

The Kingdom of God

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DANIEL ii.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, and it shall stand forever."**

MUCH has been said and written on this by different commentators. Different sects and partisans have seized this text, and applied it to their sect, and proved, as they verily believe, that their sect is the true kingdom of God, which will stand forever. The Catholics say it was set up in the days of the Roman Caesars, and thus claim for the Pope St. Peter's chair and the kingdom, and that to the Bishop of Rome were the keys of this kingdom given at the demise of St. Peter, and the popes have been the successor and earthly head of this kingdom ever since. The Baptist writers, many of them, say the same, and claim a descent from the apostles for the Baptist church, making the church what the Catholics do the Pope; and try to show a regular succession of the church, as the Catholics do their popes. They

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also claim believers' baptism (*immersion*,) as an initiatory rite into the kingdom, and that none are citizens of this kingdom until they

comply with this requisition. The Episcopalians, or some of them, claim this same kingdom to have been set up in the days of the kings of England; and therefore the kings or queens of England are the accredited head of the episcopacy, and rulers over the visible church. The Presbyterians say it was set up in the days of Luther, among the German kings; the Quakers, in the days of Fox; the Methodists, in the days of Wesley; the Shakers, in the days of Ann Lee; and the Mormons, by Joseph Smith.

All writers seem determined to have an earthly kingdom, and an earthly head to that kingdom. 1Cor.iii.3,4: "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" Or, as is properly said by James, (iii.14-16,) "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."

And now permit me to show that this kingdom is neither "earthly, sensual, nor devilish;" but I shall show -

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- I. WHAT IT IS;
- II. WHOSE IT IS;
- III. WHEN IT IS; and,
- IV. WHERE IT IS.

I. WHAT IT IS

It is heavenly; for the God of heaven sets it up, that is, exalts it. It is evidently a holy kingdom; for the will of God is to be done in it as in heaven. Luke xi.2: "And he said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name: Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth." It is a righteous kingdom. See Romans xiv.17: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

It is an everlasting kingdom - "shall stand forever," says our text. Psalm cxlv.12,13: "To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." Dan.vii.14,27: "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High,

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whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Heb.xii.28: "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." 2Pet.i. 11: "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Rev.xi.15: And the seventh angel sounded: and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." Rev.xxii.5: "And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever."

As there cannot be two kingdoms, and both stand forever, we must naturally suppose, by the texts which I have quoted, that it must be a glorified kingdom: and, indeed, the last text quoted proves it to be in the New Jerusalem state. See also Psalm xxiv.7-10: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. . . Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." Ps.cxlv.10,11: "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord;

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and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power." Isa.ii.10,19,21: "Enter into the

rocks and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the rugged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Isa.iv.2-5: "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence." Isa.xxiv.23: "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the

Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." 1Thess.ii.12: "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory."

If it is a glorified kingdom, and an eternal kingdom, it cannot be consistent to say it is an earthly kingdom, or a mortal kingdom. It is an immortal one. Christ says, John xviii.36: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." It cannot be an earthly kingdom. And again, 1Cor.xv.50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." If this be true, it cannot be in a mortal state. But I will prove it immortal. Matt.viii.11,12: "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and 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." Luke xiii.28,29: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from

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the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God."

This can never be in a mortal state, for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, together with all the prophets, have passed from the mortal state. Then we may well conclude that the kingdom spoken of in our text is a heavenly kingdom, holy, righteous, and everlasting: an eternal kingdom, where the subjects of the kingdom will shine as the sun, and all the heirs be glorified, and corruption be changed into incorruption, and the mortal to immortal. Then death will be swallowed up in victory.

How foolish, and ridiculous the idea, that "it shall not be left to other people," if the subjects are not immortal! If deaths and births continue as now, in one hundred years death would conquer the whole kingdom, and in process of time would change every subject from those who received it at the beginning, to their descendants; and in the fulness of time, according to the temporal millennial doctrine, the devil will be let loose and conquer a large number of children, which have been literally born in the kingdom, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea-shore, and transplant them out of the eternal and everlasting kingdom of God into the kingdom of the devil, and there excite them to make war against their sires in the beloved city. See: "Dowling's Reply to Miller," pp. 217,218. If our learned men can reason

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no better than this, I would advise them to go where they can get a little common sense, before they undertake to teach people who know their right hand from the left. And were it not for the influence they obtain by newspaper puffs, for which the editors make them pay well, they would obtain no more influence than

their writings deserve. But let us now inquire concerning this kingdom.

II. WHOSE IT IS

1. I answer, it is God's kingdom. Acts xiv.22: "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." 2Thess.i.5: "Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." Both of these show that the kingdom of God was not then come; but believers were exhorted to be faithful, and endure sufferings and tribulation, that they might be counted worthy to obtain the kingdom of God when it should come. Therefore, none will pretend that a temporal millennium is here alluded to, or that the gospel church is here meant; for these brethren were already counted worthy to belong to the church.

Again, Luke xiv.15: "And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that

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shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Now, I ask, is every one blessed who eats bread in the church, or in the gospel day? If so, what can the text mean, (Luke xiii.20,) "Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets?" Every unbiassed mind must see at once that the kingdom of God of which our text speaks, is not temporal, but eternal; not earthly, but heavenly.

2. It is a kingdom given unto Jesus Christ, the Son of man, when he leaves the mediatorial seat, gives up the redeemed church to God the Father, and the mediatorship becomes subject to God. Christ having performed all the work which the Father gave him to do as Mediator, the mediatorial kingdom, or kingdom of grace, is given up, and the kingdom of God set up, and Christ now sits on the throne of his father David, having put down all enemies, and all authority and power, against his rightful reign on earth, having

dashed the kingdoms to pieces like a potter's vessel, burned up the wicked, cleansed the earth, and raised the saints. Then the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever. Then Jesus will be God blessed forevermore; and his kingdom will fill the whole earth, and his tabernacle will be with men, and he will dwell with them, and be their God, and they shall be his people.

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Now you will ask for my proof. This is right; and in my soul I wish you would be as particular with all who preach the gospel, and demand their evidences. We should have less error in our world, and more truth.

First; see Daniel vii.13,14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." This proves the kingdom given to the Son of man.

Second; see 1Cor.xv.23-28: "But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 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. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things

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under him, that God may be all in all." Also, Psalm ii.9: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psalm v.3,6: "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee,

and will look up. Thou shalt destroy them that speak teasing; the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man." 2Pet.iii.10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." Also, verse 13: "Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Rev.xi.15: "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." Psalm xlvii.2,9: "For the Lord Most High is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth." "For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding." Zech.xiv.9: "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." Rom.ix.5: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever.

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Amen." Rev.xxi.3: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." These texts prove the remainder of what I have stated above; and we may further inquire, To whom is the kingdom given?

Third; I answer, it is given to the saints. See Dan.vii.21,22,27: "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Luke xii.32: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Matt.xxv.34: "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." James ii.5: "Hearken, my beloved brethren; hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" 2Pet.i. 11: "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly

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into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." These texts prove abundantly that the saints are to possess and inherit the kingdom, and the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.

III. WHEN IT IS

I will now show WHEN IT IS they will enter this kingdom and inherit it forever. Not in this present world; for in this world they are to suffer persecution; also, they are strangers and pilgrims in this world. 2Tim.iii.12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 1Pet.ii.11: "Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord." Heb.xi.13,14: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country." Also, verse 16: "But now they desire a better country, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city."

But it is at the coming of Christ with power and great glory, when he shall come in the clouds and in his kingdom. See Dan.vii. 13,14: "I saw in the night visions: and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near

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before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Matt.xxv. 31-34: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the

holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from the other, 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." 1Thess.ii.12: "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." 1Thess.iii.13: "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, as at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." 2Tim.iv.1: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." Also verse 8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

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After the resurrection; for when Christ comes he will reward his saints with his kingdom, as we have abundantly proved. Matt.xvi. 27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Then the kingdom of God is not yet set up? No. But our text tells us it will be set up in the days of those kings. What kings? I answer, the ten toes, of which he had just been speaking, are a representation of ten kingdoms, into which the iron, or fourth kingdom, should be divided. Compare Dan.ii.41,42, with Dan.vii. 23,24: "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part iron, the kingdom shall be divided, but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken." "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that

shall arise: and another shall arise after them: and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings."

Then our text more than implies that these ten kings are to be in existence until Christ

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shall come and dash them to pieces, and they be destroyed by the brightness of his coming. 2Thess.ii.8: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Also, Dan.ii.45: "Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." These passages are as simple and plain as words can make them. And I am bold to say, that no one will, or can, consistent with common sense, deny but what these ten toes do denote ten kings; and I have never seen any but scoffers, skeptics or infidels, who would deny it. And if these toes do represent ten kings or kingdoms, as all good expositors do admit, there can hardly be a shadow of a doubt but we are on the very close of the kingdoms; for they have now existed more than 1300 years, and this is a greater proportion than other parts of the image have borne with reference to time. And had we no other rule, we ought to bear our watch-tower night and day, lest he, Christ, come and find us sleeping.

IV. WHERE THIS KINGDOM IS TO BE

I will now show WHERE THIS KINGDOM IS TO BE . And,
1. It is to be under the whole

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heaven. See Dan.vii.27. Phil.ii.9,10: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." 2. It is to be on the earth. Psalm ii.8: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth

for thy possession." Also xxv.13: "His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth." xxxvii.9: "For evil doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth." verse 11: "But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Also, verse 22: "For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off." Isa.lx.21: "Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Rev.v.10: "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." 3. It will be called a new earth. Isa.lxv.17: "For, behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isa.lxvi.22: "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your

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name remain." 2Pet.iii.13: "Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Rev.xxi.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." Also, verse 5: "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful."

By the proof thus adduced, we see, that the kingdom spoken of in our text is not earthly; for the kingdoms of the earth are broken to pieces and carried away, and no place found for them. It is not sensual, man ruling over man, or tyrannizing over his fellow; but each will do as he would have others do unto him, and each will love his neighbor as himself. It is not to be wondered at, then, that a rich man cannot easily enter this kingdom, nor one who lords it over his fellow, for the meek only can inherit it. This, too, shows why kings, captains, and mighty men are destroyed in the great battle of God Almighty; for those spirits and principles cannot exist in the kingdom of God. We learn too, by this view, why the earth is cleansed by fire; for the proud, and all that do wickedly, must be consumed out of it. See Matt.xiii.41,42: "The Son of man shall

send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend,

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and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." This too accounts for the scoffers in these last days; for they well know, if the kingdom is to be a righteous one, they themselves can have no part in it. We also learn by this why so many of our D. D.'s and professors, so many of our Rev.'s and clergy, so many of our editors and Christian teachers, as they wish to be called, are so strongly opposed to this doctrine. They know if Christ should come he would not regard their high-sounding titles, nor their dogmatical teachings: they know that their great aim has been to seek honors of men, and worldly profits of their dupes, and their trade is in danger. Their spiritual reign and conversion of the world has been their hobby, and they hug to the foolish idea of converting the world to their dogmas and faith, by means of money and sectarian missionaries. As well may they undertake to dip the ocean dry with a fireman's bucket, as to convert the world with their sectarian motives and party creeds. How can men be so ignorant as not to see, that every convert only makes the rent worse, and every year divisions and subdivisions increase? Can a kingdom thus torn and divided stand for "millions of years," as one of the sectarian editors lately proclaimed, and our dear Saviour be correct, Matt.xii.25: "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and

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said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." We know they cannot be true.

Every discerning mind knows that at the present time, the Roman Church are making two proselytes to the Protestants' one, and all must agree that of those converted by Protestants one half, or nearly so, are mere nominal professors. Well may we say, "millions of years" must pass away before our world could be converted. But I ask, what man of common sense, who has read and believes his Bible, can for a moment believe the doctrine of

these foolish editors and priests, who assert that "millions of years" must intervene before Christ will come? How different did the apostle Peter preach from this. 1Pet.iv.7: "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Also Christ, Rev.xxii.12: "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." And, 20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come, quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Likewise James v.8,9: "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold the Judge standeth before the door."

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Much more Scripture might be produced to show we are on the end of the world. Yet the Scripture is fulfilling, to the very letter, by these scoffers of the present day, who say, "where is the promise of his coming?" and also "saying in their hearts, my Lord delayeth his coming." And some of them are so awfully daring as to publish openly and boldly to the world that he will not come this "million of years yet." Strange infatuation! It is time for all who sincerely love our Lord to awake from their slumbers, trim their lamps, and be ready, for the Bridegroom is at the door. Why will you be so backward in believing God's word? Can you not discern the signs of the times? And I beseech you, O sinner! do not hear to these false teachers; they will deceive you. Look for yourselves; read, study, and consider for yourselves. You may depend upon it, every important movement of the nations, of the church, of sects, and societies, of the world, denotes the end of all things is at hand. A few more days to be numbered, and time will be no more. Regard not these blasphemous hypocrites, these wicked scoffers, these false teachers, who are crying peace and safety, when sudden destruction cometh; that say, my Lord delayeth his coming. Be warned by one who feels for your souls. I ask not for your honors, nor for your money; let them perish with the world. I ask you to escape for your life, your eternal life. Oh!

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save, save your soul! Think of that world which will never end, of that state which will never be changed. Think, my dear friend, of your own good; buy the truth, buy oil, buy wine and milk, without money and without price. Come, ye poor, take hold of the riches which can never perish; eat, O eat and drink of that food which can never cloy, which if a man eat of he shall live forever. Come, ye sick, here is health for you; ye lame, you will find strength; yes, weary ones may find rest, and captives will go free. The bars of the prison-house will be broken, and the shackles of the slaves will be unloosed. Captain Jesus is knocking at the door; King Immanuel will soon come in.