.—EXAMPLES. Ps. 59:13. 76:1. Jer. 42:15. Ps. 23:6. 122:1. Isa. 2:2. John 14:2.

PRIN. 2. The words “Sodom”—“Egypt”—“Babylon,” &c., in prophecy, representing the dominions of sin, or city of the wicked one, including all the ungodly of every class.

PROOF. Rev. 11:8.—EXAMPLE AND PROOF. Isa. 1:10. 31:1. Jer. 46:20. Rev. 18:2. Isa. 21:9. [Jer. 51:8. Rev. 17:5, 4. Jer. 51:7.

PRIN. 3. All the “exceeding great and precious promises,” of the Bible,—“the portion” only of all the saints for ever.

PROOF. 2 Pet. 1:4. Gal. 3:7, 16, 29. Heb. 4:8, 9. 11:13, 36—40. Rom. 10:12. Ps. 119:57. 142:5. Lam. 3:24.—EXAMPLE. Ps. 37:29, 33, 34, 37, 40. Isa. 35:1—10. 60:1—22. 65:9, 10, 17—25. Jer. 31:33, 34. 32:37—44. Ezek. 36:24—30. Dan. 7:18, 22, 27. 12:1—3, 10, 12. Mal. 3:11, 12, 17, 18. Mat. 5:1—12. 6:4, 6, 18. 7:24, 25. 25:46. Rev. 20:4, 5. 21:1—27. 22:1—5, 14.

PRIN. 4. All the penal “curses” or threatenings of the Bible,—the “portion” only of all the wicked “for ever.”

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\* EXPLANATION.—In these references, a colon (:) separates between chapters and verses; and a comma (,) between verses of the same chapter. A dash (—) denotes intervening verses. In some cases, the proof from passages is not direct, but inferential.

**PROOF.** Deut. 29:19—24. 28:15, 45. Job 20: 29, 7—28. 24: 19. Ps. 11: 6. 17: 14. Eccl. 9: 6. Mat. 25: 46. Luke 16: 25. Prov. 3: 33. Isa. 34: 5. 65: 15. Mal. 2: 2. 4: 6. Gal. 3: 10. Rev. 14: 11. 2 Thess. 1: 9. Rev. 19: 3. 20: 10. **EXAMPLE.** Ps. 68: 1, 2, 21, 23. 79: 6. Isa. 13: 1—22. 34: 10. Jer. 25: 30—38. Ezek. 39: 1—13. Dan. 7: 11. 12: 2. Joel 2: 2—11. Zeph. 1: 8—18. Mal. 3: 2, 5. 4: 1, 3. 2 Pet. 3: 7, 10. Rev. 6: 12—17. 19: 11—21.

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**PRIN. 5.** Distance of the judgment, &c., unknown and unforecasted by prophets.

**PROOF.** Dan. 12: 8, 9. Mat. 24: 36, 42, 44, 50. 25: 13. Mark 13: 33, 35. Acts 1: 7. 1 Thess. 4: 15, 17. 5: 1—3. Isa. 13: 6. Joel 1: 15. 2: 1. Obad. 15 verse. Zeph. 1: 7, 14, 15. Mal. 3: 1. Ja. 5: 9. 1 Pet. 4: 7. Rev. 22: 12, 20.

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**PRIN. 6.** Definite portions of time in prophecy, representing indefinite duration or periods.

**PROOF.** Dan. 7: 25. 12: 7. Rev. 12: 14. 14: 11. 20: 10. 22: 2. Ps. 90: 4. 2 Pet. 3: 8. **EXAMPLES.** Dan. 8: 14. 9: 24—27. 12: 11, 12. Rev. 11: 2, 3, 9, 11. 12: 6.

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**PRIN. 7.** Prophets wrote of future, rather than past things, usually, though writing in the present, past and future tenses, mingled together.

**PROOFS AND EXAMPLES.** Isa. 53: 2—12. Phil. 3: 13, 14. Isa. 63: 1—3. 64: 1—3. Ezek. 37: 1—14, 16—23. Na. 3: 1—7. Hab. 3: 2—18. Rev. 4: 1, to Rev. 22: 20.

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**PRIN. 8.** The Prophecies mostly “spiritual” rather than secular; or “the Spirit” of the word to be impressed on the mind, rather than “the letter.”

**PROOF.** John 6: 63. Rom. 7: 14. 1 Cor. 2: 13. 9: 11. 10: 3, 4. 2 Cor. 3: 6. Eph. 6: 11—17. Col. 1: 9. 3: 16. Acts 26: 22.

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**PRIN. 9.** Things “spiritual,” or “invisible,” shown us in the word, usually by “types”—“shadows,” or “figures,” from visible things.

**PROOF.** Rom. 1: 20. 1 Cor. 10: 6, 11, (see marginal reading.) Gal. 4: 24. Col. 2: 17. Heb. 8: 5. 10: 1.

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**PRIN. 10.** Christ’s coming to suffer, and coming finally with his kingdom, usually, not always, mentioned by the ancient prophets, as but one event, making the latter coming the most prominent.



**PROOF AND EXAMPLES.** Deut. 18: 13, 19. Acts 3: 20—23. Ps. 50: 3—6. Isa. 35: 4. 63: 1—4. 66: 15, 16. Zech. 14: 5—9. Mal. 3: 1—5. 4: 1—3, 5, 6.

**PRIN. 11.** Scenes of the judgment day, not mingled with mere secular things by the prophets in the same connexion, while rather the whole connexion, though in figures, exhibits the same vast realities.

**EXAMPLES.** Isa. 65: 17—25. 66: 15—24. Mat. 24: 27—51. 25: 1—46. Compare Rev. 17th, 18th and 19th chapters, with Isa. 48th, 52d, Jer. 51st and 52d, concerning the character and destruction of Babylon, city of Satan.

**PRIN. 12.** Realities from the judgment, or spiritual world, not used by the prophets as types of momentary earthly things.

**EXAMPLES.** Principle violated by construing passages like the following, as primarily of earthly things, viz. Mat. 24: 27—51. Mark 13: 25—36. Luke 17: 24, 26—37. Rev. 19: 11—21. 20: 1—11, &c.

**PRIN. 13.** The christian temper, or spiritual mind, by receiving the Holy Ghost, necessary most clearly to “discern,” or “understand” the spirit or power of “the word.”

**PROOF.** Dan. 12: 10. Hos. 14: 9. John 3: 4, 9, 10. Rom. 8: 5, 6. 1 Cor. 2: 10—16. 3: 1—4.

**PRIN. 14.** A willing obedience and “meditation” of the requirements of the word, in desiring to know, necessary to understand it.

**PROOF.** Ps. 119: 99, 100. Dan. 12: 10. Mat. 13: 14—16. John 7: 17. 8: 43. Acts 28: 27.

**PRIN. 15.** Interpretations false, which are “smooth things” to the wicked, promising them “peace, peace, when there is no peace.”

**PROOF.** Isa. 3: 11. 30: 10. Jer. 6: 14. 8: 11. 23: 14. 31—33. Ezek. 13: 10—12. 16. 22.

**PRIN. 16.** Interpretations false, which naturally diminish the “comfort” of the spiritual mind, or make the “righteous sad.”

**PROOF.** Isa. 40: 1. Jer. 23: 30. 30: 16. Ezek. 13: 22. John 14: 1, 16, 18, 26, 27, &c. 1 Thess. 4: 8. 5: 11.

**PRIN. 17.** True interpretations harmonizing with the spirit, letter, and great end of the Gospel, and of Christ's coming "into the world to save sinners."

**PROOF.** Mat. 9 : 13. 18 : 11. Luke 9 : 56. 19 : 10. John 12 : 47. 1 Tim. 1 : 15.

**PRIN. 18.** "No prophecy" (or instruction) "of the scripture, of any private interpretation," or of private concern, which is given rather generally.

**PROOF.** 2 Pet. 1 : 20. Acts 10 : 34. Rom. 2 : 11. 1 Cor. 10 : 11. 2 Tim. 3 : 16, 17. 1 Pet. 1 : 17.

**PRIN. 19.** The words, "everlasting"—"forever"—"forevermore," &c., representing endless duration only, especially when joined with rewards and punishments.

**PROOF AND EXAMPLES.** Gen. 49 : 26. Ps. 3 : 4. 15 : 1. 43 : 3. 68 : 15, 16. 121 : 1. 37 : 18, 29. Mat. 25 : 41, 46. Rev. 14 : 11, &c.

**PRIN. 20.** True interpretations, harmonizing with the perceptions of men truly "reasonable."

**PROOF.** Isa. 1 : 18. Rom. 12 : 1. Acts 17 : 2. 18 : 4, 19. 24 : 25.

**PRIN. 21.** Preconceived opinion, even if approved by the modern fathers, not a safe rule of interpretation.

**PROOF.** Prov. 26 : 12, 16. 1 Cor. 1 : 27—29. Jer. 17 : 5. Mat. 23 : 9. Ex. 23 : 2. 2 Tim. 4 : 1—5.

**PRIN. 22.** Profane history no rule of interpreting "the Spirit" and power of the holy word.

**PROOF:** Mat. 15 : 3, 6, 9. Col. 2 : 8. 1 Tim. 1 : 4. 4 : 7. Tit. 1 : 14. 2 Pet. 1 : 16.

**PRIN. 23.** Prophecies now specially fulfilling, to be understood and considered, in order best to understand.

**PROOF AND EXAMPLES.** Mat. 24 : 10, 12, 14, 33. 2 Thess. 2 : 2—10. Isa. 29 : 11—14. Rev. 14 : 6, 7.

**PRIN. 24.** The Bible its own independent interpreter, uniformly.

**PROOF.** Ps. 118 : 6, 9. 146 : 3, 5. Isa. 30 : 1, 2. Jer. 17 : 5.

# BIBLE CHRONOLOGY WITH SCRIPTURE PROOF,

Showing an apparent mistake of about 39 years in the popular calculation.

## *From the Creation to the Flood.*

	At the Age of		
Adam begat Seth	130	Genesis	v. 3
Seth begat Enos	105	"	v. 6
Enos begat Canaan	90	"	v. 9
Canaan begat Mahalaleel	70	"	v. 12
Mahalaleel begat Jared	65	"	v. 15
Jared begat Enoch	162	"	v. 18
Enoch begat Methuselah	65	"	v. 21
Methuselah begat Lamech	187	"	v. 25
Lamech begat Noah	182	"	v. 28, 29
Noah's age at the Flood	600	"	vii. 6

1656

## *From the Flood to Abram's sojourning.*

Shem begat Arphaxed 2 years after the flood		Genesis	xi. 10
	At the age of		
Arphaxed begat Salah	35	"	xi. 12
Salah begat Eber	30	"	xi. 14
Eber bogat Peleg	34	"	xi. 16
Peleg begat Reu	30	"	xi. 18
Reu begat Serug	32	"	xi. 20
Serug begat Nahor	30	"	xi. 22
Nahor begat Terah	29	"	xi. 24
Terah begat Abram	130*	Gen. xi. 26, 32; xii. 1-4; Acts vii. 4	
Abram sojourns	75	Genesis	xii. 4

427

Whole sojourning till coming out of Egypt, 430 years, Ex. xii. 40; Gal. iii. 16, 17.

From the coming out of Egypt to the beginning of the temple, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, 480 years, 1 Kings vi. 1.

## *Reign of Kings afterward.*

Solomon reigned still farther	36 years.	1 Kings xi. 42;	2 Chron. iii. 2
Rehoboam next reigned	17	"	xiv. 21; " xii. 13
Abijah or Abijam	3	"	xv. 1, 2; " xiii. 1, 2
Asa	41	"	xv. 8-10; " xvi. 13
Jehoshaphat	25	"	xxii. 41, 42; " xx. 31

\* By comparing these passages, it will appear that Abram sojourned at 75 years of age, and at the death of his father Terah, who died at the age of 205, so that the 75 years of Abram's age subtracted from the 205 years, his father's age at the same time, leaves 130 as the age of Terah when his son Abram was born.

Jehoram	reigned	8 years	2 Kings viii. 16, 17; 2 Ch. xxi. 16-20
Ahaziah	"	1	" viii. 25, 26; " xxii. 2
Athaliah	"	7	" xi. 3, 4, 20, 21; " xxii. 12; xxiii. 1, 11
Jehoash or Joash	"	40	" xii. 1; * " xxiv. 1
Amaziah or Uzziah	"	29	" xiv. 1, 2; " xxv. 1
Azariah	"	52	" xv. 1, 2; " xxvi. 1, 3
Jotham	"	16	" xv. 32, 33; " xxvii. 1, 8
Ahaz	"	16	" xvi. 1, 2; " xxviii. 1
Hezekiah	"	29	" xviii. 1, 2; " xxix. 1
Manasseh	"	55	" xxi. 1; 2 Ch. xxxii. 33; xxxiii. 1
Amon	"	2	" xxi. 19; 2 Ch. xxxiii. 20, 21
Josiah	"	31	" xxii. 1; " xxxiv. 1
Jehoahaz	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	" xxiii. 31; " xxxvi. 1, 2
Jehoiakim	"	11	" xxiii. 34, 36; " xxxvi. 4, 5

419 $\frac{1}{2}$ 

Duration of the Babylonish captivity, as generally estimated, 70 years.†  
 From the Babylonish captivity to Christ, as generally estimated, 483 years.†

## RECAPITULATION..

	Years.
From the creation to the flood . . . . .	1656
From the flood to Abram's sojourning . . . . .	427
Whole sojourning to the coming out of Egypt . . . . .	430
From coming out of Egypt to beginning of temple . . . . .	480
From beginning of temple to Babylonish captivity . . . . .	419 $\frac{1}{2}$
Duration of captivity, as estimated . . . . .	70
From the captivity to Christ's advent, as generally estimated	483

Take present computation B. C.	3965 $\frac{1}{2}$
From popular calculation B. C.	4004

Deficiency, 38 $\frac{1}{2}$ 

*Note.* The above chronological table is offered to the public, more with the desire of exciting inquiry and careful investigation on the subject, than to have it silently received as a true calculation. From considerable inquiry, it is believed, that during the last age of the Church, if no longer, the number has been but very few who have so far examined this question for themselves, as to become fully satisfied, from positive Scripture testimony, that the period, from the creation to Christ, was actually 4004 years, as represented by the chronological calculations placed on the pages of our Bibles; and generally considered unquestionable.

It will be seen, that this calculation makes the period from the creation to Christ about 39 years less than the 4004, as heretofore received.

\* It will be seen that in a few instances like this, there may possibly be the variation of a year, or part of a year.

† With regard to these two periods, as generally allowed, the writer hesitates to speak with confidence, not seeing them so clearly as the preceding with references.

If that calculation should be considered so many years too large, the error may have resulted from attempting to fix correct dates from the periods during which the several judges of Israel held their offices; inasmuch as some of these periods are left in comparative darkness, and for aught we can decide, some of those judges may have been cotemporary with each other, and the periods of their judging be recorded twice, in some instances, by adding them together.

It is therefore suggested to all who prefer a positive "thus saith the Lord," to "the traditions of the elders," that they inquire into this subject, and find out, if possible, what the truth is in relation to it; so that if this calculation be defective, its defects may be shown clearly from Bible Testimony, and that another table, with clear proof from inspiration, may be furnished us, showing, if possible, that the calculation of 4004 years B. C. is a true calculation; or else furnish some other, which shall be supported with better proof.



# LECTURE I.

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## TESTIMONY FROM MOSES AND THE PROPHETS.

Mat. 3: 2.

*“ The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

IT must be admitted that there never was, and never can be, another subject so unspeakably interesting to all, as that of the “*kingdom of heaven at hand*,” introduced by John in this passage. And as the subject was so full of lively interest to Christ and John, who always made it their theme, and their great and prevailing motive to repentance, whenever and wherever they preached “*the gospel of the kingdom*,” it is also of the utmost importance now, that it should be well understood by all to whom this same Gospel is preached. Those who shall well understand the nature of this kingdom, and give due and seasonable attention to it, may immediately obtain all its blessedness and glory for eternity; while others, by a perversion and neglect of it, are every moment in danger of being for ever destroyed by it, which shall be made manifest to the universe when the Son of man shall finally “*come, with his mighty angels*” of the kingdom, “*in flaming fire*,” to destroy his enemies “*with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord*. (2 Thess. 1: 8, 9.) As upon all other important subjects, there is a diversity of prevailing sentiment on this, not only in regard

to the kingdom's being "*at hand*," but in regard to what Christ and John really meant by the kingdom itself. Without limits, and without occasion now, even to state the variety of these opinions, it may be said at once, that there is one sentiment concerning it, which is quite prevalent, and which supposes that Christ and John, in preaching "*the kingdom at hand*," as a motive for immediate repentance, meant neither more nor less than the kingdom of the Gospel dispensation, or christian church, which was then so near "*at hand*," that it did actually come within about forty years after, and in the fullest manner, in the passing away of the Jewish dispensation at the destruction of Jerusalem.

Against the sentiment that the church, or present dispensation, was the kingdom at hand, preached by John and our Saviour, I have been led to dissent, after having long held the sentiment as correct. The principal reasons for this change of my view on the subject, is a most clear and pungent conviction, after carefully searching out the whole matter, with the Bible as its own expositor, that the sentiment is contrary to the spirit and letter of the Bible, and that it does exceedingly "*make void the law*," or word of God, in destroying its power to awaken, convert and sanctify the souls of men, and that the present long continued depression of Zion, in her gross idolatrous conformity to this world, has resulted mostly, if not altogether, from such an understanding of the "*Gospel of the kingdom*." It will be seen, on reflection, that there is no awakening motive to repentance in the mere sentiment that the "*Jewish dispensation*" is passed away, and another dispensation come. Long experience tells us that sinners are rather quieted by it, while the spiritually minded, who live by faith of invisible things, must aspire after something



infinitely more important as a treasure of their own, on which to set their hearts, than the momentary concerns of any earthly dispensation, for *their* “*kingdom of heaven at hand.*”

### THE DOCTRINE

To be maintained in this, and other discourses, is, that “*the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*” as preached by Christ and John, was and is, the “*everlasting kingdom*”—“*of God,*” composed, as every kingdom is, of the king himself, and all the subjects of this kingdom—that this kingdom “*at hand*” it yet to come—that it will come with Christ, the Great King, to judgment, together with the resurrection, and all the events of that great day—that it is now specially at hand, as appears by the prophetic signs of it at present fulfilling; and that all the prophets and apostles on these subjects, were designed to be understood as preaching the same “*kingdom at hand.*”

As the whole of this doctrine cannot be discussed in a single discourse, and as many have supposed that the prophets of the Old Testament were always silent about the sudden coming of this great event, and that this consideration is an argument that Christ and John, in preaching the kingdom at hand, meant only that the christian church or Gospel dispensation was then “*at hand*”—The subject may now be discussed under the following

### PROPOSITION, viz.

To hear the prophets of the Old Testament themselves on this doctrine, and to show from the letter and apparent spirit of their writings, that they did severally, most distinctly and impressively, foretel the same coming of the great day, or kingdom at hand, as that so foretold by

Christ and John, though we consider it the everlasting kingdom of God, yet future and "at hand."

Passages from the Old Testament prophets will be *examined*, as they stand in order, very briefly, and with but a brief notice, to make room for a greater number in a single discourse, which only can be devoted to proof from those prophets.

## 1. THE PROPHET MOSES.

Deut. 18: 18, 19. "*I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto me, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.*"

That Moses is here foretelling, the second and final coming of Christ, as well as his first, is positively affirmed by the Apostle Peter when preaching, really *after* Christ's first coming and return to heaven, saying, "*And he [the Lord] shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you. Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*" (Acts, 3: 21.) Here, Peter, foretelling Christ's coming again from "*the heavens*," asserts that "*all the holy prophets since the world began*" have foretold the same. And in his very next expression, to make his meaning more clear, he refers to Moses, the first prophet, who foretold these great things of Christ's coming again, and quotes this very passage from Moses, almost verbatim, saying, "*For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your*

*brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people."* (Acts, 3: 22, 23.) Thus Peter explains this passage from Moses as foretelling the same still future coming of Jesus Christ at "*the restitution of all things,*" which he was himself preaching as a motive to repentance, which restitution surely will not be accomplished until the whole house or church of God shall be finally restored to all that perfection and glory of which all the saints have the sure promise, when, as Peter quotes and explains Moses, "*all who will not hear that Prophet [Christ] shall be destroyed.*"

Peter then goes on with his discourse, and says, "*Yea, all the prophets, from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.*" (Acts, 3: 24.) Here, he affirms again, and more particularly, that Samuel, as a prophet, and all who wrote after him, foretold the same "*days*" or "*times of restitution of all things,*" which he was then holding up to view, with Christ's coming again from "*the heavens.*" Let us, then, look for this prophecy, in,

## 2. THE PROPHET SAMUEL.

2 Sam. 7: 12, 13. "*And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed [Christ] after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.*"

Here, certainly, Samuel does foretel of a personage finally to be set up, who shall build the Lord's house, and

be established on a "throne" over a "kingdom for ever." Surely this never has been fulfilled, and never can be, in case of mortals in the flesh, and is appropriate only to Jesus and his everlasting kingdom yet to come, when he, as the true "*Master Builder*," shall finish the Lord's house.

### 3. THE PROPHET DAVID.

Ps. 50: 3—6. "*Our God shall come and shall not keep silence, a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is Judge himself.*"

This is from one of the prophets after Samuel, who, as Peter says, "*foretold of these days*" of final "*refreshing*," and subsequent immediate coming of Christ again from "*the heavens*;" and as Christ has himself informed us, that important predictions of him, were written "*in the Psalms*," it would seem that both Christ and Peter were explaining this passage of the Psalms, as foretelling the great events of Christ and his kingdom yet to come; or as Christ and John expressed it, "*The kingdom of heaven at hand*." And surely there is no passage in the Psalms, which, more expressly and strikingly than this, foretels and describes Christ's coming with his kingdom to judgment, when, as he says himself, he shall be seen coming "*in his glory*," and "*in his kingdom*." This passage from the Psalms seems to explain itself, independently of other testimony, as foretelling Christ's final coming with his everlasting kingdom to judgment; for then, as it declares,

“*God*,” in coming, will no longer “*keep silence*,” or wait in mercy for sinners, but will rather speak out—or “*roar out of Zion*”—or “*descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God*.” (1 Thess. 4: 16.) His coming, also, as here foretold, with “*a fire*” devouring before him—his then calling “*to the heavens from above, and to the earth*,” for all their inhabitants to be gathered together to be judged by “*God himself*,” and his then gathering together his saints unto him, all unite in showing the passage as most clearly and rousingly a description and prophecy of Christ’s coming, yet at hand, or future, with his everlasting kingdom, to judgment.

#### 4. THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

Isa. 13: 6. 9. “*Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is AT HAND. It shall come as a destruction from the Almighty*.” “*Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel, both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it*.”

According to the very letter of this passage, as Peter has said of “*all the prophets*,” it foretels the future coming of “*the day of the Lord*”—“*as a destruction from the Almighty*,” with cruel “*wrath and fierce anger*”—to make an utter desolation of sinners, even destroying them out of “*the whole land*.” It will be noticed that Isaiah says here, that this “*day of the Lord is at hand*;” as Christ and John always preached “*the kingdom of God—at hand*,” and as the awful events of this great day are alike, as described by Christ and the prophets thus far examined, and as they are the same words, “*at hand*,” in warning sinners of their momentary danger of the judg-

ment, how can we but allow that the former prophets *did* foretel just such a kingdom at hand as did Christ and John, and that they all *did* mean God's everlasting kingdom, yet coming at the judgment, instead of the coming of the Gospel dispensation? And should we undertake to make Christ's prophecy of the day "*at hand*," more consistent with human history, in saying that it was fulfilled within forty years after given, what one great "*day of the Lord at hand*" could we fix upon as having come forty years after Moses, after Daniel, and after Isaiah, to make *their* prophecy more consistent? while Peter says they all wrote of the same "*days*," or time, and some of them expressly say, it is "*at hand*," as did John and Christ.

Isa. 26: 21. "*For behold the Lord cometh forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth, also, shall disclose her blood, and no more cover her slain.*"

Here the prophet also foretels of the Lord's coming "*forth out of his place*," or out of "*the heavens*," to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, which, it must be granted, will be literally fulfilled in every "*job*" and "*tittle*," when Christ shall come again with his kingdom to judgment, and not before; for then "*the earth shall disclose her blood, and no more cover her slain*;" or when the blood-guiltiness of the wicked, through the whole earth, shall be disclosed before the whole universe; and when the dead or the slain shall no more be covered in the dust of the earth. Surely all this is a prophetic and thrilling description of the coming of Christ again, at the general resurrection, to punish the wicked of the whole earth for their guilt in the blood of souls, and the blood of Christ, which will then be required at their hands.

Isa. 35: 4, 10. "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, [saints in the flesh,] *Be strong, fear not; behold your God [Christ] will come with vengeance, [for his enemies,] even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.*" "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion [or heaven] with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

In addition to the abundance of New Testament testimony that Isaiah foretold Christ's coming and kingdom at hand, this passage of his, is in itself most clear in foretelling the glorious event, because it is the coming of Christ or God, with vengeance for his enemies, and salvation for his afflicted and feeble saints. It being, also, when the ransomed saints of the Lord shall return home from all their wanderings abroad to Zion, or high heaven, which is supposed to be "*Mount Zion,*" (Rev. 14: 1,) "*with songs and everlasting joy,*" when all their sorrows and sighings shall flee away, (see Rev. 21: 4,) shows clearly, that the event is the same as that day when Christ shall come from heaven, at "*the restitution of all things,*" which Peter said was declared by all the "*holy prophets since the world began,*" and properly called by Christ and John, "*the kingdom of God at hand,*" because the great work it will accomplish for saints and sinners, ever has been, and will be, so near "*at hand*" to every mortal hearing it declared.

## 5. THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

Jer. 23: 5, 6. "*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David [supposed to be a type of the church] a righteous Branch, and a King, [Christ,] shall*

*reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth, [at his final coming.] In his days [or at that time] Judah [the saints] shall be saved, and Israel [the saints] shall dwell safely, [in heaven,] and this is the name whereby he shall be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."*

Although this passage of Jeremiah is understood to foretel the raising up of Christ, or, in a few words, the events of his first coming and work as Mediator to the last, the burden of it surely is expressed in language altogether more appropriate to Christ's coming *finally* with his kingdom at hand, than to his self-sacrificing work of a Mediator, not fully yet done; and thus it appears Peter understood this prophecy of Christ by Jeremiah.

## 6. THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

Ezek. 21 : 27. "*I [the Lord] will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he [Christ] come, whose right it is, and I will give it to him."*

Believing the declaration of Peter, as before noticed, it would seem that this passage from Ezekiel's prophecy will be fulfilled when God, with his "*sharpened,*" "*furbished*" and *glittering* "*sword,*" given "*into the hand of the slayer,*" (21 : 9—11,) shall *make a short work upon the earth, and cut it short in righteousness; even to the overturning, overturning, overturning* of the mischievous works of Satan and his followers; including all human sinners and devils, when Christ, whose right it is to reign, shall come to judgment, and God shall give all this dominion for ever to him, though Satan, as the god of this world, has reigned so long and so oppressively over the children of men during the period of Christ's still remaining in the



heavens. Then, as it is foretold, "*the heathen*," or the wicked, shall be given unto him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, when, as his vanquished, incorrigible enemies, he shall "*break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*" (Ps. 2: 8, 9.) All this looks like Christ's finally coming to reign, putting "*all his enemies under his feet*," (1 Cor. 15: 25,) and like the coming of himself and kingdom, or "*the kingdom of heaven, at hand*," as preached by Christ and John, and others after them.

## 7. THE PROPHET DANIEL.

Dan. 2: 44. "*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms.*"

This is a part of the explanation of Daniel's vision of a wonderful image of "*gold—silver—brass—iron*," and "*iron*" and "*clay*;" the latter of which is explained in the preceding verse, as representing the apparent latter day mingling of the saints with the world: "*They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men*," and yet with no more real mixing, than in case of iron and clay. And should we suppose this a prophecy, of the present and long standing mingling of the church with the seed of men, or the world, would there not be a striking harmony between the type and the ante-type? However Daniel's image may be explained, it would seem that this explanation of its feet and toes of iron and clay, is showing to us things to exist in the very last days before the final setting up of God's

everlasting kingdom, to “*to break in pieces and overcome all*” its opposing powers or “*kingdoms.*”

The “*kings*” and kingdoms mentioned in the verse now before us, being here represented as standing with living and strong power against God, till he shall set up a kingdom finally to break them all in pieces and consume them, apparently hinders our understanding them as mere political kingdoms, having had their momentary rise and fall thousands of years ago, as some have supposed. If such powers are really to stand till Christ, or the God of heaven, shall come to destroy them utterly in consuming fire, we should naturally rather understand them not as political kings or kingdoms of flesh and blood, against which the saints have no wrestling or warfare, as Paul has said, but as the “*principalities,*” and “*powers,*” and “*rulers of the darkness of this world,*” and “*spiritual wickedness in high places.*” (Eph. 6: 12.) Against these powers, this apostle exhorts the saints to put on all the armor of God, which he describes as being all spiritual, never using any carnal weapons himself, and forbidding it in others. Although this very “*spiritual*” doctrine was exceedingly precious to Paul, and which, in substance, it appears he was always preaching, he affirms, when arraigned by the carnal Jews before King Agrippa for heresy, that he has “*continued unto this day witnessing to both small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.*” (Acts, 26: 22.) This might seem equal to saying that Daniel, and other prophets, with Moses, witnessed, or spake of this spiritual warfare, and of the final termination of it by Christ’s coming to break in pieces and consume all his, and the saints enemies under his feet. Thus Paul would seem to explain this conflict and victory in Daniel, the same as what he

means by the saints finally becoming "*more than conquerors through him that loved us.*" (Rom. 8 : 37.) Isaiah might also be understood as speaking of the same warfare foretelling the comforts and joys of saints in "*Jerusalem, (heavenly, Heb. 12 : 22,) when "her warfare is accomplished, and her iniquity pardoned."* (Isa. 40 : 2.)

In the passage of Daniel now before us, he certainly speaks as explicitly of the coming or sitting up of the kingdom of God, as did Christ and John, and even more so, in expressly saying it shall never be destroyed, nor left for other people.

Dan. 7 : 13, 14. "*I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him before him ; and there was given unto him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*"

With the same inspired testimony as before, that Daniel with others of the prophets "*foretold of those days,*" the letter of the language in this passage, is directly to the point, and foretels Christ's coming as "*the Son of man*" "*with the clouds of heaven,*" as expressed also by Christ himself, (Mat. 24 : 30,) to receive "*the kingdom and the power and the glory,*" (Mat. 6 : 13,) then for ever to be ascribed to him by the whole universe, even by his vanquished enemies, (Phil. 2 : 10, 11.) This passage of Daniel, seems clearly, as having no appropriateness to any events short of Christ's final coming "*with the clouds of heaven,*" or with the innumerable multitudes of his kingdom, to reign gloriously with all his saints, as kings with him upon thrones, in the "*new heavens*" and "*new earth,*"

then to be created, (Isa. 65 . 17, &c. 66 : 22. 2 Pet. 3 : 13. Rev. 21 : 1, 2.)

Dan. 12: 1—3. “ *And at that time (last day) shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of my people—and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*”

This passage contains more things than can now be particularly noticed, while it will answer the purpose, to say, that it seems as a prophecy of the great things of the final coming of the kingdom of God; from the following things foretold in it,—(1.) the standing up of Michael the Great Prince, or Christ the “*Prince of Peace*,” for his people.—(2.) When all the saints of God’s book “*shall be delivered*,” into “*the glorious liberty of the children of God*.” (Rom. 8 : 21.)—(3.) At the resurrection and final doom of saints and sinners.—(4.) With the saints all shining as the stars for ever and ever.

From this and many more passages of Daniel, it will be seen that he dwelt more on the coming of “*the kingdom of God*,” than any of the other prophets, so far as respects the use of the word “*kingdom*,” in treating on the subject, though others may have dwelt equally upon it in different language and in the use of different symbols.

## 8. THE PROPHET HOSEA.

Hos. 8 : 1. “ *Set the trumpet to thy mouth, he shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they*

*have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law.'*

If Hosea has any where spoken of Christ's coming at the last day, as Peter says all the Prophets have foretold of his coming at the "*restitution of all things,*" this passage must be an instance of it. Christ himself foretold his coming as the lightning from east to west, and as an "eagle" to seize upon the body wherever found. (Mat. 24 : 26, 28. Luke 17 : 37.) Although it may have been supposed, that this coming "*as an eagle against the house of the Lord,*" was the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Roman army with eagle standards, yet it must be recollected that as "*judgment must begin at the house of the Lord,*" it will begin and finish, with souls, and not with a mere building of wood or stone, when the wicked, favored with all the privileges of God's house or church, shall be cut off and only the remnant or saints of Israel will be saved, as "*they are not all Israel who are of Israel.*"

## 9. THE PROPHET JOEL.

Joel 1 : 15. "*Alas, for the day ; for the day of the Lord is at hand ; as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.*

Every scripture principle of interpretation would explain this passage as a warning to the wicked to prepare for the great events of an approaching judgment, always at hand, or very near to every living mortal, the same as coming upon the generation of men last to live upon the earth, however near or remote may be the period when the earth and all its contents shall be burnt up. This passage, it must seem then, is in perfect harmony with the preaching of Christ and John, that "*the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"

Joel 2: 1. "*Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is NIGH AT HAND.*"

In view of this "*great and terrible day,*" surely, all the inhabitants of the world, who are unprepared to meet it, have infinitely more occasion to tremble than can be imagined from the solemn description of the day given in this chapter; and especially, that it is even "*nigh at hand,*" to every individual of them, suddenly to destroy such characters without remedy. Our Saviour's preaching the everlasting kingdom at hand was seemingly the same thing.

## 10. THE PROPHET AMOS.

Amos 9: 10, 11. "*All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us. In that day will I raise up the tabernacles of David,*" &c.

This death by the sword of the Lord, of all the sinners among God's people, seems most naturally understood, as a threatening of final destruction of all the enemies of God, and this promise to build the tabernacles of David, appears as a promise to all the saints who are God's house, spoken of as tabernacles because he will dwell with them as his house, and "*his tabernacle,*" shall be "*with men.*" (Rev. 21: 3.) When Christ asking shall come to judgment, all such promises and threatenings can be fulfilled and not before.

## 11. THE PROPHET OBADIAH.

Obad. 15th verse. "*For the day of the Lord is NIGH upon all the heathen.*"

If our other premises are correct in supposing the great

day of the Lord in the former prophets to be the same as the kingdom at hand in the Gospel, then, of course, Obadiah preaches the great kingdom at hand, as truly as did Jesus Christ.

## 12. THE PROPHET JONAH.

Jonah, 3 : 4. “ *Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*”

Unless this prophet was an exception with Peter when he said they all foretold Christ's coming again to judgment, this passage may be understood as typical, and foretelling the faithful preaching of the Gospel yet to sinners who shall repent, before the great city of wickedness, “ *spiritually* called “ *Nineveh*” (see Rev. 11 : 8. Na. 1 : 1, &c.) shall be destroyed; and inasmuch as Christ calls Jonah a “ *prophet*,” as if he foretold things as did the others, and quotes a passage from his book, seeming to make Jonah a type of himself in being three days in the heart of the earth, might it not be inquired whether the book of Jonah, after all, does not really mean something infinitely more interesting to the saints than a mere history of striking worldly transactions?

## 13. THE PROPHET MICAH.

Mic. 1 : 3. “ *For behold the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.*”

Upon the same principles and testimony as before mentioned, this passage also may be understood as foretelling the Lord's coming “ *forth*” with his kingdom “ *out of his place*,” to judgment, when, surely, he will tread down and destroy all his enemies for ever, which must be done when the kingdom of God, yet future, or “ *at hand*,” shall come, and be set up by the God of heaven.

## 14. THE PROPHET NAHUM.

Na. 1 : 15. “ *Behold upon the mountains, the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, THAT PUBLISHETH peace—for the wicked shall no more pass through thee, he is utterly cut off.*”

As “ *the wicked*” are not yet “ *cut off*” from the privileges of the church “ *utterly,*” while they still continue to “ *pass through*” it; but will be so cut off and destroyed at Christ’s coming again to reign, it would seem, that this passage, with its connection, was designed to foretel of Christ’s finally coming upon, or from the high “ *mountains*” of his habitation, when he shall bring everlasting “ *good tidings*”—to be then realized to all his saints, with “ *the kingdom of heaven*” then come, now “ *at hand.*”

## 15. THE PROPHET HABAKKUK.

Hab. 3 : 3. “ *God came from Teman and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.*”

As this passage, with what follows it, appears so strikingly descriptive of Christ’s final coming from “ *Mount Zion,*” or “ *Mount Paran,*” to judgment, with his glory covering the heavens, and his praise filling the earth, never to be done till the great day of God’s final universal glorification, may not the passage be considered as parallel to the final coming of the kingdom of heaven at hand, or yet future, to mortals?

## 16. THE PROPHET ZEPHANIAH.

Zeph. 1 : 7, 14, 15. “ *The day of the Lord is AT HAND*”



—“ *The GREAT day of the Lord is NEAR, IT IS NEAR, and HASTETH GREATLY, even the voice of the day of the Lord; the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath,*” &c.

If the Lord ever did foretel, by any of the ancient prophets, the things of Christ's coming again from heaven to the day of judgment, as Peter affirms they all did, then how can this passage be rationally understood, except as foretelling that same “great day of the Lord,” always “at hand,” yea, “*It is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly*”—“*A day of wrath,*” when even “*the mighty*” sinner “*shall cry there bitterly?*”

## 17. THE PROPHET HAGGAI.

Hag. 2:22. “*And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen,*” (or the wicked.)

If the kingdoms of the heathen here, are all the high powers or thrones of Satan, and all who adhere to him of foul spirits and wicked mortals, as would seem most like the general spirit of the preaching of the Holy Ghost by the prophets, then these events are yet future, for the kingdoms of wickedness are not yet *overthrown*; the world was never more full of them than now; but in the actual and final coming of “*the kingdom of heaven, at hand,*” as in the text, this work of God Almighty will be for ever done, in the deliverance and glory of his saints, and utter destruction of all his enemies.

## 18. THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH.

Zech. 14:5. “*The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.*”

Inasmuch as the Lord God has never yet “*come*” with “*all the saints*,” but will so come at the last day, to judgment, as expressly foretold by “*all*” the “*holy prophets*,” and inasmuch as this passage of the Lord’s coming with his saints is the same, both in the spirit and the letter, as the same prophecy in the New Testament, it is reasonable to understand it as foretelling the same kingdom of saints coming from heaven, as that called “*the kingdom of heaven, at hand*.”

### 19. THE PROPHET MALACHI.

Mal. 3:1—5. “*The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap. And I will come near to you to judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord.*”

The proof contained in this passage alone, that it was not all fulfilled in Christ’s first coming; and that it includes also his second coming with his kingdom to judgment, may be seen in several particulars, viz. (1.) Christ’s first coming was not so “*sudden*” as will be his second, “*as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west.*” (Mat. 24:27.) (2.) All the wicked could “*abide the day of his*” first “*coming*,” and could even crucify him, as they will not be able to do at his second appearing, when they will cry only to “*mountains and rocks*” for a hiding place, saying, “*for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?*” (Rev. 6:16, 17.)

(3.) In his first coming he did not purify, as by fire, all his living saints suddenly, as in his second he will do in being "*revealed from heaven in flaming fire,*" (2 Thess. 1:8,) when he shall "*burn up the chaff*" and "*the tares,*" gathering the wheat into his "*garner.*" (4.) He did not then "*come near*" his enemies "*to judgment,*" as he will when he shall come again literally to judgment; for while first on earth, he always declined judging, even in the smallest case, though yet he will judge the world in righteousness. (5.) He was not then "*a swift witness against*" sinners of every class here called "*sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers, oppressors,*" and fearless of God, as he will be swift as lightning at his second "*appearing and kingdom*" "*at hand;*" and as he and John always spake of the event in holding it up as a motive for immediate, sudden, swift repentance to every soul not yet altogether prepared by faith in his atoning blood, to stand before him in that great day, however soon or late, the universe shall behold it.

## LECTURE II.

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### TESTIMONY FROM JOHN'S AND CHRIST'S PREACHING.

Mat. 3 : 2, and 4 : 17.

*“ The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

#### THE DOCTRINE

Now to be maintained is the same as in the first discourse, viz. that “ *The kingdom of heaven—at hand,*” as preached by Christ and John, was and is the everlasting kingdom of God; that this kingdom of God, angels and saints at hand, is yet future; that it will come with Christ the Great King to judgment, together with the resurrection, and all the events of that great day; and that all the prophets and apostles on these subjects were designed to be understood as preaching the same “ *kingdom at hand.*”

Aware that this doctrine is not, in all respects, according to the general theology of the age, and that many have rather supposed, that this “ *kingdom of heaven at hand*” was only the christian church, or “ Gospel dispensation,” now, and long already come, the subject will be taken up under the following

#### PROPOSITIONS, VIZ.

I. To establish the truth of the doctrine by an examination of JOHN'S PREACHING, in showing that he uniformly

preached the "everlasting kingdom" of "God at hand," rather than the "Gospel dispensation;" and,

II. To establish the same truth, in showing its harmony with the PREACHING of JESUS CHRIST.

I. The doctrine is to be proved by the PREACHING OF JOHN on the subject.

1. John's calling "*the kingdom*," in the text, by a name as high as "*heaven*," and, indeed, his calling it "*the kingdom of heaven*" itself, is more naturally understood of God's everlasting kingdom in the high heavens, than of the church below, or a mere earthly dispensation.

2. From the beginning to the close of John's preaching, it will be found that he never explained himself as meaning an earthly church or dispensation, by the terms "*the kingdom of heaven*;" and that, in fact, he never said any thing, directly or indirectly, either of the Jewish or christian dispensation passing or coming; leaving us to understand him as meaning literally the very "*kingdom of heaven*" itself, in declaring it at hand; and besides it seems unnatural to call a dispensation, or period of privileges on earth, a "*kingdom*" at all, and especially to call it God's kingdom, while Satan is rather reigning on earth as god of this world, during the period of all this dispensation. (2 Cor. 4: 4.)

3. Both John and Christ, in our text, preached the kingdom of heaven at hand as an *awakening motive to repentance*, saying, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" And what alarming or awakening motive to repentance for dead sinners, has there ever been, or ever will be, in the simple fact of the natural passing away and coming of the different ages or dispensations? In seeing that the actual and full coming of the christian dispensation had nothing in it to arouse and convulse the world, it need only be recollected, that it did not, on coming, produce even ex-

citement enough to furnish us now with a standing record of the precise time when it came, whether at Christ's birth, death, resurrection, ascension, pentecost day, or at the destruction of Jerusalem, said to be about forty years after the pentecost outpouring of the Spirit upon the christian church. But when "*the kingdom of heaven*" itself shall really come, it will arouse and convulse the whole universe, so that all must know eternally, and understand alike, the precise period of its coming. This consideration, of course, is now, has been, and will be truly awakening to mankind, when properly preached, as a motive for immediate repentance, while the christian world is, at this very time, comparatively fast asleep in looking at the Gospel dispensation, or the christian church, in its fallen state, for their awakening motive to "*flee from the wrath to come,*" or to prepare for the kingdom at hand.

4. In the very next words of John's discourse, after the announcement of his text, as it were, "*Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,*" he said unto the unbelieving Pharisees and Sadducees, "*O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.*" (Mat. 3: 7—9.)

These *viper* characters, trusting in their literal Abrahamic descent, to save them "*from the wrath to come,*" it seems, understood John's preaching "*the kingdom*" to come, against sinners, the same as "*the wrath to come,*" and would be baptized as literal Jews, to prepare them for "*the kingdom,*" or for the day of "*wrath to come,*" rather than exercise repentance for it, as John was requiring in his preaching. John then proceeds to rectify their mistake, warning them against thinking of escaping "*the*

wrath to come," by a mere literal relation to Abraham, when nothing but "*works*" on their part, "*meet for repentance*," would prepare them to escape the wrath of the coming kingdom against sinners. This, it will be seen, is as the preaching of John on the text, "*Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" Now, then, if the kingdom then at hand was the Gospel dispensation in John's view, his sermon, or doctrine to those wicked Jews, is very foreign to that of his text; for here he is warning men of, and showing them how to flee from, the wrath of the great day which is to come, instead of agitating them with the subject of earthly dispensations. But if we understand John as adhering to his apparent text in warning sinners of the destruction of the coming wrath of God upon them, to mean the same as his warning them of the coming of the kingdom of God to "*break in pieces and consume all*" other "*kingdoms*," (Dan. 2:44,) then John was consistent, and certainly did preach the everlasting kingdom like Daniel, and not the Gospel dispensation. John continues and says:

5. "*And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore, every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.*" (Mat. 3:10.)

According to this doctrine of John, and, as in our text, Christ is yet to lay the Almighty axe to "*the root of the trees*;" when, as he has himself said of the barren "*fig tree*," in the "*vineyard*"—"Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" (Luke, 13:7.) Understanding this, as is generally done, to set forth the destruction of the wicked, as unfruitful trees in God's vineyard; and all to be accomplished in Christ's coming to judgment, and not before; then, in order to make John's text of the kingdom at hand, harmonize with this doctrine of his, we must understand "*the kingdom at hand*," which he preached, to be that

everlasting kingdom which, in its final sudden coming, with the King and Judge himself, will cut down, or cast down, every unfruitful sinner, even "*into the lake of fire which is the second death.*" (Rev. 20 : 14, 15.) John proceeds :

6. "*I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance ; but he [Christ] that cometh after me, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.*" [Mat. 3 : 11.]

Christ, the mightier than John, already then come, it is true, did afterwards begin to preach the same great doctrine or "*Gospel of the kingdom,*" and did suffer, laying the foundation for the finishing of his work infinitely more mighty in full view of the universe, on coming again, though he never himself baptized any, even with water, (John, 4 : 2,) while there is believed to be nothing afterwards said in the Gospel which can be adduced as clear proof that Christ ever did baptize any with "*the Holy Ghost and with fire,*" at his first coming ; although the Holy Ghost, on pentecost day, did descend in "*a rushing*" manner on the disciples, when "*there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon them.*" (Acts, 2 : 3.) But this was rather the foretold work of the Holy Ghost, than of Christ in his first coming. And yet that Christ will thus baptize, or cleanse his disciples, even the last of them, at his final coming and kingdom, is seemingly proved by a variety of parallel passages. Some of these passages speak of his coming "*suddenly,*" and as "*a swift witness*" "*to judgment*" "*against*" his enemies—when he will be "*like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap,*" to "*purify*" and "*purge*" "*the sons of Levi,*" or the saints. (Mal. 3 : 1—6.) Also of their being finally gathered "*out of all countries*" to be brought into their "*own land,*" (or heavenly Jerusalem, Heb. 12 : 22,) when God shall



“*sprinkle clean water upon*” them, to “*cleanse*” them from “*all*” their “*filthiness*” and “*idols*,” &c. (Ezek. 36: 24—26.) Then they are to be made “*white in the blood of the Lamb*,” (Rev. 7: 14,) or to “*walk with*” Christ “*in white*,” (Rev. 3: 5,) being then “*clothed in white raiment*.” (Rev. 3: 4.) This baptizing, or purifying of the saints, surely they never experience while in the flesh, as the saints in glory are supposed to have experienced, and all others will have done when Christ shall have come again and fulfilled to them all his promises of grace to be given through faith in his name. Then, indeed, he will have finally and fully baptized them all “*with the Holy Ghost and with fire*,” when he shall come “*in flaming fire*,” (2 Thess. 1: 8,) when “*the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat*.” (2 Pet. 3: 12.)

If, then, John, in the above passage of Christ's coming with fire to cleanse his saints, is speaking of the great day of his final coming, as well as including his first, to prepare the way, his discourse still harmonizes with his text of the kingdom coming, and coming to judgment.

7. “*Whose fan is in his hands, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire*.” (Mat. 3: 12.)

This is John's preaching still further of Christ's coming as the Mighty One; and though he has once been in flesh, and wrought miracles, he never in the flesh separated saints and sinners, or the chaff and the wheat, to save the saints and burn up his enemies with unquenchable fire. All evangelical believers understand that Christ will make an end of this great work on his yet future coming with his kingdom, and not before. Then, of course, in this passage also, John preached the future coming of the

kingdom at hand, as an awakening motive to repentance, as impressively as before, and, as it might seem, more so, because in such significant and bold figures he goes into the particulars of the things to be experienced by saints and sinners when the kingdom at hand shall really come.

II. It is to be proved from the PREACHING OF CHRIST, that "*the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*" the special theme of his own and John's discourses, was then, and is now, God's everlasting kingdom, yet coming with Christ to judgment, rather than any thing of a mere earthly dispensation.

1. "*From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" (Mat. 4 : 17.)

These are the express words with which "*Jesus began to preach,*" and they are the very same as those in which John also began to preach the same "*Gospel of the kingdom ;*" of course their meaning must be the same as when preached by John ; so that all our proof that John meant by them the future coming of God's everlasting kingdom, might be brought as proof that Christ also, meant the same, by the same words.

2. "*And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom.*" (Mat. 4 : 23.)

By this testimony, in very close connexion with the preceding passage, it is shown, that Jesus not only "*began*" preaching the kingdom at hand, or "*the Gospel of the kingdom,*" which are understood as the same kingdom, but he *continued* so to preach the kingdom, as an arousing motive for repentance "*about all Galilee,*" so long as he preached at all.

3. It is apparent, from the life and doctrines of all

Christ's followers when he was upon earth, that none of them understood him to mean the Gospel dispensation, by the kingdom of heaven; but that they rather all understood him to mean God's "*everlasting kingdom*," as preached by the prophet Daniel. (Dan. 2 : 44. 7: 14, 27.)

4. CHRIST'S SERMON *on the mount*, comprising the 5th, 6th and 7th chapters of Matthew, appears to be all of it in perfect accordance with his grand text, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*," while understanding this passage as already explained.

This sermon of our Lord is too long to admit of our now entering into the various particulars of it, though it may be remarked in general, that it seems like a very appropriate and impressive carrying out of the leading doctrines of his favorite text, so to call it, with which he began his preaching, as already quoted. It will be seen, that this text, or summary of his doctrine, contained two parts; first the work to be done by sinners; and secondly, the motive by which to awaken them to do it. The work is immediate repentance; and the only sufficiently awakening motive for their doing it, is "*the kingdom of God—at hand*" to bring with it eternal life and glory to every penitent believer, and everlasting shame and contempt to every impenitent unbeliever. That discourse is full of this doctrine from beginning to end, while a considerable part of it is occupied in expounding and enforcing the law of Moses and the Prophets, in regard to the particulars of murder—adultery—divorcement—false swearing—an eye for an eye, &c.—hatred to enemies—alms—prayers—fasting—treasures laid up—judging—golden rule—strait gate—false prophets—and false professors—together with the wise and foolish builders, with the final standing fast of the former, and great fall of the latter. Through all this discourse

the divine Teacher coming "*not to destroy the law*" nor "*the Prophets,*"—" *but to fulfil*"—goes on exposing the false religion of those who trust in a pretended conformity to the letter, or mere externals of the word of God, while he also shows the necessity with all mankind of such a continual life of heart felt, and even perfect obedience to the very spirit of the Bible, as no man ever practised or ever will, even in part, without the true spirit of repentance and faith in God; all the same as a genuine change of heart, or being born of the Spirit. The blessedness or beatitudes of the several descriptions of the righteous, in the introduction of this discourse of Christ, is believed to be the eternal blessedness and glory of all the saints to be given them in the glorious "*kingdom of heaven—at hand,*" rather than any thing they experience in a mere momentary earthly dispensation; even in the best that can be given them while their warfare continues, and they "*must [yet] through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God,*" (Acts 14: 22,) where "*the wicked cease from troubling and the weary be at rest,*" (Job 3: 17.)

5. Another long discourse of our Saviour, embracing the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew, except the first three verses, seems, on carefully examining it, like a further and still more awakening carrying out of the two great doctrines of his, in saying "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"

In his sermon on the Mount, Jesus dwelt altogether the most on *repentance*, the first part of that solemn text or summary of doctrine; while in this, now under consideration, he dwelt almost wholly on the subject of the *kingdom at hand*, the motive as the second part. Although the first part of this discourse, or chap. 24th, is supposed to be equally full of the doctrine of the kingdom, the examination of it will now be omitted in reserving it as the burden

of one or two future discourses particularly bringing into view the prophetic SIGNS of the everlasting kingdom now "*near, even at the doors.*" The next chapter, or second part of this discourse, more fully exhibiting the kingdom at hand, may be examined so far as our limits will permit.

Mat. 25 : 1. "*Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom.*"

As the preceding connexion shows, this is to be fulfilled when Christ shall come, and when his evil servants denying their Lord's being at hand, shall have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers, where "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," (Mat. 24 : 50, 51.) Then, at the last day, "*the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*" or Christ the Bridegroom coming, will be like this earthly marriage at midnight. There is then to be a "*marriage supper of the Lamb,*" (Rev. 19 : 7—9. Mat. 22 : 2—4,) when all the true church as the bride, and Christ as the bridegroom, are to be united as in a marriage, which "*death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,*" &c., shall ever be able to disannul. (Rom. 8 : 38, 39.)

Mat. 25 : 2, 3. "*And five of them were wise and five were foolish. They that were foolish took no oil with them ; but they that were wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.*"

This being also like "*the kingdom of heaven*" in its coming with Christ the heavenly Bridegroom, to the judgment and marriage supper of the Lamb, shows how it will then prove with the two classes of mortals then to be judged. The foolish virgins taking no oil, naturally appears to represent all that class of mankind now, and in all ages, who, with all their privileges, are so "*foolish*" as to

neglect the work of repentance, and all the preparation of heart which the Bible, the Holy Ghost, and their own conscience, tell them is indispensable for a readiness to meet the Bridegroom, in his coming, with the kingdom at hand ; while the wise in taking oil, seem clearly to represent all the true saints from first to last, who by a timely repentance and due preparation of their hearts in obtaining the grace of God, shall be found ready for admission into the kingdom at hand, however soon it shall come with the King, who is the heavenly Bridegroom.

This sleeping of the wise and foolish, till awoken by the midnight cry of the Bridegroom at hand, appears naturally to represent the latter day state of the world, including even the church, all in a state of very great inaction as to a looking out for the kingdom, or Bridegroom at hand. This is called sleeping in various places in the Bible, as "*What meanest thou, O sleeper,*" (Jonah 1 : 6.) "*It is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*" (Rom. 13 : 11.) "*Therefore let us not sleep as do others.*" (1 Thess. 5 : 6.) Such a state of sleep or inaction, even of the church, to precede Christ's final coming, is many times foretold, both by the former and latter Prophets, now more readily understood, perhaps, of the latter. Christ in foretelling the signs of his "*coming and of the end of the world,*" tells of "*iniquity*" abounding, and "*the love of many waxing cold*"—"many offended" and betraying "*one another*"—"false prophets," &c. (Mat. 24 : 3, 10—12,) and of scarcely finding "*faith on the earth*" at his coming, (Luke 18 : 8.) While Paul foretels "*a great falling away first, and that man of sin—revealed, the son of perdition.*" (2 Thess. 2 : 3.)

Mat. 25 : 6—9. "*And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps,*

*And the foolish said unto the wise, give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out, but the wise answered, saying, not so, lest there be not enough for us and you, but go ye rather to them that sell and buy for yourselves."*

Without occasion now to notice the minutia, or sectarian speculations, which have been common concerning this passage, it is amply sufficient to understand it as a most interesting prophecy of Christ himself, that in the last stage of the church on earth, before his coming as the King and Bridegroom of heaven, even while it may be in a state of comparative "*midnight*" darkness, or when "*darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people.*" (Isa. 60 : 1, 2.) There shall be a cry made, sufficient to wake up and arouse to speedy action, the whole living multitudes of the two races on earth, represented by the wise and foolish virgins, till then comparatively asleep, as if not aware of "*the kingdom of heaven—at hand ;*" or, of "*the Judge*" standing "*before the door.*" (James 5 : 9)—And where are we now?—Or might we not, with great propriety, I say, '*Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?*' And, might not the watchman also, answer and say—"*the morning cometh and also the night ; if ye will inquire, inquire ye, return, come.*" (Isa. 21 : 11, 12.) Without here dwelling on this exceedingly interesting topic, it may be said that this cry to be made at midnight, "*Behold, the Bridegroom cometh,*" &c., suddenly and rousingly, to wake up a slumbering world, the saints to holy action ; and the "*despisers*" to "*behold and wonder and perish,*" (Acts 13 : 41.) seems like a prophecy in very striking figures, of the latter day promised "*rain,*" (Joel 2 : 23,) or pouring out of God's "*Spirit upon all flesh,*" &c. (Joel 2 : 28)—and "*times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,*"—just before—"*he shall send Jesus Christ whom the*

heaven must receive, till the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets since the world began." (Acts 3: 19—21.)

The "CRY at midnight," in representing the latter day, pouring out of the Spirit throughout the whole world, so astonishingly upon the church, must apparently be understood also, to include the latter day *preaching of "the Gospel of the kingdom,"* which is "*the everlasting Gospel,*"—"*in all the world—all nations*"—or *every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,*" as by "*an angel flying in the midst of heaven,*" preaching it "*with a loud voice,*" and saying, "*Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come.*" (Mat. 24: 14. Rev. 14: 6, 7.) What a tremendous and universal excitement would it naturally make, to have this all literally fulfilled in regard to a visible, high flying angel, in suddenly doing this great work of the Spirit and word of the Lord, to usher in the eternal judgment! And yet though men alone are commissioned to begin and finish this work, having Jesus always with them, "*even unto the end of the world,*" (Mat. 28: 20.) Christ uses this figure of the flying angel in doing it, apparently to show us how suddenly, how powerfully, and with what astonishing excitement it will be done; when he thus pours out his Spirit, "*to finish the work and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.*"

Thus it may appear that the foretold arousing CRY at midnight, in waking up both the wise and foolish every where, is the same as all this latter day excitement and preparing of the Church, the Bride, to meet, and then for ever to dwell with the glorious Bridegroom, in the kingdom of heaven then come.

Mat. 25: 10—13. "*And while they went to buy, the*



*Bridegroom came; then they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, and said—Lord, Lord, open unto us. But he answered and said, verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."*

Without troubling ourselves or others with speculations on various foreign questions which have sometimes been raised on this passage, it is sufficient for us and others to learn from it, at once, the awfully solemn and interesting things which it was so specially designed to teach, concerning Christ's coming and "*kingdom at hand*," viz. that all the true children of the kingdom, less or more in number, will be ready, by the Gospel, grace and Spirit of God, to meet the Judge, the King, the Bridegroom, at his coming with the kingdom, to go in with him, for ever to enjoy his glorious presence at "*the marriage supper of the Lamb*"—while unbelievers of every age, rank and description, out of the church and in it, through their unnecessary, heedless and wicked delay of repentance, trusting in some false refuge, as a lamp without oil, profession without grace, or hope without evidence, will then be for ever shut out. Their calling upon the Lord to open unto them too late, as strangers to him and his kingdom, faintly shows the unspeakable despair and anguish which must then fill the souls of all unbelievers in that abyss of "*wo, wo, wo*," (Rev. 8: 13,) where hope shall never come.

Mat. 25: 14—30. "*For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them,*" &c. &c.

The remainder of the connexion may be omitted in giving time for a word of remark. "*The kingdom of heaven,*" the Saviour says, is like this account of "*a man travelling into a far country.*" Jesus, though God, was here "*as a man,*" or with a human nature, in the flesh—he has since gone into a far country, "*that is a heavenly.*" (Heb. 11 : 16.) Before his going, he delivered his goods of this world all into the stewardship of mankind as his servants, including even his own atoning sacrifice on the cross, and all the privileges and opportunities necessary, with a faithful improvement on their part, for their severally becoming "*good and faithful servants*" to obtain the everlasting joy of their Lord. "*After a long time,*" now more specially at hand, he will come again and "*reckon with*" them all in a final judgment. Some, according to this instruction, will then be found "*good and faithful servants,*" having squandered nor wasted nothing of their Lord's goods, but rather having doubled, or well improved them, then to be for ever commended of their Lord, and to be made rulers "*over many things,*" or to reign as "*kings*" "*with him,*" over all their enemies, on "*thrones*"—"for ever." (Mat. 19 : 28. 1 Cor. 6 : 2. Rev. 5 : 10. 20 : 4. 22 : 5.) And some of the servants, according to this likeness of things concerning the kingdom of heaven coming, will be found, by their divine Lord, as having made no improvement of all the goods committed unto them, to every individual enough for his capacity. Such unprofitable servants, representing all final impenitent sinners without distinction, shall then at once be deprived of all their privileges, and cast "*into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*" Surely, in all this, Jesus is preaching, not the Gospel dispensation at hand, but the kingdom of himself, which is a kingdom, rather than a dispensation. Or this is the king-

dom of heaven at hand which he began to preach, as his first words, text, or leading subject, and which, as long as he lived, he continued preaching, "all about Galilee," as before mentioned.

Mat. 25 : 31—46. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, (Dan. 7 : 9, 10,) then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat, &c. Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels ; for I was an hungered and ye gave me NO meat," &c.

All this is another striking likeness of the kingdom of heaven at hand, which Jesus began and continued preaching so long as preaching at all ; while, indeed, he here speaks almost without figures, of his coming in his glory with all his holy angels, to sit on the throne of his glory, to gather and judge all nations. How literal he makes all this appear of the coming of himself and kingdom, including all his holy angels, together with the events of the general resurrection, or gathering and judgment on that occasion. The righteous, then, as the true flock of Christ, are to "inherit the kingdom" which he has prepared for them "from the foundation of the world," being himself "a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13 : 8.) This shows, also, that neither the Gospel dispensation, nor any of its appurtenances, were ever in Christ's promise or preaching ; for both saints and sinners are *in* the dispensation as long as they live. But the foretold and promised

kingdom is something which no saints in the flesh have ever yet inherited, and into which they have never yet entered; for if the church is that kingdom, or the Spirit, within the heart that kingdom, or the dispensation that kingdom; so that they have already entered into it, and have it all within the compass of their own breasts, then why are they *yet* to “enter into” it “*through much tribulation*?” and why inherit it in meeting the Judge finally, as though it were a gift never before inherited, and as though none were entitled to it until after all their toils and sacrifices for Christ are performed in a state of trial?

### REMARKS.

*First.* We see, in this latter clause of Christ's discourse on the doctrine of repentance and the kingdom at hand, (Mat. 25 : 31—46,) the dreadfully DEPRAVED CHARACTER, at heart, of every impenitent sinner in the universe, to be cast off in the coming of God's kingdom. Though, externally, they may, many of them, have done many deeds resembling those of the truly righteous; and yet done them from a principle of pride, self-love, natural affection, or human sympathy, all of which are common with impenitent sinners; it will be disclosed, at the final judgment, that there never has been a single unconverted sinner, so living, and so coming to judgment, who, from a moral and righteous principle, has ever done the least good thing, as it regards the moral law, of love to God and love to man. Not one of the multitudes to be cast off, it will then be seen, has manifested the least care for the honor of Jesus, or for his bleeding cause, before them all their days. For when he has been “*hungry—thirsty—naked—a stranger—sick, and in prison*” before them all their days, they have not had regard enough for him, nor for his little ones,

in whom he dwells, by his Spirit, to offer unto him, or them, for his sake, the least degree of aid in his or their suffering cause. Not one morsel of food will it appear that any one of them has ever given, nor one drop of cold water for Christ's sake; while they themselves have always been living upon *his* bounties, and spending them all upon their lusts, rather than do any thing with them purposely and from the heart, to honor or aid him in his, and the sufferings of his people on earth, from principalities and powers always prevailing against them. And yet it appears their sin is so great, that even at the very judgment seat they will have the audacity to deny it all, as they do now, in their practice at least, saying, "*Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst,*" &c., "*and did not minister unto thee?*" After being then distinctly told when, viz. all their lives, they will plead ignorance no longer. And though now they act as if wholly denying their daily treating the blessed Jesus with such shocking abuse, where is their sincerity in denying it while professing to believe his Gospel? and seeing, too, that this trait of their character is among the very things of the Gospel which they profess to believe?

*Secondly.* In this preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom, we see what that CHANGE is, which all true saints experience in their heart, while here in the flesh, to prepare them for the blessedness remaining for them at the coming of the kingdom. By the character finally to be ascribed to them, it appears they must have repented of all that natural character of the wicked, common even with all the saints before repentance. This then appears as an *entire and whole change of heart*, by repentance, by the Spirit and word of God; so that on going to the Judge, or meeting him, they are absolutely, in all respects, even in the

most minute particulars, or in every moral point of view, “*new creatures*,” and diametrically opposite to what they once were without such a change, and opposite to what all incorrigible sinners will be for ever, not having thus submitted themselves to God.

*Thirdly.* We see most distinctly exhibited in this preaching of the kingdom at hand by Christ, that with him the ALL-PREVAILING MOTIVE for immediate repentance, was the prospect of sudden, everlasting, infinite blessedness and glory, to the immediate faithful, penitent, and of sudden, everlasting shame, contempt, and despair, to every one daring to delay repentance a single moment.

## LECTURE III.

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### TESTIMONY FROM FURTHER MENTION OF “THE KINGDOM,” &c. THROUGH THE BOOK OF MATTHEW.

Mat. 3 : 2, and 4 : 17.

“*The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”

#### THE DOCTRINE

OF this discourse will be the same as in the two former, viz : That “*the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*” as preached by Christ and John, was and is, the “*everlasting kingdom of God,*”—is yet future, &c.

#### THE PROPOSITION

Is to present further proof of the doctrine, from the mention of “*heaven*” and “*the kingdom,*” through the book of Matthew, where not already examined, or to be reserved as more appropriate for another occasion.

This plan of proof is now proposed, for its greater brevity, supposed fairness, and sufficient fulness. As the four gospels, or evangelists, are understood to have recorded the same in substance, concerning “*the kingdom,*” while among the four, it is believed that Matthew, on this subject, is the most full, there will be no need of going through with the other three, for proofs either for or against the doctrine now vindicated. The passages will now be taken up in their order.

Mat. 5 : 3. "*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*"

10. "*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*"

12 "*Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.*"

16. "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven.*"

The word "*heaven*" in the latter of these verses, is naturally understood as the "*everlasting kingdom*" of God above, because it is so generally admitted, that the special glorious residence of the Almighty, is thus above rather than elsewhere. And if we admit the principle, that the divine promises are to be fulfilled rather in heaven above, than upon earth beneath, we must admit the kingdom promised in the other three verses, as being their future glorious heavenly abode ; and especially so, because it is positively affirmed by the very letter and spirit of the words expressing the promise, "*The kingdom of heaven.*"

19, 20. "*He (who breaks even the least commandment) shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven ; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven : For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*"

The latter expression of "*the kingdom,*" into which unbelievers can never enter, must, of course, mean God's glorious kingdom : because, scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites, by thousands, have entered into the gospel dispensation ; and seeing the name of "*the kingdom*" is precisely the same in both verses, properly contained in the



same sentence, it would be natural to understand the same by the words in the preceding verse, and especially so, since there is no *greatness* this side of heaven above, on which it would be safe for saints to set their hearts as a promise, since "*he that is least*" below, "*is great,*" in the promise for heaven. (Luke 9 : 48.)

34. "*Swear not at all ; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne.*"

45. "*That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.*"

48. "*Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*"

Mat. 6 : 1. "*Otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.*"

9. "*Our Father which art in heaven.*"

13. "*For thine is the kingdom,*" &c.

20. "*But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.*"

33. "*But seek ye first the kingdom of God,*" &c.

The word "heaven" and "kingdom" in each of these verses, it is supposed, without argument, means literally the high heavens where God resides, gloriously, on his "*throne,*" and in his "*kingdom.*"

6 : 10. "*Thy kingdom come ; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.*"

Although volumes might be written on this important and interesting passage and petition of the Lord's prayer, but a few brief thoughts must here suffice. The "*heaven,*" in this passage, is supposed to be understood generally, as the heavenly kingdom above, where all are now perfect in their obedience to God : and the petition joined with it, that his will may be done as perfectly by all "*in earth*" as now done by holy beings in heaven, it is be-

lieved, will be fully accomplished, when the whole generation of his saints as "*the house of Israel*," shall have properly inquired for it, (Ezek. 36 : 37,) and when the kingdom of God itself shall come. Then, "*we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.*" (2 Pet. 3 : 13.) In this "*new earth*" the saints are "*to be glad and rejoice for ever,*" when "*the former*" earth "*shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.*" (Isa. 65 : 17, 18.) Then, surely, the commandments of God will be done by all "*in earth,*" (the "*new earth,*") as perfectly as now done, by all in heaven and not before.

In favor of the doctrine drawn from the text, that "*the kingdom*" also to "*come,*" as prayed for in the passage before us, is indeed literally God's glorious kingdom of heaven yet to come, rather than the christian church, the Spirit in the heart, or any thing merely for the present life, it may be said :

1. To understand "*the kingdom of heaven*" to "*come,*" to mean only the christian dispensation, or church, might seem to represent Christ as absurdly and profanely borrowing the glorious kingdom itself, and using it as a mere figure of "*earthly things*;" (John 3 : 12,) making the greater the type of the less,—the more dark and mystical, the type of the plain, even attempting to show us plain things, as by figures borrowed from scenes which, themselves, cannot be shown us only by figures from the plain, as "*a shadow of good things to come,*" &c., and only thus seen, "*through a glass darkly.*" (Col. 2 : 17. Heb. 8 : 5. 1 Cor. 13 : 12.)

2. Such an understanding of "*the kingdom*" here, would represent Christ when dictating that prayer as altogether inconsistent with himself, and as though feeling a deeper interest for himself and his disciples, in *earthly*

things, and as though requiring them to feel and pray more daily and specially for them than for the *infinite blessedness* to come with his "*everlasting kingdom*," while elsewhere forbidding all their anticipations and forebodings of good, or evil, "*for the morrow*," &c. (Mat. 6: 34. 10: 28. Col. 3: 2.)

3. So to understand the kingdom in that petition, would represent it as less proper for the use of the saints now than before the gospel dispensation came; "*For what a man seeth, (or hath) why doth he yet hope for,*" or pray for. (Rom. 8: 24.)

4. To understand the kingdom here, to mean the grace, or Spirit of God in the heart, would rather do away the power and spirituality of the Gospel of the kingdom to awaken and convert; in making things *mystical*, which are not so, by figures, and in calling them by names, which God has not called them.

4. But, to suppose Christ here to mean by the kingdom, God's eternal and glorious kingdom, yet to come; and to be "*set up*," as foretold by Daniel, (2:44,) would suppose him to mean precisely what his words naturally imply, both in letter and spirit; as the simplest believer of the gospel of this kingdom would at first understand, except otherwise taught "*by the precept*" or "*traditions of men*." (Isa. 29: 13. Mark 7: 13.)

5. This understanding of the kingdom prayed for, and its being so understood also throughout the Gospel, naturally leaves an original spirituality and power in the pure word of God, both of the former and latter prophets, which might explain to us more clearly the mystery of its being felt by thousands in an audience, like a two-edged sword on first hearing a chapter from it to prick them all in the heart in former times, while now, and for ages, the church

and the world have slept and can sleep, as it were soundly, under the preaching of the kingdom of heaven already long come, with the *christian dispensation*.

6. To understand the "*kingdom*" in this petition for its coming, as the real glorious kingdom yet to come, would show the petition as altogether harmonizing with very many other prayers apparently designed as forms of worship for the saints' use on earth; like this short form of prayer given by Christ while himself in the flesh. The last petition, and last verse but one, in the whole Bible, is for the speedy coming of Christ, i. e. with his kingdom, to judgment; for it seems, according to prophecy, to suppose he will never appear again, for "*every eye*" to "*see him*" (Rev. 1 : 7,) until he comes with his kingdom, or "*all his holy angels with him.*" (Mat. 25 : 31.) While with his saints on earth, he comforted them, just before leaving them, in their sorrows, in prospect of his absence, with the promise of coming "*again*" to "*receive*" them to himself, to remain with him; (John 14 : 3,) encouraging them apparently as a generation of saints to continue, that in "*a little while,*" (John 14 : 19,) he and his Father would come unto them, to abide with them, on their loving him and keeping his "*commandments,*" (John 14 : 23.) In view of such promises as these, the same blessed Jesus, in the Revelation, several times repeats the promise, or prophecy, "*Behold, I come quickly,*" (Rev. 22 : 7, 12,) and then again, as his last words on record till he comes, he says, "*Surely, I come quickly, AMEN.*" Upon this last prophecy or promise, follows the last petition, and last words of the Bible except the benediction. "*Even so, come Lord Jesus.*" (Rev. 22 : 20.)

In perfect accordance with the apparent spirit of these prophecies of Christ's final appearing, and this last prayer

for him to come as quickly to us all as he has promised, there are many others in the Old Testament for the same object. It would likewise appear so from the prophecy, that "*prayer*" is required to "*be made for him continually,*" who "*daily shall be praised.*" (Ps. 72: 15.) Surely this must be Christ, whose final coming should continually be prayed "*for,*" by all them "*who love his appearing,*" (2 Tim. 4: 8,) because were it a mortal Solomon, or any other personage less than Christ, it would be idolatry "*daily*" to "*praise*" him; and besides, the work of *redeeming and saving "souls,"* is ascribed to him in this Psalm, (Ps. 72: 13, 14,) which is appropriate to none but the glorious Redeemer, while "*He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.*" (Ps. 72: 8.) As this glorious personage must continually be prayed for till his final appearing to accomplish all this prediction, and as prayer cannot be made at all "*for*" such a being, as is always needful "*for*" fallen men, the prayer "*for him,*" must necessarily be, "*for him*" to be sent, as God "*shall SEND Jesus Christ,*" (Acts, 3: 20,) or "*for him*" to "*come,*" when his kingdom, of course, will "*come*" with him; as it is frequently foretold, that his angels and saints shall *come* with him, as in the following passage: "*And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee,*" (Zech. 14: 5,) and "*with his mighty angels.*" (2 Thess. 1: 7. 1 Thess. 3: 13. Mat. 24: 30. Dan. 7: 9, 10, 13. Jude, 14th verse. Rev. 19: 11, 14.)

In view of promises of the kingdom to come, as in substance found in passages like these and others very numerous, and in view of the fact that the saints, while "*at home in the body, are absent from the Lord,*" (2 Cor. 5: 6,) and yet when exercising faith, "*having a desire to depart*

and be with Christ, which is far better, (Phil. 1 : 23,) it may be seen, that like Paul, they will feel a continual desire, or "prayer" of heart for Christ to "come," in their "love" of "his appearing," while "ready to be offered," &c. (2 Tim. 4 : 6. 8.) Then why shall not prayer, like the following inspired forms, be understood as prayers for his coming and kingdom at hand, or as speedily as may be? "Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation." (Ps. 38 : 22.) "O Lord, my strength, haste thee to help me." (Ps. 22 : 19.) "Make no tarrying, O my God." (Ps. 40 : 17.) That these and other prayers in the Psalms, are given for the saints, as their forms of worship, like the Lord's prayer, it may be conceived, when it is remembered how very appropriate most of them have long been found to be, to the most spiritually minded saints, at all times and in all conditions; that they are expressed both in the singular and plural number, both for private and social worship; and that some of them are positively so explained, or that they are for Israel's use, or for "Israel" to "say," as follows: "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, NOW may ISRAEL SAY. If it had not been the Lord who was on our side when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick." (Ps. 124 : 1—3.) "Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may ISRAEL NOW SAY. Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth. The plowers plowed upon my back," &c. (Ps. 129 : 1—3.)

If all "Israel," or saints, as the true "seed" of "Abraham," (Gal. 3 : 7. 29,) "may now say" these two Psalms, then why may they not "say" all the others with equal propriety, if they will but be consecrated and spiritual enough to do it, without hypocrisy? And if they "may," then they "may" be continually making "prayer" "for

him" (Christ) to "come;" yea, that he may "make haste"—"make no tarrying"—but "come quickly" with "the kingdom—at hand;" and all in accordance with this petition of the Lord's prayer, "*Thy kingdom come.*"

Another apparent proof that the kingdom, in this petition of the Lord's prayer, is God's everlasting kingdom, and not yet come, is the fact that the petition for its coming is inseparably joined with the petition for God's "will" to be "*done in earth as it is in heaven.*" Now this latter petition is certainly not yet accomplished; neither can it be till the everlasting kingdom comes to finish all the work of redemption; and as these two petitions (so joined together like one, in their natural sense, though by man made into two periods,) seem to imply, that when the kingdom shall come, then God's will in the earth shall be done as it is done in heaven, the conclusion is natural, as expressed by a far famed assembly of the most learned and godly ministers at Westminster, England, about two hundred years ago. They say, that, "*In the second petition, which is, Thy kingdom come, we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed,*" &c., "and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened."

Mat. 7: 21. "*Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*"

"*Every one,*" without saying "*Lord, Lord,*" enter into the Gospel dispensation.

Mat. 8: 11, 12. "*And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*"

"*The kingdom of heaven*" here, must surely be the glorious kingdom, for there only can the saints be gathered

“*from out of all countries,*” (Jer. 32:37,) to “*sit down*” and “*rest from their labors,*” (Rev. 14:13,) with these patriarchs, not in the christian dispensation or church here, but in “*the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven.*” (Heb. 12:23.) All living are in the christian dispensation, without being gathered so far; neither are any “*cast out*” as at the final gathering. (Mat. 25:31, 32, 34, 41, 46.)

These wicked ones, then, to be “*cast out,*” or cast off, are supposed to be here called “*children of the kingdom,*” because then the devil’s kingdom is to be destroyed, while they are of their “*father the devil,*” (John, 8:44,) and belong, of course, to his “*kingdom,*” (Mat. 12:26,) including fallen angels, as well as human sinners, all of whom are mingled among the spirits of saints on the earth, (Ps. 79:1, &c.) to be “*cast out*” finally at the coming of God’s kingdom.

Mat. 9:35. “*And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people*”

While there is nothing in this passage, or its connexion, showing that the “*kingdom*” mentioned in it is the church in the Gospel dispensation, all the preceding proof might be brought in proof that it is rather the “*everlasting kingdom*” yet “*at hand.*”

Mat. 10:7. “*And as ye go, preach, saying—The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”

This passage, though parallel to others already considered, must be more particularly noticed in examining the apostle’s preaching of the kingdom.

Mat. 11:11. “*Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than*



*John the Baptist, notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."*

Although many have supposed, that without question, "*the kingdom of heaven*" here means the present dispensation or church, where all are so much greater than even John while in the Jewish dispensation; there are certainly serious and weighty reasons for questioning the long standing sentiment, such as the following:

(1.) The letter of the language here, calls it "*the kingdom of heaven,*" while it is no where in the Bible explained as any other than God's glorious kingdom.

(2.) Christ here speaks of the kingdom as then *existing*, while the *Gospel dispensation* was not then existing, as learned christians generally agree.

(3.) Christ here declares the "*least in the kingdom of heaven*" to be "*greater than*" the great and holy John the Baptist, who from his birth was filled with the Holy Ghost, which could not be true of the least nor the greatest in the christian dispensation, but is true of the least in the glorious kingdom.

And should it be said, that the greatness of these least ones, is only their greatness in *spiritual* privileges, would there not be a manifest absurdity in calling a man's greatly abused privileges his own personal greatness? especially so when comparing his rank of greatness with that of John, whose greatness was all moral and personal, having nothing to do with special privileges of an earthly dispensation?

But should it be supposed, after all, that Christ *did* mean here the astonishingly superior *privileges*, even of the present age, might there not be a difficulty in answering satisfactorily queries like these?

Wherein were the religious privileges of the Jewish

church so vastly inferior? Was not Christ, with all his redeeming qualifications, and finally coming with his kingdom, as fully foretold and promised as now? (Acts, 3:19—21.) Was he not then a *Lamb slain from the foundation of the world?* (Rev. 13:8.) Was not salvation as freely offered to every returning sinner as now? (Isa. 45:22. 55:1, &c.) Were not love and faithfulness to God the same *way* of salvation then as now? (Ps. 31:23.) Were not the instructions of Moses and the prophets then enjoyed, the same as Paul preached, or the same as now? (Acts, 26:22.) Could not the grace and Spirit of the Lord be then enjoyed in as great a fulness by all the faithful as now? If not, how could John, Simeon, Zechariah, Elizabeth, Anna, and others, have been so abundantly endowed with such gifts in the very darkest stage of the Jewish dispensation? (Luke, 1:15.) Did not "*Abraham*" see Christ's "*day, and was glad?*" (John, 8:56.) And were not the writings of "*Moses and the prophets*" then, powerful as a "*two edged sword,*" or as a witness "*from the dead,*" for the awakening and conversion of sinners then, as well as now. (Heb. 4:12. Luke, 16:27—31.)

Mat. 11:12. "*And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*"

So far as it is proved that the verse preceding this passage speaks of the glorious kingdom of heaven, the same may be said of the kingdom in this, for, being thus united together, they appear necessarily to mean the same kingdom. The *violent*, in taking "*the kingdom of heaven by force,*" will not, of course, be understood of the Gospel dispensation, nor any thing merely as an inheritance below, for the very best things here, are given, or urged,

upon sinners, without their fighting for them; and they never begin any fighting for the kingdom, till by repentance, faith, and "*a covenant—by sacrifice,*" (Ps. 50:5,) they truly enlist under the King's banners. In this way the godly saints, with the "*whole armor of God,*" are to use "*violence,*" and fight the "*good fight,*" (2 Tim. 4:7,) "*not against flesh and blood, but against principalities—against spiritual wickedness in high places,*" (Eph. 6:12, 13,) and although these dark powers will fight with great violence against the very kingdom of heaven itself, in the terrible "*battle of that great day of God Almighty,*" (Rev. 12:7—9. 16:14,) their "*thrones*" and "*principalities*" must all be cast down, "*destroyed and given to the burning flame,*" in that day of the coming of "*the Ancient of days,*" or "*Son of man,*" with the kingdom, or multitudes of heaven. (Dan. 7:9—11.)

Mat. 13:11.—"*It is given you [the saints] to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but unto them [self-blinded sinners] it is not given.*"

This kingdom being too *mysterious* for the knowledge of unbelievers, must be the awfully *mysterious* kingdom above, rather than the Gospel dispensation, which is not so *mystical* to blind mortals.

19. "*When any one heareth the word of the kingdom,*" &c.

24.—"*The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field.*"

31.—"*The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field.*"

33.—"*The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.*"

38.—"*The good seed are the children of the kingdom.*"

41.—“ *They shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend.*”

43. “ *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.*”

44. “ *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field.*”

45.—“ *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls.*”

47. “ *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea,*” &c.

52.—“ *Therefore, every scribe [or teacher] which is instructed into the kingdom,*” &c.

It will probably be allowed, that in these several instances of Christ's showing us “ *the mysteries of the kingdom,*” by figures borrowed from visible things, all in the most unbroken connexion, that he meant the same “ *kingdom*” in each instance. Then as the gospel dispensation and its privileges are best understood without such *mystical* comparisons, it seems altogether the most natural to understand Christ, in all these passages, as instructing us concerning the real heavenly kingdom, and the ways and means given us of obtaining it as our everlasting rest. His showing also, in this connexion, as he does, the everlasting doom of saints and sinners, as in the last harvest of the world, looks like convincing proof that he was there dwelling on the all important subject of his eternal kingdom at hand.

Mat. 16: 19. “ *And I will give unto thee [Peter] the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven,*” &c.

Not having space to be particular on this noted passage, long made as the corner stone of the peculiar faith of the Catholic church, it may just be remarked, that it is Jesus

Christ, and he alone, who still has "*the keys of hell and of death,*" (Rev. 1 : 18,) or "*the key of David; he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth.*" (Rev. 3 : 7.) All the saints also, had the same promise as did Peter, of *binding and loosing* "on earth" and "*in heaven,*" (Mat. 18 : 18,) at their option, showing that Peter had no more promise of power, than others of the faithful, which hinders our understanding this promise to Peter, as giving papal power to *him*, or any other individual mortal. And as it appears that neither Peter nor the other Apostles ever received any keys of authority, or domination, as "*lords over God's heritage,*" (1 Pet. 5 : 3,) during their pilgrimage on earth, is it not at least questionable whether the authorities assumed over the consciences of God's people by *ecclesiastical bodies*, be not a usurpation of power belonging to none inferior to Christ himself? Yet the saints shall *have* the keys of the promise, or shall have power with Christ, not now, where they must strive to be the least in human power; but when Christ shall come "*with power and great glory,*" (Mat. 24 : 30,) when they "*shall sit with*" him on his "*throne,*" (Rev. 3 : 21,) when they shall thus with him "*judge the world,*" and even "*angels,*" (1 Cor. 6 : 2, 3) when having overcome, they shall "*rule the [wicked] nations with a rod of iron,*" &c., (Rev. 2 : 26, 27,) and when they shall "*execute upon them the judgment written, [in the Prophets, &c.]; this honor have all his saints; praise ye the Lord.*" (Ps. 149 : 5—9.)

Mat. 18 : 1.—"*Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven ?*"

3.—"*Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*"

4. "*Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*"

"*The kingdom*" here, as expressed, is one into which unconverted individuals cannot enter ; and, of course, can neither be the visible church on earth, nor gospel dispensation ; both of which are believed to be quite too full now of these very characters. It must rather be understood of God's glorious kingdom, while Christ seemingly was not discussing here the subject of how few, or how many little children, literally, should be counted as visible church members.

23. "*Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants.*"

This begins the long parable of a forgiven servant's taking his fellow servant "*by the throat,*" and ends with the representation of his finally being delivered "*to the tormentors,*" &c., all apparently showing "*the kingdom*" here, to be God's glorious "*kingdom,*" as in the preceding parables.

Mat. 19 : 12.—"*And there are some eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake.*"

14. "*But Jesus said suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*"

23. "*Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.*"

24. "*Again I say unto you, that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.*"

The kingdom, in these several passages, naturally appears the same as where already examined, and must be the glorious "*kingdom,*" rather than a church or dispensation on earth : *First*, Because it positively shuts out all the rich, or money-lovers, like the agreeable young ruler

of the parable. *Secondly*, Because “*eternal life*,” (19:16,) in the parable, stands for the same as entering into this “*kingdom* ;” and, *Thirdly*, Because being “*saved*,” in the same connexion, stands for the final blessedness of heaven. (19:25.)

Mat. 20:1. “*For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.*”

20:21.—“*Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom.*”

The great honor asked for these two brethren, in the kingdom, must be heavenly, as Jesus explains in what follows, when this honor is to be finally given to those “*for whom it is prepared of*” his “*Father*,” (23,) and showing, also, that no dominion on earth shall be exercised among the saints. (24, 25.) The kingdom, in this parable of the house-holder and his hired laborers, is naturally understood as in the former parables.

Mat. 21:25. “*The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?*”

31.—“*Verily I say unto you, [Jewish priests,] that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.*”

43.—“*The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*”

The “*heaven*” in the first of these passages, is the high “*heaven*,” as supposed, all admit. The “*kingdom*” in the next, shutting out wicked priests and elders, in receiving penitent harlots, must of course be God’s glorious “*kingdom*,” rather than a dispensation or church below, where pharisees, &c., are not thus always shut out; while the kingdom taken away and given, would seem like the

everlasting privation of the wicked, and gift of heaven itself to the saints, when finally given to them all at the last day, rather than any reward given to men for the moment in the flesh, before the time spoken, when justice shall be rendered to all.

Mat. 22 : 2. “ *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his son.*”

30. “ *For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.*”

In the first of these verses, “ *the kingdom of heaven,*” or the way shown by figures how it is to be obtained, is understood the same as in the former parables of this Gospel, while “ *heaven,*” in the latter verse, is mentioned most literally.

Mat. 23 : 9. “ *And call no man your father upon earth ; for one is your Father which is in heaven.*”

13. “ *Wo unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the kingdom of God against men,*” &c.

22. “ *And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God.*”

The “ *heaven*” twice mentioned here, is used most literally, while in the other verse it is apparently shown how the ungodly example of exalted hypocrites, is now, and always was, the greatest stumbling block or hindrance in the way of men’s faith, and entering into the glorious kingdom of God, which ever has been known on earth.

Mat. 26 : 29.—“ *I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.*”

26 : 64.—“ *Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*”



“*The kingdom,*” and “*heaven,*” in these verses, seem so literally the kingdom and clouds, or hosts of heaven finally coming, that all must so understand it.

Mat. 28 : 2.—“*The angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone,*” &c.

28 : 18. “*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given to me in heaven, and in earth.*”

The “*heaven*” of both these verses, is clearly enough “*the kingdom of heaven at hand,*” and coming with Christ the King, *quickly, “suddenly,” “swiftly,* as “*the lightning,*” and “*as a thief in the night.*” And none can tell how soon.

Thus we have examined all the testimony in the book of Matthew, on the subject before us, where the words “*heaven*” and “*kingdom*” are used, except a few passages appropriate and reserved for other divisions of the subject.

### REMARKS.

If the discussion thus far has been fair, reasonable and scriptural, as designed, then it is true, that in all the preaching of Christ and John the Baptist, they were always holding up most prominently the great concerns of “*the kingdom of God;*” its *coming,* and its being “*at hand,*” in good earnest, as the most powerful, awakening, and converting motives they could command, by which to excite and persuade us all to the most speedy, swift repentance, and holiness of life, through faith in Christ, as a preparation for that day.

It is also true, if the discussion has been fair, that so far as we have been understanding these things of “*the kingdom,*” to be spoken only of the gospel dispensation, or church on earth, we have been deceived, misled, and fall-

en asleep over the subject. How then it becomes us all, within and without the church, deeply to realize that it is now "*high time to awake out of sleep,*" and to join in all scripture efforts to raise the midnight cry so long foretold, "*Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him,*" that with the gift of the Spirit, every where poured out in answer to prayer, "*the gospel of the kingdom*" may go to the ends of the earth as by the rapidity and power of the angel flying in the midst of heaven, to preach it every where, as Jesus did, saying—"*The time is fulfilled! the kingdom of God is at hand! Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.*"

## LECTURE IV.

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### COUNTER ARGUMENTS PRESENTED AND ANSWERED.

Mat. 3:2. 2Pet. 3:4.

*“The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” — “Where is the promise of his coming?”*

#### THE DOCTRINE

To be supported on this occasion, is as before, that the kingdom of heaven at hand, as preached by Christ and John, was and is the everlasting kingdom of God, &c., and that it is still at hand, according to various of the signs of it at present fulfilling.

But as there are doubtless many, in these “*last days*,” as Peter foretold, who would rather “*be scoffers*” at this doctrine on hearing it stated, and many perhaps of the more serious, who being “*blinded*” may join with the scoffers, and say—“*Where is the promise of his coming?*” it is no more than reasonable, in attempting to “*prove all things*,” that the testimony on the other side should be fairly heard and answered, so far as can be done in a single discourse.

#### THE PROPOSITION,

Therefore, is, to examine some of the most common and supposed weighty OBJECTIONS against the doctrine that Christ, with his everlasting kingdom, is now verily “*at*

*hand*;" and against the belief that Christ, John, or any other prophet, meant to be understood as preaching such a doctrine.

OBJECTION 1. "*Where is the promise of his coming?*" By this question, as foretold by the apostle in the text, and its connexion, the unbelievers of the doctrine now before us, would seemingly be understood as considering it one of their strongest arguments, that there are no scripture promises, or predictions of any such day, or of Christ's coming "*at hand*."

But Peter himself has most effectually answered this cavil of the "*scoffers*," in the same connexion. Before stating this question, he informs us of his object in both his epistles, and that it is to stir up our "*pure minds by way of remembrance*," i. e. to "*be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets*," and by "*the apostles*." (2 Pet. 3 : 2, 3.) Here, as his subject of the Lord's coming and day of judgment, he seems to say at first, that the prophets, and apostles before, had foretold the same. Thus he considered that there *was* a "*promise*," repeatedly spoken by the Old and New Testament prophets, of the Lord's coming with the great day. These promises of Christ's coming have been so fully noticed in the preceding discourses, that it seems needless now to repeat them; yet it may be mentioned again, that this same Peter, on another occasion, said that God had foretold, or promised Christ's coming again at "*the restitution of all things, by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began*," (Acts 3 : 20, 21.) Then Peter, in answering this cavil, immediately says,— "*But the day of the Lord [Christ] will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise*," &c., (2 Pet. 3 : 10,) describing also, in terrible figures, the events of that great day.

OBJECTION 2. “*For since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*” (2 Pet. 3: 4.)

This, as Peter informs us, is another of the scoffing cavils of “*the last days,*” against Christ’s coming “*at hand.*” Like infidels indeed, they roundly deny the Lord’s having done any thing since the “*creation,*” which can be understood as a sign that such a day is any nearer now, than it ever was. But Peter proceeds at once, to answer the cavil, and says—“*For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God [or according to prophecy] the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water, and in the water, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished;*” (2 Pet. 3: 5, 6,) giving us next to understand, that the destruction of the flood is a sure sign since “*the creation,*” that the day of “*fire,*” of “*judgment and perdition of ungodly men,*” will surely “*come as a thief in the night.*” (3: 7.) But of all this, the unbelievers preparing not for it are willingly ignorant, i. e. their ignorance is wilful, and their guilt is none the less for their wilfully closing their eyes against the truth. Peter here might have mentioned many other awakening things since “*the creation,*” which have taken place, as sure signs that Christ will yet so come to destroy his enemies; and on many other occasions he did so, some of which we have already noticed. The first coming of Christ—of John—Christ’s wonderful works—his offering himself a sacrifice for his people—his resurrection—his ascension, and subsequent pouring out of the Spirit on the church, &c., were great things. In Peter’s day these were great signs, which had but just begun to exist, showing the day of the Lord “*at hand.*” And now there are many additional things which are *not* as they were from

“*the creation,*” showing the kingdom verily “*at the doors.*” But these are reserved for another occasion.

OBJECTION 3. It is said, that all these predictions were given two or three thousand years ago, and not fulfilled yet in the Lord’s coming; and that, therefore, they cannot be understood as foretelling an event then “*at hand,*” which has not yet come.

In the blind conceptions of spiritual things, by carnal men, this argument looks plausible. For it implies that if the Lord were really, on those occasions, giving a promise of his own coming and kingdom at hand, he has, to say the least, been very “*slack concerning*” such a promise in not having come before now. But Peter also answers this specious cavil, and says—“*The Lord is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*” (2 Pet. 3 : 9.) Here Peter indirectly affirms, that the promise of the Lord to come, *is* for his coming finally to judgment; and that although he has waited so long before coming, it is not to be imputed to him as slackness, as “*scoffers,*” or “*some men count*” it, but rather, because of his great mercy, he is “*not willing that any should perish,*” &c. But though he has waited in mercy now 1800 years longer, he will not always wait, so that this long waiting is no sign that he will continue to wait—“*But the day of the Lord WILL come as a thief in the night,*” &c. (3 : 10.)

OBJECTION 4. It may be urged still that there is an impropriety in saying that an event is “*at hand*” thousands of years before its coming.

Although this argument may be viewed as a direct impeachment of the Lord’s perfect and holy ways of instructing us on spiritual things, in supposing him necessarily

like short sighted and carnal beings, a word of explanation may here be given in answer to the objection.

(1.) In a sense, infinitely more important than mortals can conceive, from the language of those predictions they *have* been fulfilled to all who have since met their Judge, and that, too, immediately after first hearing them. And could the real condition of sinners already perished, be seen by scoffers as it is, or could those sinners come back for a moment to tell living "*scoffers*" how they met the Judge in a "*great day*" to them, would it not be likely to hush the present flattering song of the great day yet "*far away*."

(2.) "*The great day*" must be so preached "*at hand*," because of the dreadful threatening against a contrary course,—"*Wo to them that are at ease in Zion—ye that put far away the evil day*," &c. (Amos, 6: 1—3.) "*If that evil servant shall say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming*," &c. He must "*have his portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*." (Mat. 24: 48—51.) Who then shall dare *openly* to avow this infidel doctrine?

(3.) Peter has himself still further explained the Lord's waiting so long after declaring the great day "*at hand*," by saying that, "*One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*." (2 Pet. 3: 8.)

(4.) The prophets spake prophetically, or prospectively, in declaring "*the day of the Lord at hand*," i. e. they almost uniformly connected it with the previous "*signs*," as Christ did, so that when those "*signs*" shall appear, then it may be positively known to believers that the day "*is near, even at the doors*." (Mat. 24: 33.)

OBJECTION 4. "*This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled*." (Mat. 24: 34.) By many

it is argued, that this passage proves clearly, that all the predictions of Christ's coming again, "*as the lightning*"—"in the clouds of heaven," &c., were fulfilled forty years after given, in Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem, by the Roman army, before the passing away of that "*generation,*" as profane history is said to prove, so that now we are not to look for any proof of Christ and his kingdom "*at hand,*" from his own foretelling his coming, as recorded in Mat. 24th, Mark 13th, Luke 17th and 21st.

In answer to this, it may be said, that profane history does *not* prove that Christ has ever yet come like "*lightning,*" and "*with the clouds of heaven.*" Though profane history is not admitted at all as a rule of interpreting the spirit of the word in this discussion; if it were, it surely would fail of proving that Christ so came at that siege of mere flesh and blood, or human carnage, except as he was present at the place, continually *before* and *after*, ever since. No profane writer, it is believed, has ever stated the fact of Christ's "*appearing*" from heaven, to order, to witness, or to approve of the human butchery of such a scene. The histories we have of the scene, simply state the facts of the carnage, and there leave it, without a syllable of *Christ's* being there to order the battle. Then, to affirm that this human siege was the fulfilling of the great things foretold of Christ's wonderful coming from heaven, would spiritualize those spiritual things into mere carnal things. It would also adopt as a precedent, or rule of interpretation, that Christ set us the example of borrowing spiritual things, or the judgment scenes, as mere types of things not spiritual, as if, in his view, the latter were so much more important than the former, for waking us all up to prepare to meet the judgment. Indeed, such a precedent violates, at once, all the rules of interpretation which could be mentioned, except



such as would reject the things of the Spirit altogether, which belong to the word.

But, in further reply to the argument, that those prophecies of Christ's coming were fulfilled 1800 years ago, because to come to pass before the passing away of the "*generation*" there mentioned, it may be said that this argument is predicated on a mere human "*tradition*," or interpretation of the word "*generation*," in the passage, the correctness of which tradition we do not admit, viz. that the word means an "*age*," as if Christ had said, that "*age*" should not pass away till all those, his solemn prophecies, should be fulfilled. In modern days, such arguing is called begging the question, rather than come on to premises admitted by the opponent. If the word "*generation*" there, does not mean an age, then the argument drawn from the opinion that it does, proves nothing of the fulfilling of the prophecy in that age, or 1800 years ago.

In showing that the word "*generation*" there, did not mean that age, it may be said that the events did not take place in that age, have never yet taken place, and are such events as never *can* take place, till "*The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;*" and further, there is another meaning to the word "*generation*," allowed by all, in our language, which, if given to it here, makes it perfectly consistent with the solemn prophecy where it stands, leaving no contradiction nor obscurity on the connexion, and does not destroy its awakening power, as in case of calling it that particular *age of the world*. This other definition of the word is, that it means a *genealogy, lineage, or race*; and if this were what Christ meant by the word "*generation*," in this passage, and if he were speaking of the genealogy of either the righteous or the

wicked, that "*generation*" is not *yet* passed away, nor will it be, till indeed, Christ shall himself come, as he said, "*in the clouds of heaven,*" with "*power and great glory.*" While there is much other plain proof that our Saviour meant a genealogy, not an age, by the word "*generation,*" it more naturally comes into another discourse, where the whole connexion is to be examined.

OBJECTION 5. "*There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.*" (Mat. 16 : 28.)

This passage concerning Christ's coming in his kingdom, is supposed by many to be satisfactory proof, that all he meant by such expressions, and by his "*kingdom—at hand,*" was simply the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, within forty years; and before the actual death of some of his then living hearers. In answer to which it may be said, that according to the next four verses of the connexion, this prophecy of Christ, was actually fulfilled within "*six days after,*" instead of being delayed forty years to the reputed overthrow of a literal city. Of course its fulfillment, was not the passing away of the Jewish dispensation, being all done, immediately, and while it continued. The next verse explains the subject by saying—"*And six days after, Jesus taketh Peter, James and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain.*" (Mat. 17 : 1.) Here Christ was "*transfigured*" and made to appear unto them gloriously, as his final coming is figuratively represented, or in vision, (Rev. 1 : 13—16. 19 : 11—16,) when there appeared unto them also, "*Moses and Elias,*" already then glorified subjects of his spiritual kingdom, or "*kingdom of heaven—at hand.*" These subjects of the kingdom, it is said, "*appeared in glory.*" (Luke 9 : 31.) Peter himself so understood this vision. Thus he after-

wards spoke of it, in one of his epistles, saying—“*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you, the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty,*” &c. (2 Pet. 1 : 16.) Accordingly Peter and the other two had seen so much of the real glorious spiritual kingdom of Christ, and him in his glory for a mere moment, while they were in the flesh ; and before tasting death. But no such glories were seen by any one at Jerusalem’s overthrow, so far as appears by any thing written on the subject ; while the signs just before the siege, according to Josephus, are not at all the same as foretold by Christ, to precede his final coming. More than this, John, one of the three, who saw Christ’s transfiguration, it is said, lived sixty years longer, and saw, as recorded in the Revelation, all the various things of Christ’s coming and kingdom, with all its glory, having nothing to do with the change of mere earthly dispensations. All this, it may seem, increases the proof, that the great burden of Christ’s prophecies of his coming with all his kingdom has never yet been fulfilled, and will only be fulfilled in the end of all things now “*at hand.*”

OBJECTION 6. “*The kingdom of God is come unto you.*” (Mat. 12 : 28.)

This expression from our Saviour’s own lips, it is supposed by some, sets the question beyond all doubt, that even then, his kingdom or the gospel dispensation had already come, and that no words could more expressly declare it. But in seeing that Christ did not mean by this expression, that the gospel dispensation had then come, we need only recollect that this dispensation had *not* then come ; neither had the Jewish dispensation passed away to make room for it ; neither had Christ then suffered, and could not, of course, have declared a dispensation come, which had *not*

come, without denying the fact of its being "*impossible for God to lie.*"

Yet to understand clearly what Christ *did* mean by the expression of "*the kingdom—come,*"—it will be necessary to understand the design and bearing of the argument, from which this short passage is detached. He was refuting the wicked and foolish sophistry of the Pharisees, to whom he was then speaking. They, like other Jews and infidels, denied his divinity as the Messiah foretold by the prophets; and to sustain their unbelief against his mighty miracles before their eyes, even his casting out devils; when they could think of nothing else to say, in the form of argument, they entangled themselves by saying—" *This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.*" (24 verse.) Thus, in their dilemma, they admitted more than they were aware, even that Christ had actually cast out devils, still in denying his almighty power by which he had done it, they madly affirmed that he had done it by the power of Satan. This extorted admission from them that Christ had cast out devils, gave him an opportunity to confute and confound them on their own ground, as his manner usually was, on such occasions. He then first shows them the falsehood and absurdity of their own argument against his power; by its contradicting itself; as though they thought that Satan would naturally cast out Satan; or attempt to destroy his own kingdom, like the falling of a house by its dividing against itself.

Then having clearly convicted them of the falsehood of their charge of his having only Satanic power to cast out Satan, while still they had virtually admitted that he had done such a work—it followed, of course, that in denying his own power to do it, they must, in order to be consistent

with themselves, admit also, that he had done it "*by the finger of God,*" whose power, as Jews, they did not openly deny.

The force of Christ's argument, thus far, is simply this: if he had actually cast out devils with power sufficient, not his own, not Satan's, the first of which they had just professed to believe, the latter he had just proved; then it followed, of course, according to their own argument, that he had done it by the power of God, as no other power could do such a work. Being then convicted by Christ, of virtually admitting, though they did not mean it, that he had cast out devils by the power or Spirit of the Almighty, whose kingdom they had been taught by Daniel and others would finally come, he closes his argument by an expression including the words now before us, viz. "*But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.*" This conclusion seems to show, that their admitting what they did, and denying what they did, was inadvertently admitting more than he was preaching, as he only preached the kingdom of God "*at hand,*" exhibiting his miracles as a proof of it, which proof they denied, while, in their absurd argument against him, they had, as it were, admitted the power of that kingdom already "*come unto*" them.

OBJECTION 7. "*The kingdom of God is WITHIN YOU.*" (Luke, 17 : 21.)

This disconnected part of a sentence from the words of Christ, has been used again and again, and probably supposed from time immemorial, as an argument, or positive proof from Christ himself, that the kingdom he preached "*at hand,*" was something of the Gospel dispensation already come, rather than the everlasting kingdom yet to come, which Daniel and other prophets had foretold.

But this declaration of the coming of the kingdom, was

made too soon, as in the other case, to be understood of the christian dispensation then already come; for Christ was then living to make the declaration, being himself and hearers still in the Jewish dispensation not then passed. Then, why might not Christ rather mean the Jewish than the christian dispensation, by saying, "*The kingdom of God is within you?*" And is there not something manifestly absurd, or very unnatural at least, in the idea of either a dispensation, or such a kingdom's, finding a lodgment within the heart of an individual, seeing that the kingdom necessarily includes, not only the "*King eternal,*" but also the innumerable multitudes of the heavenly hosts, while a dispensation is a mere period of time on the the earth? Sure, in reality, an individual can never contain either a dispensation, a church, or a kingdom of any kind.

But, it may be replied, that this is an unfair way of treating the argument, and that it is only maintained that the *Spirit*, or *power* of the kingdom of God, had then come, and was within the saints, the same as their now having the Spirit or kingdom in them. It may be answered, that the Spirit, or grace of God, in the heart of an individual, and the true kingdom of God in all its parts, are certainly too different from each other to be expressed by the same terms. It should be recollected, that wherever the prophets describe the kingdom of God, or the scenes of its coming, they speak of it as something *terrible, mighty, glorious*, and sometimes as connected with *armies, horses, horsemen, chariots, earthquakes, hail, lightnings, thunderings, &c.*, while they rather speak of the Spirit of God which comes to dwell with the saints, as though a "*still small voice.*" Neither is it the office of the Spirit to be King, or to order the kingdom with him, on going to dwell

with mortals. This is rather the prerogative of the Great King himself, who will bring his kingdom with him when he shall come again, though he has said, his "*kingdom is not of this world.*" (John, 18:36.)

More than this, were it admitted that the indwelling of the Spirit with individuals, *was* the same as having the kingdom in them, the argument from the passage fails again, when it is recollected that they were Pharisees and wicked men, to whom the words in the passage were exclusively addressed. "*The Pharisees*" had just "*demande*d of him when the kingdom of God should come," and he was directly answering them, and speaking to none others, and they surely did not have even the least degree of the Spirit of Christ, or spirit of his kingdom in them, for they rather had the spirit of the wicked one in them, as Christ on another occasion told them so expressly, saying "*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.*" (John, 8:44.) Neither was our Saviour, at that time, discoursing on the *subject* of the Spirit's silent operations on the minds of individuals. From the first he had been preaching the Gospel of the kingdom to come, or "*kingdom of God at hand,*" but had said little or nothing of the office of the Spirit, or Comforter, except in private to the saints, and specially directed to them. Of course, the Pharisees would not naturally inquire about the coming of the Spirit. They had heard Christ only on the subject of "*the Gospel of the kingdom,*" which he had continued to preach "*about all Galilee.*" (Mat. 4:23.) Accordingly, on that subject, the minds of the Pharisees were excited, and on no other, and they wished to know when the great event would come, as in scripture the inquiry was frequently made, and is now, by those whose minds are called

to the subject. So Jesus understood them to inquire on the subject of his kingdom, and not about his Spirit. Jesus, of course, answered them with information of his *kingdom*, not saying a word about the coming of any thing else; so that it might look like wresting his words to make them mean the *Spirit* only for the kingdom, which he every where preached as coming, and as being "*at hand.*" But,

If inquired, what then did Christ mean by the kingdom's being "*within*" the Pharisees?

It may be replied, that as he could not, consistently with positive facts, mean, that either the kingdom, or Spirit of God was *within* their individual hearts; neither did he say so; he must necessarily mean something else by the word "*within,*" in the passage. And here it may be remarked, that another translation of the word has been given, and long handed down to us by Bible critics as reasonable; which may be seen by consulting the marginal readings, found in the Polyglott and other reference Bibles. According to this other reading, or translation, the passage stands—" *The kingdom of God is AMONG you.*" This is altogether different from the absurd position of its being *in* their individual hearts.

Christ's answer to the question of the Pharisees, was as follows,—"*The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say lo here ! or lo there ! for behold the kingdom of God is within [or among] you.*" (Luke 17: 20, 21.) This naturally appears to mean that the future coming of the kingdom, for which they inquired, would not be visible, "*with observation,*" or with "*outward show,*" as our translators tell us, in the marginal reading. Too many would make but little of Christ coming, as though it would be only while men were in the flesh; one saying "*Lo here !*" or Christ has come in this thing; and ano-



ther saying "*Lo there,*"—or Christ has come in that event ; as if his coming and kingdom would be something for them to gaze on, as public shows are seen to gratify the sight. Immediately in this answer of Christ to the question concerning the time for his kingdom to come, he tells the Pharisees, that when he shall come, it will be like the "*lightning*" from "*one part under heaven*" to the other.

If it be admitted, as seemingly every where explained, that Christ's kingdom will come with him to judgment ; then it will come as much like "*lightning*" as himself, and quite too suddenly "*within*" or "*among*" his enemies, for them to gaze upon it in the flesh, and to treat the subject any longer as only worthy of their curiosity, or speculation. For then, suddenly, they will for ever be destroyed by it; never again to say—*Lo here !* or *Lo there !* in regard to it ; as if it might come, and exist on the earth, and sinners afterwards remain alive, to cavil and speculate about when it came. And what else but this very spirit of "*Lo here !*" and "*Lo there !*" about Christ's coming and kingdom, can we understand, by the present variety of speculations on the subject, which for a long time have been common ? One has seemed to say, in regard to it, "*Lo here !*"—"Don't look for the kingdom yet to come, for here it is—it came at Christ's first advent." Another has seemed to say—" *Lo there !*"—"it came at pentecost day, in that great pouring out of the Spirit to set up the kingdom or the church." Another, "*See here !*"—"it came when Christ came to destroy Jerusalem, and to make an utter end of the Jewish dispensation."—Another "*See there !—the kingdom of God is within*" your own heart ;—"it comes at every man's death," &c.

Is it possible to conceive of any other events or sayings in christendom, which are now so general on the subject of Christ's coming as these, which could be a more remark-

able and exact fulfillment of this prophecy concerning the contradictory and infidel speculations of Christ's second coming to be witnessed in the latter days, or just before his glorious appearing? And is not this fulfilment a witness not to be set aside, that the kingdom, and all its accompanying events, will now very suddenly be "*among*," or upon all the unbelieving to destroy them suddenly in hell except they repent and believe the Gospel?

#### REMARKS.

1. Should it be allowed, that the doctrine of the text is thus far proved, viz. that the kingdom preached by Christ and John, was only God's future coming everlasting kingdom, then it follows, that all our thoughts, conversation and prayers about the kingdom of God "*in our hearts*," have been improper, unscriptural, and very far from "*that form of sound words*," which we ought rather to "*hold fast*." (2 Tim. 1 : 13.)

2. On the same ground there is impropriety and even heresy in the doctrine that God's kingdom is "*now among us*," or that we ourselves are already *in* it, while the very prayers that God would "*build up his kingdom in our hearts and throughout the world*," with desires at the same time, that Christ may *not* yet come with his kingdom to judgment, would be also heretical, and making comparatively very light of the preaching of Christ and the prophets while on earth, concerning the eternal kingdom of God soon to be set up.

3. Finally, does it not become us at least, faithfully to search the Scriptures, every one for ourselves, particularly that we may fully and fairly understand the doctrine of the real kingdom of God preached by Christ and the prophets, so that if, indeed, the false prophet has long filled our minds with heresy about it, we may turn from it immediately and with all our hearts.

## LECTURE V.

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### TESTIMONY FROM THE APOSTLES' PREACHING.

Mat. 10 : 5—7.

*“ These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, but go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

### THE DOCTRINE

OF this discourse will still be, that “ *the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*” as preached by Christ and John, was and is God’s “ *everlasting kingdom*” yet to come, with all the events of the judgment, now “ *at hand,*” which will now be discussed under the following

### PROPOSITION, VIZ.

To show that the apostles of Christ so understood him, and that from first to last they preached substantially the same nearness of the “ *great day of the Lord,*” as did the former prophets; and the same “ *kingdom of heaven—at hand,*” and this *after* the coming of the christian dispensation, and as clearly as Christ and John had done it *before*, and to show this by examining,

I. Their INSTRUCTIONS given them by CHRIST at the commencement of their work.

II. Their MANNER OF PREACHING, as found in the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES; and,

III. Their MANNER OF WRITING AND PREACHING, as found in their EPISTLES.

Before proceeding to the scripture proof, as proposed, let it be considered that the apostles had been constant and attentive hearers of Christ's preaching "*the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*" while he continued to preach, that being so much with him, and consecrating themselves wholly to him, and to his cause, they would naturally understand correctly his meaning in preaching "*the kingdom.*" It being apparent, then, as examined in former discourses, that Christ did uniformly preach a kingdom yet to come, it appears reasonable to conclude that the apostles so understood him, and felt bound to follow his example in preaching, at his bidding, the same "*Gospel of the kingdom,*" or the same kingdom at hand.

I. It is to be shown, from CHRIST'S INSTRUCTIONS to his apostles how to preach his "*Gospel of the kingdom*"—"at hand"—that they must necessarily have understood it of the "*everlasting kingdom*" of God yet to come, instead of the Gospel dispensation, or any thing else already now come, and that this would require them also to preach the same glorious kingdom.

1. Let us, then, begin with the text chosen on this occasion. This passage, and its connection, seem to contain Christ's directions to his apostles how to preach his Gospel as fully as any where to be found. Here Jesus expressly directed the "*twelve*" to go forth to their work of preaching, saying unto them, "*And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" These are precisely the same words as those with which Christ and John had

commenced, and substantially continued preaching as an exciting motive to repentance. This instruction of Christ to his apostles was no where, in any sense, counteracted.

To see still clearer the meaning which Christ attached to "*the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*" in the text, and as the apostles must have understood, it would be well to look over the entire chapter of forty-two verses, containing this text. The whole of it is occupied with Christ's instructions to them on sending them out. By such an examination of the whole 10th chapter of Matthew, it will be seen that the continual burden of his soul, which he was then committing to them, was the great interests of his own final coming and kingdom, which they must faithfully preach above all other considerations. This they were directed to do, as means of sinners' repentance, and final salvation in the great day of his coming and kingdom. In the midst of these instructions Christ says:

*"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake ; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another ; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come. (Mat. 10:22, 23.)"*

This shows that Christ was then instructing his ministers, as a genealogy, or race, even "*to the end,*" or till his own final coming, which would be as soon as their having preached "*the kingdom—at hand,*" as he then bid them, "*over all the cities of Israel,*" or "*in all the world,*" as "*a witness to all nations,*" when "*the end shall come,*" (Mat. 24: 14,) or to "*every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,*" when "*the hour of his judgment is come.*" (Rev. 14: 6, 7.) All these things of the preaching of "*the Gospel of the kingdom,*" till "*the end of the world,*" or "*the hour of God's judgment,*" appear to show,

that Christ, in all this message to his ministers, was instructing them all, descending from age to age, from that time till his final coming at "*the end of the world,*" to continue preaching the doctrine of his "*kingdom—at hand,*" as he had himself preached it. It may be seen here, that Christ spake in this message, as though the period when the kingdom should come, "*the end,*" and the time for "*the Son of man*" to "*be come,*" are all the same period. Then, in all his preaching and instructions to his ministers how to preach, he was perfectly consistent, and from first to last held out no other awakening motives to repentance than "*the kingdom—at hand,*"—" *the end of all things,*"—his "*coming,*"—" *the hour of God's judgment,*"—" *the resurrection,*" &c., all belonging to the same period. So his ministers then understood the commission of the Lord to go and preach, saying, "*the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" Then why should it not be now so preached to every creature?

2. "*And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.*" (Luke, 9 : 2.) "*And say unto them the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*"—" *And be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*" (Luke, 10 : 9, 11.)

This is Luke's record of Christ's directions to his apostles how to preach the kingdom of God, as having "*come nigh*" unto men. This is naturally understood to signify the same as its having come *so* nigh as to be "*at hand*"—as expressed on other occasions repeatedly. In the same connexion, Christ is instructing his apostles to continue thus preaching to the wicked, as a motive for their repentance for whom the coming day of judgment would be more intolerable than for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, and others who must "*be thrust down to hell,*" should they

not repent. (Luke 10 : 13—15.) In all this connexion, Christ is instructing his apostles, that *the kingdom at hand—the day of judgment*—and sinners being *thrust down to hell*, are all one and the same awakening motive, to be always preached for the repentance of hardened sinners.

3. “*Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*” (Mat. 28 : 19, 20.)

This is Christ's further instruction to his apostles and ministers, given *after* his crucifixion and resurrection ; and are his last words, or valedictory address on leaving them, to go away till coming again with his “*kingdom*” at “*the end of the world.*” Seeing that Christ is to be spiritually with his ministers, there instructed, till “*the end of the world,*” it is apparent that all of them are to receive , and should obey that instruction, to preach “*the kingdom of heaven—at hand*” as Christ had before “*commanded*” them, “*even unto the end of the world,*” and so long to expect his all-sufficient co-operation in doing the work. In this last message, and at its very close, the “*end of the world*” is still his theme, and the great burden of his soul, and which he would have uppermost upon the minds of all his followers. In saying, “*Lo ! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,*” he apparently speaks of the kingdom, or the end so near, that for aught they knew, their own short lives, who then lived, might not expire till the actual and final coming of the great day. Seeing the plainness and great solemnity of Christ's uniformly impressing these things on the minds of his followers, is it not clear, that the apostles must have understood

Christ as always requiring them to preach the same "*kingdom at hand.*"

4. "*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" (Mark 16 : 15, 16.)

Thus, Mark records Christ's last words concerning his great subject from first to last, so dear to him, viz. "*the kingdom—at hand,*" which requires his followers to preach it so in all the world, not withholding it from a single mortal, or "*creature.*" Here, it is still the same Gospel of "*the kingdom—at hand*" without an intimation of any change in it, and without allowing them to change it into the gospel of a dispensation, till every where preached.

The great motive of this passage from Mark, is *salvation* to every believer, and *damnation* to every unbeliever, which Christ considered, and which, we see, is the same to all mankind, as Christ's coming with his kingdom to judgment to save all his people and to damn all his enemies.

II. It is to be shown from the BOOK OF ACTS, that the *apostles did understand "the kingdom at hand,"* to be none other than the ETERNAL KINGDOM of God, yet coming to judgment, and that they also preached in the same manner, as long as they lived *after the Jewish dispensation* was passed, and the Christian dispensation had come.

1. Acts 2: 1—47. "*And when the day of pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place,*" &c. &c.

Not having room to repeat this long chapter of the apostles' preaching "*the kingdom at hand,*" after Christ had left them, it may be remarked, that here, immediately after his ascension, they commenced in good earnest by the help



of the Spirit copiously poured out, preaching "*the Gospel of the kingdom,*" as they had been for three years before instructed. In this chapter, it will be seen that Peter's first beginning to preach this "*Gospel of the kingdom,*" was by quoting a passage of it from the prophet Joel—"and it shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,) I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," &c. "And I will show wonders in heaven," &c. "*The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come.*" (Acts 2: 16—20. Joel 2: 28—31.) Here it is seen that the first thing which Peter thought of, in preaching "*the kingdom—at hand,*" as Christ had bid him, was the latter day pouring out of God's "*Spirit upon all flesh,*" and the then immediate coming of "*the great and notable day of the Lord.*" It is true, Peter did not repeat the express words of Christ here, as he did of Joel; but he preached the same doctrine precisely, as that of Daniel, Christ and John, in warning the world of the same "*notable day;*" in holding up the great event of that day, in the coming of God's kingdom to judgment. It would have been strange, had Peter, Daniel, Christ, John and others, in preaching the same great things of the judgment or kingdom coming, had they always repeated each other's express words, though sometimes they did it. Ministers in preaching the same doctrine now, generally are very particular, not to copy each other's phraseology in expressing the same idea, and sure variety in doing it, is commendable and necessary, to give a better understanding of the doctrine, and to impress it more deeply on the mind.

Though Peter considered that pouring out of the Spirit as having been foretold by Joel, and as a sign of the great day drawing nigh, there is much scripture evidence, that

“*the refreshing*” on earth, there foretold, is but in a very small part fulfilled yet; but that in “*the latter rain*” of the Spirit, (Hos. 6: 3. Joel 2: 23,) things spiritual are to be witnessed incomparably more extensive and convulsing, with the general preaching of the Gospel through the world, in preparing for the kingdom, or “*notable day of the Lord*” to come.

When Peter, in this discourse, had dwelt long enough on what various of the prophets had said of Christ, his character—his coming—the great day, and its awful events to awaken the attention and interest of his wicked audience, he next preaches to them, their own *personal depravity*, accusing them all, of having “*taken, and by wicked hands—crucified and slain*” the Lord Jesus. (Acts 2: 23, 36.) Thus the doctrine of the kingdom, or great day, from the word of God, pricked them in their hearts, when Peter turned to the other part of the Gospel, and said, “*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,*” (Acts 2: 37, 38,) &c. In all this discourse Peter preached nothing but scripture doctrines; and while there were so few of his audience, who before knew any thing, even of the letter of the Gospel, or word, which he preached, he judged it best to present the word of God verbatim, apparently, as near as he could remember. Thus he preached *repentance* as *the work to be done*, and *the kingdom, or great day*, as the *motive*—just as Christ bid him; and the effect was 3000 souls added to the church the first day.

2. “*And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent. Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained,*

whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead; and when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, and others said, we will hear thee again of this matter." (Acts 17: 30—32.)

Here Paul also preaches most clearly the doctrines of human depravity, or "*wickedness*," *repentance*, *resurrection* and *day of judgment*, the same as Christ, John, Peter and others had done, while occasionally, some of them, in speaking of the great day, described it by "*the kingdom of heaven*" coming.

3. Acts, 19: 8—10. "*And he (Paul) went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened—he departed from them and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And thus continued he, by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia, heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.*"

In this passage, we find that for two years and three months, in succession, Paul, at Ephesus, preached, or "*disputed*," about nothing else, as it appears, but "*the kingdom of God*;" which is here also called "*the word of the Lord*," which shows, that for all that period his preaching was, in substance, precisely like that of Christ and John in preaching the same "*kingdom of God*," or which was like it, "*the kingdom of God at hand*."

4. Acts, 20: 25—27. "*And now behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more, Wherefore, I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*"

Here, also, Paul speaks as though his constant preaching of "*the kingdom of God,*" was the same as "*all the counsel of God,*" or all the word of God, which must show that he made it his whole business to preach that "*kingdom at hand,*" which Christ had done, and "*commanded*" his apostles to do also.

5. Acts, 24: 25. "*And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.*"

Here, again, is, in substance, "*the Gospel of the kingdom,*" or "*judgment to come,*" which was always calculated to make the wicked "*tremble,*" even kings or princes like Felix; but without the doctrine of its coming, and coming soon, there would be comparatively nothing fearful or alarming in it; neither could there be any Gospel preached, which would make a Felix tremble, without its containing distinctly the doctrine of "*the kingdom,*" or "*judgment to come.*"

6. Acts, 28: 30, 31. "*And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.*"

These being the very last words of the book of Acts, and of the account from sacred history which is given of Paul, show us, that he held out for "*two whole years*" more, and to the last, in "*preaching*" and "*teaching*"—"*the kingdom of God,*" and other great things of Christ and his coming, which Christ, in the same doctrine, called "*the kingdom of God at hand.*"

Then should not all the succession of Christ's ministers continue to do the same, "*with all confidence,*" even until "*the end of the world,*" as Jesus bid, depending upon his help to the last, as he promised in the text?

III. It remains to be shown, from the WRITINGS OF THE SEVERAL APOSTLES, that from first to last they preached substantially the same nearness of "the *great day of the Lord*," as did the former prophets, and the same "*kingdom of heaven at hand*," after the coming of the *Christian dispensation*, and as clearly as Christ and John had done before it.

1. Rom. 14: 10. "*For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*"

Having already shown, that the judgment seat of Christ, and the coming of Christ, and his kingdom, to the judgment, are verily the same great event, which believers will not probably question, we take for granted, that this passage and its connexion of argument, is an instance of Paul's preaching "*the kingdom at hand*" the same as Christ did.

2. 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3. "*Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world, and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?*"

This great honor which is to be given to the saints at the coming of Christ and the kingdom, we see, is one very important item in the coming of the kingdom of God, and is as really holding up the infinite realities of "*the kingdom of heaven at hand*," as if the apostle had used the same words in expressing it as did Christ and John.

3. 1 Cor. 15: 24, 25. "*Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*"

Here certainly Paul is writing of "*the kingdom*," and the same kingdom that Christ preached and commanded

his apostles to preach "*at hand*," as we have seen. And in this very long chapter, the apostle writes almost exclusively of the doctrine of the resurrection, and the great events attending it, when Christ shall come to reign as King, having done with the office of Mediator, and assuming the throne as one with the Father in putting all his enemies under his feet. Jesus, also, preached the same things of the resurrection, as attending the coming of his kingdom.

4. 2 Cor. 5: 10, 11. "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body.—Knowing, therefore, the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men,*" &c.

In this, as in other passages of Paul's writing, it is apparent, that he always urged the great things of the coming kingdom, as though already *near*, with the final judgment of all men, as the strongest motives of the gospel, or as "*the terror of the Lord*," by which, to excite, or "*persuade*" sinners, to give heed to the demands of the gospel of the kingdom, for "*all men every where to repent.*"

5. Eph. 5: 5. "*For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God.*"

By this, we are taught, that an inheritance "*in the kingdom of Christ and of God*," both one, was the exclusive motive in the mind of the apostle here, by which to wake up the wicked to repentance, being assured; as they are here, that they must repent, or cease to be such characters, in order to inherit that kingdom.

6. Phil. 4: 5. "*Let your moderation be known to all men; the Lord is at hand.*"

If this be understood, as seems natural, that sinners

should always do right; it is the same as that they should repent, or reform in all cases; while the assurance that "*the Lord is at hand,*" is, apparently, the same as "*the Lord*" Christ's coming in his kingdom is "*at hand,*" and may, of course, be considered the same doctrine precisely, and as briefly, as that of Christ and John—"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

7. Col. 1: 13.—"*And hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.*"

Col. 3: 4. "*When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*"

This translation of the saints into the kingdom of Christ, and their appearing "*with him in glory,*" when he comes, seems to be the same great change in their experience, and is to be fully effected, not at their conversion, or first setting out in the way of holiness, but when their work is done, and when they finally meet Christ and dwell with him in his kingdom, and in his "*glory;*" and is seemingly the same as if the apostle had spoken of Christ's coming and kingdom, as did Christ and John, when declaring the event "*at hand.*"

8. 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17. "*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord.*"

No believer doubts this being Christ's second coming "*from heaven,*" at the sound of the last "*trump of God,*" at the judgment, resurrection, and glorification of all the saints in heaven, when as a kingdom it shall come down with Christ the then glorious King. The apostle speaking as though he might himself be "*alive and remain,*" until

Christ's coming, shows that he felt bound as he had been commanded, to preach the true doctrine of the coming of "*the kingdom at hand.*"

9. 2 Thess. 1: 6—9. "*Seeing it is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them which trouble you: and to you which are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*"

These, surely, are all of them, the great events of "*the kingdom of heaven*" coming, which, for aught the apostle knew, might come, finding himself and his brethren still in the flesh, and is, of course, the same doctrine as the coming of Christ to judgment, or "*kingdom of God at hand.*" Peter alone, of all the apostles, was assured of the death of his body, before translation at Christ's coming, of which he could have had no knowledge, except as specially revealed to him by Christ, in regard to his martyrdom. (2 Pet. 1: 13—15.) As Paul preached those great things of the kingdom at hand, instead of the certainty of death, at hand, while no apostle ever preached *death* at hand as an awakening motive to repentance; why then should not ministers now, and until "*the end of the world,*" as Christ bid them, preach the same things of the kingdom at hand, and not the long popular and worn out substitute of the gospel dispensation come, and death at hand; so long as it is a fact, that we have no revelation of the coming of temporal death to ourselves or others; and know not but the judgment will actually overtake us all, while in the flesh?



10. James, 5: 8, 9.—“ *The coming of the Lord draweth nigh;—behold the judge standeth before the door.*”

In this manner the apostle James had understood his commission from Christ to preach the kingdom of heaven at hand: and thus he declares it here, as drawing nigh, and actually standing at the door. He also urges the doctrine as a motive to repentance; or for the patience and establishing of the heart, and grudging not one against another unto condemnation; so in putting these two parts of his doctrine together, it becomes precisely the same as that of Christ and John, in holding up clearly, both the requirements, and the speedy coming of the Judge and his kingdom as the motive for the sinner, who cannot in any other way be excited so deeply and truly, to flee from the wrath to come by faith in the Judge himself.

11. 1 Peter, 4: 5—7. “ *Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit. But the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.*”

Here, Peter writes as he preached on pentecost day and afterwards; representing the Judge, Christ, as ready to judge the living and the dead even in that day; as though his coming might then be looked for. Then his declaring “ *the end of all things at hand,*” was really the same as he had been directed to preach the kingdom of God “ *at hand;*” since we all know that the actual coming from above, of the kingdom, will be with “ *the end of all things.*” So Peter here enjoins watchfulness, soberness and prayer, as the repentance required with this great and solemn mo-

tive, of the Judge being already to each person, so near in coming to judgment.

12. 2 Peter, 3: 10, 11.—“*But the day of the Lord will come, as a thief in the night,—Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness ?*”

This passage, and indeed this whole chapter, is devoted to the subject and setting forth of the day of judgment, and Christ's coming, in language very impressive, in requiring repentance, or, a life of “*all holy conversation and godliness,*” with the exciting motive of the certainty of the coming of “*the day of the Lord,*” bringing with it the various events of the judgment. To see that Peter here specially means the coming of Christ, and his kingdom; by these things, it will be noticed, that, in the third and fourth verses, “he connects it with “*the last days,*” when there will “*be scoffers*” — “*saying where is the promise of his coming ?*” So, in the 12th verse, he exhorts, to “*looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,*” &c., as though all should be looking out for it as being very near and hasting in its approach, making it all look like “*the kingdom,*” and “*day of the Lord—at hand.*”

13. 1 John, 3: 2.—“*Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*”

Here is John the evangelist, as well as John the Baptist, before considered, presenting the doctrine of Christ, as God, in his final appearing, to be seen as he is; as the first of all motives, in then making all his saints just like him in blessedness, holiness, and glory, so far as possible for creatures to partake of all with Christ in his kingdom.

14. Jude, 14, 15.—“*And Enoch also, the seventh from*

*Adam, prophesied of these things, saying, "Behold the Lord cometh, with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds," &c.* This the apostle Jude calls expressly the Lord's coming with the "ten thousand of his saints;" and more than this, it is "to execute judgment," i. e. it is Christ's coming with his kingdom from above to *judgment*; showing that all these things of the kingdom are coming together; that it is no new doctrine from him, from the other apostles, from Christ, from John the Baptist, from the former prophets, nor from Moses, but that even "*Enoch*," so long before Moses, and before the flood, only "*the seventh from Adam*," prophesied of precisely the same things of Christ's *coming* and "*kingdom*," to the final "*judgment*." And all this he urges as apparently his strongest motive to mankind to comply with his exhortation, that they should "*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints*." (Jude 3.) This is none else, than a godly, holy faith, and genuine repentance, such as Christ and the apostles preached first to the saints, or delivered to them, which they truly received, and according to which they lived, as a general thing for a long time after the refreshing of pentecost days. Thus it appears that very powerfully the apostle Jude preached the same gospel of the kingdom which Christ said was at hand, and which winds up the writings of all the apostles; and he would have it the more readily believed, from the fact of its having been preached to the people of God, from the early days of Enoch. We are told also, that these same things have been foretold by all God's "*holy prophets since the world began*." (Acts, 3: 21.)

## REMARKS.

From this selection of passages concerning the apostles' preaching, it surely appears, that so far, at least, they severally understood the preaching of Christ, of John, and the former prophets, in those early days, when preaching "*the kingdom*"—" *day of the Lord,*" &c., "*at hand,*" to mean, neither Jerusalem's destruction, nor the Christian dispensation; but the final and glorious coming of Christ and his kingdom to judgment. And from a faithful searching out of every passage in the New Testament, it will be found also, that it contains not an instance of their advancing, in all their preaching and writing, a word of doctrine contrary to the coming of the "*everlasting kingdom*" of God "*at hand.*" Neither is there any thing to be found in all their preaching and writings, apparently designed to awaken men to any thing, or to interest them in any thing short of the great concerns of Christ and his approaching kingdom. Thus their preaching was spiritual, powerful and awakening to sinners and sanctifying to saints. Then should not others now go and do likewise.

## LECTURE VI.

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### COUNTER MILLENNIAL TESTIMONY EXAMINED.\*

Mat. 3:2. Rev. 20:5.

“ *The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”—“ *This is the first resurrection.*”

#### THE DOCTRINE

STILL to be maintained is, that “ *the kingdom of heaven at hand,*” preached by Christ, John and others, was and is God’s *everlasting* and glorious *kingdom*, which is now coming shortly with Christ, the great King, to the “ *Resurrection*”—“ *Judgment*”—and “ *End of all things*”—together with the “ *New Heavens*”—“ *New Earth,*” and a MILLENNIUM, to be heavenly and eternal.

Although several *objections* against this doctrine have been already answered, there is another, perhaps the greatest of all, which is, that there must be a temporal, or limited *millennium*, before the judgment, of at least “ *a thousand years*” duration, supposed by some to be 360,000 years, and by others, as a long but indefinite period.

This OBJECTION at once puts far off, or “ *far away, the evil day,*” and would seemingly put to silence the great doctrine of Christ and John, that “ *the kingdom of heaven is at hand,*” to be heard no longer while the world shall

stand. Believing this OBJECTION to be unsound, unscriptural, and exceedingly fatal to the success of the Gospel, and ruinous to the souls of men, where most generally urged, it will now be answered under the

### PROPOSITION

Further to sustain our general doctrine that "*the Son of man,*" is soon to appear "*in his kingdom*" to judgment, by showing that the scriptures most depended on, for proof of a mere temporal or *limited millennium before* the judgment—were rather designed to set forth a *millennium*, or period *after* the judgment, which, to all the saints and angels, will be as *glorious and everlasting* as "*the kingdom of God,*" with all their enemies then overcome, and "*cast into the lake of fire which is the second death.*"

The portion of scripture supposed to be most relied on in support of a mere *temporal millennium*, is that of Rev. 20: 1—6. This passage speaks of "*Satan*"—"bound"—"*a thousand years*"—in "*the bottomless pit*"—saints sitting "*upon thrones*"—"priests of God and of Christ"—"*blessed and holy*"—"first resurrection"—reigning "*with Christ a thousand years,*" &c.

It will be seen that this passage, in order to be used as an OBJECTION against the doctrine of "*the kingdom at hand,*" has been improperly detached from its connexion—that it stands inseparably connected by the conjunction "*and,*" with the *preceding* vision of Christ's awful coming to judgment, and also by the same conjunction "*and,*" with what immediately follows *after* showing the further scenes and events of the judgment and final state of saints and sinners.

In an attempt to prove that these six verses of the saints'

*reign with Christ*, are given to show us their everlasting state in heaven *after* Christ's coming and kingdom to judgment, the subject may be most naturally and understandingly discussed under the following heads :

I. To sustain the doctrine that the second coming of Christ with "*the armies of heaven*" to "*judgment*," is now "*at hand*," as hitherto maintained, by proofs found in the eleven verses, viz. Rev. 19: 11—21, immediately preceding these six of the saints' reign, &c.

II. By proof found in this passage itself, viz. Rev. 20: 1—6, and

III. By proof contained in the next following fourteen verses of the same connexion, viz. Rev. 20: 7—15, and 21: 1—5.

I. Our doctrine is to be further sustained in answering this *counter millennial testimony* against it, by the proof of the eleven verses immediately preceding it, viz. Rev. 19: 11—21.

Rev. 19: 11. "*And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*"

This verse, in its connexion, surely appears to set forth the second coming of Christ to judgment, as foretold by himself while in the flesh, by his apostles, and "*all the holy prophets since the world began.*" He certainly has not since yet come to "*judge and make war*" against his enemies, neither will he do it till the day appointed, "*in the which he will judge the world in righteousness,*" (Acts, 17: 31.) Then it will be done, as described in what follows :

12. "*His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head*

were many crowns, and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself."

This is "*the Lord himself*," as the connexion shows. "*His eyes—as a flame of fire*," (see Rev. 1 : 14,) shows that his mere *look* upon sinners will be as a fiery, sudden destruction, and seems parallel to various other descriptions of him at his coming; such as, "*A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.*" (Ps. 50 : 3.) "*A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him.*" (Dan. 7 : 10.) "*And burning coals went forth at his feet.*" (Hab. 3 : 5.) "*When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God,*" &c. (2 Thess. 1 : 7, 8.) The "*many crowns*" then to be given him, are naturally understood to represent the mighty honors he will then achieve when "*his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth*," (Zech. 9 : 10,) or "*from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same*," (Mal. 1 : 11,) when "*every knee shall bow—and every tongue shall confess to God.*" (Rom. 14 : 11.) "*For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*" (1 Cor. 15 : 25.)

13. "*And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the WORD OF GOD.*"

This shows positively that the Personage so coming from heaven, is Christ, or the "*Word of God.*" (John, 1 : 1.) This bloody vesture with which he will then be clothed, will no more be stained with his own blood; for then his mercy being clean gone for ever, from sinners, he will no more suffer them to shed *his* blood; but rather, as the prophet gives his words, Christ says: "*I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my*



raiment. *For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.*" (Isa. 63 : 3, 4.)

14. " *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*"

These armies of heaven, or " *kingdom—at hand,*" to come with Christ, are understood to be the same as " *the clouds of heaven,*" (Dan. 7 : 13. Mat. 24 : 30. Rev. 14 : 14,) and the " *thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand,*" when " *the judgment*" shall be " *set, and the books opened.*" (Dan. 7 : 10. Rev. 5 : 11. 20 : 12.)

15. " *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*"

The " *nations*" to be smitten and ruled " *with a rod of iron,*" can only be " *the nations*" (Rev. 2 : 26, 27,) of the wicked, for all others are then to " *be caught up—to meet the Lord in the air,*" &c. (1 Thess. 4 : 17.) This sharp sword of the Judge at his coming, must be considered the same as the " *sword of*" his " *mouth,*" with which he " *will fight against*" his enemies on that occasion, (Rev. 2 : 16,) the same as he mentions in saying, " *I will whet my glittering sword, and my hand shall take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh,*" (Deut. 32 : 41, 42,) and which he further mentions, saying, " *A sword ! a sword is sharpened, and also furbished. It is sharpened to make a sore slaughter ; it is furbished that it may glitter ;—this sword is sharpened, and it is furbished, to give it into the hand of the slayer.*" (Ezek. 21 : 9—11, 28.) Christ's then treading the wine press of the " *fierceness and wrath of Almighty God,*" can be understood only

as another terrible figure of the final damnation in hell of all the ungodly in that great day, as expressed in other places. (Isa. 63 : 3. Rev. 14 : 20.)

16. *And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."*

This appears further to show the universal "everlasting dominion" of Christ, to be achieved at his coming, when all his saints, without distinction, are to be made "kings" to "reign on the [new] earth," (Rev. 1 : 6. 5 : 10,) when Christ himself shall still be their "everlasting" King. (Dan. 4 : 34.)

17, 18. *"And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried with a loud voice to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together to the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great."*

This giving of the flesh of all God's enemies, even the mightiest of them, to be devoured by the fowls of heaven, in the great day of "his appearing," as a dreadful figure of their final destruction and shame, in the day of "the marriage supper of the Lamb," (Rev. 19 : 7, 9,) is foretold by another prophet in words very similar, as follows : "Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field—assemble yourselves and come," &c. "Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth.—Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. 39 : 17—20.) Such a universal and terrible slaughter of the enemies of God with their mighty powers, God has not made since the prophecy was given,

and surely never will make, while they shall live in the flesh to enjoy continual offers of mercy. But soon the prophecy must be fulfilled, and thus will “*all*” his “*enemies*”—“*perish.*” (Judges, 5 : 31.)

19. “*And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him [Christ] that sat on the horse, and against his army.*”

This final gathering of all God’s enemies together, against Christ, cannot consistently be understood of their literal bodies to any particular location or country of this world, since “*the battle of that great day of God Almighty,*” will not be “*against flesh and blood,*” but “*against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*” (Eph. 6 : 12.) Still, it strikingly represents the universal combination of their spiritual forces under “*the beast,*” or Satanic power, then suddenly to be destroyed at Christ’s coming with his “*armies of heaven,*” or “*kingdom at hand.*”

20, 21. “*And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet, that wrought miracles (Rev. 13 : 11, 14,) before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, (Rev. 13 : 16, 17,) and them that worshipped his image. (Rev. 13 : 15.) These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that set on the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth, and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*”

This short passage gives a most vivid description of the result of this “*battle of that great day of God Almighty,*” when Satan and all his assistant deceivers here together, called “*the beast,*” (Dan. 7 : 7, 19, 23—26,) and “*the false prophet,*”—by Christ apparently “*false Christs and false*

*prophets,*" (Mat. 24: 11, 24,) are to be conquered and taken "alive," not annihilated, (Rev. 9: 6,) and "cast into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." To prevent a flattering supposition with any, that this passage does *not* foretel the destruction of *all* God's enemies in that battle, when not an individual of the Lord's armies shall fall or be injured, it is here expressly declared, that the "*remnant,*" or to the *very last one* of all the armies of the wicked, "*both free and bond, both small and great,*" must be destroyed by the *whetted, furbished, and glittering sword* of the Almighty Lord, soon coming with the mighty "*armies of heaven,*" or of his kingdom to judgment, when, as Paul has informed us, all the living saints, with others then to be raised from the dead, are to be "*caught up in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to meet the Lord in the air.*" (1 Cor. 15: 52. 1 Thess. 4: 17.)

We have now examined, as proposed, the eleven verses of Christ's coming to judgment with "*the armies of heaven,*" or heavenly kingdom, which immediately precede the passage of *counter millennial testimony* next to be considered. As this coming of Christ and his kingdom to judgment, here stands, as coming *before* the saints' resurrection, and sitting on thrones to judge the world; and as this exaltation and blessedness of saints follows on in unbroken connexion, would it not seem as a violent wresting of the scriptures, to say that this blessedness of saints shall be on *this* earth, only in the *flesh*, and *before* this coming to judgment of Christ and his kingdom, as we have just seen in the preceding passage? As proposed:

II. We are to look for further proof of the doctrine, that "*the kingdom*" is still "*at hand,*" as before stated, by an examination of the *counter millennial testimony* in the next six verses, or Rev. 20: 1—6.

Rev. 20 : 1. " *And I saw an angel come down from heaven having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand.*"

2. " *And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.*

3. *And cast him into the bottomless pit, shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season."*

As the Lord's manner necessarily is in giving "*line upon line—line upon line,*" &c., (Isa. 28 : 10,) so here, apparently, to make this great instruction of Christ's coming more clear, he represents it further as by "*an angel,*" elsewhere called "*Michael the archangel,*" and "*Michael—the great prince.*" (Jude, 9th verse. Dan. 12 : 1.) This "*Angel,*" "*Great Prince,*" "*Michael,*" or Christ, is to fight the Lord's battle, with his angels on his side, finally against Satan, or the dragon and his angels, [fallen.] (Rev. 12 : 7—9.) None but Christ has power of his own to conquer Satan. But Christ, with this "*key of the bottomless pit,*" or "*the keys of hell and of death,*" "*that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth,*" (Rev. 1 : 18. 3 : 7,) is able, as foretold, to "*bruise the serpent's head,*" (Gen. 3 : 15,) and to "*put all his enemies under his feet.*" (1 Cor. 15 : 24, 25.)

Satan's confinement here, is now supposed to be for ever, though figuratively represented by the long period of "*a thousand years,*" and his being "*loosed a little season,*" to represent only his coming "*out*" of hell with all his armies in a second resurrection to judgment.

4. " *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the word of God, and for the*

witness of Jesus, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

5. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection."

6. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Although the counter argument against the doctrine of the kingdom at hand, supposes this thousand years' reign of saints to be *only in the flesh this side of the judgment*, the position now to be taken with it is, that it is their *everlasting reign with him in heaven*, or in the "New Heavens and New Earth," (Rev. 21 : 1, 2,) and will be *after Christ's coming to judgment* in the slaughter of all his enemies, as just shown in the preceding connexion. To suppose this reigning to *come before* that *coming* of Christ, makes the connexion to contradict itself.

Other reasons for believing this reign of saints to be *eternal*, and *after* the judgment rather than *before* in the flesh, are as follows—

(1.) There is a manifest absurdity in the supposition of their *reigning* while their spiritual "*warfare*" continues, (Isa. 40 : 2,) while yet only on probation, (Mat. 20 : 8,) before they have "*overcome*," (Rev. 3 : 21,)—endured "*unto the end*," (Mat. 24 : 13,)—or gone as "*strangers and pilgrims*," (Heb. 11 : 13,) through the world, before their "*tribulation*" is ended, (Acts 14 : 22. Rev. 7 : 14,) before they arrive at the "*city*" (Heb. 11 : 16) of "*rest*" prepared and remaining for them. (Heb. 4 : 9.)

(2.) The apostle Paul appears sharply to rebuke this boasting and carnal doctrine of the saints pretending to have a “reign” here in the flesh, saying—“*Now ye are full; now ye are rich; ye have reigned as kings without us, [ironically spoken] I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.* (1 Cor. 4 : 8.) This feeling of Paul is like his commendable “*desire to depart and to be with Christ which is far better.*” (Phil. 1 : 23.)

(3.) In another passage of John, in the same vision, he seemingly speaks of this same “reign of the saints as being eternal, rather than limited, saying—“*For the Lord God giveth them light, [in heaven] and they shall REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER.*” (Rev. 22 : 5.)

(4.) This future sitting of all the saints, or such as “*have not received the mark of the beast,*” (Rev. 13 : 16, 17,) on “*thrones,*” having “*judgment given unto them,*” and their then reigning “*with Christ,*” appear to be precisely the same promises, both in letter and spirit, as many others of the Bible, which all the faithful will probably admit to be for a heavenly everlasting inheritance only, among which are the following :

“*And I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father hath appointed me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*” (Luke, 22 : 29, 30,) or “*all nations,*” &c. (Rev. 7 : 4, 9.)

“*Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world—know ye not that we shall judge angels?*” (1 Cor. 6 : 2, 3.)

“*But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.* (Dan. 7 : 18.) “*The Ancient of days [the Lord] came [will come] and judgment was given unto the saints*

of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed [will possess] the kingdom." (Dan. 7 : 22.)

"Let the saints be joyful in glory, [in heaven,] let them sing aloud upon their beds, [or, in their "rest,"] let the high [eternal] praises of God be in their mouth, and a two edged sword [of justice] in their hand to execute vengeance upon the heathen, [all the finally ungodly] and punishment upon the people, to bind their kings [mighty sinners] with chains, and their nobles [exalted sinners] with fetters of iron, to execute the judgment written, [or all the threatenings of the Bible.] This honor have all his saints," when finally they shall reign with him "in glory." (Ps. 119 : 5—9.)

"And he that overcometh—to him will I give power over the nations [of the ungodly] and he shall rule them with a rod of iron [figuratively] as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers," [or destroyed in the judgment.] (Rev. 2 : 26, 27.)

"To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne." (Rev. 3 : 21.)

As parallel promises in almost the same letter or figure, do not these show that the "thrones"—"judgment," and "reign," of saints with Christ, &c., in the passage before us, are glorious and everlasting, and to be enjoyed *after* the coming of Christ and his kingdom, rather than *before*?

(5.) The saints' exalted station in the passage under consideration, called "*the first resurrection*," and their all having "*a part in*" it, is explained by parallel passages on the same subject, to be the real final "*resurrection*," and glorification of the bodies and souls of the saints at the end of the world, as follows :

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth



*shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*" (Dan. 12 : 2.)

"*In the resurrection they [the saints] neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.*" (Mat. 22 : 30.)

"—*For the hour is coming, in the which, all that be in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*" (John, 5 : 28, 29.)

(6.) The saints being "*blessed and holy*" as in the passage before us, while reigning too "*upon thrones,*" is more naturally understood of their final everlasting blessedness and holiness in heaven *after* the judgment, than of their certain perpetual tribulations, and "*filthy rags*" of their "*righteousness*" (Isa. 64 : 6,) in the flesh this side the judgment.

(7.) The saints in this passage being represented as secure against the "*second death,*" and all others exposed to it, shows them then to be in a *saved* state already, or in *heaven* without any further holding out to obtain it.

Should it be considered proved that this reigning of saints upon thrones, in the first resurrection to judge the world, is indeed their glorious everlasting reign *after* the coming of Christ to judgment, then the passage itself proves "*the kingdom of heaven*" to be verily "*at hand,*" rather than a "*thousand of years*" off.

III. As proposed, it remains to present further proof of the doctrine of "*the kingdom at hand,*" rather than a thousand years off, by an examination of the fourteen verses next following this *counter millennial* passage just examined.

Rev. 20 : 7, 8. "*And when the thousand years are ex-*

*pired, [or when the period arrives] Satan shall be loosed out of his prison [or out of hell] and shall go out [of the bottomless pit, not "go forth,"] to deceive the nations [of the wicked then to rise, or "go out" with him] which are [now, not then] in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog [Ezek. 38 : 2, 14, 16, 18. 39 : 1, 11, 15, supposed to be all the devils and then damned human sinners] to gather [or come with] them to battle, the number of whom, is as the sand of the sea."*

The number of this army of the wicked to rise, or come to battle with Satan at that day, numerous "*as the sand of the sea,*" with no apparent apostacy of the "*blessed and holy*" from their reigning on *thrones*; and no appearance of sinners being born and multiplied *after* this reigning; and, indeed, not a *moment of time* for its being done, after the wicked, "*both free and bond, both small and great,*" to the very "*remnant,*" are "*slain with the sword of him that set upon the horse,*" (Rev. 19 : 18, 21,) yea, all this appears irresistibly to prove that this army will not be an army of mere human sinners in the flesh, and standing on the footstool before the judgment, but that it will be rather the final resurrection of the wicked to the "*judgment*" then to be "*given unto the saints*" over them. (20 : 4.)

OBJECTION. It may be objected here, that the "*thousand years*" are said to "*EXPIRE,*" as though this were a proof that they are literal years, and literally to begin and expire before the judgment.

To this it may be replied, that if they are only a *figure* of duration in a future state, they can neither literally *begin*, nor literally *expire*, so that their being here said to "*expire,*" must be as figurative as the "*years.*" If, then, it can be fairly proved, that such years are figurative of duration, where there *is* no literal time, this objection will

be answered. The proof that the "*thousand years*" are not literal, but figurative, may now be briefly stated.

(1.) It is a period absolutely *after* Christ has come to judgment, as we have seen in the preceding connexion, when literal time or years will extend no farther.

(2.) During the period called "*a thousand years*," the saints are "**WITH the Lord**," and reigning "**WITH him**," when, as inspiration says, "*One day is WITH THE LORD as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" (2 Pet. 3 : 8. Ps. 90 : 4.)

(3.) In this same book of Revelation, definite periods of times are frequently used, as will be admitted, figuratively, to represent duration, which is indefinite, and to mortals unknown, both before and after the judgment. The following are specimens :

"*The devil shall cast some of you into prison, and ye shall have tribulation TEN DAYS.*" (Rev. 2 : 10.)

"*And they rest not DAY AND NIGHT, saying, Holy, holy, holy,*" &c. (Rev. 4 : 8.)

"*And to them it was given, that they should not kill [not annihilate] them, [sinners,] but that they should be tormented FIVE MONTHS.*" (Rev. 9 : 5.) "*And there were stings in their tails, and their power was to hurt men FIVE MONTHS.*" (9 : 10.)

"*And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies [slain witnesses, or saints overcome] THREE DAYS AND A HALF,*" &c. (Rev. 11 : 9.) "*And after THREE DAYS AND A HALF, the spirit of life from God entered into them,*" [or will revive them all,] &c. (11 : 11.)

"*And to the woman ["Zion"] were given two wings as of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, (Ezek. 34 : 25,) into her place, (John, 14 : 2,) where she is*

*nourished for a TIME, AND TIMES, AND HALF A TIME.*" (Rev. 12:14. Dan. 12:7.)

"*And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest DAY NOR NIGHT.*" (Rev. 14:11. 20:10.)

"*In the midst of it, [heavenly city,] and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bear twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit EVERY MONTH.*" (Rev. 22:2.)

(4.) It is evident that there is no way by which we mortals of time could have any conceptions of duration in eternity, except by its being shown us in figures borrowed from time itself. Sure, we never should have learnt the definition of the words "*everlasting*"—"eternal," &c., had not he who "*inhabiteth eternity,*" explained them to us by figures, such as already mentioned, among which are the "*thousand years*" of this passage. "*A thousand years*" is a very *long* time, even beyond the age of Methuselah himself, the oldest mortal of the earth, and may seem even more appropriate for *us* as a figure of eternity, than a *million years*, because a *thousand* are nearer the experience and conception of mortals than a *million*.

(5.) There are various passages of earthly time in the *Old Testament*, which are apparently used as figures of duration which shall never end, such as the following:

"*They shall fear thee as LONG as the SUN and MOON ENDURE, throughout ALL GENERATIONS.*" Or, for a *long* duration, *longer* than man can conceive. (Ps. 72:5.)

"*As the DAYS OF A TREE, are the DAYS of my people, and mine elect shall LONG enjoy the work of their hands.*" (Isa. 65:22.) Then in the "*new heavens and new earth.*" (Isa. 65:17—22.)

"*And it shall come to pass, that from one NEW MOON to*

ANOTHER, and from ONE SABBATH TO ANOTHER, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord," (Isa. 66 : 23,) then in "the new heavens and the new earth." (Isa. 66 : 22.)

Here we see, that in the "new heavens and new earth," or heavenly state, eternal duration is prefigured by various periods of earthly time; then why shall we not, from a precedent so repeatedly used in inspiration, conclude that similar figures, such as "a thousand years," are given to represent the same endless duration in this passage, Rev. 20 : 1—6, in showing the same heavenly "reign of saints" on "thrones," &c.

Rev. 20 : 9, 10. "And they went up [or will rise out of hell] on the breadth of the earth [or numerous enough, if literal bodies, to cover over the breadth of the earth] and compassed the camp of the saints about and the beloved city, [or "New Jerusalem"—heavenly "city," or "kingdom" then come, where the saints are to sit on thrones, &c.] and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them [to make such a final, desperate and hopeless attack upon the kingdom of God then come] was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

This, we may consider as the resurrection of all the wicked at the day of judgment. And, indeed, it seems to be the most particular and striking description of the separate resurrection of the wicked which is recorded in the Bible. This resurrection is virtually called the *second* "resurrection," in the fifth verse, where the saints' rising is called "the first resurrection," as though to be followed by a resurrection of characters to be destroyed by "the second death," which is not to hurt the saints. Although

these things are spoken of as two resurrections, the understanding is, that, literally, they will take place together, in a moment, at Christ's coming and the end of the world.

As the wicked rise, it is represented that Satan deceives them, for then it will be too late to deceive the saints again. When on rising, and being deceived, they show their deception by making a most desperate attempt to destroy the Almighty and his whole kingdom, in all its final perfection and glory ; and all this, by their whole powers combined in sight of the universe. After their immediate destruction by the fire of the divine wrath, then falling upon them from heaven, the justice of God will for ever shine gloriously, in their damnation, though while here in the flesh, they were so restrained in their sins, as many times not to be suspected, as the deadly enemies of God, even by the saints. This fact seems to render it necessary, that all the wicked on *that* occasion, should be *once* suffered to show out before all creation, just what hearts they all have, and their real feelings towards God and his children ; that thenceforward, it may be seen, and absolutely known for ever, to all, that the curse of the law then inflicted on them, is but just equal in its greatness, to their own guilt in violating it. Without some such exhibition as this, at the judgment, though the reality is now shown us only in figures, it is difficult to conceive how the Almighty could so happily or so forcibly show forth his eternal justice in the damnation of all his enemies, some of them, yea many perhaps, having passed here for reputable christians.

The *devil, beast, and false prophet*, here seeming to include Satan and all belonging to him, then to be "*cast into the lake of fire and brimstone,*" to be "*tormented day and night for ever and ever,*" appears to show the final re-

resurrection, and immediate destruction of all slain sinners in the hour of God's judgment.

Nothing being intimated in the whole connexion of the saints afterwards apostatising, or being deprived of their "*reign*" upon "*thrones*," nor of any probationary events whatever, adds to the proof that this is the final resurrection and doom of the wicked, while the saints thus upon thrones, &c., is their final resurrection and portion for ever with Christ.

11. "*And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.*"

Here the Almighty sitting upon his "*great white throne*," and "*the earth and the (visible) heaven fled away*" without further "*place*," at all, are additional scenes of the same great day of the coming of Christ and his kingdom, and are further convincing proof that the separate resurrection of saints and sinners in the same unbroken connexion as just examined, are to be accomplished, at Christ's coming to judgment, and the everlasting state, and not "*a thousand years*" at least before, and only with mortals in the flesh.

12. "*And I saw the dead small and great stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*" (See Dan. 7 : 10.)

Without limits, as might be desirable to notice the various important words of this passage, it is sufficient for our present purpose, that it gives us a view of the final resurrection and judgment of all mankind, saints and sinners, "*small and great*;" and is perhaps, the clearest passage in

the Bible in showing us the scenes of that "*great day of the Lord*;" or Christ's second coming.

13. "*And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works.*"

This is a kind of repetition of the same great events of the resurrection and judgment at Christ's coming with his kingdom, at the passing away of "*the earth and the heaven*," (11,) the saints sitting on "*thrones*," &c., (4—6,) the resurrection and destruction of Satan and his hosts, &c. (7—10,) and "*the dead small and great*," standing at the bar of God, (12.) Here, apparently, in addition to the resurrection of all the dead from the grave, or bodies dwelling in dust till that day—all the bodies of the human race, buried "*in the sea*," or in the *waters*, must also come forth to the judgment; and more than this, then all the *souls* of the wicked, and foul spirits, buried, as it were, in "*the bottomless pit*," or the abodes of everlasting "*death and hell*," must come forth to the judgment. No literal flesh and blood of course, will be expected to accompany any class at the judgment. One class will rather, on rising, be "*as the angels of God in heaven*;" (Mat. 22: 30,) while the other can only be as "*the devil and his angels*"—"in hell." (Mat. 25: 41. 10: 28.)

14, 15. "*And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.*"

How awfully! yea, how unspeakably terrible!! this describes the final destruction of all unbelievers, at their coming, now swift to the judgment, or meeting "*the kingdom of heaven—at hand*." Without mistake here, "*who-*



soever," then is not a christian, "not written in the book," must be "cast into the lake of fire." So "death and hell" here are explained in the passage, to be *every one*, or "*who-soever was not found written in the book*," since both as one, are to be "cast into the lake of fire." Although some may have flattered themselves that the "hell" in the 13th verse, delivering up her dead, means only the literal *grave* to give up the *bodies* of mankind generally, this passage exposes the delusion; for the same "hell" here, is to be "cast into the lake of fire." The literal grave will not even *exist*, when "*the earth and the heaven*" shall be thus "*fled away*," (11.) More than this, there are no *fiery threatenings* against the literal grave; neither is it possible in the nature of things, for it to be "cast into the lake of fire." While again others may have imagined that the *location* of "hell," the place of torment, will finally be cast into "*the lake of fire*," to be annihilated, leaving no further place for the damnation of sinners; it must still be remembered that God's threatenings are not against a mere *place*, or *location*; but against "*sinners*" who have broken his law and must experience its awful and "*everlasting*" penalty or "*curse*." When it is said that "*death and hell*" shall then be "cast into the lake of fire," it is naturally understood by all, except by those threatened, who loathe the doctrine, that all the *inhabitants* of everlasting "*death and hell*," on coming up to the judgment, must be "cast into the lake of fire"—as it is said of John—"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, (Mat. 3:5,) showing that the *inhabitants* of a place are meant, rather than the *place* itself, in speaking of it as moveable. The fire of this lake can only be "*everlasting*" and "*unquenchable*," rather than

mere literal fire; because literal fire can never torment the "*naked*" souls of the ungodly; and more than this, literal fire is one of "*the elements*" which must itself, as Peter says, "*melt with fervent heat,*" in "*the day of the Lord,*" which among "*the works*" of the "*earth,*"—"shall be burned up." (2 Pet. 3 : 10.)

This casting of the wicked finally into a lake of eternal, "unquenchable" fire, is supposed to be called the "*second death,*" here, because of its being literally, the *second* time they are destroyed from a kind of life, or being out of hell; and the *second* time they are cast into the pit of wo. Thus when death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed, or when all everlasting "*death and hell*" shall be cast into the lake of fire, so the opposite, or all "*everlasting life*" and "*heaven*" shall go into the heavenly city, and there sit with Christ on thrones and reign for ever.

Rev. 21 : 1. "*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.*"

This "*new heaven and new earth,*" can only be the final "*kingdom of heaven*" come, which is now "*at hand.*" Other holy writers speak of it calling it by the same name as here:

"*For behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind,*" &c. (Isa. 65 : 17.)

Because the blessedness of that habitation is so inconceivably great, there will be no room to remember, or even for a moment to *think*, of any thing formerly known in this world.

"*For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make, shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain..*" (Isa. 66 : 22.)

“ *Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*” (2 Pet. 3: 13.)

By consulting the connexion of these several passages of “*the new heavens and new earth,*” it will be seen that all speak of them in connexion with the events of the great day and future world. It is mentioned as though, at the very moment when this world or earth shall “*be burnt up,*” (2 Pet. 3: 10,) or “*fled away,*” (Rev. 20: 11,) or “*passed away,*” (Rev. 22: 1,) or *created*, or made “*new,*” (Isa. 65: 17. Rev. 21: 5,) “*the new heaven and new earth,*” both one, will come, as it were, and take the very place where this world now stands, then to be the everlasting abode of saints and angels; so that the saints sitting on “*thrones*” mentioned in 20: 4, &c., are supposed to be *in* this same “*new heavens and new earth.*” So, all the events, from Rev. 19: 11, through the book, are apparently all of them the scenes of the judgment and future state, and not chronological events of earthly time. The description of this “*new heaven,*” or “*kingdom of heaven*” come, can never be given by man, otherwise so beautifully as in this 21st and this 22d chapters of Revelation, though mortals may continue to call upon mortals for a better description.

22: 2. “*And I John saw the holy city new Jerusalem come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*”

This is, indeed, “*the kingdom of heaven,*” or “*of God,*” coming “*down*” with Christ to the judgment, with whom all the saints are to dwell for ever in the “*new heavens and new earth,*” then to be prepared for them as suddenly as Christ shall come. This “*New Jerusalem*” of Christ, angels and saints, then coming “*down from God*

out of heaven," must now be, as Paul calls it, "*Jerusalem which is above,*" and is "*free, which is the mother of us all,*" (Gal. 4:26,) and "*the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,*" (Heb. 12:22,) the same as "*the armies in heaven,*" (19:14,) "*the clouds of heaven,*" (Dan. 7:13. Mat. 24:30,) and the "*thousand thousands,*" and "*ten times ten thousand*" ministering unto, and standing before, "*the Son of man*" at his appearing to judgment. (Dan. 7:10. Rev. 5:11.)

3. "*And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*"

At this actual coming "down" of the "*holy city,*" or kingdom, all heaven, it is here revealed, will unite in loud voices in praise and rejoicing that God and his people are finally dwelling together, on earth, as it were "*the new earth,*" no more to be separated again, for ever.

4, 5. "*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. AND HE that set upon the throne, said, Behold I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful.*"

These are further figures of the glory and blessedness of "*the kingdom of heaven*" when come, in contrast with the tears, sorrow, crying, pain, and death of this fallen world, when, at Christ's coming with the kingdom, God shall have suddenly created "*all things new,*" even so wonderfully new, both for saints and sinners, that not a single thing within the reach of their senses or anticipations, shall remain as it was. All will then be eternally as different with them and before them, either for better or

for worse, as the passing away of this world to give place to a glorious “*new earth,*” or “*heaven,*” for the reign of saints as kings for ever, and the sudden casting of all the human race, “*not written in the book,*” or not true believers, into the lake of *everlasting, unquenchable fire.* Then eternally, God’s solemn words in foretelling all these things here, and throughout the Bible, and warning sinners “*to flee from the wrath to come,*” though now disbelieved, and disregarded like “*fables,*” will all be found “*true and faithful.*”

### REMARKS.

Thus we have examined the *counter millennial testimony* of Rev. 20: 1—6, by its connexion. We have seen that the eleven verses next preceding it, are a striking prophecy of Christ’s coming to judgment, and slaying his enemies, “*both free and bond, both small and great,*” that the *six millennial verses* themselves, explained by parallel passages, are a prophecy of Satan’s destruction, and the saints everlasting “*reign with Christ*” on their promised “*thrones;*” and that the fourteen verses next following after, are also a prophecy most clear, of the various great and wonderful events of the judgment and scenes of the future state; and that the whole is contained in the closest connexion. This leads to the conclusion, that this *counter millennial testimony*, so called, Rev. 20: 1—6, is no argument against the doctrine of our text, that “*the kingdom of heaven is at hand,*”—but rather, that it shows us, as it were, a glorious and *everlasting millennium*, coming *without* any long time, as passing away first, and that it is further strong proof that, indeed, the glorious “*kingdom*” is now “*nigh at hand.*”

## LECTURE VII.

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### COUNTER MILLENNIAL TESTIMONY FURTHER EXAMINED.

Mat. 3:2. Rev. 20:5.

“ *The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”—“ *This is the first resurrection.*”

#### THE DOCTRINE

OF the present discourse will be the same as in the latter, viz. that “ *the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*” as preached by Christ, John, and others, was and is God’s “ *everlasting kingdom,*” which is now coming shortly, with Christ the Great King to the “ *Resurrection*”—“ *Judgment*”—“ *End of all things*”—“ *New Heavens*”—“ *New Earth,*” and a MILLENNIUM to be *glorious and everlasting.*

Although the counter testimony, and counter *Millennial testimony* against this doctrine has already been examined to some extent, there is a counter *Millennial THEORY* requiring farther attention, to which many have subscribed in modern times, who seemingly consider it the strongest of all other evidence against the doctrine of “ *the kingdom*” now “ *at hand,*” and against the speedy coming of a *millennium* to be *glorious and everlasting.*” This *THEORY* will now be stated and examined.

## COUNTER MILLENNIAL THEORY STATED.

It maintains that the *millennium*, or period foretold in Rev. 20 : 1—6, of Satan bound “*a thousand years*”—*saints sitting on “ thrones ”*—“*priests of God and of Christ*”—“*judgment given unto*” them—reigning “*with Christ a thousand years*”—beyond the power of the *second death*—being “*the first resurrection,*” &c., will be exclusively in the present world, and during “*a thousand*” or more of literal years *before* the judgment—that Christ in this *Millennium* will not come personally nor visibly to any, but rather by his Spirit—not to cut off all the wicked from the earth—not literally to raise any of the sleeping saints from their graves—not to bring any of his kingdom with him from heaven—not to destroy the world in creating “*all things new*”—not really to give any of the saints their promised “*thrones*” and “*judgment*” to “*reign*” with him in glory; neither to accomplish any of the events of the day of judgment—but rather,

To pour out his Spirit with great increase from year to year, till the influence of Satan shall be destroyed from the earth, as though bound in hell, producing the conversion to christianity of nearly, if not quite the whole world, all of whom then to live in the flesh, in great religious and temporal prosperity during the same thousand years or more, with so much of Christ’s spirit in their hearts, that he may be said thus to *reign* on this earth, and they with him during that long period—that they will so resemble the former martyrs that they may be said to be the very same persons raised from the dead, as John was said to be the “*Elias which was for to come*”—that they will continue rapidly to increase in their posterity, with very long lives, until the number of the saints, from first to last, shall greatly exceed the wicked who perish—that on the

close of this period, there will be a letting loose of Satan, and a consequent general apostacy or declension in Zion, "*for a little season,*" or for a few hundred years, till the living wicked shall again be far greater than that of the saints in the world, when Satan will engage the wicked in a universal outward persecution against the saints, immediately upon which Christ will come really and gloriously from heaven with his kingdom, the real resurrection, judgment day, and "*end of all things.*"

Although this counter millennial theory seems to have been wisely *aimed* to repel some hitherto visionary schemes of Christ's second appearing in the flesh; to reign at Jerusalem over flesh and blood, with the resurrection also of the dead saints a thousand years before the judgment; it will now be considered as being equally visionary and secular, though in an opposite extreme, and to be also discarded. In defending the doctrine of the kingdom, and *everlasting* MILLENNIUM now "*at hand,*" against this counter theory, the plan of this discourse will be,

I. To state and answer some of the most common supposed *arguments* used in *support* of the same counter theory: And,

II. To present some more direct *reasons* for *discarding* it.

#### I. COUNTER MILLENNIAL ARGUMENTS TO BE ANSWERED.

1. It is argued, that in Rev. 20: 1—6, it is expressly and repeatedly stated that there shall be a "THOUSAND YEARS" of this reign of the saints "*with Christ,*" which cannot be true, only on the supposition that it is *this side* the judgment, while years roll on.



Were it admitted, as this argument supposes, that these “*years*” are *literal* years, the argument would be at once conclusive and unanswerable. But if they are *figuratively* used in that connexion, they prove rather that the millennial reign of saints with Christ upon thrones will be in heaven and everlasting. The proofs that these “*years*” in the connexion *are* used figuratively, to represent an eternal duration, after the judgment having been given in the preceding discourse, this argument will be considered as there answered.

2. It is said that the living “*NATIONS which are in the four quarters of the earth,*” to be deceived by “*Satan, when the thousand years are expired,*” (Rev. 20 : 7, 8), proves that the millennium preceding it, must be this side the judgment, and while there *are* “*nations*” still living to be deceived.

Were these indeed mere political nations of the flesh, the argument would be sound, but if, as attempted before to be shown, they are the nations or innumerable multitudes of the bottomless pit then rising or coming “*out*” and coming “*up*” to judgment, then the passage rather proves an *everlasting*, than a limited and mere temporal millennium, as foretold of the saints reigning “*a thousand years*” in the preceding verses. This argument appears to take for granted that God never uses the word “*nations*” except as living nations in the flesh; but it will be found on examining, that in this same book of Revelation he *does frequently* use the word *nations* in speaking of men at the judgment, or in the spiritual world. The following are instances of the same: “*And the NATIONS of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, [heavenly city,] and they shall bring the glory and honor of the NATIONS into it,*” (Rev.

21 : 24. 26,) “ *And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the NATIONS,*” [in the heavenly city,] (Rev. 22: 2.)

3. It has been argued that these thousand years must necessarily be literal time, and this side the judgment, in order to give opportunity for the saints so to increase as to out-number the wicked, to prevent Satan’s triumphing, and to FULFIL THE PROPHECY that *the Seed of the woman* [Christ] shall “bruise” the serpent’s head. (Gen. 3: 15.)

Though the multitudes of heaven are finally to be more than man can number, (Rev. 7: 9,) the Bible no where teaches that the saints shall out-number the armies of sinners. Besides there are many passages which teach the contrary. Christ’s calling his church a “*little flock,*” in promising them “*the kingdom,*” to come, (Luke 12: 32,) very naturally implies, that compared with others not of them, they will be a “*little flock,*” till they all receive the promised kingdom at the judgment. (Mat. 25: 34.)

Christ further says, in view of the same subject, “*Many are called, [invited,] but few are chosen,*” (Mat. 22: 14,) and that “*few*” comparatively find “*the strait gate*” while “*many,*” on the other hand, will go in at the “*broad gate of destruction,*” (Mat. 7: 13, 14,) while various other passages are understood to imply that *not* the greatest number of the human race will comply with the terms, and obtain salvation, though God is “*not willing that any should*” refuse and “*perish.*” (2 Pet. 3: 9. See Rom. 9: 27. Isa. 6: 13. Hag. 2: 16. Mat. 25: 1—10.)

And with regard to Satan’s triumphing finally, with superior numbers, when he and his army shall be chained up in everlasting despair, it would seem like a strange kind of triumph to be so called. And would a human army of 100,000 strong, triumph on being utterly vanquished and confined in earthly dungeons till the death

of every one, because conquered by an army of only 10,000 strong. It was not so when Jonathan and his armor bearer alone went forth and discomfited the camp of the Philistines, (1 Sam. 14 : 1, 13—20, &c.) And if *Satan's head* shall not be effectually *bruised* by Christ, the Seed of the woman, when he shall have "*put all enemies under his feet,*" or Satan and all his vast kingdom in hell, "*where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched,*" (1 Cor. 15: 25. Isa. 66: 24. Mark, 9: 43—48;) then surely the prediction cannot be accomplished.

4. We are sometimes told, that the long foretold *carrying BACK of the twelve tribes of the JEWS* not yet found, will necessarily take too much time to suppose that any other than a temporal millennium can be *now* "*at hand.*"

Much might be said on this question, but little must suffice. Some of the passages which are supposed to prove that the Jews, including the ten revolting tribes, are yet to go and settle at Jerusalem and Palestine, speak of "*the children of Israel*" to be gathered "*out of all countries,*" to their "*own land,*" &c. (Jer. 29 : 14. 31 : 8. 32 : 37. Ezek. 20 : 34, 41. 34 : 13.) In days, quite modern, some interpret these promises, or especially those of the "*new covenant,*" *sprinkling, cleansing, &c.,* (Jer. 31 : 31. 32 : 40. Ezek. 36 : 25—27,) as proving the attainment of *entire sanctification*, or "*CHRISTIAN PERFECTION*" of men in the flesh. While with all my heart, I would say, "*God-speed*" to those who seeing the present dreadful, yea general *desolating* "*abominations*" of "*the holy place,*" (Dan. 9 : 27. 12 : 11. Mat. 24 : 15,) and would labor with them for the revival of apostolic holiness, to the entire obedience of the Gospel and fulness of the Spirit of God, I am constrained to dissent from both these schemes of interpreting these

exceeding great and precious promises of God, of the "*new*" and "*everlasting covenant*," *cleansing*, &c.

My reasons for dissenting from such interpretations are some of them briefly as follows, (1.) On examining 2 Kings, 17: 1, &c., of the dispersion of the ten revolting tribes, it seems that they were rather amalgamated with the Assyrians, than preserved as a pure race, yet to be found for carrying back. Our Saviour's finding such a mingled people of the Samaritans, who with the woman at "*the well*," were as "*fields—white already to harvest*," (John, 4: 35,) adds to the proof that they are *not* still a distinct people to be found and carried back. (2.) Believing that the word "*Israel*"—"*children of Israel*," &c., to whom the promises are made, (Gal. 3: 16,) to be all God's true Israel by faith in Jesus, it would seem like *casting "pearls,"* or heavenly promises, (Rev. 21: 21,) "*before swine*," and *giving holy things to "dogs,"* (Mat. 7: 6,) to give any of these promises to literal *Jews*, for their use, while yet remaining the enemies of God, and of their "*father the devil*." (John, 8: 44.) (3.) Understanding the divine promises as being all made for the saints only, and to be fulfilled only to them, not in a state of probation, but on overcoming, in a heavenly portion for ever, I cannot understand any of such promise, either for the *Jews*, a carnal portion in the flesh, or for the saints their spiritual "*rest*" OF PERFECTION, *before* the battle is fought, or the victory won. (Please examine Proofs and Examples under Prin. I. and III., page 15.)

5. Some have said that the very THOUGHTS of a millennium, which only comes with the judgment, and that, too, before the greatest part of the human race shall be converted, are *naturally GLOOMY and APPALLING to chris-*

tians, and contrary to the comfort of the Gospel, belonging to them.

It is true, the Gospel is a *comforting* word to the spiritual mind, (Isa. 40 : 1, &c. 2 Thess. 4 : 18. 5 : 11,) yet it is not admitted that such thoughts are naturally gloomy, or disquieting to saints awake to righteousness, and living, as did the apostle, always ready, and desiring “*to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.*” (Phil. 1 : 23.) Wicked and infidel men, like Felix, it is true, will naturally “*tremble*” and feel *gloomy* in view of such a millennium as threatens immediately to destroy them, soul and body, in hell for ever, except on their repentance, which they intend not to exercise. And so it will naturally be with professors of religion, whose faith, if they have any, is less than a “*mustard seed*,” and whose sympathies of the flesh are stronger than their love to God’s just and holy law. But with regard to the faithful and consecrated saints, being made comfortable or gloomy, by the *greatness* or *smallness* of the number of conversions from the ranks of Satan, it is believed that the scriptures teach nothing of it. On the contrary, Christ expressly says to his disciples—“*Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.*” (Luke, 10 : 20.) From this, it seems that the saints are not allowed to be gloomy, should sinners *not* be converted, and without witnessing it they have cause enough to “*rejoice*,” so long as allowed to indulge the hope of soon being themselves “*in heaven.*” But were it necessarily gloomy to the christian to think of not half the race of fallen man finally converted and saved, to all of whom full salvation is freely offered, and by them despised, why should it not be at least doubly gloomy to think of not only *half*, but *all* the fallen *angels* finally

lost, who have neither abused nor enjoyed offers of mercy?

And how can it be gloomy at all, to christians like Paul, desiring to "*depart and to be with Christ,*" to think of a millennium "*at hand,*" which will place them, with all the elect of God, on their promised glorious thrones, to commence their everlasting reign with Christ, in the termination of all their trials and sorrows in their present conflict with sin and the powers of darkness.

6. By some it is understood that there are many OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES which prove that there must be a millennium, or period of rest, for the church in *this* world.

A few of these passages may now be presented and examined.

Ps. 2: 8. "*Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen [enemies of God] for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.*"

Perhaps no passage of the Old Testament has been more times quoted in public prayer than this, and interpreted as a prophecy of the saving conversion of the whole population of the globe to the religion of the Gospel. But on examination it will be found that the passage is improperly detached from its connexion, which, when read together, explains itself very differently. The verse which follows it is, "*Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*" (Ps. 2: 9.) Nothing seemingly could more strikingly than this represent the utter *destruction* of all "*the heathen,*" or wicked, when conquered and given to Christ and his people, *not* to sit with him upon his throne, but rather to be ruled with an iron rod, or most dreadfully and for ever destroyed. Another passage of the New Testament describes Christ's finally ruling the wicked with the same rod:

"And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." (Rev. 19: 15.)

Isa. 2: 2. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it." (Mic. 4: 1, 2.)

This passage, instead of foretelling the conversion of the world, as many have supposed "a thousand years" before the judgment, expressly foretels what "shall come to pass in the LAST days." This will be quite too late to be "a thousand years" before the "last days." The people of God, are explained as being his "house," or "building," (Heb. 3: 6. 1 Cor. 3: 9,) and as the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands," is to become "a great mountain and fill the whole earth," (Dan. 2: 35, 45,) so it appears that the Lord's house is to be eventually in Christ, powerful against all its foes, and as a "great mountain" of power to break in pieces "the image." (Dan. 2: 34, 45.) In the fulfilling of this prophecy, then, "in the last days," this "mountain of the Lord's house" will prevail over all the mountainous powers of sin and Satan ever arrayed against it, and will "be established," or settled to "dwell" high above all the mountains of opposition, to be "moved no more." (1 Chron. 17: 9.) Then all "the nations of them which are saved," (Rev. 21: 24,) not of unconverted and wicked men, but of the living and dead saints in the resurrection of "the last days"—"shall flow," or be suddenly gathered unto it as their final rest. No such gathering of "the nations" of God's "elect," or "saints" has ever yet taken place, or ever can, while the resurrection is delayed, and the living bodies of men must remain scattered in all countries for the procuring of their perishing

bread, and the dead must till then remain in their graves. But when "*the mountain of the Lord's house shall be*" so "*established,*" then his saints shall thus flow together, or be "*gathered,*" as abundantly foretold." (Ps. 50: 5. Isa. 54: 7. Jer. 29: 14. Ezek. 11: 17. Mat. 24: 31.)

Jer. 31: 34. "*And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother saying know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more.*"

This detached passage also, has been quite generally interpreted, as foretelling an earthly or temporal millennium, of the world's conversion to Christ, so as to need no more preaching, or exhorting men to "*know the Lord,*" for a "*thousand years*" before the judgment. But in seeing that this is a mere delusion, and must have been originally palmed upon us by the false prophet, a few plain things need only be considered.

(1.) Christ has commissioned his ministers and people to *continue* preaching, or saying to *all*, "*know the Lord,*" promising himself to be with them, "*always, even to the end of the world.*" (Mat. 28: 19, 20.)

(2.) When the prophet inquired "*how long*" this work must be done, the Lord said, "*Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate.*" (Isa. 6: 11.)

(3.) Christ also, told his people, in their thus preaching the Gospel, the same as that it must be continued "*until the Son of man be come.*" (Mat. 10: 23.)

(4.) It is expressly foretold that "*the beast,*" or power of Satan, shall make *war with the saints, and overcome them,* "*until the Ancient of days*" come, and "*judgment*" shall be "*given to the saints of the Most High,*" and "*the*



saints' possess "the kingdom," (Dan. 7: 19, 21, 22. Rev. 13: 7.) If Satan should be bound a thousand years to worry the saints no more, before Christ's coming to judgment, this prophecy would prove false.

(5.) The preceding verse explains this prophecy of Jeremiah, as foretelling, *not* a thousand years conversion of the world, before the judgment, but rather the eternal rest and glory of all God's saints in heaven, when perfected in holiness, spirituality, and obedience in all things, when in the appointed time, or finally, God shall have made his "new," or everlasting "covenant," with "the house of Israel," or saints, who have overcome, and put his "law in their inward parts," and written "it upon their hearts." (Jer. 31: 33, 34.) Then, to be sure, and not before, will they have done teaching others to "know the Lord."

7. As an objection against an everlasting millennium with the judgment at hand, it is said, that in its not allowing TIME sufficient for the CONVERSION OF THE WORLD, it naturally *destroys the* MOTIVE for missionary and christian effort.

The world's conversion, to be sure, has long been held up as a motive for christian fidelity, but what has it effected in bringing about the object for the last two centuries, since probably the argument began to be used? while it appears from the fairest calculation which can be made, that now, after so long a time in urging this motive which is not found in the Bible, that conversions from the world to the church, are less than one to a thousand of the numbers annually added to the world. And is it not a positive fact, also, that during the period of urging this motive for christian effort, or especially the last half century, pure and undefiled religion has been gradually, if not rapidly on the decline, until now almost extinct? Looking also, at the 600,000,000 of the world's population said yet

to be without the letter of the Gospel, what will the further urging of this hitherto unsuccessful motive be likely to accomplish in reviving primitive christianity and saving a lost world? And what if, within a few hundred years of continued declension and amalgamation of the church with the world, as heretofore, it should be said that the *whole world is converted to the church*? In such a case, would it not be more proper to say, *the whole church is converted to the world*?

Rather than longer give heed to such seducing "*fa-  
bles,*" shall we not rather hear the speech of the Almighty for our motive to Christian action, in his saying—"Go up to the mountain and bring wood, [or begin to do the self-denying work first,] and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. Ye looked for much [the world's conversion] and lo! it came to little [not one thousandth part] and when ye brought it home [offered it to the Lord] I did blow upon it, [despised it.] Why, saith the Lord of hosts? Because of mine house [God's spiritual people] that is waste, [desolate as to spirituality] and ye run every man to his own house [or, are hasty in efforts to enrich yourselves and households.] Therefore, the heaven over you is stayed from her dew, [or the spirit not poured out] and the earth is stayed from her fruit." [or saving conversions generally are not multiplied.] (Hag. 1 : 8—10.)

But why should a short time in which faithfully to build a house, be a *less* motive for immediate and energetic action in the work, than the expectation of a *long* time? Surely, in no important *worldly* matters do men reason or practice on such a principle. In the breaking out of a fire which will desolate the city in a few hours, if not repelled immediately, how suddenly are our ears almost stunned with the

loud cry of—FIRE! FIRE!! FIRE!!! with scores of fire bells and church bells ringing—with multitudes running, and engines loud rattling, all to extinguish the fire in the proper season allowed for doing it. Such hasty zeal and energy would not be manifested in rescuing the property, were it not for the *strong motive* of the *time so short* allowed for doing the work. Just so men reason and practice in all other emergencies where there is much to be done, and *great shortness of time* for doing it. They engage in the work with the greater zeal, as the time is nearer “*at hand,*” when it will be too late for the work to be done.

And are not the MOTIVES of the Lord Jesus, the prophets and apostles on this very subject of christian effort, directly the reverse of holding out a *long* time, in which to build the Lord’s house, to excite zeal in doing it? As already abundantly shown, they always urged “*the day of the Lord*”—“*the kingdom*”—“*the Judge,*” &c., “*at hand,*” as the greatest of all motives to immediate repentance and christian effort, while the apostle would have us all zealous in “*exhorting one another,* [or saying “*every man to his neighbor—know the Lord,*”] *and so MUCH THE MORE AS*” we “*see the day approaching.*” (Heb. 10: 25.)

II. It remains further to defend our doctrine of the everlasting kingdom, and glorious *millennium* “*at hand,*” against the counter theory of a thousand years of Christ’s invisibly reigning with his saints in the flesh, first—By presenting some more direct *arguments against that scheme.*

1. Such a view of Christ’s coming to reign with his saints, represents him as coming *invisibly* to every eye, and consequently without any visible *power and glory,* con-

trary to his own and others' inspired declaration, that "every eye shall see him," (Rev. 1:7,) "coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Mat. 24:30. Dan. 7:13. Rev. 14:14.)

2. Such a coming of Christ as this theory represents, gradually and increasingly from year to year, by the Spirit, until the world shall be converted, is contrary to the many scripture predictions of his coming, to be **SUDDEN**, "as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west;" like "the flood;" (Mat. 24:27, 39,) like the fire upon "Sodom;" (Luke, 17:28—30,) "like a thief in the night," (1 Thess. 5:2. 2 Pet. 3:10,) "suddenly as a swift witness against the sorcerers," &c. (Mal. 3:1, 5.) "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump," &c. (1 Cor. 15:52.)

3. This counter millennial theory represents the wicked as nearly, or quite all *converted*, at Christ's thus coming to reign, which is contrary to the many scriptures, showing rather, that at his real coming, or coming "himself," they are all to be *suddenly destroyed* as by his "flaming fire." (2 Thess. 1:8, 9.) "With the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. 2:8,) "To execute judgment upon all—that are ungodly, (Jude, 14, 15,) to slay them "with the sword of" his "mouth," when "all the fowls" shall be "filled with their flesh." (Rev. 2:16. 19:15, 21.)

4. The same counter theory of Christ's coming to reign in a millennium, represents its blessedness as designed for only the favored ones of a particular age of the world. This is contrary to the acknowledged doctrine that "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation," (2 Pet. 1:20,) because it interprets a vast amount of the divine promises so *privately* as to take them away for ever from the whole *multitudes* of God's elect, or the true seed

of Abraham, to whom they belong, (Gal. 3: 7, 16, 29,) and gives them to a kind of select number in the flesh, to be enjoyed only for a comparative moment. It is contrary also to the scripture doctrine that the saints' "*promises*" are to be inherited only in heaven for ever. (Heb. 11: 12—14, 36—40. See Proof and Example under Prin. III.)

5. It represents the Lord, in a manner, as a "*respector of persons*," in trying a part of his dear saints through all their lives, in the furnace of affliction, to prepare them for heaven, while preparing others for the blessing with entire exemption from a warfare against the powers of darkness.

6. This counter theory represents, that by far the greatest part of the finally redeemed saints, as entering "*into the kingdom*" only from a long "*reign*," as kings in this world, without "*much*," if any, "*tribulation*." This is contrary to the assurance of Christ and the apostle, that "*in the world*" they "*shall have tribulation*," (John, 16: 33,) and that "*it is through much tribulation*" they "*shall enter*" there, (Acts, 14: 22,) and contrary to John's vision of the innumerable multitude finally made white in heaven, that they are only those "*which came out of great tribulation*." (Rev. 7: 14.)

7. The same counter theory, in its representing such multitudes of saints as living so godly and so long in the world *without* "*persecution*," is contrary to the inspired declaration, that "*ALL that will live godly in Christ Jesus, SHALL suffer persecution*." (2 Tim. 3: 12.)

8. It represents Christ's kingdom, and himself with it, as actually *in* "*this world*" 1000 years, which is understood to be at variance with Christ's own declaration, in saying, "*My kingdom is not of this world*." (John, 18: 36.)

9. Christ, on giving, by request, very fully, "*the signs*"

of his "*coming, and of the end of the world,*" (Mat. 24 : 3, &c.,) never intimated a word of any such sign as that of 1000 years of the triumph and peace of his church in this world, to take place next *before* his coming. Were it true that such a thousand years were next to precede his coming to judgment, and were it revealed, too, by the former prophets, sure Christ would have mentioned it as a sign far more important and distinguishing than any he foretold. More than this, all the signs he did foretel, seem to contradict the theory of such a thousand years first.

10. This counter millennial theory, in its representing that soon all the world is to be converted and saved, naturally *hinders* the *awakening* and *conversion* of the *ungodly*. It has this tendency in taking away from them the terror of their threatened speedy destruction in hell at Christ's second coming "*at hand,*" and in virtually promising them every one, conversion and sure eternal life, should the day find them still in the body. Thus they are naturally comforted, and encouraged in a false hope of heaven while in the full and continued indulgence of all their sins, in their hope that such a saving millenium is at hand.

11. The same theory in its construing so nearly all the "*exceeding great and precious promises*" of God, as the comforts and peace of *this world* only, naturally draws the heart of the *saints* away from the glories above, entices them to set their affections on something this side of heaven ; keeps out of their mind, and out of their sight the realities of a judgment and future world ; brings them into a state of spiritual famine ; divests them of their spiritual armor ; hinders their power to labor on the building of the Lord's house, and gives the wicked one a continual and almost complete advantage over them. These things might seem like making "*the heart of the righteous sad ;*"

strengthening "*the hands of the wicked,*" and "*stealing*" God's "*words every one from his neighbor.*" (Ezek. 13 : 22. Jer. 23 : 30.)

12. Such a temporal millennium is contrary to the scriptures in its presumptuously putting "*far away the evil day,*" (Amos 6 : 1—3,) maintaining that it is at least 1000 years, if not 360,000 years off, though Christ, the prophets and apostles never one of them taught such a doctrine, but agreed in frequently and arousingly warning mankind to prepare for it, as being "*near, near*"—"at hand"—"*nigh at hand*"—"*hasting greatly*"—"*coming in a little while*"—"quickly"—"*at the door,*" as was more fully shown in a former discourse.

13. The present fulfilled and fulfilling of various important prophecies of the *signs* to precede "*the great day,*" apparently prove that it is already "*even at the doors*" leaving no room for any long period of years whatever to intervene first. But as these *signs* are to be made the subject of more full discussion in the next discourse, they will now be reserved for that occasion.

14. This theory of a temporal, rather than an everlasting millennium "*at hand,*" is now discarded, because it is understood as construing a vast proportion of the awakening considerations of the Bible, as the mere things of *time*; and thus to hold out *insufficient and unscriptural* MOTIVES for *immediate repentance*. It will be seen, that in the coming and passing of the longest supposed temporal millennium, there are no scenes to be witnessed by those in it, except such as are *temporal*, or *momentary*, which, however good or bad they may be represented, have comparatively nothing in them calculated to *awaken* careless sinners or hypocrites, or to excite them immediately "*to flee from the wrath to come.*" Such motives of themselves, ne-

ver have awakened, and never will awaken, the enemies of God to prepare for the eternal judgment. The motives of the *Bible* for this purpose, are directly the reverse. It uniformly holds out motives like the following, and none others, *viz.*—" *Day of the Lord*"—" *Coming of the Lord*"—" *Judgment seat*"—" *Resurrection*"—" *End of all things*"—" *Kingdom of God*"—" *New heavens*"—" *New earth*"—" *Salvation*"—" *Damnation*"—" *Everlasting fire*"—" *Eternal life*"—" *Eternity*," &c., all now, " *at hand*"—coming " *quickly*"—" *at the door*," &c. These awakening considerations, are in substance, precisely the same as " *the kingdom of God*," or everlasting millennium, and scenes of its coming, just " *at hand*."

15. Finally, this counter millennial theory is now discarded, because it is understood, as indirectly, though virtually, *laying down* UNSCRIPTURAL AND FALSE PRINCIPLES of interpreting the great things of the Spirit, and of godliness in the Bible, or such as are contrary to " *the first principles of the oracles of God*." It will be seen, that in its explaining the *reign of saints—thrones—resurrection and judgment* of Rev. 20 : 1—6, as all to be fulfilled in the present life, it virtually explains the whole *connexion* of Christ's second coming, judgment, &c., and all parallel passages as also to be fulfilled in this life, in order to make them harmonize with this counter theory. The principles naturally wanted to sustain such interpretations, it may be seen, are such as the following : *viz.*

Such as would explain the greatest proportion of God's " *exceeding great and precious promises*," as designed to be fulfilled to men in the flesh, in things of the moment, rather than to the perfected saints in giving them riches, honors and pleasures, which shall be infinite and eternal. (See Proof, &c., Prin. III.)



And the great amount of the penal curses or threatenings of divine wrath against the ungodly, as designed only to be executed against different classes of sinners, or *nations* while on probation, rather than against all God's incorrigible enemies in hell for ever. (See Proof, &c., Prin. IV.)

That theory also maintains as a principle, that the greater part of the prophecies, or word of God, are spoken of the *secular*, rather than the *spiritual*, interests of mankind. (See Proof, &c., Prin. VIII.)

It also assumes as a principle, that nearly all the *figures* and *shadows* apparently showing the awful realities of the coming judgment and future state, must be understood in the *letter*, rather than in the *spirit*. (See Proof, &c., Prin. IX.)

As another principle, it assumes, that the resurrection, judgment, thrones, reign of saints with Christ, &c., are borrowed by the Almighty only as *types* of the *momentary* scenes of *this world*. (See Proof and Prin. XII.)

And that those interpretations are true, of the promises and threatenings of God, which naturally whisper, "Peace, peace," to the ungodly, in making sad the spiritual mind. (See Proof, &c., Prin. XV. and XVI.)

Lastly, it assumes as a principle, that the long standing "*traditions of men*" are a more sure rule of interpretation than the Bible, as its own independent interpreter. (See Proof and Prin. XXI. and XXIV.)

### REMARKS.

From the considerations herewith presented, it would appear, that the subject of the millennium, so called, is

one of vital interest to the church, and to the souls of all mankind having opportunity to read or hear of it :

That it has now long been made the subject of a kind of vain speculation, and viewed according to the popular traditions of men, or presumptive opinions of each man for himself, more than according to the spirit and letter of God's sure word in revealing it :

That now, by properly taking heed to it, and obtaining a clear scripture view of it, we may furnish ourselves with a scripture commentary on the great mass of the prophetic writings of the kingdom of God, both of the Old and New Testaments ; and

That by obtaining and maintaining a mere secular and false view of the subject, we are naturally furnished with an unscriptural and false commentary on nearly all the things of the Spirit in the same prophecies, which naturally converts them into comparative trash, confusion and nonsense, making them rather loathsome to the spiritual mind, and destroying their terror, and awakening power to unbelievers, and to operate most directly in producing the very same declension in Zion which she has experienced, since, as supposed, this latter course has been most fully pursued in regard to the millennium.

## LECTURE VIII.

### SIGNS OF THE KINGDOM, NOW SPECIALLY AT HAND.

Mat. 3 : 2. 24, 3.

“ *The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”—“ *Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*”

This is an important question concerning “ *the kingdom of heaven—at hand.*” In substance, as appears, it was occasionally proposed as long ago as when the writings of the Old and New Testaments were given. For a long time now it has been the case, that as soon as individuals have had their minds called to the subject, their first thoughts, and, many times, their first question concerning it, has been, when will it come? or, how many years first? As in the text now chosen, this question was proposed to our Saviour just before his crucifixion, together with an inquiry for “ *the sign*” of his “ *coming, and of the end of the world.*” In his long and particular answer to these inquiries, though he told neither the “ *day*” nor the “ *hour*” of the event, he *did* tell quite a number of the *signs* to be witnessed before its coming, by which it may be *known* when “ *it is near, even at the doors.*”

### PROPOSITION.

In further vindication of the doctrine of “ *the kingdom—*

*at hand*," against the arguments of a *temporal millennium*, or long period of alleged foretold events first to come to pass, it is proposed to examine some of Christ's own prophecies of things first to be witnessed, comparing them with events now fulfilled and fulfilling before our eyes, and thus to show that the great day of his "*second*" "*appearing*," with all the awful and glorious events of the final judgment, is now verily "*nigh at hand*," so that for aught mortals can know, all the prophecies of its coming may be fulfilled within a single year. This will be done:

I. By examining into the precise meaning of the DISCIPLE'S QUESTION in the text, concerning the period and "*sign*" of Christ's "*coming and the end of the world*:"

II. The very full and solemn ANSWER OF OUR SAVIOUR to the same question.

If it can be proved that the inquiry of our text was exclusively for the period and signs of Christ's coming to judgment, in the destruction of all his enemies, and all material things, the answer of our Saviour which follows, must be understood as given *to that same question*, and *not*, as many have supposed, to an inquiry rather for the *period and signs of Jerusalem's destruction* by the Roman army forty years after the answer was given.

I. It is to be shown from the QUESTION in the text, and its connexion, that the inquiry of the disciples was exclusively for the *period and signs of Christ's coming to judgment*, and not at all for the siege against a temporal city by a mere human army.

1. One part of the question itself, is too plain to be understood otherwise than as an express inquiry for the *period and "sign of" Christ's "coming and of the end of the world."* *Christ's coming and the end of the world*

are here placed together, which shows that the *disciples* understood them as coming together, at "*the end of the world*" and not before. At that time, of course, they considered, as we do, that all the great events of the final judgment will take place. From this part of the question surely nothing could be more foreign than a supposed inquiry for the siege against Jerusalem, or "*the end of the*" Jewish dispensation.

2. In regard to the other part of the question, *viz.* "*When shall these things be?*" there is proof in the *preceding connexion*, that the words,—"*these things*," include Christ's coming to judgment and the other great events of his coming instead of being *limited* as many have said, to the destruction of the temple, buildings and single city of Jerusalem. In now proving that "*these things*" mean so much, we must examine the preceding connexion which prompted the question, *viz.* "*when shall these things be?*" There it will be seen that Christ was "*come into the temple*," (Mat. 21 : 23,) and that he continued teaching in the temple till "*the Pharisees were gathered together*," to tempt and question him about "*the great commandment in the law?*" (Mat. 22 : 34—36, 41.) Soon, upon this, Christ being still in the temple, commenced a discourse exclusively addressed to the "*scribes and Pharisees*," (Mat. 23 : 13,) and continued it to the end of the chapter, (23 : 39.)

In this discourse to the Pharisees, who apparently represent his opposers, or unbelievers generally, he calls them "*hypocrites*," no less than six times, (23 : 13—16, 23, 25,)—"fools"—"*blind*"—"blind guides" repeatedly, (23 : 16, 17, 19, 24, 26,)—"serpents" and a "*generation of vipers*," (23 : 33,) also calling them, "*Jerusalem, Jerusalem*," (23 : 37.) In connexion with this, he charges them as a

"*generation of vipers,*" with the grossest of crimes, even with the blood of all the the prophets from *Abel* to *Zacharias*, (23 : 35,) and foretels their continuing in such a course of martyring his people, &c. (23 : 34.) In the same connexion and discourse, he continually denounced upon them "*Wo*"—" *Wo*"—" *Wo*"—with "*the damnation of hell,*" in their finally being made to suffer for the blood of all the martyrs. Then he closes his discourse thus addressed to his enemies, or concerning them all from first to last, even from *Abel's* day, by an assurance of his long continued willingness to have safely "*gathered*" them, but they "*would not,*" and threatening them with being left desolate as a "*house,*" or "*generation,*" or as a city having abused the privileges of "*Jerusalem,*" (his people) and with seeing him no more, to offer them life, till they shall "*say Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*" (23 : 39.)

The enemies of God, abusing *Jerusalem's* or the saint's privileges, here threatened with destruction, and called, among other names, "*Jerusalem, Jerusalem,*" are spoken of by another prophet and called by the same name, in foretelling their final destruction. "*Behold the day cometh and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against JERUSALEM to battle,*" &c. "*Then shall the Lord go forth and fight,*" &c. "*And the Lord thy God shall come and all the saints with thee.*" (Zech. 14: 1—5.) Certainly "*the day*" has never yet come, when the Lord has gathered "*ALL nations against JERUSALEM,*" nor against any other city in the flesh, nor gone "*forth*" himself "*to fight,*" neither in that "*day*" has he ever yet "*come, and all his saints with*" him. But in Christ's coming to judgment, as all the prophets have foretold, and as Christ declares, these great and awful things shall be fulfilled, in every "*jot*" and "*tittle.*" (Mat.

5 : 17, 18. 24 : 29—31,) and in a manner inconceivably more dreadful than these striking types of it can represent.

The threatening and prediction of Christ against his enemies, of their seeing him no more till saying "*Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,*" appears parallel to other prophecies of his finally putting all his "*enemies under his feet*" when every "*knee shall bow—and every tongue shall confess to God.*" (1 Cor. 15 : 25. Rom. 14 : 11.) When "*they shall call,*" and "*seek*" unto the Lord, but in vain. (Prov. 1 : 24, 28.)

Thus Christ closes that solemn discourse concerning the "*generation*"—"house," or city of his enemies; with warnings and threatenings of his coming "*in the name of the Lord*"—to require of them the blood of the prophets, and place them where they cannot "*escape the damnation of hell.*" These things being found in the close of the 23d chapter of Matthew, introducing the 24th, which begins with the word "*And*"—shows that in the mind of the disciples, there was a close connexion between Christ's words in both these chapters, while it would appear that their question to him concerning his "*coming,*" &c., was proposed but a very few minutes after hearing him preach so solemnly in the temple about his coming "*in the name of the Lord,*" &c. In all that discourse of Mat. 23 : 13—39, they heard not a word about the passing away or coming of mere earthly dispensations, nor of any events to come, less important than those of the final coming of the Lord with "*the end of the world,*" which they make so prominent in their question contained in the text.

In further proof of what the question really meant, by considering the circumstances which prompted it, let us

look at the next verse in the connexion, which is only the verse but one before the question, *viz.*

Mat. 24: 1. “*And Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and his disciples came unto him for to show him the buildings of the temple.*”

Thus on coming out of the house of worship, and hearing their Master preach so rousingly of the awful destruction and events of his “*coming in the name of the Lord,*” they seemingly desire to know particularly what will become of the stone buildings, &c., or other mighty human works about the temple, at his “*coming,*” of which they had just been hearing him speak. Without waiting to have their apparent question more definitely stated, Christ, as his manner was, answered immediately, as follows, in the next verse, which also is next before the question of the text.

24: 2. “*And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*”

Considering that this subject was introduced, and rousingly discussed in the discourse just heard, so as deeply to impress the disciples' feelings in regard to it, it must appear that both he and his disciples had rather in view the events of his final coming, than the momentary events of thousands of years before, and that his answer concerning the destruction of buildings, &c., was given to show the devastation, and utter throwing down and destruction, not only of the *buildings* of one city, but of the world, and all things which are therein. This would make the prophecy harmonize with many others on the subject. (See Isa. 13: 9—11. Mal. 4: 1, 3. 2 Pet. 3: 7, 10.)

3. In CHRIST'S ANSWER to this question of the disciples, there is much proof that he considered the whole burden of it, as an inquiry for his coming finally to judgment, in-



stead of things comparatively trifling, to come thousands of years before. Some of this proof may here be briefly stated before particularly looking at the *signs* to be examined in the same answer.

(1.) From Mat. 24: 27—51, and thus through chapter 25th, to the close of Christ's long answer to this question, he discourses wholly and most solemnly on the great things of his coming to judgment, together with the ways, means, and vast importance of our all being immediately, continually, and altogether ready to meet its solemn events. All this looks as though he had *no thought* on a subject so foreign as that of a mere fight of flesh and blood, and that, too, of *sinner*s against *sinner*s, which he would rather consider as *Satan's* casting out *Satan*.

(4.) Christ begins his answer to this question with a solemn charge, in the first sentence, to his saints not to "*be deceived*" by any man on the subject. (24: 4.) If this charge were only against the disciples being deceived about the day of a temporal city's overthrow, and they, of course, were to remain in it, till seeing it "*compassed with*" literal "*armies*," (Luke, 21: 20,) it would seem that their faithfulness regarding the charge would not benefit them, even in a temporal point of view, inasmuch as then it would be too late to escape out, except with their mere bodies, their stuff, of course, being made spoil in the siege.

(5.) Were Christ then counselling his disciples only how to make most of their life in *this* world, contrary to the object of his coming "*into the world to save sinners*," (1 Tim. 1: 15,) "*to seek and to save that which was lost*," (Luke, 19: 10,) it might represent him as deficient in the wisdom of this world in not advising them, so that they might have seasonably escaped with all their goods to some comfortable place of abode, without the distressing

necessity of fleeing, destitute and desolate, with their families, for a shelter to the bleak mountains of the country, "to Pella," &c.

(6.) In the very second verse of Christ's answer, (24:5,) he speaks, *not* of an earthly siege, but of his own *coming*, or of individuals who would deceive others about the *subject* and *time* of his coming; so that the question must be about his own coming, or he is discoursing upon a subject very foreign to it, under the pretence of answering it.

(7.) Three times, in the first part of his answer, now generally understood of a literal city to be overthrown, Christ uses the word "END," (24:6, 13, 14,) as though meaning by it the same as expressed in the question, viz. "*The end of the world*," *not* of the Jewish dispensation. But if he did mean by it only the end of a dispensation, must not his disciples, inquiring for "*the end of the world*," have been deceived by his using their words in his answer in such a contrary sense?

If these considerations shall be admitted as proof that the inquiry of the disciples in the text, was for the *time* and *signs* of Christ's "*coming*," and the literal "*end of the world*," we are prepared next to examine, as proposed:

## II. CHRIST'S ANSWER TO THE DISCIPLES' QUESTION:

Giving the SIGNS understood to show that now his final coming and kingdom are "NEAR, EVEN AT THE DOORS."

The several items of this answer may now be taken up by course, as generally the most profitable way of expounding or studying a passage.

Mat. 24:4, 6. "*And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive*

many. *And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars ; see that ye be not troubled ; [or not deceived and turned away from the truth ;] for all these things must come to pass, but the end [or Christ's coming] is not yet,*" or "*is not by and by,* (Luke, 21 : 9,) i. e. not passed "*by, and*" passed "*by.*"

Christ here begins his answer by foretelling great latter day deceptions, by many in his name, called by himself "*false Christs,*" and "*false prophets,*" and in Revelation, "*the false prophet.*" (Rev. 16 : 13. 19 : 20. 20 : 10.) Paul foretold the same deceptions as understood in speaking of the "*god of this world*" blinding the "*minds*" of individuals, (2 Cor. 4 : 4,) and of their receiving "*strong delusion that they should believe a lie,*" &c., and apparently speaks of the arch deceiver and his adherents, as "*the man of sin—son of perdition,*" &c. (2 Thess. 2 : 3, 11, 12.) In Revelation, the same apparent deception is mentioned under the figure of "*the beast*" deceiving "*them that dwell on the earth*"—causing "*all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads.*" (Rev. 13 : 11, 14, 16.)

Here Christ most solemnly warns his people as a genealogy, or race, to the end of time, against being "*deceived*" by these infernal powers of deception. "*Take heed that no man deceive you*"—"See that ye be not troubled," &c. It is most evident that Satan, who "*is a liar, and the father of it,*" (John, 8 : 44,) is not willing that men should believe, and practice according to the great truths of "*the Gospel of the kingdom*"—"at hand," and would, if possible, turn their minds to any thing else rather than their solemnly believing Christ's coming and kingdom near, and this very appropriate work of his, Christ and all the prophets have abundantly foretold. By various "*devices*"

and "*wiles*," (2 Cor. 2:11. Eph. 6:11,) he naturally prosecutes this work, against which Christ thus warns his people.

In the 6th verse of this answer, as we see, Jesus has particularly foretold *one* of these "*devices*" of the *false prophet* to deceive his people, if possible, to make them all believe a lie in relation to the prophecies of the Lord's "*coming and kingdom—at hand*," viz. "*Ye shall HEAR of wars, and rumors of wars.*" Take notice; Christ does not say, in this prediction of Satan's device, that wars, and rumors of wars, would *come to pass*, as a sign of his coming; but "*ye shall HEAR*" of them; i. e. *hear* of them as a *sign to you*, of the day of the Lord "*at hand.*" The mere coming to pass of wars, and rumors of wars, surely could be no more special sign of any great day near at one time more than at another, for they have been common ever since Cain's day, and will be, as long as the enemies of God shall remain on the earth, to contend for this world's goods. Yet there may be a way of *hearing* of them, which *shall* be a sign of the Lord "*nigh at hand.*" I mean when we hear of wars, and rumors of wars, as an argument against the doctrine of the kingdom "*at hand.*"

May it not be said, then, that *now*, and for a *long time past*, this prophecy of deception on the subject of Christ's coming, by HEARING "*of wars and rumors of wars*," is remarkably fulfilling? Is it not true that almost the whole christian world have been made to disbelieve in the coming of Christ nigh, by the HEARING of just such things? And what is now more common every day, and from every direction, than our HEARING of these very arguments, to prove that Christ's coming to judgment is *not* "*at hand*;" but rather that the various prophecies of it are fulfilled

*already*, and that those great events belonging to it are "BY AND BY," or *passed and passed, long ago?* And do we not now find the report in almost every commentary, and every man's mouth, when arguments are wanted against the doctrine of the kingdom to come, that the great mass of the most striking prophecies of it, are long ago fulfilled in dreadful wars and battles? And thus we continue to "HEAR" of the "wars" of *Cyrus—Alexander—Titus—Mahomet—Constantine—Bonaparte*, and of the present *commotions of the East*, as though these were a fulfilling of a great proportion of the prophecies, which surely rather foretel the final "*battle of*" the "*great day of God Almighty*," in Christ's coming to judgment.

But in case of several of the New Testament prophecies of the same great day, particularly in Paul's epistles and the Revelation, which are not understood as explained by profane history, as fulfilled in a former war, how frequently do we now "HEAR" of the "*RUMORS of wars*" hereafter to fulfil them? Such as some dreadful battle against the Catholics, or political judgments against our own nation, or more bloody battles between other nations than ever heretofore. If, then, we had eyes to see and hearts prepared to understand, should we not unitedly perceive, that this long period of thus *hearing "of wars and rumors of wars,"* on the Bible subject of Christ's coming to judgment, is now fulfilled and fulfilling, as strikingly as it is possible for the case to admit, and that it is a sign that "*the Lord is at hand.*"

7, 8. "*For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.*"

Since political wars, literal famines, pestilences and earthquakes, are too common and continual things to be

special, significant *signs* of the day of the Lord "*at hand*," we must rather understand this passage as figurative. And seeing that these events are called "*the beginning of sorrows*," it seems proper to understand them as events coming to pass, as the very *last* things before the commencement of the infinite and everlasting "*sorrows*" of all the enemies of God to be experienced at Christ's coming? These "*famines and pestilences*" seem like appropriate figures of the same "*sorrows*" or destruction of the wicked in that day, as also shown under the opening of the fifth seal of the Revelation, where the "*pale horse*"—"death" and "*hell*," are represented as destroying the enemies of God "*with the sword, and with hunger, [or famine,] and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*" (Rev. 6: 8.)

The "*earthquakes*," and clashing of nations, in the same passage, just at "*the beginning of sorrows*," seem very naturally as the latter day commotions and clashing of the powers of light and darkness together, at the great pouring out of the Spirit upon the church, and when the pure Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached with power in all the earth. In such a case, which appears abundantly foretold, and already much noticed in these discourses, there will very naturally be violent and open opposition to the church then awake, throughout all nations, as no local or private concern; and when come to pass, will be a sure sign that Christ is immediately to appear. How soon this sign will be seen, mortals cannot now tell, but very soon, for aught we know.

9. "*Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.*"

This is given as another sign of Christ's coming to judgment, and showing the event very near. The event

foretold as the sign, is that there shall be bloody persecutions and martyrdoms throughout "*all the world*," which certainly has never yet taken place, and never can, in the nature of things, till the true Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached throughout the whole earth, with the co-operating work of the Spirit of God, so to stir up the church (then scattered in "*all nations*'") to holy action, as to lay a foundation for such extensive martyrdoms, &c. In the apostles' days, and at some periods since, such things have existed within the narrow compass of the church, but never in "*all nations*." Such persecutions must be the natural effect of the work of the Lord, as foretold of "*the last days*," and already noticed. And though secular and unbelieving professors may now shrink from it, and in their hearts deny the prediction, as something too bad for the good Lord to suffer, it will be a rejoicing day to the persecuted and highly favored saints experiencing such trials and honors for Christ's sake. True martyrs always have so rejoiced in such scenes, always will, and Christ has forewarned them to "*rejoice and be exceeding glad*," in the midst of them. (Mat. 5: 12.) Such will be the attitude of both saints and sinners at Christ's coming to judgment, (see Rev. 19: 19, &c.) just after the midnight "*cry*" — "*Behold the Bridegroom cometh*," &c. And on this account, if we will, we may now see so much the clearer, both the mercy and justice of the Lord, then to be fully and eternally displayed.

10. "*And then shall many [professedly pious] be offended and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.*"

This is another sign when fulfilled, that Christ's coming and the end of the world are very near. And is it not now fulfilled and daily fulfilling, before our

eyes, and very extensively, where christianity exists And is not the only reason why this fulfilment has not been discovered long ago, because, as a general thing, we have been too soundly asleep, or prostrate in slaughter before our spiritual enemies to realize our condition. The vision of the "bones" of the "valley" representing "*the whole house of Israel,*" [or saints,] (Ezek. 37: 11,) and many other prophecies apparently foretel such a state of sleeping, or spiritual death in the church, which, however, may be hard for us now to understand, by reason of insensibility, in that very condition. (See Ps. 141 : 7. 79 : 1—4.)

If this prophecy or sign of the day at hand be not already remarkably and extensively fulfilling before us, in brethren *offended, betraying* and *hating one another* ; what mean these terrible offending and clashing divisions for a long time increasing in the very church of God, calling themselves "orthodox," until they have become divided into hundreds of sects and parties, with high partition walls between them, of their own erecting to defend themselves against the cannonading of the other ? And what means this hating of "*one another*" as shown in sectarian conflicts, and newspaper skirmishes between them, with an apparent design to destroy the character and influence of one another as christians, rather than to seek after personal holiness, or to procure the salvation of perishing souls ? And what else, than a considerable degree of such offences, *betraying* and *hating "one another,"* though I speak with all due respect and kindness, and willingness to acknowledge my own part of the fault, shall we consider the late offending, clashing contention, and actual rending asunder in the midst, of one of the largest, longest standing and professedly most orthodox ecclesiastical bodies of this republic ? And all this in the midst of many



public proceedings, to speak most favorably of them, naturally making demons exultingly to rejoice, in this crucifying of "*the Lord afresh,*" and putting him to "*an open shame.*" And what else than the same fulfilment are the anti-fraternal divisions existing among other large and evangelical connexions, not only of this, but other countries? Is not then the day and the hour of the Lord's coming now "*at hand?*"

II. "*And many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many.*"

This sign, consisting of powerful deceptions even in the church concerning the period of Christ's coming, is but a repetition of that already considered in the fourth, fifth and sixth verses, and surely never could be fulfilled as some have supposed, by the momentary rising up, of here and there an obscure individual calling himself a prophet, unknown to the world, perhaps except in his own neighborhood. Such pretended prophets have been common, from the days of the apostles and before, such as "*Theudas*" and others. (Acts, 5 : 36, 37. 21 : 38.) Such prophets then, rising now, could be no more sign of an event near, than thousands of years ago at their rising. But, if in fact it has come to pass, that nearly if not quite all christendom has been deceived by Satan, the false prophet, by means of his adherents, both infernal and in the flesh, so as to believe that the great and solemn events of this whole chapter, (Mat. 24th,) with all its parallel passages, were specially or primarily fulfilled in the siege of the Roman army against the city and bodies of the literal Jews 1800 years ago; and if, in solemn truth, Christ in this whole chapter, and through the next, as is now maintained, was rather foretelling, in answer to the question of our text, the great and terrible things of his own "*coming and of the end of the world,*" have we not *ourselves* been deceived,

from the highest to the lowest, on this infinitely important consideration? And why should we any longer stigmatize the ministers and members of other denominations, in calling *them* specially the long foretold "*false prophets*," except as they with ourselves may have been more or less blinded by the god of this world, and more or less so beguiled as unwarily to join in propagating his heresies?

12. "*And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*"

This is another sign by which the waking saints of the last days are to "*know that summer is nigh*," or that Christ's final coming "*is near, even at the doors*." But the very events here foretold, *viz.*, coldness of love, and abounding iniquity, are naturally calculated to blind the mind and hinder a right understanding of the prophecy; because if blinded in regard to a prophecy of our own *blindness*, we should naturally want more spiritual vision by which to *see* such blindness fulfilled in ourselves; as some of the blindest of such characters indignantly once said to our Saviour on the subject—" *Are we blind also?*" (John 9:40.) As evidence of the present and long coming to pass of this prophecy, may it not be inquired, whether there was ever a time before, since the creation, of such general abounding, great outbreking, violent and yet popular iniquity under the light of the Gospel as now; and extending too, throughout so great a portion of the habitable globe? And was there ever a time before, when there was so much of the very spirit of "*Laodicea*" in the church? and so little of primitive vital godliness proportionally as now? after making due allowance for our modern successful efforts in sending abroad the letter of the gospel, and other many popular, or political efforts to fortify against the desolating ravages of

vice, threatening the annihilation of all our worldly interests. To be sure, while this spiritual desolation exists, and in itself seems deplorable, there are things in our midst of an opposite character which are continually increasing with interest and calculated to cheer us, and when truly awake to righteousness, to make us lift up our hands in rejoicing, that the redemption of ourselves and all Israel is nigh.

13. "*But he that shall endure unto the end, shall be saved.*"

If, as many have maintained, Christ here, and through his answer, meant the end of the Jewish dispensation, at the destruction of Jerusalem, forty years after that period, he must, of course, be understood to say, that whosoever should endure, or live to the end of that dispensation, should be saved. But sinners then living, are not supposed to be saved. Or if Christ were understood to mean that they should be saved from personal injury in that siege; then the 1,100,000 Jews said to have been massacred in that siege, would give a different interpretation to his meaning. It is rather a prediction of the final salvation of all believers enduring to "*the end*" of their probation in the faith, even through such foretold dreadful apostacy, keeping prominently in view the latter day christians in their holding out to the end of the world, in faithfulness against such foretold temptations.

14. "*And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come.*"

This is a sign of Christ's coming, and of the end of the world, more readily understood on coming to pass, than a general deception, darkness, blindness and declension just noticed, because of its engaging so much of the *visible* labors of *men*, instead of being done by *seducing invisible*

*spirits* like the other. The "*Gospel of the kingdom*" to "*be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations,*" is none other than the Gospel of Christ, or word of God, both one and supposed to be called "*the Gospel of the KINGDOM,*" because of its being the great object of the Bible to instruct mankind concerning God's everlasting kingdom; and to aid them in escaping the final destruction it will bring upon the enemies of God, and in obtaining the salvation it will then give to all the saints. When, therefore, this Gospel shall be preached in all the world, not as the Gospel of the christian dispensation *come*—but of "*the kingdom of God,*" and of that kingdom to "*come,*" and "*at hand,*" then, says our Saviour, "*shall the end come,*" i. e. "*the end of the world,*" as stated in the question.

This same prophecy or sign of Christ and the judgment just "*at hand,*" is given again by Jesus himself twenty years, as generally calculated, *after* Jerusalem's overthrow, which shows that it was not fulfilled as some have said, *before* that siege, for if fulfilled then, why did Christ foretel it *again* twenty years after as *not* fulfilled? This other prophecy of the gospel so preached, is given by the figure of an angel flying in "*the midst of heaven,*" to preach it "*in all the earth, and unto every nation and kindred and tongue and people,*" with "*a loud voice*" calling on the world to "*fear God,*" &c., in view of "*the hour of his judgment,*" then "*come.*" (Rev. 14 : 6, 7.)

Although this sign of Christ and the judgment "*at hand,*" has not yet appeared, as the Gospel has never yet been preached so extensively throughout the whole earth, it is a sign which must be witnessed for a short time before the end of the world, but how soon that sign will appear no mortal can tell. Still, there is the same evidence that the time is at hand when it will be done, as that "*the end*

*of all things is at hand.*" Some reasons may now be given for the belief that now very soon, (the precise time yet unknown,) the Gospel will be preached in all the world, producing general and tremendous excitement to the fulfilling of this and other prophecies of the event which then will be a sure witness to believers, that they are standing on the very verge of the judgment, which reasons have not existed in former ages as now.

#### FACTS AUTHORIZING THE EXPECTATION

That now very soon the pure "*Gospel of the kingdom*"—"at hand," will be preached apostolically throughout the world, then to be known as a positive sign that Christ "is near, even at the doors."

(1.) Within only about 300 years of the near 6000 of the earth's standing, has the art of printing been discovered as an apparent beginning of the preparation of the way for doing the great work.

(2.) Within a very few years now, or within the recollection even of the young, has the art of making and printing paper been so improved, that sheets of it dried, cut and printed too, for Bibles, can be brought, in a moment, as it were, directly from the rag pumice in the vat, and multiplied with astonishing rapidity, all which is now ready, as never before, to co-operate to any extent at the bid of the Almighty, with his Spirit poured out, for thus preaching the Gospel.

(3.) Within about 40 years, Bible and missionary societies have arisen, for the first time since the apostles' days, which have done much, and are doing more and more, in scattering the letter of the Scriptures very extensively in the world, and notwithstanding the comparative spiritual desolation of the church at home, the work of God has

been revived on mission ground, Sandwich Islands, within only a year or two, very much after the manner of the days of pentecost.

(4.) Within but a short time, since Bible and missionary efforts commenced the *translation* of the *scriptures* into the different tongues has so increased, that it is reported that they are now read in more than *one hundred and fifty different languages* of the earth.

(5.) The church now has funds enough, and men enough learned at the feet of Gamaliel, if filled with the Spirit of God, even without another conversion, first to preach the Gospel apostolically to the extent foretold that it shall be done, and that too within a very short time, without the assistance of miraculous power given to men as formerly.

(6.) There is now, on the minds of the most evangelical, or spiritually minded, in every section, so far as can be learnt, a *deep conviction*, (or token of general reform,) of the present rapid declension of Zion, and coming in of iniquity like a flood; who rather felt, but a few years ago, that the church was spiritually *rich, increased in goods*, and had *need of nothing*.

(7.) Within only about a dozen years, *reform operations* have commenced and progressed with considerable effect against the strong tides and winds of opposition in exposing, as it were, a host of the *long secret abominations* of the Lord's house, like the work of Ezekiel in similar discoveries in the temple, but just before the general slaughter from the Lord, of all the ungodly of the city for such abominations "*come to the full.*" These exposures have exceedingly tended to open the eyes of the church, which before were much closed in regard to Satan's devices, and have prepared them to look, think and investigate for themselves, as they must, to take effectual hold of the full

work of reform, and in spreading the pure Gospel through the world.

(8.) Within a very few years past, as it is ascertained, quite a number in this country, and very many in Europe, are beginning to talk, write and preach, "*the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*" which, it is believed, has been almost generally left out of the preaching of the church since the days of our primitive fathers, who continued to preach it so till the departure of the church from the faith once delivered to the saints, and was not much, if at all, revived in the reform, even of Luther's day.

(9.) As it was at Jerusalem on pentecost day, there are now in our thousands of christian cities, strangers and foreigners from every clime, who, should they witness another such pouring out of God's Spirit, and be converted to Christ, would naturally, in the persecution which it would excite, flee home to their native soil, with the Gospel and Spirit in their heart, and on their tongue, to proclaim it to their fellows without a moment's hindrance in obtaining a public education, learning a foreign language, setting up schools, refining the natives, &c. &c., before telling them, in their own tongue, the simple story of "*Jesus and the resurrection,*" and "*the wonderful works of God.*"

(10.) Within about the same shortness of time, improvements in steam power have been made, and applied to conveyances both on the water and on the land, which improved power, together with the foretold general pouring out of the Spirit and universal persecution of the last days, will be indispensably necessary in rapidly conveying christian ministers throughout the desolations of their own countries, missionaries to foreign countries, and converted foreigners, as we trust there will be, from christian cities to

their own country. In this way, and in no other, as it yet appears, can the Gospel of the kingdom be preached, as foretold, with such despatch, power and excitement, throughout the earth, and as figuratively represented by "*An angel*" flying "*in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to all 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,*" &c. (Rev. 14: 6, 7.)

(11.) God has foretold a pouring out of his "*Spirit upon all flesh,*" &c. "*in the last days,*" (Joel, 2: 28. Acts, 2: 17, 18,) which, although supposed by many to have been wholly accomplished on pentecost day, and soon after, will be found, on a proper examination, as but very partially fulfilled at that time, and to be finally done in the literal "*last days,*" and so extensively as literally to reach the regions of "*all flesh,*" which cannot be less extensive than the Gospel, is to be then preached throughout the whole world.

(12.) That this work of finally preaching the Gospel as foretold throughout the earth, will be very *sudden, powerful and awakening* when it shall be done, may be understood from the passage, just quoted of the Spirit poured out upon "*all flesh,*" &c., and the angel's flying "*in the midst of heaven*" as though himself to do the work. The same is apparent also, from its being expressly said of the Lord, as may be seen, in relation to this very prophecy—" *For he will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.*" (Rom. 9: 28. See Mat. 25: 1—10.)

(13.) Even were there no express predictions that the latter day work of preaching the Gospel to all nations, will



be very sudden and powerful when done, we might naturally infer the fact, from the consideration that it is not to be done with the church asleep, as for ages past, but by the spirit poured out, as on pentecost days, throughout all nations, as no flesh now living has ever witnessed.

### REMARKS.

From these considerations, it is apparent that although external preparations such as now suggested may be abundantly made for preaching the Gospel through the world, nothing effectual can be done in it either soon or late, except as the Lord himself shall enlist in the work by sending his Spirit as the Elijah to come, in making thorough work in doing it.

That by such a work of the *Spirit* as this, the Gospel of the kingdom may be preached in all the world as foretold, within a single year or so, with only present preparations, as well as within a century.

And finally, that these signs foretold by Christ being so far fulfilled already, and preparations so abundantly made, now within a short time for fulfilling the last, show the day of the Lord now specially nigh, and that it will not be delayed at all by the haughty conduct of proud scoffers, in saying—" *Where is the promise of his coming?*"

## LECTURE IX.

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### CHRIST'S FURTHER SIGNS AND DESCRIPTION OF HIS KINGDOM AT HAND.

Mat. 3:2. 24:3.

“*The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”—“*Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?*”

HAVING examined this question in the preceding discourse, and assumed the position that it is an inquiry for the time and signs of Christ's second coming, not at the end of the Jewish dispensation, but at “*the end of the world,*” with his kingdom to judgment, and having examined a part of our Saviour's answer to this question, the subject will now be resumed under

### THE PROPOSITION

Further to vindicate the doctrine of CHRIST'S “*everlasting kingdom*”—“*at hand,*” against all arguments for considering it still a great way off—by a more full examination of HIS OWN ANSWER to this question; and by showing from the *present fulfilling* of his *foretold signs* of its coming, that now “*that great day of God Almighty*” is even so “*nigh at hand,*” that it may be upon us, and upon the whole world, within a *single year* for aught we know, though the precise period be not revealed.

## CHRIST'S ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, CONTINUED.

Mat. 24 : 15—20. “ *When ye, [as a generation or lineage] therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation [or desolating abominable things] spoken of by Daniel the prophet, (Dan. 9 : 27. 12 : 11,) standing in the holy place [among God’s people] (whoso readeth let him understand,) (Dan. 9 : 23,) then let them which be in Judea, [or the saints in Israel,] flee to the mountains ; [“ flee from the wrath to come,” to “ get up into the high mountain,” Mat. 3 : 7. Isa. 40 : 9,] let him which is on the house top not come down to take any thing out of his house, neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. [but rather be always perfectly ready for a sudden flight to “ Mount Zion,” (Rev. 14 : 1,) from “ the house top,” “ the field,” &c.] And wo unto them that be with child, and to them that give suck in those days! [or, to poor, unprepared, entangled sinners having no faith by which to “ flee,” or “ mount up with wings as eagles,” Isa. 40 : 31.] But pray ye, that your flight [to heaven. 1 Thess. 4 : 17] be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath-day.” [Or, that it may be free from every possible hindrance,]*

Although perhaps, for ages past, this whole passage may have been understood as a prophecy of nothing else than the siege of the Roman army against the bodies and city of the literal Jews 1800 years ago, there are certainly many serious and scripture reasons for rejecting such an interpretation, as being one of the mere traditions of men, making void the law of God, and not the less objectionable for its antiquity. In kindly and meekly dissenting from this long popular interpretation, as a supposed mere “*Jewish fable*,” originating with the false prophet only to dis-

annul the power of the Gospel to awaken and convert mankind, I would say, that,

In the book of Daniel, the very question of our text is proposed to the Lord, in these words, "*Oh my Lord, what shall be the end of these things ?*" (Dan. 12: 8.) "*These things,*" it will be seen, are the things of Christ's coming to judgment, as the "MICHAEL"—"*the great Prince,*" standing "*up,*" or coming to deliver "*every one that shall be found written in the book,*" at the resurrection of "*some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*" (Dan. 12: 1, 2.) Daniel also connects these scenes of the final judgment most intimately with the same desolating "*abominations*" which are mentioned by Christ, which are to be discovered by the people of God "*in the holy place,*" as the sign of his "*coming and of the end of the world*" near.

Since Daniel shows us that these desolating "*abominations*" are to be fulfilled, at "*the end of the war*"—"even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." (Dan. 9: 26, 27,) "*till the time of the end.*" (Dan. 12: 9,) "*at the end of the days,*" &c., (Dan. 12: 13,) and since Christ tells us that "*the abomination of desolation*" which he foretold to be discovered just before his coming, is the same as that in Daniel, we have Daniel's testimony that this "*abomination,*" foretold by Christ, was *not* seen 1800 years ago, in the Roman army, but will be seen in close connexion with Christ's "*coming and of the end of the world,*" showing a harmony between Daniel, the disciples' question and Christ's answer, all on the same sign of the last day near.

By Christ's caution in this part of his answer, "*(Whoso readeth let him understand,)*" it appears that he was then aware that some would *not* understand this prophecy

quoted from Daniel, and indeed the same caution to "*understand*" is contained in Daniel (Dan. 9: 23, 25) with a prediction that "*none of the wicked shall understand*," because of their doing wickedly. (Dan. 12: 10.) And seeing how these things explain themselves when compared together, have we not ourselves been incautious after all this caution, and like the wicked themselves, misunderstood the prophecy in supposing it fulfilled so long before the foretold "*end*" when it shall be accomplished and fully seen by all "*the wise*?"

And why should the Roman army, never hypocritically professing the Christian religion, coming to destroy a city of hypocritical Jews, be considered by a holy God so much more abominable than were they coming against some *other* wicked city *not* so hypocritical?

Shall we not rather abandon the tradition that such an army of mere flesh and blood was the worst "*abomination*" foretold by Christ and Daniel to trouble the church till Christ's "*coming and the end of the world*?"

And shall we not rather be "*wise*," and "*understand*," as we read, that those very desolating "*abominations*" are now standing "*in the holy place*," or in the very midst of the evangelical church, and that for a long time past, in becoming more and more abominable, and yet comparatively undiscovered by the watchmen till within a few years now past? That we may the more easily "*understand*" what this dreadful abomination *is*, and be "*wise*" in regard to it, we may just read Christ's own explanation of it in the preceding words of his answer. He had but the moment before been foretelling, as signs of his coming at hand, how "*many*"—" *shall be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another,*" and of dreadful deceptions, with "*iniquity*" *abounding*, and "*love*"

waxing "cold." (10—12.) Such things as these would naturally be very *abominable* in the sight of God, and especially so when found in the most holy place on earth, or in the "little sanctuary" of the saints. (Ezek. 11: 16.) The present coming to pass of just such things, were noticed in the last discourse, in expounding those verses. Christ, in saying, "When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation," &c., speaks as though the very abominable things he had just foretold, were this "abomination of desolation." And surely, with all her outward prosperity, wealth, increase and show, the church of Christ never before, since its existence, had in it so much of "the love of money—the root of all evil," and "covetousness which is idolatry," and various other things abominable as now. Without attempting to describe these evils particularly, it may just be said, that generally they are such, as on being seen by some, as the long foretold abominations to come, have given rise to various self-denying and unpopular associations which have been formed to expose and repel the evils.

The *discovery*, not the *existence* of these abominations, was to be "the sign" of Christ, and the end of the world nigh. They have long *existed*, but have but recently begun to be *discovered*, are supposed to be yet but partially seen by any, and by some in the church perhaps not at all; while those who may profess the clearest sight of them, may be but little shocked at the sight, for want of more spiritual vision and knowledge of the fact, that their discovery is a foretold sure sign that "the day of the Lord is at hand."

In regard to Christ's warning his saints, in the connexion now under consideration, to be ready to "flee to the mountains," from "the house top"—"the field," &c., though

others may view it as the most "EVIDENT" proof that the whole is spoken of *literal* mountains, *earthly* things, &c., there are great difficulties in so understanding those warnings to the saints, such as the following :

It would seemingly require a miracle for men to escape by flight out of a besieged city from their "*house top*," without *coming "down ;"* and to say that Christ only meant that they should flee out of the city on the flat tops of the adjoining houses, certainly seems very illogical.

Would it not also have required a miracle for the saints "*in Judea*" to have *seen* the Roman army as the abomination, surrounding Jerusalem, so far off, as from all Judea to the city ?

And what special cause would a siege at Jerusalem give for such a sudden flight to the mountains from "*the fields*" of "*Judea*," while none have maintained that the siege was carried at all away from the city ?

Such a construction of the passage seems gross and secular, and altogether contrary to Christ's saying, that his "*words are spirit, and they are life*," (John, 6 : 63,) and entirely foreign to the question which he was answering, and to the whole burden of his own answer, both preceding and following after the passage in question.

Another evangelist has recorded this same fleeing to "*the mountains*" from "*the house top*,"—" *the field*," &c., and positively explained it by its entire connexion both before and after, *not* of a siege of flesh and blood, but of "*that day*"—" *that night*," and "*the day when the Son of man is REVEALED*," (Luke, 17 : 30—34,) when, as another says, he "*shall be REVEALED from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire*," &c. (2 Thess. 1 : 7, 8.)

But if we understand the fleeing "*to the mountains*" of

the saints, to be their final flight to the high heavens, at the close of their probation, or to "*be caught up to meet the Lord in the air,*" at his final coming, (1 Thess. 4: 17.) the prophecy would harmonize both in the spirit and in the letter, with other passages which speak of the saints' final abode as "*on the Mount Zion,*" (Rev. 14: 1,) in "*the high mountain,*" (Isa. 40: 9,) and in "*the mountain of the Lord's house—established in the top of the mountains,*" &c. (Isa. 2: 2. Micah, 4: 1.)

21. "*For then shall be great TRIBULATION, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, nor ever shall be.*"

The coming to pass of this unprecedented "**TRIBULATION,**" is another corresponding sign of Christ's "*coming, and of the end of the world,*" near. In order to be warned by the sign on its coming to pass, we should not be deceived and misunderstand what this "**TRIBULATION**" is.

It could not have been the massacre of "1,100,000 Jews" by the Roman army, because, as we have seen, that event, both in letter and spirit, is foreign to all this prophecy; more than this, their sufferings, as hypocrites, for a moment in such a siege could not, without falsehood, be called greater suffering or "**TRIBULATION**" than their threatened subsequent suffering in "*hell, where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.*"

Neither could this "**TRIBULATION**" be the final perishing of any of the wicked in hell at any time, because, as we see, it must come to pass *before* Christ's coming to judgment, as he says, "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days,*" &c., "*and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, &c.* (29, 30.)

Neither can it be the outward persecutions and martyrdoms to be experienced by the saints in the last days "*of*



*refreshing,*" because Christ counts *not* such trials of the saints, their greatest "*tribulation,*" telling them rather to "*rejoice and be exceeding glad*" in the midst of them, and they have always done so, and always will; while it is only "*the carnal mind,*" which "*is enmity against God,*" that would deplore such things as the greatest "*tribulation.*" (Mat. 5: 10—12. Rom. 8: 7.)

The prophet Daniel has seemingly explained this "GREAT TRIBULATION," calling it "*a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation—and at that time thy people shall be delivered,* [into the glorious liberty of the children of God,] *every one that shall be found written in the book,*" [every saint,] when they "*that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,*" &c. (Dan. 12: 1, 2.) Thus Daniel explains it as being just at the time of the saints' final deliverance at the resurrection.

Then let us rather understand this very "GREAT TRIBULATION" of the saints in this life, to be their latter day "*overcome*" condition; not from the quickening opposition of flesh and blood, to make them rather "*rejoice,*" but from the deceptive "*powers*" of "*darkness,*" and "*wiles of the devil,*" and "*spiritual wickedness in high places.*" (Eph. 6: 11, 12.) The saints being *thus* "*overcome,*" throughout the world, must, indeed, "*be in GREAT TRIBULATION*" in the sight of their beholding and bleeding Saviour, and will be so seen by themselves when delivered out of it, and out of all their "*bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God,*" in heaven. (Rom. 8: 21.) But in the midst of such an "*overcome*" state, "*deceived,*" wounded, yea, "*killed all the day long,*" and "*counted as sheep for the slaughter,*" (Ps. 44: 22. Rom. 8: 36,) with their "*bones scattered at the grave's mouth,*" (Ps. 141: 7,) "*very dry*" in "*the open valley,*"

even "*the whole house of Israel*," [saints,] (Ezek. 37: 1—5, 11,) they would naturally be too spiritually insensible of their condition to consider it a state of "TRIBULATION" at all, like the bodies of men so overcome with intoxication or disease, as to lie for hours and days in a state of living death, or utter insensibility.

As proof that this view of the saints' latter "TRIBULATION" is correct, it may be recollected that the things foretold by Christ in the verses immediately preceding, and just considered—such as *deceptions, many offended, betraying and hating "one another," "iniquity" abounding, and "love" waxing "cold,"* are, in substance, to the church, precisely the same as this "GREAT TRIBULATION," seeming positively so to explain it.

Further, God has repeatedly, elsewhere, foretold just such an overcome and cast down state of Zion, or the saints, as among the events of the last days, by such figures of it as the "*beast*"—"ten horns"—or "*horn*"—*devouring, breaking "in pieces, and" stamping "the residue with his feet"*—*speaking "very great things"*—*making "war with the saints, and" prevailing "against them, until the Ancient of days [the Lord] came, and judgment was given to the saints,"* &c. (Dan. 7: 19—22. Rev. 13: 1, 5—7.) The prophecy of "*darkness*" [spiritual] covering "*the earth, and gross darkness the people,*" just before "*the Lord shall arise upon*" Zion "*and his glory shall be seen upon*" them, (Isa. 60: 2,) seems like the same latter day overcoming, or "TRIBULATION," as that now before us. Also the *slumbering and sleeping* of all the "*virgins*" until "*at midnight there was [shall be] a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom [Christ] cometh, [to judgment,] go ye out to meet him,*" (Mat. 25: 1—10,) seems like the same "TRIBULATION." There are, also, multitudes of parallel

prophecies which cannot be rationally explained, except as foretelling such a latter day overcoming of the saints, constituting their unprecedented "TRIBULATION."

22. " *And except those days [of great overcoming tribulation] should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved, [or no mortal in the flesh remain a christian for salvation,] but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened,*" [by the Spirit poured out, and Christ's *appearing* himself, " *the second time, without sin unto salvation.*" Heb. 9:28.]

In correctly understanding this prophecy of one of the very last scenes of mortals before all swallowed up in eternity at the judgment of the great day, we need only to open our long closed eyes upon the signs around us, as some have partially done, which, in the gradual imperceptible progress of past ages and centuries, have come to pass in the remarkable fulfilling of this prophecy of great "*falling away,*" (2 Thess. 2:3,) *overcoming,* "TRIBULATION," &c. Let us then look at the state of Zion no longer than twelve or fifteen years ago, or before the late discovery and exposure of intoxicating liquors for instance, which evil in itself, aside from the multitude of others since brought to light, was secretly and rapidly slaying both the bodies and the souls of the church and her ministers too, with not a trumpet voice raised against it, except it were with the accompanying exhalations of alcoholic effluvia. Suppose that such a tide of intoxicating liquors had continued unnoticed, and rolled in upon the church with the same ratio of increase as during a few years before, only till *this* time, how many church members and ministers, who could possibly learn to swallow the poison, would not have been drowned in the flood? And suppose that such a state of things, unobstructed by the powers of "total abstinence" had continued on, even through another genera-

tion, who then but drunken hypocrites would be church members, bishops, priests, elders, deacons, &c. ?

But this prophecy is now further fulfilling, "*for the elect's sake*" the Lord is *shortening* "*those days.*" Zion, or "*the elect,*" must be saved like Noah and his family from this temporary flood, though all the world beside should be destroyed by it. And so it appears, he is rapidly preparing to cut short at once, by the sudden pouring out of his Spirit, to preach the Gospel of the kingdom through the world, in "*a short work,*" and in coming himself to judgment.

Should the query arise, how can such a latter day foretold declension consist with such a latter day pouring out of the Spirit? It may be replied, that the declension, in various passages, is represented as being *gradual, imperceptible, and long* in its *coming*, and comparatively reaching to the *end* or *consummation* of all things, and to be terminated but just before Christ's coming, with but a short work of the Lord in sending his Spirit to do it, which is to begin and close too, as it were, *in the time of the end*; so that the long continued latter days of GREAT TRIBULATION are to be cut off in the reviving of the saints, and giving them the honor of suffering outward "*tribulation,*" or open persecution "*ten days,*" or a very short time, (Rev. 2: 10,) before being all "*delivered*" gloriously. (Rom. 8: 21.)

23, 24. "*Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect.*" (Rev. 13: 13, 14.)

This prophecy, as a sign of Christ and his kingdom at hand, is in substance the same as that of *deceptions* and "*false prophets*" in the first part of Christ's answer. By its

deceiving, "*if it were possible, the very elect,*" it is naturally understood to be very powerful, and proving fatal in blinding the minds against the pure light, or awakening doctrines of the Gospel, of all but "*the very elect,*" and would destroy them also, were it "*possible.*" Then where are we now? Or may we not say—"Watchmen, what of the night? Watchmen, what of the night?" And were this foretold "*midnight*" "*darkness*" swept from our eyes, and should we truly hear the foretold "*cry made*" by the awakening influence of the Holy Ghost, "*Behold the Bridegroom cometh,*" &c., and should we truly thus wake from our long slumbers to behold things just as they were foretold, and just as they are, should we not see that now indeed, the great mass of an ungodly christendom are perfectly deceived in regard to all the prophecies of Christ's coming and kingdom at hand, and are living with precisely the same exposedness to sudden everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, "*saying peace and safety,*" as if there were no warnings in the Gospel for them to escape the evil? And in the degree that the very elect have been shrouded in the same darkness, and sleeping as do others, have they not been also badly, though not fatally deceived? According to this sign then, is it not high time to awake out of sleep, and unite in lifting up the foretold "*cry*"—"Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him"?

25, 26. "*Behold I have told you before, Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert, go not forth: behold he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.*"

Christ's here having before "*told*" his saints of these deceptions, &c., as signs of his coming and kingdom at hand, may be understood of his having done it, not in a mere verbal manner, but by "*all his holy prophets,*" that

is, by "*the Spirit of Christ which was in them*"—"when it testified beforehand," &c. (1 Pet. 1 : 11.) These warnings against our being overcome by those deceptions, are so nearly the same as already considered, the subject may now be passed.

#### CHRIST'S DESCRIPTION AND FURTHER SIGNS OF HIS COMING TO JUDGMENT.

27. "*For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*"

This is a most vivid description of Christ's final coming to "*judge the world in righteousness,*" which, when so coming to pass, will hush in eternal silence the long continued speculations of "*lo ! here, and lo ! there,*" about his having come before, in some invisible secret manner, without injuring his enemies at all at his coming. His coming as the flash of *lightning from east to west*, as here described, is altogether in harmony with very many prophecies of the same great event, showing it as coming *suddenly—visibly—powerfully—gloriously—terribly*, as in the following instances—"He bowed the heavens also and came down, and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub and did fly, yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. (Ps. 18 : 9, 10.) "Our God shall come and shall not keep silence, a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." (Ps. 50 : 3.) "Extol him that rideth upon the heavens," &c. (Ps. 68 : 4.) "His glory covered the heavens and the earth was full of his praise." (Hab. 3 : 3.) "And the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple"—"and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers," &c. (Mal.

3 : 1, 5.) "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy by the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. 2 : 8.) "With power and great glory." (Mat. 24 : 30.) "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15 : 52.) These various and yet harmonious descriptions of the Lord's final coming to judgment, with many parallel passages scattered through the Bible, it will be seen, are not appropriate to any scenes less solemn and awful than the long foretold, and almost forgotten day of Christ's coming "at hand."

28. "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." (Job. 39 : 27—30. Hos. 8 : 1. Hab. 1 : 8.)

Although some consider this prophecy as fulfilled by the eagle standards of the Roman army at the siege of Jerusalem, we see that it is contained in the same sentence, and connected by the conjunction "for," with Christ's final coming like "lightning" from heaven to destroy all his enemies, having no possible relation to the private and momentary concerns of such mere and common human transactions. The passage simply tells us where Christ's coming will be, and that instead of its being at Jerusalem, or some other one place only, it will be wherever there shall be souls to be judged, coming down upon them suddenly "as the lightning," or as the eagles from their lofty flights to seize upon their prey wherever found over all the earth.

29. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." (Mat. 24 : 21. Jer. 30 : 7. Dan. 12 : 1. Isa. 13 : 10. 24 : 23. Ezek. 32 : 7. Joel 2 : 10. 3 : 15. Rev. 6 : 12—14.)

This *darkening of the sun*, and *moon*, the *stars falling*, &c., being "*immediately AFTER*," *not before* the close of Zion's sufferings and "*tribulation*" in this world, not before her foretold latter day being overcome by the beast, or false prophet, as already noticed, must necessarily be understood, *not* as a prediction of *previous* great changes in the mere political world, as some understand it, and to be fulfilled in the fall or loss of their political honor, of certain dignitaries of the earth, as though they were here pre-figured by the *sun*, *moon*, *stars* and visible *heavens*. Such figures of mere human politicians would be most inappropriate to be used by Christ in his discourse on the signs and events of his coming to judgment. Neither could such political eclipses and downfalls, be a distinguishing sign of *any* great day at hand, because they always had been and would be but the common events of political powers. Neither does it appear that the *literal darkening of the sun* and *moon*, and *falling of the stars* of the firmament for a season, is *here* expressly foretold; because it will then be too late for mortals to *witness* such a sign.

But it does rather appear, that these mighty things foretold by Christ of his coming to judgment, are striking and awakening figures of the terrible events of that great day itself, when God shall "*make all things new*," (Rev. 21: 5,) in awfully convulsing and revolutionizing the whole universe of natural and moral things; when instead of longer enjoying any of the lights of the firmament, or of the Gospel, the wicked are to be suddenly "*driven away in*" their "*wickedness*," into the bottomless pit of eternal night, despair, and even "*blackness of darkness*." Then the *literal sun*, *moon* and *stars*, will no more shine for ever on the righteous, because "*the Lord shall*



be unto" them "an everlasting light"—"sun—moon," &c. (Isa. 60 : 19, 20. Rev. 22 : 5.)

The *shaking* of "the powers of the heavens," then, (Isa. 13 : 13. Joel, 3 : 16. Hag. 2 : 6, 7, 21,) over the heads of the wicked, as it were, appears like a most significant figure of the whole multitudes of "the armies which are in heaven" mustering in good earnest to come down in an instant to the work of the "everlasting destruction" of the wicked "from the presence of the Lord," so long foretold. (Rev. 19. 14. 2 Thess. 1 : 7, 9.)

Although we understand not *this* prophecy as being fulfilled in the mere passing of any events of time whatever, there is a propriety in the supposition that God may give the world *premonitory signs* of the drawing nigh of those great events of the judgment, to be seen with mortal eyes throughout the earth. And, indeed, there are some other prophecies resembling this in the figure, though not in the period of their predicted fulfilment, which it is difficult to understand, except as foretelling some wonderful signs in the visible "heavens," and to come to pass *previous* to the great day, whether they shall be so received or not—such as the following :

"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, BEFORE the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." (Joel, 2 : 31. Acts, 2 : 19, 20.)

While Peter affirms that the Spirit's work on pentecost day was a fulfilling of this prophecy, rather than its being the effect "of new wine ;" surely it was not *all* then fulfilled ; "all flesh" did not then experience or witness the event ; nor did the literal "last days" then come, with which Peter connects the event ; (Acts, 2 : 17—20,) and

besides, Peter, in his apparent next discourse, brings up this same foretold great *pouring out of God's Spirit*, calling it "*the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,*" representing it to be fulfilled finally, *not* on that or pentecost day, but "*when he [the Lord] shall send Jesus Christ—whom the heaven must receive till the times of restitution of all things,*" (Acts, 3: 19—21,) *which will take place at "the end of the world,"* rather than while the saints shall still wait for their promised final "*restitution.*" According to this, these *signs, wonders, &c., in the heavens,* were to be witnessed *after* pentecost day, and "*BEFORE the great and terrible day of the Lord come.*" In looking for the visible appearance in "*the heavens*" above, for these signs, our minds naturally fix upon such things as the following:

1. The DARKENING of the NATURAL SUN for about one whole *day*, in 1780, supposed *not* to have so occurred before since Christ's hanging upon the cross, and to have been equally supernatural with that occasion, notwithstanding the scientific and contradictory theories of the wise in modern times to prove it *not* supernatural.

2. Another of these "*fearful sights and great signs*" in "*the heavens,*" (Luke, 21: 11,) of "*blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke,*" (Joel, 2: 30, 31,) calling our attention, are those of the AURORA BOREALIS, OR NORTHERN LIGHTS, which are a kind of fulfilling of this prophecy to the very letter, in all the minutia of the events. True, it has long been said, that the existence of the NORTHERN LIGHTS has no more to do with prophecy than the changes of the moon, or the eclipses of the heavenly bodies, and that these lights are equally ancient. Without deciding this momentous question against the present generally prevailing sentiment of the church and the world, I would

remark, that during some years of research, both in the scriptures and other books, by inquiry of the aged, the astronomer, meteorologist, and other learned men, I have been led at least to question the generally supposed antiquity of the northern lights, which supposition excludes them from the fulfilling prophetic signs of the judgment at hand. Some of the reasons for my backwardness thus to admit the antiquity of this phenomenon, are as follows :

(1.) They appear, in all respects, *supernatural* or *miraculous*, and not as the effect of natural causes ; and if so, they are not among the things which have existed from the creation of cause and effect.

(2.) Their apparent striking *supernatural character* gives them an entire *fitness* to be *used as signs* in the heavens, of the judgment at hand, if the Lord has ever, indeed, foretold any such signs.

(3.) All the *combined efforts of men*, even of the ungodly, most intensely and unitedly bent on rejecting them as testimony of a rapidly approaching judgment, with all the modern improvements in astronomy, and other arts and sciences on their side, *have failed* to show us a natural *cause* for these northern lights, in which even themselves can be agreed, while their several theories concerning their cause have been as contradictory as the testimony of the witnesses against Christ to procure his crucifixion.

(4.) As yet I have found *no history* of the great antiquity of these lights being actually *seen* in the heavens, except contained in writings which are *quite modern*. Neither have I been able to ascertain in what library a real *ancient* book may be found, if called for, which records the *previous* occurrence of what are since called the northern lights. To be sure, I have found, in modern

cyclopedias and dictionaries of the arts and sciences, declarations, and recently written traditions of the great antiquity of appearances in the heavens, supposed to answer to these lights. But these things, under existing circumstances, are viewed as questionable testimony. It seems, however, from some of these modern histories, that in March, 1716, these lights were seen with great brilliancy and astonishment in England, though unseen before by the oldest inhabitants. At this occurrence, it appears that printed records were made of them, which may still be found on searching, though as yet I have seen nothing written of their previous appearance more ancient than in an English "dictionary of arts and sciences," published about 77 years ago. If there can be found a single copy of an *original* history, with satisfactory, or indubitable proof, that it is in itself *ancient*, which records the *previous* appearance of this phenomenon, its weight must be allowed; but if not, certainly, as things are, the antiquity of the northern lights cannot be made unquestionable.

(4.) The prophecy of Joel and Christ, as already quoted, is naturally understood as foretelling a day, before the judgment, of the *first* appearance in the visible heavens of "*sights*" and "*signs*," as "*fearful*" and wonderful as now witnessed in the northern lights; accordingly, the believers in such prophecies are authorized to look for them in their appointed season, as signs, and as something *not* common and ancient, but rather as modern and supernatural.

(5.) These lights have appeared, in all respects, precisely the *same* as those foretold and described by Joel, and Christ, and Peter, to "*come to pass in the last days*," as the signs of the judgment day at hand. (Joel, 2: 28. Acts, 2: 17—20. Luke, 21: 11.)

(6.) Had Christ and the Holy Ghost, *knowing* "all things," known that such appearances in the heavens had been and would be but common occurrences, and *no* sign of the latter day approaching, could they, without falsehood, thus foretel to all the world that precisely such appearances *would* be such a sign?

(7.) Should the church now agree in understanding these *wonderful* and "*fearful sights*" and "*signs*," "*in the heavens*," as *not* being those which are foretold, must they not, of course, on the same principle, reject as the fulfilling of the prophecy, *every* other such appearance to the *end of the world*, especially should it answer to the prediction as precisely as in the case of the northern lights?

Whatever may prove true concerning the antiquity, or modern origin of the NORTHERN LIGHTS resembling so perfectly the foretold latter day "*signs*," &c. of "*the great day of the Lord*"—"at hand," these researches and reflections are now thrown out with the view of eliciting further light on the subject, *not* from the mere reports of tradition recently written, but from FACTS well authenticated, and especially from an *original history* of the existence of those lights, which is truly *ancient*, if any individual feeling an interest in the subject, may be able to furnish it for the public.

3. Another of these foretold "*fearful sights*," &c., to which our attention has been recently called, is that "*FEARFUL SIGHT*," or wonderful phenomenon of the apparent *falling* of "*the stars*," of the firmament, before the dawn of the morning November 13, 1833. This SIGHT or SIGN, it appears, was no private concern, being generally seen as allowed, throughout christian America, if no further, where not obstructed by natural clouds. As the reve-

lator has foretold the like, in the falling of "*the stars of heaven*" to "*the earth as a fig tree casteth her untimely [or unripe] figs, when she is shaken with a mighty wind.*" (Rev. 6 : 13,) it would appear that if the one were the type, and the other the antitype, nothing could have been more harmonious. Although this astonishing and unprecedented phenomenon has been called "*a shower of meteors,*" as if it were no new thing under the sun, and no more a matter of prophecy than the wonted track of the meteor down its inclined plane ; it is supposed to be an unquestionable fact, that there has never been a *record* of a similar phenomenon on the pages of history, till since the occurrence of *this* event of 1833.

Whatever we are to learn from this event concerning the present fulfilling of the ancient prophecies of the judgment day at hand, it is not to be expected of "*the wise*" or "*the foolish,*" if indeed all slumbering as "*at midnight,*" (Mat. 25 : 1—10,) that they would at first do otherwise than philosophize any positive fulfilling of such a prophecy, however palpable it might appear, into the effect of some known and acknowledged cause, rather than be troubled with its otherwise loud admonition immediately to prepare to meet their God in his actual coming to judgment.

And what shall we think in relation to this thing, if gravely told that men deeply learned, have actually discovered the true natural cause of the apparent general *falling of the stars* as above mentioned, without showing, so that the world can understand it, what that *cause is* ? And if further said that they have proved their own discovery and knowledge of such cause, by predicting the very night on which immediately there would be another similar phenomenon—that they with other select individuals sat up

and watched the heavens, on the predicted night, and saw the event repeated as predicted, while none in the whole world besides, so far as is known, witnessed a similar sight; might we not be rather tempted to look on the supposed discovery, as only parallel to the tale of a certain man's gazing up into the heavens, pretending there to see "a great red dragon," till making his comrades all acknowledge that they also could see the beast, who verily supposed it a reality, till informed by the other, that it was only a trial and specimen of human credulity on similar subjects ?

But to treat the matter in a more scriptural and serious way, may we not inquire whether such alleged discoveries of proof against the prophetic admonitions of "*the day of the Lord—at hand,*" apparently saying "*peace, peace,*" to the ungodly, or to a slumbering world, slumber on, are not themselves also foretold as signs in the last days, that "*the day of the Lord is at hand?*" Sure it is reasonable to consider such arguments against the coming of the "*Lord at hand,*" as parallel to what Peter foretold of some "*in the last days,*" saying—" *Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were, from the beginning of the creation.*" (2 Pet. 3: 3, 4.) This is understood as precisely the same denial of Christ's coming, and attempting to prove the denial true, by denying the fulfilling of any prophecies showing it nigh as that now before us. And as to such arguments from "*astrologers, star-gazers,*" &c. the prophet has had a word given him from the Lord apparently still more appropriate as follows—" *Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, [viewers of the heavens] the monthly prognosticators stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold they shall be as*

*stubble : the fire shall burn them ; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame."* (Isa. 47 : 13, 14. Mal. 4 : 1.)

Unless there shall yet be found and brought before the public, some conclusive proof, not founded on mere human tradition or public sentiment, but on an authentic *original* and real *ancient* history, or something equally admissible as proof, that the "*fearful sights and great signs*" in the heavens which have appeared in modern times, are *not* modern, or *not* supernatural; have we not now, a word from the Lord, which should be heard as though a voice of thunder, speaking in these very events, in addition to the many other signs admonishing the world, that ungodly sinners cannot safely promise themselves another year of indulgence in sin, before the coming of "*the Lord himself,*" to cast them alive, both soul and body, "*into a lake of fire burning with brimstone*" ? (Rev. 19 : 20.)\*

\* NOTE.—The following article in further illustration of this subject, is furnished me since writing the above, and may be seen in the New-York Commercial Advertiser of Oct. 22d, 1839. The phenomenon described in this London article was seen by myself and others on the same Tuesday evening of Sept. 3, especially of the aurora, in the western part of New-York, and is described by various papers of this city as seen here and at Boston at the same time, with unprecedented splendor, brilliancy and singularity of appearance, though far less astonishing than their described appearance in London, and with nothing special in regard to appearances in the stars. See *New-York Commercial Advertiser of Sept. 4th, and Christian Advocate & Journal, of Sept. 13.*

FROM LATE LONDON PAPERS.

LONDON, Sept. 5.—Between the hours of 10 on Tuesday night and 3 yesterday morning, in the heavens was observed one of the most magnificent specimens of those extraordinary phenomena, the falling stars and northern lights, witnessed for many years past. The first indication of this singular phenomenon was about 10 minutes



30. *“ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall the tribes of the earth mourn,*

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before 10, when a light crimson, apparently vapor, rose from the northern portion of the hemisphere, and gradually extended to the centre of the heavens, and by 10 o'clock, or a quarter past, the whole, from east to west, was one vast sheet of light. It had a most alarming appearance, and was exactly like that occasioned by a terrific fire. The light varied considerably; at one time it seemed to fall, and directly after rose with intense brightness. There were to be seen mingled with it volumes of smoke, which rolled over and over, and every beholder seemed convinced that it was “ a tremendous conflagration.” The consternation in the metropolis was very great; thousands of persons were running in the direction of the supposed awful catastrophe. The engines belonging to the firebrigade stations in Baker-street, Farringdon-street, Watling-street, Waterloo-road, and likewise those belonging to the West of England station, in fact every fire-engine in London, were horsed, and galloped after the supposed “ scene of destruction,” with more than ordinary energy, followed by carriages, horsemen, and vast mobs. Some of the engines proceeded as far as Highgate and Holloway, before the error was discovered. These appearances lasted for upwards of two hours, and toward morning the spectacle became one of more grandeur.

At two o'clock in the morning the phenomenon presented a most gorgeous scene, and one very difficult to describe. The whole of London was illuminated as light as noon-day, and the atmosphere was remarkably clear. The southern hemisphere at the time mentioned, although unclouded, was very dark; but the stars, which were innumerable, shone beautifully. The opposite side of the heavens presented a singular, but magnificent contrast; it was clear to extreme, and the light was very vivid; there was a continual succession of meteors, which varied in splendor. They appeared formed in the centre of the heavens, and spread till they seemed to burst; the effect was electrical; myriads of small stars shot out over the horizon, and darted with that swiftness toward the earth that the eye scarcely could follow the track; they seemed to burst also, and to throw a dark crimson vapor over the entire hemisphere. The colors were most magnificent. At half-past two o'clock the spectacle changed to darkness, which, on dispersing, displayed a luminous rainbow in the zenith of the heavens, and round the ridge of darkness that overhung the southern portion of the country. Soon afterward columns of silvery light radiated from it, they increased wonderfully, intermingled among crimson vapor, which formed at the same time, and when at full height the spectacle was beyond all imagination. Stars were darting about in all directions, and continued until four o'clock, when all died away. During the time that they lasted, a great many persons assembled on the bridges across the river Thames, where they had a commanding view of the heavens, and watched the progress of the phenomenon attentively.

*and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”* (Dan. 7 : 9, 10, 13. Rev. 19 : 14. 21 : 2.)

This is most clearly and literally the coming of Christ to judgment, with “*the clouds of*” the heavenly hosts, or the “*thousand thousands, and ten times ten thousand*” of his angels and saints composing his everlasting kingdom then coming with him. Of course he will appear in “*great power and glory,*” in the immediate destruction of all Satan’s kingdom of wicked men and devils, in his *creating* “*all things new,*” including the long foretold “*new heavens and new earth.*” Then, as he says, shall “*all the tribes of the earth,*” or of his enemies “*mourn,*” (Rev. 1 : 7,) and “*wail,*” in “*the blackness of darkness,*” (Jude, 13,) where “*the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.*” (Rev. 14 : 11.)

31. “*And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from the one end of heaven to the other.*”

While the preceding verse describes the mournful destruction of the enemies of God at Christ’s coming, this rather shows the glorious *gathering* of all the *saints* together from earth and heaven on that occasion, including their *resurrection, translation, &c.*, then to take place. The coming of those *trumpet-sounding angels* as though to wake up the dead, and call the universe together, are understood to be the same as those with the “*seven trumpets,*” and severally sounding as though one at a time, foretold Rev. 8 : 2, 6—13. 9 : 1, 13. 11 : 15, and are considered as being distinct and repeated representations of the great events of the coming of the judgment.

32, 33. “*Now learn a parable of the fig tree ; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh ; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all*

*these things, know that it [or he] is near, even at the doors."*

So far as the preceding signs are now to be seen, as already come to pass, here is the positive assurance of Christ that the day of his coming, and the end of the world inquired for, is near, very near upon us.

34. "*Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.*" (Mark, 13 : 30. Luke, 21 : 32.)

This is understood as a prophecy of Christ, that the race or "*generation*" of his enemies should not pass, or be converted for salvation, till his coming to judgment to fulfil all these foretold solemn events in their terrible destruction. An interpretation of the word "*generation*" here, which has long been quite popular, and almost the corner-stone of the doctrine of no future endless punishment, is that it means only *an age, or period of thirty years*. Against such an interpretation of the word, it may be recollected, that proof was presented in the fourth lecture of this series, under Objection 4th, commencing at the bottom of 89th page. Further proof that the word "*generation,*" in this passage, means all the race of the wicked, may be derived from the following, among other facts:

(1.) One of the several *dictionary definitions* of the word "*generation*" is, that it means a *genealogy, lineage, or race*; while such a definition of it as it stands in this passage, makes the passage perfectly to harmonize with its whole connexion of Christ's coming to judgment, and exhibits it all in its natural awakening power—while calling the word an "*age,*" in the verse, converts the sense into jargon and contradiction, and into things of peace to the wicked, in the apparent blotting out, at a stroke, of about all Christ's other parallel descriptions of his final coming to judgment.

(2.) But a few minutes before, and in the hearing of the disciples, as mentioned in the last discourse, Christ, in his threatenings of "*damnation*," &c., against the wicked, to be executed at his coming, had called them a "*generation*," and a "*generation of vipers*," (Mat. 23: 33, 35,) and speaks as though it commenced as long ago as in Cain's killing "*Abel*," (35,) and had descended along during the ages of the martyred prophets, by the day of "*Zacharias*," who had been slain by the same "*generation*" of his enemies, (35,) and as though the same "*generation*" would continue to "*kill*"—"crucify"—"*scourge and persecute*" his people as long as sent to them, (34, 37,) who, for their sin, were to be left of him as a race, genealogy or people, to see him no more till his coming "*in the name of the Lord*," or to judgment; so that, a few minutes after, as in the verse before us, of still threatening his enemies, his disciples would naturally understand his calling them "*this generation*," to mean the same as he meant a few minutes before, in calling them a "*generation of vipers*," not to "*escape the damnation of hell*."

(3.) In the New Testament, the word "*generation*" occurs thirty or more times, in each of which it seems to mean, *not* an age, but a *genealogy or race*, as in the following instances: "*Ye generation of vipers*"—"a wicked and adulterous generation"—"*a crooked and perverse generation*"—"a sinful generation"—an "*untoward generation*"—"a chosen generation"—"*the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light*," [in their generation.]

35. "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*"

Certainly, certainly then, notwithstanding all the preceding foretold deceptions and arguments against this solemn belief of all Christ's "*words*" of his coming to judgment,

they will be found true, and to stand the same, to be fulfilled though the heavens and the earth will soon be no more.

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

This is Christ's answer, short and definite, to the disciples' question, "*When shall these things be?*" He could tell them *the signs* of it as they asked, and has done it fully, as we have now seen. But the precise time "*when,*" is, and will be, absolutely unknown to all men, and even to "*the angels of God,*" till suddenly it shall come. The saints, by witnessing these foretold signs, may know when it is close by. When Daniel inquired for this "*time of the end,*" he was told that "*the words*" were "*closed up and sealed, till the time of the end.*" (Dan. 12: 6, 8, 9.) Christ, when again answering the question, said—" *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.*" (Acts, 1: 7.) And Paul, on the same subject, said, "*But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.*" (1 Thess. 5: 1, 2. Prin. 5th and 6th, and References.)

According to these, and other parallel passages, as here understood, all human calculations, with prophetic numbers, to fix the period or time of Christ's coming, and the end of the world, are but a vain attempt to be wise above angels, or above what is written; while the great wisdom we should all rather seek and obtain, consists in being now at once continually and perfectly ready, according to the Gospel, to meet the Lord in peace at his anticipated speedy appearing.\*

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\* Mr. Wolf, the Jewish missionary who lectured in this and other American cities two years ago, on Christ's second coming, it will be recollected by many, taught that the year of the event would be 1847,

37—51. “*But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be,*” &c. &c.

Without room fully to present and examine the remainder of the chapter, this discourse may now close with Christ’s own

### IMPROVEMENT *of the subject.*

Having very fully given the signs of his coming, as desired, showing, when witnessed, that he is “*near, even at the doors,*” he here proceeds further to *describe* the solemn events of his coming upon the wicked in their sudden destruction like “*the flood*” of Noah, finding them equally unbelieving and unprepared, also, at *their feasts, at their weddings, in their fields, at the mill, &c.*, then to be finally separated from the saints. These things led him to say to all, “*Watch, therefore, for ye know not what*

while others have computed that it will be about 1866, and others that it will be about 2000, or the seven thousandth year of the world, while the period of the calculation of many others for his final appearing, has already passed by at various dates of scores and hundreds of years ago.

Wm. Miller, a Baptist minister, who has been studying the prophecies for twenty years or more, with much interest, and has for some time been publishing and lecturing on Christ’s coming to judgment, and the end of the world, has maintained that the period of his thus coming would be about 1839, or 1843. Although this part of his theory is so wide from the 5th and 6th Principles on which this work is founded, it is believed that very much in his instructions, is scriptural and arousing as means of grace, and calculated to rectify many very important popular errors on prophecy, especially in regard to the nature of the coming and kingdom of God taught throughout the Bible. It is also believed, from information in my own excursions, that his writings and labors on the subject, notwithstanding his opinion of prophetic time in fixing the period so definite, have accomplished more in exciting interest on the subject, and the inquiry, “*Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?*” than any other American before him. And as it has been extensively published in papers that he has recently acknowledged a mistake in his calculation, putting off the great day another hundred years, it seems only as an act of justice to Mr. Miller, here to give the public a brief extract of a letter he sent me, dated at his residence, “*Low Hampton,*” (Washington Co., N. Y.,) Sept. 9, 1839,” which extract is as follows, viz. “*As it respects the mistake of an 100 years, it is one of our newspaper lies. No truth in it, nor even a shadow of truth. I have contradicted it in public and in print, and they refuse to believe me, or publish my denial. I will therefore request you to deny the report in my name, in as public a manner as you please.*”

*hour your Lord doth come*"—" *Be ye also ready, [or repent, &c. immediately,] for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh,*" [to judgment,] and " *Blessed is that servant, [or saint,] whom his Lord, when he cometh, he shall find so doing*—[as a faithful, continual christian]— *Verily I say unto you, he shall make him ruler over all his goods*—[a king in heaven]—*But and if that evil servant [unbeliever] shall say in his heart [or even secretly desire or think] my Lord [Christ] delayeth his coming, [or the judgment is not near,] and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, [or, as a natural consequence, to seek pleasure with sin and sinners,] the Lord of that servant [or sinner] shall come [to judge him] in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of. And shall cut him asunder [cut short his probation] and appoint him his portion [for ever] with the hypocrites [worst of sinners] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,*" [despair and anguish unspeakable.]

And now, in view of all these prophecies of Christ, and their parallels, throughout the Bible, showing us, by important signs in the church, and in the visible heavens, through all christendom, already fulfilled and fulfilling, that the judgment of the great day is actually now at the door ; and in accordance with these his corresponding and most solemn admonitions to prepare, will not every man, woman and child, in every profession, business and station, immediately comply, and religiously watch and be ready, having your *peace* made with God—your *repentance* for sin genuine and deep—your *faith* in Christ strong and abiding—your *love* to God and man ardent and unwavering—your *life* " *all holy conversation and godliness,*" and your sincere, continual and fervent prayer—" *Thy kingdom come*"—yea, " *Come, Lord Jesus*"—" *Come quickly.*"—" *AMEN.*"

# LECTURE X.

## DOWNFALL OF BABYLON; OR DESTRUCTION OF SATAN'S KINGDOM AT HAND.

Mat. 3:2. Rev. 18:2.

*“The kingdom of heaven is at hand:”—“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”*

### THE DOCTRINE

Now to be vindicated from this text is, that the “BABYLON” of the *Revelation*, and of parallel passages in the *former prophets*, includes the whole body or city of the wicked, of devils and human sinners, which is Satan’s kingdom; and that its downfall, as here predicted, is their final everlasting destruction in hell, at the coming of Christ and his glorious kingdom now “*nigh at hand.*”

The plan of the present concluding discourse will be to sustain this doctrine:

I. By an examination of the text, compared with its connexion and parallel passages; and,

II. By an exposition of the chapter in connexion, showing its harmony with this doctrine, and with other prophecies generally of Babylon’s character and destruction.

I. In sustaining our doctrine from the text itself, it may be remarked,



1. That the *name* of this city "BABYLON THE GREAT," in the text, and in the connexion, "THAT GREAT CITY BABYLON," is altogether more appropriate to the kingdom of Satan than to the papal power, or any other city less in number, less in power, less in wickedness, than that of Satan's whole kingdom. As yet, Satan certainly has a kingdom, city, or power, which is numerous "*as the sand of the sea*," (Rev. 20 : 8,) and powerful against the saints, and is wicked beyond any thing else, or beyond, any mere part of the same kingdom, and is more aptly called "THE GREAT," or "THAT GREAT CITY," than any other city or power of sin which is *not* "THE GREAT," or "*the greatest*;" and surely there is no other city of power, riches, pride, and wicked dominion, the name of which is more appropriate to Satan's kingdom than that of "BABYLON THE GREAT."

2. This same figurative book of Revelation informs us that "*the great city*"—"where our Lord was also crucified"—"*spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt*." (Rev. 11 : 8.) But our Lord was crucified in a city *literally* called "*Jerusalem*," leaving us to understand that "THE GREAT CITY" which *crucified* "OUR LORD," as well as slaying also *all* the martyrs of "*prophets and of saints*," (Rev. 18 : 24,) from the first, is none other than "THAT GREAT CITY" of Satan which truly is guilty of all this hostility and bloody war against the Lord, and against his dear people in the world. Then, as the devil's kingdom is "*spiritually called Sodom and Egypt*," there is the same scriptural propriety in "*spiritually*," or figuratively calling it "BABYLON," also, and occasionally by other parallel names of wicked places distinguished in the scriptures for their hostility towards the people of God,

such as "*Moab*"—"*Edom*"—"*Philistia*," &c. (See Prin. II., Proof and Ex.)

3. The *situation* into which, according to the text, this city is prophetically brought, shows the prophecy as foretelling the final utter destruction of all Satan's kingdom of devils and human sinners. When this prophecy shall be fulfilled, then, as the text says, "*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.*" This double expression of its being "*fallen*," must denote something more than its being fallen for a little season to rise again, as a political power sometimes falls and again recovers itself; and that it will then be in a condition of *despair*, as *finally* "*fallen*," or "*fallen*" to rise no more. Its then being made "*the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird*," represents it very strikingly as Satan's kingdom finally destroyed, with all its subjects actually brought together into their "*own place*." (Acts, 1 : 25.) While Satan's kingdom shall stand in its present power against the saints, or so long as there shall be devils out of hell, or foul spirits, and sinners as "*unclean and hateful birds*," out of that "*cage*" which will soon be the everlasting home or "*habitation of devils*," which was "*prepared for the devil and his angels*," (Mat. 25 : 41,) we see that this prophecy cannot be fulfilled.

4. Its being said, in the connexion, that this same "**GREAT CITY BABYLON**" "*shall be thrown down, with violence*," to "*be found no more at all*," (Rev. 18 : 21,) is considered as positive proof that its fall, foretold in the text, is the final everlasting destruction of the same city or kingdom, at the coming of Christ to judgment now "*at hand*."

5. There are many passages in the former prophets con-

cerning BABYLON'S downfall or destruction, which, both in letter and spirit, are precisely the same, being parallel passages, as that of our text, which is considered as unanswerable proof that the foretold BABYLON destroyed, in the Old Testament prophecy, is the final fall of Satan's kingdom, instead of a mere literal city; and that the BABYLON of Revelation is the same, instead of the mere papal power, as some have supposed. By comparing the 17th, 18th, and 19th chapters of Revelation, with the 13th, 48th, and 52d of Isa., and 51st and 52d of Jer., these parallel passages will many of them be found; a specimen of which may now be given of the "BABYLON—fallen—fallen" in our text, as follows: "*And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen,*" (Isa. 21 : 9,) "*Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed; howl for her.*" (Jer. 51 : 8, 37. See Isa. 13 : 19, 20.)

II. It remains to show, from an exposition of the chapter in connexion, that the Babylon of prophecy generally, whose destruction is here foretold, is the entire kingdom of Satan, of human sinners and devils, and that this, its predicted downfall, is their final everlasting destruction in hell, at the coming of Christ and his glorious kingdom "*at hand.*"

The verses then may be briefly noticed in their order.

Rev. 18 : 1. "*And after these things I saw another ANGEL (Dan. 12 : 1. Jude 9) come down from heaven, having great POWER, (Mat. 24 : 30,) and the earth was lightened with his GLORY. (Hab. 3 : 3. 2 Thess. 2 : 8.)*

"*After these things,*" or "*after*" the revelator had seen the vision of the preceding chapter of the latter day pride, extravagant show and abominable wickedness of this same "BABYLON," called "MOTHER OF HARLOTS," &c. (Rev. 17 : 5—,) he has here a vision of her terrible final de-

struction, as in the text and through the chapter. The angel here coming "down from heaven" with "great power" and "glory" is naturally understood as representing the final coming, and "power" and "glory" of Christ to judgment, because no created angel has any such "power" and "glory," while the "power" and "glory" of Christ's coming to judgment, is foretold repeatedly in figures precisely the same as in the references now given, and their various parallels.

Verse 2. "*And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen,*" &c.

This appears in substance precisely the same as Paul's description of Christ's final coming to judgment, in the "shout" of victory over his enemies, or over Satan's kingdom, as he says,—"*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel [or Christ] and with the trumpet of God.*" (1 Thess. 4 : 16.) This is apparently the same as his crying mightily with a strong voice in victory over "*great Babylon,*" then "*fallen*" for ever.

3. "*For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her [Babylon's] fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.*" (Rev. 14 : 8. 17 : 2.)

This figurative prophecy appears most strikingly to set forth the extreme, and even *drunken, wrathful, and adulterous* wickedness of this "GREAT BABYLON" city, as THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH," whose influence corrupts, not only papal, but protestant sinners, and "*all nations*" too, and "*kings of the earth.*" By means of her pride, riches, extravagance, and "*the abundance of her delicacies,*" the

merchants of the earth have their riches also, as probably none could now become rich by a traffic in those simple, plain and wholesome articles of dress, food, drink, and general style of living which were approved by the preaching and practice of Christ and the apostles. All this description of Babylon's abominable sins, and universal extent of her crimes, is altogether appropriate to Satan's kingdom ; but not so to the mere papal church, nor to any other human organization less numerous, less rich, less powerful and extensive, than that including all devils and sinners finally to fall slain before Christ in his coming to judgment to "*put all enemies under his feet.*"

4, 5. "*And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, (Isa. 48 : 20. 52 : 11. Jer. 50 : 8. 51 : 6, 45. 2 Cor. 6 : 17.) that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, (Jer. 51 : 9,) and God hath remembered her iniquities.*" (Rev. 16 : 19.)

From this, it appears to have been foreseen, that all the dear "*people*" of God, would be found scattered, or mingled in the very midst of this "*great city Babylon.*" All this is now true, and will be, till the final separation of "*the tares and the wheat,*" on the principle of Babylon's being the kingdom of Satan ; because the subjects of that kingdom will be mingled with the saints, and the saints with them, till the final appointed separation. But the same extent of mingling is not true of the mere papal power with the saints. In avoiding her high, "*heaven*" daring sins and escaping her final everlasting "*plagues*" when "*fallen,*" or destroyed in judgment, the people of God must "*come out of her,*" or "*come out*" and "*be separate,*" by a genuine repentance, faith, and obedience of Christ, till in

a moment, as it were, they shall be caught up to heaven, in a full and everlasting coming "*out of Babylon.*"

6. "*Reward her even as she rewarded you, (Ps. 137 : 8. Jer. 50 : 15, 29. 51 : 24, 49,) and double unto her double according to her works : (Rev. 14 : 10,) in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.*" (Rev. 16 : 19.)

In the day of Christ's coming to judgment, and of the fall and destruction of "GREAT BABYLON"—"THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS," will this prophecy also be fulfilled. Then, as foretold, in Christ the saints will "*be joyful in glory,*" and with "*a two edged sword in their hand,*" will they "*execute vengeance on the heathen, [enemies of God] and punishments upon the people—to execute upon them the judgment written. This honor have all his saints.*" (Ps. 149 : 6—9.) Then shall they have "*power over the nations, [sinners] and shall rule them with a rod of iron,*" &c. (Rev. 2 : 26, 27.) Then also will be fulfilled—"All nations compassed me [Zion] about, but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them." (Ps. 118 : 10.) And then too, will the church or Zion of God be his "*battle axe and weapons of war*" to "*break in pieces the nations, and*" to "*destroy kingdoms.*" (Jer. 51 : 20. Dan. 7 : 22, 26, 27.)

7. "*How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her ; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen and am no widow and shall see no sorrow.*" (Ezek. 28 : 2—10.)

This is most clearly the same "BABYLON," or city of Satan, as that of the former prophets, the character of which is described almost in the same words—"And thou [BABYLON] saidst, *I shall be a lady for ever. Therefore, hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart I am, and none else beside me ; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I see the loss*

*of children.*" (Isa. 47: 7, 8. See Zeph. 2: 15. 2 Thess. 2: 3, 4.) It must be difficult to understand passages like this under consideration except as the prophetic description of the *riches, luxury, pride, earthly power and boasting false independence* and unbelief of Satan's kingdom or the enemies of God on earth just before their general everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, at the coming of Christ to judgment. And sure, there has never before been such a fulfilling as now of this prophecy so extensively under the light of the Gospel in the world, since it was given; with other numerous things indicating their destruction at hand.

8. "*Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*" (Isa. 47: 9.)

These "*plagues*" to come on the wicked, are understood to be the same as "*the seven last plagues,*" (Rev. 15: 7, and 16: 1—21,) or final curse of the divine law coming on sinners at the judgment; accordingly the passage is viewed as describing the destruction of the wicked finally, and as a proof that the downfall of "*BABYLON*" in the text, is the final fall of Satan's whole kingdom, and nothing less terrible. Then "*her plagues,*" her punishments, are *all* to "*come in one day,*" (Isa. 47: 11,) the judgment day, i. e. sinners do not have their punishment gradually, nor daily, as they pass along, nor as fast as their sins are committed. Then they must have an everlasting "*death, famine and mourning*" of soul, and "*be utterly burned with fire,*" (Rev. 17: 16,) i. e. utterly and finally destroyed "*from the presence of the Lord,*" (2 Thess. 1: 8, 9,) when the "*strong—Lord God*" shall have judged them.

9, 10. " *And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her, [or united with her in luxurious and abominable sin,] shall bewail her, (Mat. 24: 30,) and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, (Rev. 18: 18. 19: 3,) standing afar off for fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city, for in one hour is thy judgment come.*" (Rev. 18: 17, 19.)

This, again, can be nothing less than a vivid description of the final destruction in hell of " *that great city Babylon,*" of devils and sinners, every one, and of their terrible everlasting lamentation and wailing, (Rev. 1: 7,) including even all " *the kings of the earth,*" (Ezek. 26: 16, 17,) or all the great, the rich and haughty worldlings, who would seem boastingly to *disdain* and *despise* the meek and lowly followers of Christ, who tremble at God's word. Then, " *in one hour,*" (Rev. 18: 17, 19,) will be the " *judgment come,*" which never came before, and will never come again. Then will " *the smoke of her [Babylon's] burning,*" torment, " *ascend up for ever and ever,*" all furnishing proof of the doctrine of the text, that the downfall of Babylon of all the prophecies, is the final destruction of all the enemies of God at the judgment.

11. " *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.*" (Ezek. 27: 27—36. Rev. 18: 3.)

What! What can this mean? " *The merchants of the earth,*" and no distinction between them here made, *all weeping and mourning* at the judgment! while there is probably more merchandizing and commercial wealth, with visible church members, proportionally, than with others in christian countries! Sure, none will then " *weep and mourn*" for the loss of " *their merchandise,*"



except sinners unprepared. That this will be at the final judgment, we learn from the connexion, as already seen, and its being, as here stated, when "NO man BUYETH their merchandise ANY MORE." Let us, then, deeply examine into these long overlooked and neglected prophecies.

12, 13. "*The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, (Rev. 17: 4,) and all thyne wood, [or sweet wood] and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious [or costly] wood, and all manner vessels of brass, and iron, and marble; and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, [see late monopoly of these articles,] and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, (Ezek. 27: 13. Joel, 3: 3. Amos, 2: 6,) and souls of men.*" (Ezek. 27: 37—26.)

Verily, this seems as a catalogue, or list of the articles of commerce and merchandise, now common in all christendom, as fully and as accurately made out, as Christ could have done it 1800 years ago, or as the merchant himself could do it now, with so much brevity. During the period of primitive christianity, it is supposed that none of these articles were made merchandise by christians for the purpose of money-making, as now, and that it has rather all come to pass as it now is, gradually, in the use of Gospel light, more fully to look out for earthly than for heavenly riches. And as it may be seen, probably none of this long list of articles were used at all by Christ or his disciples in those days, except so far as could be done as wholesome necessary articles for the body, i. e. avoiding *all* use of them for the mere indulgence of pride, and other propensities of the carnal mind. The innumerable multitude of saints wandering "*in sheep skins*"—"destitute,

*afflicted,*" &c., (Heb. 11 : 12, 37,) surely sought none of this Babylonish merchandise as a business. As these articles stand here, they are represented, *not* as the approved and good things of the saints' pursuit, but rather as the wicked pursuits of this "*great Babylon*" about to be destroyed in the judgment, when all this traffic must, of course, be also destroyed, when "*no man buyeth*" the articles "*any more.*" It need not be understood that *all* buying and selling is here condemned. Even Christ himself, and his followers, had a "*bag,*" and bought necessary articles for their bodies, but nothing for their lusts, which rather were all mortified, of those who naturally had them. But by such a traffic of the simple native articles of necessity for the body, as the Lord Jesus, and those like him, would patronize, it is presumed none could enrich themselves. But in trafficking for such *Babylonish wealth*, something like these *Babylonish articles* must be offered as merchandise.

14. "*And the fruits that thy soul lusted after, are departed from thee, [Babylon,] and all things which are daintily and goodly, are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.*" (Ps. 141 : 4. Prov. 23 : 6.)

This certainly looks like a most decided and terrible reprobation from the Almighty, of all the multitudes of foreign "*fruits*" and of luxurious and costly "*dainties*" and "*goodly things*" belonging to this list of *Babylonish merchandise*, to be destroyed with the great city itself to be found "*no more at all,*" when she shall be "*fallen, fallen*"—when "*utterly burned with fire,*" (Rev. 18 : 8,) "*the kings of the earth*"—"wailing" as they "*see the smoke of her burning*" (9th verse) when "*in one hour is*" her "*judgment come,*" (10th verse,) and when "*thrown down*" to "*be found no more at all.*" (21st verse.) Although perhaps few or none

in the churches in modern days, have considered this as any reprobation from God of such commercial and mercantile business in hoarding up wealth, because all the church and all the world are engrossed in it; I would ask, is not the reprobation expressed with a sufficient clearness to be so understood, by clear sighted christians; or by such, if any could be found, as are *not themselves* more or less engrossed, directly or indirectly, in the merchandise here foretold and reprobated? And may it not be, that we all have been thus blind to it because of our natural love of it, and connexion with it? Some of the mischief and ruin produced by this popular merchandise for wealth, luxury and excess, consists in the increasing speculation, fraud, theft, oppression, monopoly, and violence of iniquity to which the system gives rise, particularly with those who are tempted to it, as they suppose, by dire necessity in finding no fairer means for a reputable conformity to the customs of others more successful in the rapid acquirement of "*mammon.*"

15, 16. "*The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, (Rev. 18 : 3, 11,) and saying, Alas, alas ! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls !*" (Rev. 17 : 4.)

This is a continuation of the same reprobation of, and threatening against this whole system of *Babylonish merchandizing* in pursuit of the wealth, honors and pleasures of this vain world. In another passage of this book of Revelation, this same Babylon, or kingdom of sin and darkness, is represented as "*a woman sitting upon a scarlet colored beast, full of the names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed*

*in purple, and scarlet-color, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand; full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*" (Rev. 17. 4, 5.)

We all know how generally throughout the protestant church, these costly and gaudy adornings, and abominations of Babylon have been ascribed exclusively to the papal church, grown rich, lifted up, adorned and abominable. But though the wickedness of that organization is probably greater than blind mortals can see or imagine, is there not almost, if not every token of the same love of "*mammon*" and gaudy extravagant show found also, throughout the bounds of the *protestant* or anti-papal church? While it may seem to us protestants, like a hard saying at present, it is nevertheless believed to be true; and surely this attempt to lay our share of the burden upon another's shoulder, or to hide our sins by laying them at another man's door, will be but in vain. To suppose this "*BABYLON*" to be destroyed utterly in the hour of God's judgment, to be only the papal organization, involves certainly very much which is heretical, or tending to quiet the consciences of protestant sinners and hypocrites in their remaining as they are, as though being a *protestant* were a qualification to escape destruction in the fall of Babylon. Rather let every "*refuge of lies*" be abandoned seasonably, and let every one take shelter in Christ, that when this great city, or prostitute woman, in all christendom, opposite in character to the other "*woman*," the spouse of Christ, shall be destroyed, or fall to rise no more; we may all be found in Christ as the woman "*the Lamb's wife*," and *not* as having a part with the opposite "*woman*," called "*BABYLON—THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS*."

17—19. “*For in one hour, (v. 10,) is so great riches come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city? And they cast dust upon their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness! for in one hour (v. 8,) is she made desolate.*” (Ezek. 27 : 29—32.)

This passage continues describing “BABYLON THE GREAT,” when about to be destroyed, as “*that GREAT city;*” none other so great, or “*like unto this great city*”—having “*so GREAT riches*” and “*costliness,*” as though including all the *greatness*, “*riches*” and “*costliness*” of the city of sin or Satan in the world. It shows also that the Babylonish character of this merchandizing by *land*, is not alone; but that “*ALL the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea,*” and “*ALL that had ships in the sea,*” are constituent parts of this “*BABYLON,*” and engaged in her “*merchandise, of gold and silver, and precious stones and pearls,*” &c., which is all contraband business according to “*the Gospel of the kingdom*” of Jesus Christ, who gives us this prophecy, and would rather require us all to be as the “*merchant*” selling “*all*” for the “*PEARL of great price.*” And indeed, this land merchandise of articles of pride and lust, of things “*dear bought and far brought,*” could not be carried on to much extent without this assistance of the mariners and those who employ them. Without reprobating any thing useful and actually approved by Christ connected with the commercial enterprise of the day, we certainly may see, that as a *system*, as a *mass*, or as a

*whole*, the Lord reprobates its present character as belonging to this "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS," and suitable only to be destroyed in the "one hour" of "her judgment" and fall to rise no more. The passage also further describes, in the most awful and appalling figures, the everlasting miseries of all the subjects of this kingdom of Satan, whoever they may be, whether in the church or out of it, of every rank, including rich sinners made so by the traffic and speculation customary by land and by sea, fearfully standing, (or would "stand afar off"—"weeping and wailing" to see "the smoke of her burning," &c.

Its being so repeatedly described as destroyed "in one hour"—"one day," when "her judgment is come," &c., is conclusive proof that it is to be at the judgment day, or the judgment hour, when, as all christians have always agreed, all sinners, or the whole kingdom of Satan, will be destroyed in hell, rather than popery or any other such private concern meet a repulse in the view of surviving mortals.

20. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her." (Isa. 44: 23. Jer. 51: 48, 49. Rev. 12: 12.)

By this verse we are further instructed, that when this "great CITY BABYLON—MOTHER OF HARLOTS," shall be "fallen, fallen"—"thrown down"—and "utterly burned with fire," all "heaven" will "rejoice over her," and also all "the holy apostles and prophets," which must include all the final inhabitants of heaven, as really as that "GREAT BABYLON" in its final fall and destruction, includes all the subjects of Satan's kingdom. And sure such a rejoicing day for *all* the saints, and all heaven, can never come, so long as any of their number shall remain out of heaven,

and so long as Satan and his kingdom shall stand, or make perpetual war against the people of God. The declaration also, in this verse, "*For God hath avenged you on her,*" shows that all this is the work of Christ against his enemies in the judgment day; for not till then "*will God avenge his own elect*" as a body. (Luke, 18: 7, 8.) All this is understood as confirming the doctrine of the text, that the Babylon of prophecy generally, is the whole kingdom of Satan, and that its predicted downfall here, and through this whole chapter, is the final destruction in hell of all the enemies of God, without distinction, from first to last.

21. "*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.*" (Jer. 51:64. Rev. 12: 8.) See Prin. 4th, &c.

This vision of the apparent "great millstone" cast "into the sea" by "a mighty angel," is explained here as representing, that with similar "violence," as it were, "*shall that GREAT CITY BABYLON be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*" The kingdom of Satan, and various organizations of his dominion, it seems from the prophets, will stand in strong opposition to Christ and his cause, till finally cast down and destroyed by the Judge in his terrible appearing to the wicked. Then, to be sure, as declared in this passage, will that kingdom of BABYLON, or of Satan, be violently "thrown down," and "*utterly burned with fire.*"

22. "*And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatever craft he be, shall be*

*found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee.*" (Isa. 24: 8.)

If we mistake not, this is an indirect, but clear representation, that the present "voice" of "*harpers, musicians, pipers and trumpeters,*" or the music of instruments generally, all belongs to "BABYLON," or *Satan's kingdom*, rather than to the worship of saints, as most of the church may now suppose it does in part. With unbelievers we know that such music is among the extremes of their joys in forgetting God, while it has greatly increased with worldlings, and in worshipping assemblies, with the late abundant increase of human inventions and craft in christendom. That it is *Babylonish* and idolatrous, may appear from the very public and popular use made in "*Babylon*" of "*the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music,*" in commanding and causing "*all the people, nations and languages,*" to fall "*down and worship the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.*" (Dan. 3: 1—7.)

There are other passages which apparently represent such music as belonging to the wicked, or Satan's kingdom, rather than to the worshippers of God, such as the following: "*They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance, they take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice in the sound of the ORGAN—Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*" (Job, 21: 11—13.) "*And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease, and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard.*" (Ezek. 26: 13.) "*Wo to them that are at ease in Zion—ye that put far away the evil day—that chant to the sound of the VIOL, and invent to themselves instruments of music like David.*" (Amos, 6: 1—5.)

From these various parallel passages, on instrumental music, it seems that the Lord classes it with "*Babylon,*"



the *dancing* of the *children* of the wicked—their rejoicing at such music—with image worship, and with his threatenings of “*wo*” and destruction, and represents that the natural tendency of it is, to make men “*therefore*” “*say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*” And particularly he reprobates here the *chanting* “*to the sound of the [bass] VIOL,*” and “*the sound of the ORGAN,*” now most common, and supposed generally to be the most of all appropriate in the house of worship. And should we justify it by saying, as many have, that in the use of such *instruments of music* we only do “*like David;*” it seems the Lord here meets us with a “*wo,*” for the *pretence* of doing it “*like David.*” If the Psalms are all designed as forms of worship for “*Israel,*” or the saints to “*say,*” or use, as attempted to be shown in a former lecture, as an inference from Ps. 124 and 129, then what is said in the Psalms of praising God upon “*harps,*” &c., is said *prophetically*, and of their *finally* and *eternally* praising him in “*heaven*” upon “*harps*” of gold, &c., “*on the Mount Zion.*” (Rev. 4: 1, 2. 5: 8. 14: 1—3. 15: 3.) Notwithstanding this “*BABYLON*” is now so full of instruments of music, and musicians to use them, and has carried so much of them into our temples of worship, and set them up as a “*Dagon*” there, this whole city of corruption itself must soon be “*thrown down with violence,*” to be “*found no more at all,*” when all her music shall cease for ever, to give place rather to her foretold “*weeping,*” *lamentation,* “*and wailing,*” no more at all to be exchanged for such vain and wicked pleasures of forgetting God.

Also, according to the passage under consideration, and according to what we see fulfilled, “*BABYLON,*” or Satan’s kingdom on earth, is now as full of craftsmen to make idols or “*shrines to Diana,*” the goddess of this world, as

Ephesus was when "*Demetrius, the silversmith,*" gathered them together on seeing *their craft in danger* from Paul's preaching, when they unitedly cried out for the space of two hours, "GREAT IS DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS." And is there not abundant reason to believe, that should the spirit of Paul and his coadjutors be now revived in any of our great commercial and mercantile christian cities, so that the Gospel should again be preached and obeyed by many, as then, to their utter renunciation of our present popular idolatry, there would be an *uproar, or outcry,* against them, from the craftsmen and others thus having their "*wealth,*" as great as that in case of Paul at Ephesus just mentioned? The pittance of this mechanism now really needed for Christ's sake, is not necessarily here condemned. Its finding bread, &c. for mechanics, is no more argument for its continuance than in case of the making and vending of drinks for intoxication; and is precisely the argument of Demetrius, the silversmith, in favor of the shrines to DIANA at Ephesus—"Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth."

23. "*And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the Bridegroom, and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; (Jer. 7: 34. 25: 10. 33: 11,) for thy merchants were the great men of the earth, (Isa. 23: 8,) for by thy sorceries, were all nations deceived.*" (Nahum 3: 4. Rev. 17: 2.)

All this darkness, desolation and ruin, without remedy, we here see is for Babylon's abominable wickedness in setting up her merchants above all others in greatness, and for thus deceiving and corrupting "*all nations.*"

24. "*And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and all that were slain upon the earth.*" (Rev. 17: 6.)

This Babylon now exalted high, will soon be found, when thrown down, as actually guilty of all the martyrdoms and murders ever committed on the earth, from the murder of Abel by wicked Cain to the end of the world, when this Babylon must fall to rise no more, and be in "*a habitation of devils,*" or "*cage of*" *foul spirits*, without opportunity ever to commit another martyrdom or murder. Of all this, our Saviour forewarned his enemies when personally with them upon the earth, when he called them "*hypocrites,*" "*generation of vipers,*" and "*Jerusalem ;*" predicting how they, as a "*generation,*" would continue to "*kill—crucify—scourge and persecute*" his saints, until being made to suffer "*for all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.*" (Mat. 23: 13—16, 33—37.)

### CONCLUDING GENERAL REMARKS.

We have now closed our scripture proof of the doctrine of these discourses, that "*the kingdom of heaven—at hand,*" as preached by Christ and John, was and is the "*everlasting kingdom*"—"of God," composed as every kingdom is, of the King himself, and all the subjects of this kingdom, that this kingdom "*at hand,*" is yet to come—that it will come with Christ the great King to judgment, together with the resurrection, and all the events of that great day—that it is now specially at hand, as appears by the prophetic signs of it, at present fulfilling ; and that all the prophets and the apostles on these subjects were designed to be understood as preaching the same "*kingdom at hand.*"

For proof of this doctrine, we have briefly, but fairly examined the writings of Moses and the prophets—the preach-

ing of Christ and John—the whole mention of the words “*kingdom*” and “*heaven*” in Matthew—counter arguments—the apostles’ commission—their preaching in the book of Acts—their writings in the epistles—the scripture and popular theories of the millennium—Christ’s signs and description of his coming to judgment; together with the downfall of Babylon; or utter destruction of Satan’s whole kingdom, as foretold by the prophets of the Old and New Testaments.

We have endeavored to show, in support of this doctrine, that all these scripture proofs are perfectly harmonious with themselves, with common sense, with the scriptures generally; that when thus interpreted, they are clear to be understood, especially to the spiritually minded, or lovers of God’s law, and that thus interpreted, they are powerful as means of grace, for the awakening, conversion and sanctification of souls; that they are full of terror to the ungodly, and of solid comfort and peace to the spiritual mind: and that—

Otherwise interpreted, they are converted into dark confusion, and sometimes nonsensical contradictions, making “*void the law of God,*” and his “*commandment*” comparatively “*of none effect:*”

We have seen, that the *signs* of BABYLON’S immediate downfall, or destruction of Satan’s kingdom at hand, as foretold of its character and particular circumstances which were to be seen just before its final overthrow, *are now* wonderfully fulfilled before our eyes, as no age of the world ever before witnessed:

We have seen, seemingly, every appearance of its *now* being in the “*LATTER TIME* of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full,” or accomplished, (Dan. 8: 23,) in Babylon’s great unbelief, great pride, and haughti-

ness, great enmity against God, and trampling down the infinite interests of man : (Dan. 7 : 7, 19, 21, 23, 25—28.

This, we have seen, or may now see, *manifested* in her present, before unprecedented, great worldly power, riches, honors and pleasures in reigning over the whole earth, in her great “*costliness*” and extravagance of expenditures for great and imposing show ; in great church edifices with “*all manner*” of Babylonish adornings, outside and within, costing in cities from 50,000 to 300,000 dollars or more as we are publicly informed, while the bare *steeple* of one in this city, about to be erected, is estimated at 80,000 dollars. We see the same also in her other buildings, furniture, conveyances and general equipage ; great “*costliness*” and luxury in food, drinks, “*fruits*,” and of “*all things dainty and goodly*,” with extravagance of ornament and show in particulars innumerable, and as abundant with church members as others, to the apparent great neglect and contempt of “*Jesus and the resurrection*,” and of the “*kingdom of God—at hand*.”

We have seen, as foretold, that the *enormous wealth* necessary for the maintenance of all this *greatness* of “*BA-BYLON*,” is now actually acquired more fully than ever before, by *merchandise, commerce*, “*many inventions*” and *craft*, to the fulfilment of this and another prophecy—“*Their land [or the world and the church] also, is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures : [now,] their land is also full of houses, [now,] neither is there any end of their chariots, [now.] Their land is also full of idols ; they worship the work of their own hands,*” [now,] (Isa. 2 : 7, 8,) all which are used by her to pamper “*the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*,” rather than to build the Lord’s spiritual house, “*whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of our hope steadfast unto the end*.”

As the natural *consequence* of this great "*costliness*," and foretold means of obtaining it; we may see that *now*, as never before, the land is full of *speculation, falsehood, fraud, theft, and oppression*; with *monopolies, private, sectional, national, and universal*; with the grossest, and yet popular multiplied violations of the law of God in efforts for the highest stations in the world, or for some satisfactory degree of conformity to the laws and customs of this "GREAT BABYLON" "*to be destroyed.*" From these considerations,

We come to the conclusion, that the DOCTRINE assumed, is true and scriptural, and that though we are not authorized to presume on the time of Christ's coming to judgment, as being at any specified distance off, "*the great day of the Lord,*" with all its glorious and yet terrible events, including the downfall of "BABYLON," and destruction of Satan's kingdom, is now, as never before, and in all respects, positively "*nigh at hand,*" and that without an immediate repentance and preparation, it may burst upon all the ungodly "*as a thief in the night,*" or "*as the lightning*" from "*heaven*" at any moment, for aught they know, and that it becomes us all, to "*watch and be sober,*" praying without ceasing, and with all prayer in the Spirit;—and in response to our Saviour's *last words*—"SURELY I COME QUICKLY, AMEN," to say, in our hearts and in our lives, "*unto the end,*" "*Even so, come Lord Jesus.*"

"*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you all, Amen.*"

THE END.













