

Letter to Rev. J. Litch, on the Second Coming of Christ

WITH
THE SENTIMENTS OF COTTON MATHER
ON THE SAME SUBJECT,

APPROVED BY THOMAS PRINCE,

BOTH EMINENT MINISTERS OF BOSTON IN THE LAST
CENTURY.

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PREFACE

The following pages are prepared and published by one who expects soon to meet God; by one who wishes to be prepared for that solemn and momentous event, and to do what he can, with God's blessing, to prepare others. In view of the strict account which all must render to him who "trieth the reins and the heart," there are two things which the author of this dare not do, and (blessed be the Lord for it!) which he desires not to do; viz., to say "My Lord delayeth his coming," or that "without holiness" men may see the Lord" [in peace.] Should any take up this book with a spirit of derision, as perhaps many may,-"for there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own heart's lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming?"-they are earnestly

entreated to listen to the following admonition from the word of God: "Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong, for I have heard from the Lord God of Hosts, a consumption even determined upon the whole earth." Isa. xxviii. 22.

C. F.

Haverhill, Nov., 1841.

LETTER

My Dear Brother Litch:-You will, doubtless, remember that when you called at my house some months ago, you requested me to examine the Bible doctrine respecting the second coming of Christ, and write you the result of my investigations.

Having now looked at the subject, until I feel that my mind is settled and established, and my feet placed on "the Rock," I take great pleasure in attempting to communicate my views and feelings to you, according to your request.

Permit me here to say, that it is my wish to bear testimony, on this momentous subject, to the world, as extensively as the Lord shall permit. I shall therefore endeavor to lay before you, as briefly as possible, my convictions, on the main points of truth touching the doctrines of Christ's second coming, with the chief arguments on which my own mind rests, for proof of the positions which I regard as fully established; hoping that the Lord will open a way whereby this communication may go into the hands of my friends as extensively as possible, and of as many others, as shall seem good to Him, before whom I expect soon to render my last

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account. I take pleasure in saying, to the praise of God, that I enter upon this work with a sweet and delightful witness in my soul, (from God's Spirit, as I fully believe,) that I am doing that which pleases Him; sincerely desiring thereby to glorify the name of Jesus Christ, my God and Savior, and to do good to souls for whom he shed his blood.

I will here state the process of mind, by which, in the providence of God, I have come to my present convictions respecting the truth of the Bible on the subject under consideration.

It is now somewhat more than three years and a half, since the lectures of William Miller, on this subject, were put into my hands. At that time I had neither read nor heard anything of the views which he advocates, nor did I know anything of the subject of which his work treated, except that it was concerning the millennium. His book, therefore, was to my mind an entire novelty. I took it up, as we often say, by mere casualty; but, as I fully believe, by the wise direction of Him who numbers the hairs of our heads. I devoured it with a more intense interest than any other book I had ever read; and continued to feel the same interest in it, until I had read it from beginning to end for the sixth time. My mind was greatly overwhelmed with the subject, until I felt that I could truly love Christ's appearing, and that I

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could therefore hope with Paul, that there was laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which God, the righteous Judge, should give me at that day." The subject then seemed to me to be surrounded, and fortified, on all sides, with an array of scriptural testimony, which nothing could overthrow.

In this state of mind, I wrote to Mr. Miller; but as I have no copy of the letter, I do not remember whether I did, or did not, express myself to him as fully convinced of the truth which he advocated. It is my impression, however, that I did. About the same time, also, I wrote and preached to the people in Boston, with whom I was then laboring, a couple of sermons, designed to lay before them the theory of Christ's second coming at hand, which Mr. Miller advocated, and the evidence on which the truth of the doctrine rested; telling them that I expressed no opinion of my own, but wished them to examine the subject for themselves. Having also, at the same time, an appointment, to read an essay for criticism, before the Suffolk South Association of Congregational Ministers, of which I was then a member, I laid the same subject before them. In expressing their minds with regard to it, the first

said "moonshine;" the second said "ditto;" and another said "the prophecies can't be understood." I think there were two whose feelings seemed revolted at the idea that the prophecies could not be understood; but there

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were none present who seemed to sympathize in the impression that there was truth in the subject, or that it was worthy of investigation. I left the meeting much pained, and, if I rightly remember, not a little mortified; for there was much laughter over the subject, and I could not help feeling that I was regarded as a simpleton, for entertaining the thought that there could be any truth, in what seemed to them such palpable nonsense. I did not feel ready to say to them that I coincided with Mr. Miller; for the subject was new to me, and I had not sufficiently surveyed and examined the ground to attempt much by way of defending it, even if I had had an opportunity. Soon after this, I found opportunity to converse with an aged clergyman, for whom I have great respect, and who, as I then believed, had given more attention to the prophetic parts of the Scriptures than any other man in this country, and had written and published much, and with great acceptance. The firmness and fluency with which he opposed Mr. Miller's views, led me to feel that it might be owing to my ignorance that I was so much impressed on reading his book; and the reproach, which I saw would come upon me, if I advocated them, led me to lay the matter aside. Some time after, when a member of the Association asked what I then thought of Miller's book, I said, (for the sake of retaining his good opinion,) "I was

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much overwhelmed with it at first, but now I don't think anything of it." The truth is, that the fear of man brought me into a snare; I was unwilling at this time to appear as an advocate of the truth defended by Mr. Miller; but neither Scripture nor argument had ever settled the convictions of my mind to the contrary.

After this, I left Boston and went to New Jersey, where my mind became deeply absorbed in examining the subject of full

sanctification by faith in Christ. So fully had all my previous teachings set me against that doctrine, and so unprepared was I in my experience to appreciate its value, and the blessedness to be derived from it, that it was a long time before I felt established and confirmed in the belief and experience of it, as a doctrine of the Bible. But I was at length led by the Holy Spirit to cast myself by faith upon the faithfulness of Him, who is declared "faithful to sanctify us wholly, and to preserve our whole spirit and soul and body blameless unto the coming of Christ." In doing this, I have found a blessedness in Christ, which is indeed a "peace that passeth all understanding," and a "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Such was the power of the gospel which I now felt in my own soul, that I thought, if God were to fill the whole earth, as He had filled me, with the blissful manifestations of his spiritual presence, it would make this world a blessed

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place indeed; and as I knew that he was "able to do for us exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," and had said, "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord," I preached, as the expected millennium, the universal prevalence, and experience of entire sanctification. Respecting the Christian's delightful privilege, to be "sanctified wholly, and preserved in spirit, soul and body, blameless to the coming of Christ," through his faith in *the faithfulness of Him who hath called him, and will do it*; I have the same blessed convictions and experience that I have for a considerable time entertained: but I think that I now better understand what that coming of Christ meant, to which God is faithful to preserve us blameless; and also better what Paul meant by exhorting "as many as be perfect," like him to "forget the things behind, and reach forth unto those before; and thus follow after, to apprehend that for which they are apprehended by Christ Jesus, if by any means they may attain unto the resurrection of the dead." In the state of mind which I have described, I remained up to the time when you called upon me, having delightful enjoyment in my soul, from receiving Christ as "*of God made unto me sanctification,*" as

well as "wisdom, righteousness, and redemption," and endeavoring, by all means in my power, to urge

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the blessed doctrine and experience of holiness, or full sanctification through faith in Christ, upon all who call themselves his people. I rejoice, dear brother, in thus opening my feelings to you on this subject, that you are prepared to appreciate my feelings, by your connection with that branch of Christ's visible church, whose founder, and whose ministry, for the most part, I trust, to this day, have felt and preached the importance and practicability of being fully sanctified to God; and many of whose members, I believe, from my acquaintance with the writings of some, and my delightful personal intercourse with others, have, and do now enjoy this blessing in its rich experience. To "abide in Christ and sin not," I believed to be the privilege of all God's people, and felt that I had been taught it by the Holy Ghost; and when I thought of the coming of Christ, I said, the great question is, "Who shall abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?" Let us see to it that we are prepared, by being wholly the Lord's, and then it matters not when the day arrives.

For preaching the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification, I lost my church connection, and became, in part, an ecclesiastical outcast. But I gained deliverance, in this process, from the fear of man, and learned the blessedness of fearing God, and Him only, and of relying on His arm, instead

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of that fleshly arm of ecclesiastical countenance and support, on which I had been accustomed to lean.

I cannot say, my brother, that I felt anything like cordiality in seeing you; but I now bless God, and give you thanks for the call, and praise the name of the Lord, that I was so far emancipated from the power of the beast, as not to be afraid to examine a subject because it was unpopular.

After you left me, I examined the books which you gave me, and felt my former convictions respecting the truth and importance of the subject reviving. I looked into the words of Moses, and

searched the prophets and the Psalms, not forgetting that Christ said, "All things written" therein "concerning me must be fulfilled." I felt myself surrounded with light and truth; but still I seem to have been more in the condition of one swimming, than of one who had found a firm place for his feet. About this time, I set apart a day of fasting and prayer, and laid myself before the Lord. While lying upon my face at the feet of my blessed Savior, I felt the following blessed promise most sweetly applied to my mind: "The meek shall he guide in judgment, and the meek shall he teach his way." I could not doubt that this application was by the Holy Spirit. I know that some may deride this idea, but I believe that it is the privilege of Christ's disciples to know the

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Comforter, and understand his teachings. Christ said, "the world cannot receive" him, "because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; *but ye know him*, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." During this day of fasting and prayer, I was made to feel the unspeakable blessedness of being disposed of forever to the highest honor of Jesus. It seemed to me that there was a perfect heaven in the thought of being placed, forever and ever, in just that position in the universe where I should be. made the highest honor to him who had, for my sake, suffered polluted sinners to spit in his face, and heap upon him every manner of foulest insult and hellish cruelty, and then to cast him out and put him to death with thieves. My whole being seemed to flow out in one gushing desire to this effect,-let Christ have all his due of me, let him have all the glory that belongs to him; and I felt that to be disposed of to that end, would be to me the perfection of bliss. I felt that I had no wish either to live or die, either to soar and shine with the highest and brightest in glory, or to lie among the most obscure in the lowliest position that a ransomed soul will ever fill in heaven, if I might but have just the place where I should forever render to Christ the full meed of praise, which he has so abundantly deserved from me. On searching the Bible, and examining truth, since that time, all has appeared delightfully plain to me.

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God's word, in His great and glorious plan of salvation, has seemed full of light, and the things of His glorious and eternal kingdom easy to be understood.

My mind is now in a state of delightful rest in the Lord, touching the whole matter; and I feel fully prepared, and happy, to lay before you what I believe to be the truth, and the arguments by which I find it supported.

RESURRECTION

I. I believe that the two resurrections, spoken of in the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, will take place literally, as there laid down; that "the souls which were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which have not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither have received his mark in their foreheads, or in their hands," will live and reign with Christ a thousand years; that this is the first resurrection-and that the rest of the dead will not live again until the thousand years are finished. This thousand years I believe to be the millennium, and the only millennium which has ever been promised to the church.

My reason for this opinion is, that I take the plainly revealed word of God, in this chapter, for truth, and know of no reason for doing otherwise; and because I find not one passage in all the Bible to support the idea of a millennium previous to the resurrection.

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I know it is maintained by those who are looking for a millennium before the resurrection, that the resurrections spoken of in this chapter are mystical. I do not receive that opinion, because I do not find one text of Scripture, nor one shadow of an argument, by which to support it. I believe that if the resurrections spoken of in the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, are not to take place, literally, as therein laid down, then it is utterly impossible to prove from the Bible that there ever will be a resurrection; because the same arguments that would prove these resurrections mystical or figurative, would prove the same thing with equal force respecting any other passage of the Bible which speaks of a resurrection, and

so the Bible doctrine of a resurrection becomes a mere figure, and all vanishes into mysticism. Such opinions I discard.

It is said, I know, that if this first resurrection is literal, none but martyrs will then be raised. This is to me a strange position. (1.) All who have been beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, (2.) all who have not worshipped the beast or his image, or received his mark, are to live and reign with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection. The rest of the dead live not again till the thousand years are finished. Who is the beast? According to Daniel, *the secular power*, or any power that attempts to control the world for its own

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purposes, in opposition to Christ, who only has a right to rule. Mark of the beast then is evidently the lust of power. It seems plain to my mind, therefore, that those who do not worship the beast, or his image, are those who submit to Christ; and that those who do not wear the mark of the beast, are those who have put away all lust for power, and laid their entire being at the foot of the cross. I suppose, therefore, that all who have said we *will* have Christ to reign over us, will live and reign with Him a thousand years; that this is the first resurrection; that the "Lord my God shall come, *and all the saints with him*," (Zech. xiv. 5,) at that time, and enjoy their millennium together; while "the rest of the dead, (the wicked,) live not again till the thousand years are finished."

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

I believe that "when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations, Gog and Magog, in the four quarters of the earth." I believe this Gog and Magog to be "the rest of the dead," who "live not again until the thousand years are finished"-that is, all the wicked; that these

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will then go up on all the breadth of the earth; *i. e.*, will then be raised from the dead and compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; that fire will come down from God out of heaven and devour them; that the devil that deceived them will be cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are, and will be tormented day and night forever and ever; and that this is the second death.

I believe these things because "thus saith the Lord," in the twentieth chapter of Revelation, and because I know of no shadow of a reason for calling them mysticisms. The opinion that they are mysticisms, I believe to be one of those groundless traditions of men, by which the commandment of God is made of none effect. I believe that the doctrine of a first and second resurrection was taught by Christ, in John v. 28, 29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in the which all that are in their 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." I find, on examination, that the Greek preposition, *eis*, which in this passage is twice translated, unto, might with equal propriety have been translated, at, and then the passage would have been plain, fully harmonizing with the twentieth chapter of Revelation. I believe, therefore, that Christ meant to teach, that all who are in their

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graves shall be raised; those who have done good, *at* the resurrection of life-those who have done evil, *at* the resurrection of damnation.

II. How will Christ dispose of the righteous and the wicked, who shall be found on the earth, at the time of His coming?

I believe, from the testimony of Paul, in I. Thess. iv. 14-18, that when Christ comes, bringing all that sleep in Jesus with him,-that is, all the saints,-the dead in Christ will rise; that all God's people, who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air-and so shall ever be with the Lord. I believe that all the righteous, according to *Paul's* testimony in 1 Cor. xv. 52, 54, will

then, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, be changed from corruption to incorruption, from mortal to immortality, and be caught up with the saints, then raised immortal from their graves. I believe, however, that no such change will then pass upon the bodies of the wicked who are alive at Christ's coming; but then will be fulfilled that fearful prediction of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He declared, in the seventeenth chapter of Luke, shall be fulfilled "in the day when the Son of man is revealed." "I tell you, in that night, there shall be two in one bed, the one shall be taken and the other shall be left. Two shall be grinding together,

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the one shall be taken and the other left. Two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left." When Christ was asked-Where, Lord? "he said unto them, wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." That is-wheresoever the righteous and the wicked are together when the Son of man is revealed, there shall the righteous be changed to incorruption, and caught up, in the twinkling of an eye, to meet the Lord in the air, while the wicked shall be left.

I believe, with Malachi, the prophet, that the "day" will then have come, "that shall burn as an oven, and the proud and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up," saith the Lord, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." I can have no fellowship with any interpretation of Scripture, that can make such a declaration, enforced with "thus saith the Lord," to be a mere figure. I believe that, as truly as the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire and set forth as an example, so truly will all the wicked of the earth be thus destroyed, in fulfilment of the prediction of Isaiah xxxiii. 12. "The *people* shall be as the burnings of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire." Then also, in fulfilment of Jer. xxv. 33, "The slain of the Lord shall be from one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the

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earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground." Then, also, will be fulfilled

the prediction of Ezekiel, (xx. 47, 48,)-"Say to the forest of the south, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree; the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. And all flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it; it shall not be quenched." The prophet continues, "Ah, Lord God, they say of me doth he. not speak parables." Thus even now do the wicked think to escape the force of God's threatenings by calling them parables. But they will learn that the declaration, "thus saith the Lord," is no figure of speech; that the fearful threatenings thus sanctioned, will have a complete fulfilment. At the same time will be fulfilled the words of Daniel, (vii. 9, 10, 11 verses,)-"The Ancient of Days will sit; his throne the fiery flame; his wheels burning fire; a fiery stream issuing from before him; then will the beast be slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Thus it will be seen that "in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, the wine is red, it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the same; but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out and drink them."

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(Psalm lxxv. 8.) Then, as declared by Hosea, (iv. 3,) "shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field and with the fowls of heaven; and the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away." Then, according to Joel, "shall there be a noise of chariots; on the tops of the mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained; all faces shall gather blackness." (Joel ii. 5, 6.) Then, as predicted by Amos, "the Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither." Then will he "send a fire into the house of Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad; a fire upon the wall of Gaza, which shall devour the palaces, thereof; a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof; a fire upon Teman, which shall devour

the palaces of Bozrah; a fire upon the wall of Rabbah, which shall devour the palaces thereof; a fire upon Moab, that shall devour the palaces of Kirioth; and a fire upon Judah, that shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem." Then, according to Obadiah, "shall the house of Jacob be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for

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the Lord hath spoken it." Then, also, will the word of the Lord, by Micah, be fulfilled-"For behold the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and he will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place."

Then, as foretold by Nahum, shall "the mountains quake at him and the hills melt, and the earth be burnt at his presence, yea the world, and all that dwell therein." Then, also, according to the vision of Habakkuk, will "God come from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran, and will behold and drive asunder the nations, and the everlasting mountains be scattered, and the perpetual hills bow, and the tents of Cushan be in affliction, and the curtains of the land of Midian tremble." Then, also, the words of Zephaniah will be realized: "I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the Lord. I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of heaven and the fishes of the sea, and the stumbling-blocks with the wicked. Therefore, wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured in the fire of my

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jealousy." Then, also, shall come to pass the words of the Lord by Haggai: "I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall

come down, every one by the sword of his brother." Then, as by Zechariah foretold, "This shall be the plague wherewith the Lord shall smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem, (i. e., all who have persisted in their opposition to Christ,) their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouths." That will be the day, foretold by Malachi, "that shall burn as an oven, and the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."

Thus I have found in every one of the prophets except Jonah, an express declaration respecting the destruction of the wicked from off the earth. Nearly all the prophets speak of fire as the agent of that destruction.

My object has been to cite a single passage only from each writer of sacred prophecy. Those who will search the prophets, will find their declarations on this fearful subject exceedingly

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numerous. Moses, and the writers of the Psalms, speak of the same dreadful day. Thus God speaks by Moses in Deut. xxxii.: "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction." The same destruction is several times repeated in the same chapter. So also in Psalm xxiv. 16: "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." Ps. 1. 22: "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver." Ps. xcvi. 3: "A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about." A single passage from Job xxi. 30: "The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath." This also is the time foretold by Christ, in his interpretation of the parable of the tares of the field. Matt. xiii. 40, 41, 42, 43: "As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so

shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire;

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there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear let him hear." This, let it be remembered, is not a parable, but the interpretation of a parable; and, therefore, will be literally fulfilled. At that time, as Paul declared to the Thessalonians, "will the Lord Jesus 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." This is the overthrow of Babylon, set forth in the Revelation of John. Thus will be fulfilled what is written in Isaiah xiii. 9: "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."

Thus, my brother, I believe that when Christ shall come, he will raise the righteous dead, and change the righteous living from corruption to incorruption, and that then all the righteous will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and be evermore with the Lord. I believe that when Christ has gathered his elect from the four corners of the earth, all the wicked will be destroyed by fire, as the wicked of old by a flood; and thus, according to Ps. xxxvii. 20,

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"the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume, into smoke shall they consume away." That thus, according to Prov. ii. 22, "the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it."

III. What will Christ do with the world, when he shall have caught up the righteous to himself in the air, and burned up the wicked?

I believe, according to Peter, that then "the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." 2 Pet. iii. 10. That, according to Isaiah xxxiv. 9, "the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch." I shall not cite other passages on this point, because all who profess to believe the Bible, admit that this earth is to be destroyed by fire.

IV. What are we to expect after the destruction of the earth by fire? Peter tells us, in his second epistle, (iii. 13,) what to expect: "Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The promise to which Peter here refers, is in Isa. lxv. 17: "For behold I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Also Isa. lxvi. 22: "For as the new heavens and

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the new earth which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain."

I believe that in this new earth will be fulfilled the promises which God made respecting Christ. Luke i. 30-33: "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." God said to David, by Nathan, (2 Sam. 7-16,) "Thine house, and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever." In Jer. xxxiii. 17, we read, "For thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." So also in Isa. ix. 6, 7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it

with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

Christ cannot have an endless dominion

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in this world, for it is to pass away. The throne of David cannot here be established forever-nor can the Son of David here sit on that throne forever. But in the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, all these promises of God may have a literal fulfilment. That they will then and there be fulfilled, I am perfectly assured.

Again; in the new earth, and there only, can the promises be fulfilled which God has made to the righteous. It was said to Daniel, (vii. 18,) "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." Verse 27: "And the kingdom, and the 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." Nothing is plainer than that the saints cannot "possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever," in this world. In the new earth they may, and most certainly will; as God is true. In that new earth will be fulfilled what is written in Ps. xxxvii.: "The righteous shall inherit the land, *and dwell therein forever.*" There "the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." There "those that wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth." There "such as be blessed of Him shall inherit the earth." There "those

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that wait on the Lord and keep his way, shall be exalted to inherit the land." There, according to Prov. ii. 21, "the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it." There, too, shall they enjoy the beatitude spoken of by Christ: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." It is the new earth which "the righteous, the meek, shall

inherit, and dwell therein forever, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace." That is the kingdom of God, and there "the pure in heart shall see God." There "the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it." Prov. ii. 22. There, in that earth, shall be fulfilled Ps. xxxvii. 10: "For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be, yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place and it shall not be." There, while the Lord "forsaketh not his saints, but preserveth them forever, the seed of the wicked shall be cut off." Ps. xxxvii. 28. There, those who were (Heb. xi.) "as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable; who 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

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on the earth," will find all these promises fulfilled. They declared plainly, "that they sought a country, a better country, even a heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, and hath prepared for them a city." In that new earth they will have it. There the promise to Abraham, that he shall be heir of the world, will be fulfilled to him, and to all who are his seed through the righteousness of faith. There the father of the faithful will forever inherit the Canaan in which he has never yet possessed a place on which to set his foot.

V. I believe that the Bible places a great amount of clear and striking evidence before us, that the accomplishment of all these great and mighty things is near, even at the doors.

This evidence lies before my own mind in the following form:

I find that the prophecies of Daniel were given with the plain design, as it seems to me, of setting forth a connected chain of events from a given period to the end of *this* world, and the setting up of Christ's eternal kingdom of glory. This chain of events is first given us in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. (Dan. ii.) He saw an image with head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay with the ten toes. This vision was made known to

Daniel by that God in heaven who revealeth secrets. The head of gold, was the Babylonian or Chaldean kingdom; the breast and arms of silver, was another inferior kingdom that should arise after the first; the belly and thighs of brass, another third kingdom that should bear rule over all the earth. Then a fourth kingdom should arise, as strong as iron, to break in pieces and bruise; to be at length, in a state of partial weakness, in a condition represented by ten toes; i. e., divided into ten portions, or kingdoms: "And in the days of these kings (or kingdoms) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom that 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 shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break 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." That this was a chain of events reaching from Nebuchadnezzar to the end of all worldly kingdoms, and the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom, seems to my mind as plain as a sunbeam; and equally plain to my mind is the fact, *that these events have all transpired*, in the exact order laid down in the prophecy, except the last; and that, consequently,

all that we have now future, as predicted in this prophecy, is that the stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, grind the kingdoms of this world to powder, that they may be blown away as chaff; and become itself a great mountain, and fill the whole earth. The Chaldean kingdom, which was the first, the Medo-Persian kingdom, which was the second, the Macedonian or Grecian kingdom, which was the third, and the Roman kingdom, which was the fourth, have all arisen and long since passed away, with the exception of the last form of the fourth or Roman kingdom, which was to continue in the condition represented by the ten toes, until the setting up of the everlasting kingdom of God. For, "In the days of these kings (or kingdoms) shall the God of heaven set up a

kingdom which shall never be destroyed." This last form of the Roman kingdom, as all know, or may learn from history, has now been in existence more than thirteen hundred and sixty years; and yet in the days of these kingdoms will the God of heaven set up His kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. The toes of that great image have already existed in their dissevered state longer than the whole image before them, and the evidence to my mind is forcible, that they must soon become powder, under the stone cut from the mountain without hands, and be blown away; giving place to God's kingdom that shall never be destroyed.

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In the first year of Belshazzar, Daniel had a vision; in which were placed before him a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a fourth beast dreadful and terrible, with great iron teeth, and ten horns, three of which were at length plucked, and their place occupied by a single horn, having eyes like a man, and a mouth speaking great things. Then the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, with garment white as snow, and hair like pure wool, and throne like fiery flame, and wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issuing forth from before Him; the beast was slain at length, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame; when one, like the Son of man, came, to whom was given dominion and glory and a kingdom; an everlasting dominion that should not pass away, and a kingdom not to be destroyed-with whom the saints of the Most High should take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom, forever, even forever and ever. Daniel was then told that these great beasts were four kings (or kingdoms) which should arise out of the earth previous to the establishment of the kingdom of God. We have, therefore, before us, in Daniel's vision, the same chain of events as in the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, with some additional particulars respecting the fourth or Roman kingdom. The figure is now ten horns of a beast, instead of ten toes of an image. The representations are parallel to

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this point. Now Daniel saw three horns or kingdoms, into which the Roman kingdom had been divided, giving place to a single

horn or kingdom, that should speak great words against the Most High, and wear out the saints of the Most High, and have them given into his hand, until time, times, and the dividing of time; when the judgment should sit, and his dominion be taken away; and the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whom all dominions shall serve and obey. This, Daniel said, should be the end of the matter.

Now that this chain of events, with all these additional particulars respecting the fourth beast, have had a literal fulfilment, except the giving of the kingdom to the saints, there is not in my mind one shadow of a doubt. Three Roman kingdoms were subverted, according to the representation of three horns plucked up; and upon their foundation was established the papal power,-the horn that had eyes, and a mouth speaking great things; and he has worn out the saints of the Most High, and had them in his hand during time, times, and the dividing of time.

I believe that the Herulian, the Vandalian, and the Ostrogothic, three of the original Roman kingdoms, were subverted, and that

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then, by decree of Justinian, the Bishop of Rome became head of all the churches, in the year 538. This was the commencement of papal power, and since that time the pope has worn out the saints of the Most High, and had them in his hand, until, according to the Religious Encyclopedia, "it has been computed that fifty millions have suffered martyrdom by his authority." I believe that the time, times, and dividing of time, should be reckoned, as a year, two years, and a half year, making 1260 days, reckoning 12 months in a year, and 30 days in a month; and that each of these days was designed to denote a year; so that time, times, and the dividing of time includes 1260 years. From 538, when the power of the pope commenced by decree of Justinian, 1260 years would terminate in 1798. I believe that in February of that year the pope was taken prisoner by Berthier the commander of a French army, and carried captive into France, where he died; that that, therefore, was the

termination of the time, times, and dividing of time. Since that time there has been an attempted resuscitation of papal power; but the saints have never since that time been in the hands of that power,-but protestantism, contrary to the will of the pope, has been tolerated in all the kingdoms over which he formerly had sway.

I believe, therefore, that this vision of Daniel was designed to set forth a connected

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chain of events, from the time of Belshazzar, to the final end of all worldly kingdoms, and the full establishment of the everlasting kingdom of God, and that this chain of predictions has had an unbroken fulfilment, with the single exception of the coming of the Son of man with the clouds of heaven, to take His everlasting dominion and glory and kingdom, giving the body of the beast to the burning flame. I believe, therefore, that all we have now to look for, is this one mighty event, that shall make that chain of predictions complete. And hence, I believe that it is near, even at the doors.

In the third year of Belshazzar, Daniel had another vision, of a ram with two horns, and a he-goat with one horn, that brake the horns of the ram and cast him to the ground, and stamped upon him. But the horn of the goat was at length broken, and four notable horns came up, in its stead, toward the four winds of heaven. Out of one of these came up another little horn, which waxed great, even to the host of heaven, and cast down some of the host to the ground and stamped upon them; and magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and took away the daily sacrifice, and cast down the place of the sanctuary, and received an host against the daily sacrifice, and cast down the truth to the ground, and practised, and prospered. The events of this vision, Daniel was told, should transpire within two thousand and

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three hundred days; at the end of which the sanctuary should be cleansed. By this cleansing, I understand the burning of the beast, and the establishment of God's everlasting kingdom of

righteousness; because I find nothing else set forth in these visions, which corresponds with this idea of a cleansing.

In this vision are set forth some other particulars, in the chain of events, reaching from a given period to the end of all earthly dominion, and the commencement of Christ's everlasting reign. We are not left to conjecture here, but are plainly told, that the ram with two horns is the kings of Media and Persia; the rough goat the king of Grecia; the horn between his eyes the first king, which should be broken, and four stand up for it, which should be four kingdoms that should stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. From one of these should come up a little horn, etc. The Medo-Persian kingdom has had its day. The Grecian kingdom, under Alexander, has arisen, been divided into four; viz., Syria, Persia, Egypt, and Macedonia; from the last of which came up this little horn, which waxed great, cast down stars, magnified itself against the prince of the host, took away the daily sacrifice, cast down the place of the sanctuary, received an host against the daily sacrifice, practised, and prospered, casting truth to the ground. This little horn seems to my mind

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to include the whole Roman power, pagan and papal. That power arose on the west of the four parts of the original Grecian empire; it cast down the Jews, the host; it magnified itself against Christ, the prince of the host; it took away daily pagan sacrifices, and set up papal abominations; cast down truth to the ground, practised and prospered. Opposers to this truth of Christ's near approach, object that the horn spoken of in this vision was Mahomet. But this horn was to arise from one portion of the Grecian empire; whereas Mahomet arose in Arabia, which never was a part of the Grecian empire. We must therefore look for the fulfilment of this vision, to the history of the Roman powers. All the events of this vision, therefore, seem, to my mind, to have been most plainly fulfilled. All these events were to cover a period of two thousand and three hundred days. Daniel was told to shut up the vision, since it should be for many days. He fainted, and was sick certain days, and then

arose and did the king's business, but was astonished at the vision, none understanding it.

What did he not understand? He had been repeatedly made to understand the succession of kingdoms, which should arise and pass away, previous to the coming of Christ. It seems plain to me, that what he did not understand was the length of the period denoted by the twenty three hundred days,

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at the termination of which the sanctuary should be cleansed. Accordingly, in the first year of Darius, Daniel set his face to seek the Lord God, by prayer and supplication, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes; when one was sent to give him skill and understanding; and he was told that from the going forth of the decree to build Jerusalem unto the cutting off of Messiah, there should be seventy weeks. Seven weeks the city was in building-threescore and two weeks after that, Christ was first set forth by the preaching of John, and, at the end of the remaining week, was cut off. What could Daniel understand, or what may we understand, from all this? It was given evidently to enable him to understand what remained unravelled of his previous vision. Hence it was said to him, "Understand the matter and consider the vision."

The matter is illustrated to my own mind in the following way. An architect draws the plan of a building, and upon the margin of the sheet he places a scale and says,-an inch to a foot; by which we understand that a building, erected after that plan, would have as many feet in length, breadth, and height as the plan has inches of length, breadth and height. A geographer draws a map, and places a scale in the margin, and writes,-an inch to a mile. By which we understand that the territory described upon the map, extends as many miles in length

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and breadth as there are inches in the length and breadth of the map.

Now Daniel had had repeatedly placed before his mind a chain of events reaching to the end of time; until at length the inquiry was made, "How long shall be the vision?" etc. And he was told,

unto twenty-three hundred days. He did not then understand it; but afterwards one was sent to give him skill and understanding; and, to do this, placed before his mind the seventy weeks from the going forth of the decree to build Jerusalem to the cutting off or crucifixion of Messiah. Now we learn that that decree to build Jerusalem went forth in the days of Artaxerxes, 457 years before the Christian era; and that 33 years after this, Messiah was crucified, making in all 490 years from the going forth of that decree to the crucifixion; i. e., precisely as many years as there are days in seventy weeks. Now I have a scale of the time comprised in these visions of Daniel: a day to a year. 2300 days, then, is twenty-three hundred years. Daniel was directed to commence his reckoning at the going forth of the decree to build Jerusalem. That was 457 years before Christ. Besides that 457 years there are needed 1843 years to complete the 2300, at the end of which the whole plan of these visions terminates, and the chain of events must be completed by the cleansing of the sanctuary with the flaming fire of the Ancient of Days, and the establishment of

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the everlasting kingdom of God. I know not, therefore, how to avoid the conviction, that it is mathematically demonstrated, that the year 1843 will be the winding-up of all these mighty events; the coming of Christ, to raise the righteous dead, clothe the righteous living with immortality, burn up the wicked after the example of Sodom and Gomorrah, purify the earth by fire, establish his own everlasting kingdom of righteousness therein, and give it, an everlasting inheritance, into the possession of His saints.

The question may be asked, What will you do, if this calculation fails? I reply, I will conclude that there is some undiscovered mistake; but fully believing that the end of all things is indeed at hand, I will endeavor to be sober and watch unto prayer, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." But since not one link in this mighty chain of predictions has hitherto failed of its full accomplishment, it seems to me that he must be well nigh a miracle of unbelief, who, after examining the subject, can doubt with regard to the full

accomplishment of the great and glorious winding-up of this divine drama.

I believe that all the remaining events, set forth in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, are so many additional particulars in the grand chain of predictions, designed to shed still more light toward the close, that none living

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at this fearfully interesting period *need* mistake as to what is at hand; but that all these predictions have been fulfilled, in the history of the ten Roman kingdoms, closing up with a strikingly plain account of the career of Bonaparte, who, within the recollection of vast multitudes now living "came to his end and none helped him." Dan. xi. 45.

The 12th chapter of Daniel speaks of the standing up of Michael our Prince; a time of trouble, which Christ said for the elect's sake should be short, at which time God's people shall be delivered, even every one found written in the book. They that be wise shall then shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever. Daniel was then to shut up the book, and seal it until the time of the end, when many should run to and fro and knowledge should increase. That time has come; knowledge is increasing respecting Christ's coming; the wise are beginning to understand, but the wicked understand not. Is the question asked, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" The man in linen, on the waters of the river of time, lifts his hand, and swears by Him that liveth forever and ever, that it shall be for a time, times and an half; and this period I believe has passed, as I have shown, and we are just eking out the time of the end, while knowledge

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is increasing among the wise, to prepare them for the final catastrophe. "Then said Daniel, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" "Go thy way Daniel," was the reply,—"the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end," when "many shall be purified and made white and tried, and the wise shall (then) understand, but none of the wicked shall understand." And from

the time the daily [pagan sacrifice in the Roman kingdom] shall be taken away, [which occurred in the year 508,] and the [papal] abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days, [i. e., years,] to the end of that abominable power, 1798, which commenced 538 and continued 1260 years, to 1798, when the pope was carried captive. "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh *to the* thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." What 1335 days? The remainder of the 2300, (as it seems to me,) from 508, when the daily sacrifice was removed, which 1335 years from that period, will terminate, with the 2300 from the going forth of the decree to build Jerusalem, [457 before Christ] in 1843. "But go thy way Daniel, for thou shalt rest [i. e., die] and stand in thy lot [i.e., be raised] at the end of the days." Such, my brethren, are my full convictions respecting the prophecies of Daniel, and the termination of the periods therein set forth.

Here I leave the whole matter, with myself,

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my household, my all, in the hands and on the heart of Him whom I fully expect soon to see in His glory in the clouds of heaven. O that the wicked would "turn to the strong hold while prisoners of hope!"

I will now, my brother, give you, as briefly as possible, my convictions respecting some portions of the New Testament, which aid in making the whole subject plain to my own mind. Both John the Baptist and Christ began their ministry, by saying, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." I believe that the kingdom to which they referred, was that set forth by Daniel, which is to be established when all the kingdoms of this world are ground to powder and blown away as chaff. The question may arise, how could they say, with any consistency, "that kingdom is at hand," when more than eighteen centuries have past, and yet it has not come?

Peter, when speaking of the approach of these mighty events, says, "Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one

day." In six days God completed the creation, and rested on the seventh, and said to the Israelites, "ye shall keep my sabbaths for they are a *sign* unto you."

Each of these days, I believe to be a sign of a thousand years, and that God will be

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six thousand years in completing his new creation in Christ Jesus, and that the seventh thousand years, will be the rest that remaineth for the people of God. I believe that the chronology which Miller has drawn from the Bible, gives us the true age of the world, and that the year 1843 will complete six thousand years from the creation, and that from that time we may expect the full establishment of God's kingdom and the commencement of that blessed Sabbath of rest. We know that Christ was in the world during the fifth thousand years. Accordingly we hear him say, "I cast out devils, and I do cures, to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." That is, I convert sinners and fit them for heaven this thousand years, and the next thousand, and at the commencement of the third thousand years from this time, I shall be perfected in my kingdom. Now, as a thousand years was with Christ as one day, he could say the kingdom of heaven is at hand, with the same consistency that we could say, on the last day but one of the week, the Sabbath is at hand. It was with Christ, when he was on the earth during the fifth thousand years, the last day but one previous to his great Sabbath, or setting up of his kingdom: with perfect consistency therefore, he declared "the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Paul, having written to the Thessalonians of the time when the Lord Jesus shall be

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revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, to give his troubled people rest, and to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel, says subsequently, "that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, whom the the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall

destroy with the brightness of his coming." All admit that this is the pope. The falling away has come; the man of sin has been revealed, and the saints of the Most High have been given into his hand, during the time, times, and an half, or twelve hundred and sixty years, from the year 538 to 1798; and since that time he has been being consumed with the spirit of Christ's mouth, [the influences of the Holy Ghost among men,] and it only remains that he be destroyed in the flaming fire of Christ's coming; or, according to Daniel, that "the beast be slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." I can find no intimation here of a thousand years millennium previous to the coming of Christ.

John, in the Revelation, 9th chapter, saw locusts, in shape like unto horses prepared unto battle, with crowns of gold on their heads, their faces as the faces of men, and their hair as the hair of women, with breastplates of iron, their sound as of chariots and many horses rushing to battle, with tails

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like unto scorpions, and stings in their tails, and power to hurt men five months; (150 days, i. e., years.) He saw afterwards the four angels [or powers] loosed from the river Euphrates, prepared for an hour, a day, a month, and a year, to slay the third part of men. He saw horses, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire and jacinth and brimstone, with fire and smoke and brimstone issuing out of their mouths. I believe that, in this ninth chapter of Revelation, we have a striking description of the Turkish or Ottoman power, and the time stated that that power was to continue.

The Turk, on horseback,-with his yellow turban, and long hair, and dreadful sabre, and iron breast-plate, and fire-arms, which were invented by the Turks,-well fills up the description of the locusts, which were like horses prepared unto battle, with golden crowns, faces of men, hair of women, tails of scorpions; and horsemen with fire and smoke and brimstone proceeding out of their mouths. The time of the continuance of this power, was to hurt men five months, and to kill them an hour, a day, a month,

and a year. This describes what the Turks or Mahommedans have done to the Greeks. They first hurt that people, by repeated inroads of their armed horsemen, for the space of a hundred and fifty years, and then took possession of Greece, and put to death whom they would, for an hour, a day, a

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month, and a year. One year, 360 days, or years, as time is usually computed; one month, thirty days, or years; one day, or year; and one hour, i. e. one twenty-fourth of a day or year, one twenty-fourth of 360-fifteen days. For the duration of this power then, we have 150+360+30+1 years and fifteen days; in all 541 years fifteen days. I believe that this Ottoman or Mahommedan power commenced its work upon the Greeks, on the 27th of July, 1299, and that the Turkish independence came to an end by being surrendered into the hands of the Christian powers, England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, who undertook to settle the difficulties between the Turkish Sultan and Mehemet Ali of Egypt. This surrender of an independence which the Sultan could not maintain, evidently took place on the 11th of August, 1840, precisely 541 years and 15 days from the 27th of July, 1299. That power, therefore, has had its five months,-its hour, and day, and month, and year,-and is in fact no more. I believe, therefore, that the second wo, under the sixth trumpet, is past, and that the third wo cometh quickly-when the seventh angel shall sound, and the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever. I believe, therefore, that the last predicted event, previous to the sounding of the last trumpet, and the pouring out of the last wo, has

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transpired, and that we are now to look for the grand consummation of all that the prophets have foretold:-"For in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall *begin* to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared unto his servants, the prophets;" and that event was to come quickly, after the completion of the second wo, under the sounding of the sixth trumpet.

I am aware that the slaying of the two witnesses, is regarded by many as an event yet future; but I cannot avoid receiving the plain declaration, in Rev. xi. 3, 4, that the two witnesses are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the whole earth; nor the declaration, in the fourth chapter of Zechariah, that these olive trees and candlesticks are the word of the Lord, etc., and consequently must have been the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. These witnesses of God were to prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth, and in the end of their testimony were to be slain, and remain unburied three years and a half, and then be caught up to heaven. They began their testimony in sackcloth, as I fully believe, when they were taken from the people by the pope, whose power commenced in 538, and their 1260 years would then terminate with the papal supremacy, in 1798. I believe that at that time they were

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cast out and burned in the streets of France, which spiritually was called Sodom and Egypt, for its lust and infidelity, when that nation abrogated marriage, and declared there was no God, and that death was an eternal sleep; and that, after about three years and a half from these events, they have been caught up and circulated all over the earth, and printed in many languages, as never before; which events I cannot but regard as a striking fulfilment of these predictions. I am, therefore, wholly unable to avoid the conviction, that the great events of prophecy are all fulfilled,-except those which are to transpire at the time of the setting up of God's great and glorious and everlasting kingdom. It may be said "of that day and hour knoweth no man." True; but Christ has both permitted and directed us to know when it is *near, even at the doors*; though the day and hour is known to God only. It is also declared in Daniel, that "the *wise* shall understand."

But it may still be asked, how comes it to pass, that none but the comparatively ignorant have gained this wisdom, and that all these new things have been at once communicated to them?

I will here just quote Isa. xxix. 10-12: "For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the

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seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for I am not learned." Thus, both the learned and unlearned have found the Bible a sealed book, while those who have humbly sought wisdom of God, have gained it. Even Christ's own immediate disciples understood not the things of his kingdom, until he opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and it is only those now, who will confess their need of being thus enlightened, and will take their places, with the spirit of the little child, at Christ's feet, and there cry after knowledge, and lift up their voice for understanding, seeking her as silver, and searching for her as for hid treasure—who will gain the wisdom that cometh from above. Others may be wise in their own conceits, but their wisdom will be foolishness with God, and the things of God's Spirit will seem as foolishness unto them.

But I wish just to show, that the truths in which I have expressed my belief in this communication, are neither new nor confined to ignorant men.

Cotton Mather, who died in Boston, February 13, 1728, was a learned man, as all

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who are acquainted with his history will admit. The Religious Encyclopedia says, that Dr. Chauncy remarked, that Thomas Prince, formerly pastor of the Old South Church, Boston, was the most learned man in New England, except Cotton Mather. I have now before me a book, the title-page of which reads as follows:-

"The Life of the very reverend and learned Cotton Mather, D. D. and F. R. S., late pastor of the North Church, in Boston, who

died February 13, 1727-8. By Samuel Mather, M. A. Printed for Samuel Gerrish, in Cornhill, 1729."

On the 140th page of this work, I read as follows:

"As it is well known that Dr. Mather was well acquainted with the sacred prophecies, on which he formerly writ and printed his thoughts; so it may not be amiss to inform my reader, that, in several things, relating to the prophecies, he saw cause to alter his mind-particularly concerning the second coming of Christ, the conflagration, the new heavens and new earth, and the calling of the Jews. I will here write those sentiments of these things, of which the Doctor, just before he died, had a firm belief, from a strict inquiry, long study, and much prayer; and as near as I can, I will express his sentiments in his own words, in the following assertions.

"1. The second coming of the Lord, will

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be at and for the destruction of the man of sin, and the extinction of the Roman monarchy, under the papal form of it. He thought that, although wise men have interpreted our Savior's coming in the clouds of heaven, and the brightness of his appearance, as if it meant anything besides His personal coming, herein they spoke foolishly and unaccountably. For as their interpretations leave us destitute of any proof that our Lord will ever come at all, so they go very far towards a trespass on the third commandment.

"2. The conflagration described by the oracles of God, in strong terms, and which we are warned of *by the mouth* of all the prophets: this conflagration will be at the second coming of the Lord. To make the Petrine conflagration, signify no more than the laying of Jerusalem and her daughter in ashes; and to make the new heavens and the new earth to signify no more than the church state of the gospel;-these are shameful hallucinations. And as for the new earth, before the arrival of which, no man can reasonably expect happy times for the church of God upon earth, it is the greatest absurdity to say that it will take place before the Petrine conflagration; and there is no prospect of arguing to any purpose, with such as can talk so very ridiculously.

"3. Upon the conflagration, the glorious God will create new heavens and a new earth.

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"5. The process of judgment on the sheep and goats, in the 25th chapter of Matthew, has not one of the raised from the dead concerned in it; but is a quick division and decision, made by our Lord among the Christians who cry for mercy, when they see the fire of God ready to seize upon them, determining who shall be caught up to meet the Lord, and who shall be left to the perdition of ungodly men, in the flames before them; and there shall not one ungodly man be left living in the world.

"8. The new heavens, in conjunction with the new earth under the influence of it, is that heavenly country which the patriarchs looked for. When the great God promised them that he would be their God and bless them, they understood it of his bringing them into his deathless and sinless world. They who expect the rest, promised to the church of God upon earth, to be found anywhere but in the new earth, and they who expect any happy times for the church in a world that hath death and sin in it; these do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the kingdom of God.

"9. Such a conversion of the Israelitish nation, with a return to their ancient seats in Palestine, as many excellent persons in latter years (and among the rest himself) have been persuaded of; he now thought inconsistent with the coming of the Lord, and the burning of the world at the fall of

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Anti-Christ, before which fall nobody imagines that conversion.

"And, indeed, how is it consistent with the deep sleep in which the *Diluvium Ignis* [deluge of fire] must, as that of water did, surprise the world? The holy people of the prophecies is found among the Gentiles, the surrogate Israel. The New Testament seems to have done with a carnal Israel; the eleventh chapter to the Romans is greatly misunderstood, where we find all Israel saved by a filling up of the Gentiles; which we mistranslate the fulness of the Gentiles. The prophecies of the Old Testament, that seem to have an aspect upon such a nation, are either already accomplished unto

that nation, in the return from the Chaldean captivity; or they belong to that holy people, whom a succession to the piety of the patriarchs will render, what our Bible has taught us to call them, the Israel of God; but the final fulfilment of them all will be in the world to come, or the new heavens and the new earth, where God will dwell with men, and be their God. Of what advantage to the kingdom of God can the conversion of the Jewish nation be, any more than the conversion of any other nation, except we should suppose to remain upon the Jewish nation, after their conversion, something to distinguish them from the rest of the Christian believers? Now, to suppose this, would it not be to rebuild a partition wall that

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our Savior has demolished and abolished, which a Christian, one would think, would no sooner go to do, than to rebuild the fallen walls of Jericho?"

I will now give the views of Mather respecting the near approach of the time when all these things should be fulfilled,-just remarking, that if he had lived to see the actual overthrow of papal power in 1798, it would unquestionably have given much greater clearness and correctness, to his views on this point; while, at the same time, it will be seen what a learned and good man, who had made the prophecies his prayerful study, thought, more than a century ago, respecting the near approach of God's everlasting kingdom.

"10. By all just and fair computations, the twelve hundred and sixty years allowed for the Papal Empire, must be near, if not quite expired. By consequence, the one thousand, three hundred and thirty-five years, which bring the time of the end, when Daniel, with every other good man, is to rise and stand in his lot, are not likely to extend beyond the present century."

Such were the opinions of Cotton Mather, respecting the approach of that great and notable day of the Lord. He died in 1728. What would he have said, had he lived till 1828, and witnessed all the proofs of the approach of that time which have since been developed?

I will here insert a few extracts from Cotton Mather's preface to his work, entitled, "Directions for a candidate of the ministry," published in 1725.

"The second advent of the Lord Christ, which must be expected for the destruction of Anti-Christ, and perdition of that fourth empire, which he will abolish at his own illustrious coming, is next and immediately to be expected.

"But it is not to be wondered at, if there be very few who would believe such a preacher.

"For when the Lord shall come, he will find the world almost destitute of true and lively faith, and especially of faith in his coming; and when he shall descend, with his heavenly banners and angels, what else will he find, almost, but the whole church, as it were a dead carcass, miserably putrefied with the spirit and manners and endearments of the world." "When I should wish to stir up my brethren, who are in a deep sleep, with these messages and admonitions, to shake off this soft, and indeed lethargic and guilty slumber, I know that I shall appear to them a vain dreamer, a sort of Lot, and that they will treat me as one in jest or sport, and as a man in the falling sickness, seized with I know not what enthusiasm; and, that sleep may hold them in still more pleasing fetters, they will make use of as it were *sleepy medicines*, a diversity

of commentaries on certain prophecies as not yet fulfilled."

"But this word of God is in my mind like burning fire shut up in my bones: nor can I any longer forbear, but must again and again denounce this doom to the earth, sufficiently prepared for the fire, and a sorceress condemned to the flames.

"Yea, though some Nero should command me to be burned in the flames, I will not cease to preach *and foretel* with an earnest voice, the *dissolution, renewal* and *purification* of the world by fire.

"Speedily, with flaming fire, but who knows how soon? The Son of God, about to descend, will inflict vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not his gospel; but he will manifest his *kingdom in the earth*, which is to be possessed by our second and

heavenly Adam; and this we confess is ascertained to us by promise, but in another state, being after the resurrection.

"They indulge themselves in a vain dream, not to say insane, who think, pray, and hope, contrary to the whole sacred Scriptures, and sound reason, that the promised happiness of the church on earth, will be before the Lord Jesus shall appear in his kingdom.

"The rest of the saints, and the promised sabbath, and the kingdom of God, in which his will shall be done on earth as it is in

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heaven, and those great things of which God hath spoken by the mouths of his prophets, all prophesying as with one voice, all shall be confirmed by their fulfilment in the new earth, not in our defiled and accursed earth.

"This was the opinion of the primitive church, this *her piety* and the *ancient faith*.

"O Justin, I appeal to thee as a witness; in this faith all the orthodox unanimously consented in the primitive church.

"Very many, indeed, own, that when the Roman beast, which now deceives and enslaves the nations, shall be slain, the body of that beast is to be delivered to the burning fire, and therewith to be destroyed. But they augur that this fire will be altogether metaphorical, and rave of painted fires only—a wonder if not feigned also. A most vain surmise this! What! And even the second coming of the Lord will become, by and by, metaphorical also, and must be resolved, and vanish away into I know not what mystical dispensations! Away, with such dotings of drivellers.

"Scoffers they are, who think that all things are to continue as they were from the beginning of the creation, and fancy that they can lurk under their metaphors, and hide themselves, in the obscurities of figures, from the sight of Him who sitteth on the throne." "There are many good men, to be numbered, not indeed with scoffers, but yet with sleepers, and such as lull others to

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sleep, who by improper and excessive allegorizing, darken and injure the truth. Would that some Nepos might arise to confute these allegorists, before the event does it for them."

That Thomas Prince, pastor of the Old South Church, Boston, agreed with Cotton Mather, in his views of the prophetic writings, I have the following evidence:

The preface to the life of Mather, which I have before me, was written by Prince, who, according to Chauncy, was second in learning to none but Mather, in New England. The closing paragraph of the preface is as follows:

"And to say no more-I cannot think to wish a greater blessing in the present state of the prophetic system, than that the God of the spirits of all flesh, would, in my own dear country and every other, raise up numbers of such ministers as this, and prosper this superior example for the forming and animating of them; that they may burn and shine as he, and prepare the world for the most illustrious appearance of the great God our Savior Jesus Christ, that sun of righteousness-the boundless and flowing source of all the infinitely lower excellence, and fainter brightness, we in every place and age admire in others.

"Thomas Prince.

"Boston, February 27, 1728-9."

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I have also before me a course of lectures, by Joshua Spalding, minister of the gospel, at the Tabernacle in Salem, toward the close of the last century; which lectures were designed to set forth and establish that view of the second coming of Christ, in which I have expressed my belief in these pages. In an appendix to this work, I find testimony from the writings of Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, and a martyr, who was one of the auditors of John, the writer of the Revelations; and, also, from Iren us, bishop of Lyons, another martyr; and, also, from the writings of Justin Martyr, cotemporary with Iren us, that this view of Christ's second coming was held by the primitive church, and by them, and was received from those who were cotemporary with John, the disciple of Christ, and heard of him "What our Lord taught concerning those times."

I present these extracts from the writings of learned men, and this evidence of the opinions of the early Christians, not because I

think that the humblest disciple, with an honest heart, is not capable of learning from the Bible, through the teachings of the Spirit, all the truth which the Bible has revealed; but, with the hope of inducing some to examine the subject, who would not otherwise do it,-when they shall be made to know that great and good men, who have examined the subject, have come to the same convictions with the humble writer of

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these pages. We live in a day, when an individual who turns aside from the ordinarily received views of truth, is set down at once as a fanatic, a man not worthy of confidence; and when the expectation of a thousand years previous to Christ's coming, when the gospel of peace shall universally prevail, and men shall without tribulation enter into the kingdom of heaven, is fondly cherished by great multitudes, who call themselves by the name of Christ. It may do good to let them know that men of great piety, and prayer, and research, have been convinced that this expectation is groundless. For myself, I believe that the notion of a millennium before Christ's coming, to raise the righteous and destroy the wicked by fire, is a stratagem of the enemy, to lull the world into a sleep still more profound, so that Christ may indeed come, "in a day that they look not for him, and in an hour that they are not aware of." Even the church have consented together to put it off for more than a thousand years, when the whole testimony of Scripture shows it to be near, even at the doors. Paul says to the Thessalonians, "But ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." None need be in darkness, who will seek diligently for wisdom from above. I wish here to give thanks to God, for the benefit I have received, from the writings of William Miller; and others, who have recently

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written on this important, but greatly neglected subject. Mr. Miller I have never seen, but his writings have greatly enlightened my mind, for which I give God thanks, hoping that others may hereby be induced to read, and be, as I have been, greatly profited.

Yours, in the blessed hope of Christ's glorious appearing,
Charles Fitch.

Haverhill, November, 1841.

ADDRESS TO THE READER

Reader! have you attentively considered the truth presented in the foregoing pages? Are you prepared for the fearful events which God is about to bring to pass? Do you feel ready to see Christ in the clouds,-the heavens rolling together as a scroll, and passing away with a great noise,-the elements melting,-the earth and the works thereof burning,-all faces turned into paleness,-the dust of the earth becoming brimstone, and the streams pitch, and the land becoming burning pitch,-the people becoming as the burnings of lime, and like thorns cut up, being burned in the fire? "Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong in the day when God shall thus deal with thee?" "Thus saith the Lord God; howl ye, Wo, worth the day! for the day is near, even the day of the Lord is near." Ezekiel xxx. 2, 3.

Are you a minister of the gospel? Have the people of the land taken you from their coasts, and set you for a watchman over them? Have you been carefully watching

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that you might see when the sword was coming; and have you faithfully blown the trumpet, and warned the people? If not, when the wicked shall be taken away in his iniquity, his blood shall be required at thine hand. Are you joining in the delusive cry, "My Lord delayeth his coming?" and promising the world long centuries of unexampled and uninterrupted peace, when the mighty God declares, "My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured in the fire of my jealousy!" Your Lord "shall come in a day that you look not for him, and in an hour that you are not aware of."

Are you a man of wealth, hoarding the Lord's silver and gold, and leaving it to rust in your coffers, or squandering it upon your

lusts; when it is needed to spread abroad light and truth, and wake up a slumbering world, as the wrath that is coming upon them makes haste, that they may turn to the strong hold, while prisoners of hope? Then *weep* and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire; a witness that you have hid your Lord's talent, instead of faithfully appropriating it to

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arouse the perishing, and pull them out of the fire. O, I should be afraid to be a rich man, when Christ appears!

Are you an oppressor, keeping back by fraud, the hire of the laborers that have reaped down your fields? Remember, the cries of them that have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth,-and that his high command is, "Deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings." That fire will be kindled soon.

Are you a scoffer, saying, where is the promise of his coming? We are foretold that there shall be such as you in the last days. You stand as an evidence, that the end of all things is indeed at hand. Beware!

Are you a stupid, hardened sinner? "He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

Are you a worldly-minded professor of religion? Your worldliness will soon have an end. God grant that your own end may not be destruction.

Are you one that trembles as you think of the approaching terrors of the Lord? See! there is Christ, who died that you might live. Confess all your guilt, put away all your sins, throw yourself into his arms. "*He will in no wise cast you out.*" Take him, as he is of God, made unto you, *wisdom,*

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and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. Then fear not. Confess him as your Savior now, and he will confess you before his Father and the angels, when he appears. O, stay not,-haste,-haste, lest thou be consumed. Look not behind thee. Remember Lot's wife.

REMARKS on the TWENTY-FOURTH OF MATTHEW

Universalists have long labored hard to make themselves and others believe that the prophecies of Christ, in the 24th chapter of Matthew, were all fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem. This perversion of Scripture to their own destruction, has been confined chiefly to those whose particular business it is to lure the prey into the jaws of the devouring lion. But, recently, men of a better faith, for the purpose of avoiding the force of the awakening doctrine that the great and notable day of the Lord is at hand, have concluded to swallow this opiate, and recommend it, for the purpose of keeping themselves and others asleep. This is one of the methods now practised, to induce unwary souls to place confidence in the delusive declaration, "My Lord delayeth his coming."

The disciples were told by angels, at the time of the ascension, that that same Jesus should come, in like manner as he went up. John was told in the Revelation, "Behold, he cometh in clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and the kindreds of the earth shall wail because

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of him." So in Matthew xxiv. 30, 31: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Now if Christ did come at the destruction of Jerusalem, then he came as he went up into heaven; *i. e.*, he came in clouds; and

according to the Revelation, every eye saw him, and they which pierced him, and the kindreds of the earth wailed because of him.

In Isaiah xl. 5, it is written, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, *and all flesh shall see it together*; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

This is the only coming of Christ which the Bible anywhere brings to view, except his coming in his humiliation, in the days of his flesh. Of course, if Christ has come in the clouds, and every eye has seen him; if his glory has been revealed, and all flesh have seen it together, as the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, then it will be easy to show when and where.

But who saw Christ in the clouds of heaven, at the destruction of Jerusalem?

That God did pour out threatened judgments

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upon Jerusalem, at a particular time, is true; but there was no coming of Christ then, any more than at the flood, or the destruction of Sodom. Who saw him? We have no need to listen for a moment to those who say respecting Christ's coming, "Lo here, or lo there,"-for he has told us that it shall be "as the lightning from heaven." Until we see it, therefore, we may know that this event has not passed.

But, it will be asked, did not Christ say, "This generation shall not pass till *all* these things be fulfilled?" Certainly-and the generation of which Christ spake, has not passed, and will not pass, till he comes in the clouds of heaven, and every eye sees him.

The only question is, what did Christ mean by generation? Plainly, not the men then living, for it cannot be shown that an individual of that, or any other generation of that sort, to this day, has seen Christ in the clouds of heaven. It is said of Christ in Psalm xxii. 30, "a seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."

This, then, is the meaning of the text: "The generation of my spiritual seed shall not pass away from the earth, till all these things be fulfilled." Generation is used with like import in Psalm xxiv. 7, Psalm cxii. 2, I. Peter ii. 9.

Christ said also in one place, Matthew xvi.

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28, "There be some standing here that shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." They did not-for six days after, they saw him transfigured upon the mount, and there beheld the glory in which he will appear at his second coming. When we all behold him in that glory, as soon we shall, then we shall know that he has come.

C. F.