

# BIBLE SUBJECTS

FOR THE

## HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

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*"YE ARE NO MORE STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS, BUT FELLOW-CITIZENS  
WITH THE SAINTS, AND OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD."*

*Eph. ii. 19.*

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## THE LAND I LOVE.

My heart is onward bounding,  
Home to the land I love;  
Its distant vales and fountains  
My wishful passions move.  
Fain would my thirsting spirit  
Its living freshness breathe,  
And wearied soul find resting  
Its hallowed shades beneath.

No soil of nature's evil,  
No touch of man's rude hand,  
Shall e'er disturb around us  
That bright and blissful land.

The charms that woo the senses  
Shall be as bright as fair;  
For all, while breathing round us,  
Shall tell of JESUS there.

What light, when all its beaming  
Shall own HIM as the Sun!  
What music, when its breathing  
Shall bear HIS name along;  
No pause, no change of pleasure,  
No cloud to dim our view;  
The draught that lulls our thirsting  
Shall wake our thirst anew.

J. G. B.

## THE VESSEL.

"Filled in all the fulness of God."—EPHESIANS iii. 19.

"We learn in suffering what we teach in song."

"A few more breathings in this dull and oppressive element, then all will be health and buoyancy, strength and gladness, purity and peace."

Oh, is it come—the sweet and blessed calm,  
Foreseen and hoped for through those darksome years  
Of anguish and of dread? Here, here at last,  
I, a deep vessel in the shoreless sea  
Of thine own fulness, O eternal God!  
Filled in that fulness, find my prayers, my hopes,  
All, all fulfilled, and nothing more to crave.  
The bright reality, the thing itself,  
Transcends all thought, eclipses every hope;  
Dwelling in God, by God indwelt, I know  
Love in its fulness; life to me is bliss.  
All, all within, beneath, around, above,  
Speak but of Thee, and tell me what I am—  
The happiest of the happy! O thou peerless One!  
Great God revealed in flesh, the living link  
'Twixt Godhead and my soul! be thine the praise,  
The loving worship of a loving heart  
Rich in Thyself; for oh! however filled,  
Howe'er exalted, holy, undefiled,  
Whatever wealth of blessedness is mine,  
What am I, Lord? an emptiness, a nothing.  
Thou art my boast, in whom all fulness dwells  
Of the great Godhead, Thou whose name I bear,  
Whose life is mine, whose glory and whose bliss,  
All, all are mine.

E. D.

PROOFS FROM SCRIPTURE  
OF  
THE PRE-MILLENNIAL ADVENT.

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MY DEAR BROTHER,—The desire you have evinced to inquire impartially into the subject of our Lord's second advent, combined with the truly Christian kindness and courtesy you have invariably manifested in our recent conversations on this subject, emboldens me to address you thus, in the hope that, by the Lord's blessing, we may further prosecute the inquiry in such a manner, as ultimately to see eye to eye; and not only so, but likewise to see what the mind of God on the subject really is. Unity of judgment, to be desirable, must be unity in the truth. Diversity of sentiment is better than unity in error. Better one have the truth than neither; best of all, for all to see alike by all seeing aright. Never may we forget, however, that sweet and reconciling word in Phil. iii. 15, 16: "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything we be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." Practical union of heart and life,

as far as we are agreed, with patient forbearance of one another wherein we differ, is the course in which we may look to God to reveal to any of us that of which we are ignorant. *It is His* to reveal His own truth to His own children; still, brotherly intercourse is what He often uses for this end. O that we and all God's children might feel that we have no end to gain but to glorify Him by learning and doing His blessed will; and would that we all had more confidence in one another, as heirs together of the grace of life—members of the same family of love—learners in the same school of holy, gracious discipline and instruction!

Our last conversation was on the parables in Matt. xiii., more particularly on that of the wheat and tares. As to the interpretation of that parable, or rather, the sense in which we are to understand *our Lord's* interpretation of it, we were agreed in the following particulars:

First,—That the parable represents the state of things in the present dispensation.

Secondly,—That good and evil, the wheat and the tares, continue to be mixed together to the end of this present period or dispensation.

Thirdly,—That the harvest *is the end* of this age, period, or dispensation.

Fourthly,—That the period which follows, when the Son of man has gathered out of his kingdom all that offends, and those which do iniquity, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, is the millen-

nium, that period of universal holiness and happiness *on the earth* which all Christians are expecting.

Fifthly,—That the offenders are gathered out *at the harvest* and cast into a furnace of fire, and that this terrible judgment on the wicked is executed at that crisis by the instrumentality of the angels.

If I remember aright, you distinctly stated your concurrence in the above interpretation of the passage, but you objected to it as a proof of the pre-millennial advent, that the advent is not mentioned in the passage. Had time permitted, I should have rejoiced to have gone with you into the consideration of several passages which indisputably refer to and describe the same era or crisis as in this parable is termed “the harvest,” and in which it is distinctly stated that the advent or coming of Christ will then take place. Lack of time hindered this at our last interview; and as it may be that another may not take place soon, I am desirous in this communication to draw your attention to this point.

I would first explain a little the kind of proof which is gathered from thus comparing one part of Scripture with another. No one passage of Scripture contains all that is taught in Scripture. If any one verse, chapter, or even book of Scripture, contained all that is revealed in Scripture, the rest—that is, all the other verses, chapters, and books of Scripture—would be superfluous; and that, I am sure, you would be very far from saying. Indeed, no one could say this who believes the Scriptures to be the

Word of God. So, as to any given subject treated of in the Scriptures. It is not usually in any one passage of the Word that we can learn every thing that relates to the subject. On most topics of importance, we have instruction in many different passages ; one affording light on one part of the subject, another especially treating of some other branch of it ; and yet there must be marks of identity between the passages as to their general subject, or else we could never understand that they are different branches of the same theme, and therefore could not receive from them the instruction they contain. To illustrate this. We have not one account only, but four accounts of the crucifixion of Christ. Had these accounts been perfectly identical *as to all their details*, three of them would have been superfluous, except indeed as distinct testimonies to the fact ; though, even in this light, they would have been of little value, but for their characteristic differences in detail. And yet, if there had not been marks which infallibly identify them *as to their general subject*, they would have been equally unavailing. Nay, they would have tended to mislead ; for we might have supposed that they spoke of different persons, or of different eras in the life of the same person. But as it is, in the provident wisdom and goodness of God, they have enough *in common* to shew that it is the same event, viz. the crucifixion of Christ, which they narrate to us ; and yet *they differ so much in detail*, that one informs us of circumstances in that event



of which the others had left us ignorant. And it is only by a careful comparison of all, that we can learn all the circumstances of that solemn and important crisis in the history of our Redeemer. Thus, if I open John xviii. 6–8, I find a fact stated which is recorded by none of the other evangelists. If some one (acknowledging, of course, the authority of Scripture, and therefore of all the four Gospels) should dispute this fact, and allege that Matthew says nothing of it, and Mark says nothing of it, and Luke says nothing of it, how should I have to answer him? Clearly, by proving to him that John is speaking of the same blessed Person, and of the same solemn period in his history, and that *he states it*. I should have to remind him of the features common to all the four narratives, which identify them as to their general subject;—they all speak of the same persons, Jesus, his disciples, his betrayer, and the officers and others into whose hands he is betrayed. They all lay the scene in the same place, the garden of Gethsemane.\* They all speak of the same period, that immediately succeeding his conversation with the disciples during and after supper, and immediately preceding his examination before the high priest. They all relate other circumstances which occurred to those persons in the place and at the time specified, such as the cutting off the ear of

\* As to Luke's account and John's, however, I should have it to prove that it was Gethsemane, for the name is mentioned in neither Gospel. Yet who doubts it?

the high priest's servant by Simon Peter. Can any one doubt, who considers these things, that the general subject of John's narrative is the same as that of the other evangelists? And if so, it proves, that when John tells us that the officers went backward and fell to the ground, this circumstance did actually occur *at* that time, *in* that place, *to* those persons; and it does not in the least invalidate this proof to say that the other evangelists do not record the circumstance. I give this illustration as a very simple one, and yet most conclusive as to our title, nay, our duty, to compare Scripture with Scripture; and where the same subject is treated of in different passages, to receive the testimony of each, not only to corroborate the rest, but also to gather from one those details of instruction which are not afforded in another. I have not selected the above example as the best, but it was the first that occurred to my mind, and I think you will yourself allow that it is sufficient.

It may be said that great caution is needed in examining Scripture thus. This is admitted at once; but it is no reason for neglecting to search the Scriptures in this manner. We do need the utmost self-diffidence in searching and handling the Word of God; we need, too, the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit; but, depending on that light and guidance, and sincerely distrusting ourselves, we have every encouragement to expect that we shall be kept from the paths of error, and be led into all truth.

Let due care be taken that the passages referred to are really identical as to their general subject. Let them be thoroughly and patiently examined, before we conclude that this is the case; but, if they have so much in common as to put this beyond doubt, then let us not fear to regard the details of one as equally belonging to the subject, with all that is contained in the others.

As to the passages I have now to bring forward, I have two things to prove. First, that they relate to the same subject as the concluding part of the parable of the wheat and tares. And, secondly, that they state that the Lord will come in connection with what is there termed "the harvest."

How is it to be determined that any other passage speaks of the period termed in this parable "the harvest?" There can be but one way of determining this; that is, to ascertain what distinguishes "the harvest" in this parable, and then inquire whether the marks by which it is distinguished are to be found in the passages in question. Of course, when I speak of its distinguishing marks, I mean those which *essentially* distinguish it from every thing besides, and not any minor circumstance. If these be found in another passage, though some of the minor circumstances be wanting, we should certainly be authorized in concluding that the subject treated of in both passages is the same.

Does not the following definition of "the harvest" embrace all that essentially distinguishes it from

every thing besides? *It is that solemn act of judgment by which the righteous and the wicked are separated from each other at the close of the present mixed state of things, and at the commencement of the millennium.* There are three distinguishing marks of "the harvest."

1. It is at the end of this present age in which the wheat and the tares grow together. "The harvest is the end of the age." So shall it be in the end of this age.\*

2. It is at the commencement of the millennium—the period of universal holiness and happiness on the earth. "Then"—when all things are gathered out of the kingdom that offend, and they which do iniquity—"then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

3. It is the time at which the righteous and the wicked are separated from each other by destroying judgment on the wicked. "As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this age. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

In whatever passage of Holy Scripture we find

\* There are two words translated *world* in this passage. The field is the *world* (κόσμος, or world literally). The harvest is the end of the *world* (αἰώνος—literally, *of the age*). Κόσμος denotes this material world; αἰών denotes an age or period of duration.

these three things, there we find "the harvest." There cannot be more than one end or close of the present age; there cannot be more than one commencement of the millennial period. And the judgment which separates the wicked from the righteous at the close of the present age and introduction of the millennium is "the harvest."

One word more before quoting the passages we are to consider. As to those quoted from the Old Testament, we must not expect to find in them what is the special subject of Matt. xiii., viz., "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." It is during "this age" that these mysteries have their existence; and "the end of the age" is a great public crisis spoken of in the Old Testament as well as the New. But in the Old Testament it is spoken of more with respect to Jews and Gentiles, than with respect to true and false professors of Christianity. In Matt. xiii., the wheat represents true Christians—the tares, false professors. The great fact is, that they grow together till the end of the age, *i. e.*, till "the harvest." Evil exists till "the harvest." But it exists in other ways as well as the mixture of false professors with true Christians. It exists in the unbelief and sufferings of God's ancient people Israel, and also in the oppression of that people by the Gentiles. But "the harvest" puts an end *to all evil of all kinds*. It is then that *all* things which offend, and *all* which do iniquity, are gathered out and destroyed. And in many passages, both in the Old Testament and New, is this

harvest spoken of, this judgment which terminates the present mixed state, and introduces millennial blessedness. And in those which I shall now adduce, it is stated that at that time the Lord will come.

'I. Let us look at Isaiah xxvi. 20 ; xxvii. 6. Here we have a fearful, desolating judgment, "to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity," when "the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more conceal her slain." This judgment is a separating or discriminating judgment between the righteous and the wicked; for while the wicked are thus punished and overthrown, to the righteous it is said, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself, as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." This solemn judgment, which thus severs the righteous from the wicked, is at the commencement of the millennium. "In that day the Lord, with his sore, and great, and strong sword, shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." Now, whatever may be said of the dragon that is in the sea, and which is slain, we know who the crooked, piercing serpent is. Gen. iii. 1, 2 Cor. xi. 3, and Rev. xii. 9, make that plain enough. And we all know too that it is at the commencement of the millennium that Satan, that old, crooked, piercing serpent, is punished by being bound and cast into the bottomless pit. (Rev. xx. 1, 2.) So that this judgment is in the day when Satan is bound,

which we are all agreed is at the commencement of the millennium. But there is further evidence in the passage that this judgment is succeeded by the millennial period; for it is said, "He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." Verses 12 and 13 also connect the whole with the restoration of the children of Israel, "who shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem."

We have, then, in this passage a terrible judgment on the wicked; the righteous preserved from that judgment; and consequent upon it, "in that day," the punishment of Satan, the restoration of Israel, and Israel caused to blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit; in other words, the millennium. The passage does not say that all this is at the end of this age, of the present mixed state of things; but then, a moment's consideration will satisfy any one, that as day cannot begin without the ending or passing away of the night, so the millennium, or state of universal blessedness, cannot begin without the present mixed state of good and evil coming to a close. So that we have all the marks of "the harvest" *expressed* in this passage, except one, and that one evidently and necessarily *implied*. And what else have we? *The coming of the Lord*. "For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." If it should be said that this is figurative, I ask for the evidence of this. Should it be urged that the Lord

is everywhere, and everywhere alike, and that therefore it must be a figure to say that "the Lord cometh out of his place," my answer is, that the objection proves just the contrary of what it is urged to prove. *As God*, the Lord is omnipresent, and so to him *in that sense* all places are alike; he fills both heaven and earth. But the Lord Jesus Christ *is man* as well as God. And it is specially as "the Son of man" that he is spoken of in many passages, with respect to his second coming. And is there not *a place* where the glorified humanity of Christ now dwells? And will he not *come out* of this place whenever he comes to judgment, whether at the commencement of the millennium or at its close? I conclude then, from the very language employed, that the coming here spoken of is a real personal coming, a leaving one "place" and coming to another; and the whole context proves that it is at the time of "the harvest," at the close of the present age and the introduction of the millennial period, that this coming takes place.

II. Let us now turn to Isaiah lix. 16, lx. If you glance at chap. lix., down to verse 16, you will see that it describes an evil state of things? I have no doubt myself that it is the Jewish nation during this their long dispersion that is thus described: but the passage is only too applicable to a vast number of professing Christians. We are all agreed, however, that evil continues up to "the harvest." So we are taught here. In verse 15, the Lord is displeased because there is no judgment. In verses 16, 17, he



undertakes the work himself in the garments of vengeance. In verse 18 we read, "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies ; to the islands he will repay recompence." And is this action of his in judgment and vengeance at the time of "the harvest?" Let us see whether the distinguishing marks of that crisis are not found here. The first we have already seen. It is at the close of the period during which evil is permitted to remain. But is it followed by the millennium? Let us examine. What says verse 19, the verse immediately following the one last quoted? "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." And the whole of chap. lx. follows on in the same connection, and it has long been known to the Church as one of the most magnificent predictions of millennial blessedness to be found in the Word of God. Thus have we the three distinguishing marks of "the harvest." It is at the end of this age. It is at the commencement of the millennium. It is a desolating judgment inflicted *at that time* on the enemies of God. "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies ; to the islands he will repay recompence. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the sun." But have we anything of the advent

here? Yes, for it immediately follows: "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." The apostle quotes this passage in Rom. xi. And with what period does he connect it? Any past period? No; but with the future conversion of the Jewish nation. Is that at the consummation of all things? No; all agree that it is at the commencement of millennial blessedness. So that in this passage, applied and interpreted by the apostle in Rom. xi., we have a plain proof that the advent of our Lord is at the time of "the harvest"—that it is in connection with the judgments which close the present period, in which good and evil are mixed together, and which introduce the period of universal holiness and joy.

III. Let us now turn to Is. lxvi. The fifth verse shews us that the events spoken of are at the end of that state of things in which the righteous and the wicked, good and evil, are mixed together. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." The result of this appearing is the thorough separation of the righteous and the wicked. "The hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies." (Verse 14.) It is by terrible judgments on the wicked that God thus discriminates between them and the righteous; "for by fire and by his sword

will the Lord plead with all flesh ; and the slain of the Lord shall be many." (Verse 16.) This terrible judgment, which thus concludes the present state or age, is also introductory to the millennium. (See from verses 20 to 23.) And have we not also in this passage a most distinct prediction of the coming of the Lord? of his coming, too, in connection with this judgment, which terminates the present and introduces the millennial age? Not only are we told in the verse already quoted, "He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed," but in verse 15 we read, "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire." You may say perhaps, as has been said, that "any signal and evident interposition of Christ, as governor of the world, for the accomplishment of his purposes, is called *his coming*, and *his day*;" and you may thus seek to evade the force of all the passages, however plain, which may be brought to prove the pre-millennial advent. But ought we not to beware, dear brother, how we thus set aside the plain and evident sense of Scripture? Let me ask you, if the coming of the Lord here spoken of is not a real personal coming, where is there a passage which can prove a real personal coming at any time? Take the passages uniformly brought to prove it, and place this, and others like this, beside them, and say whether the one be not as plain and literal as the other. I will place, on one side, two

passages universally understood to refer to the real advent of Christ, and which, you would say, will be at the consummation of all things. On the other side I will place the passage we are now considering, and another of like import, and standing in a similar connection, and you shall judge yourself whether, if the one be figurative, the other is not also—whether, if the one be literal, the other is not so likewise.

*All Christians are agreed, that the following scriptures speak of the actual personal coming of Christ to judgment:—*

And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. (2 Thess. i. 7-9.)

Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (Jude 14, 15.)

*The following passages are proved, by their contexts, to be at the harvest—the end of the present, and the commencement of the millennial age:—*

The hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. (Is. lxvi. 14, 15.)

Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives. . . . And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. (Zech. xiv. 3-5.)

Consider these passages, dear brother, and say, if

these in the one column can be proved to be mere figures, whether those in the other are not mere figures also. And if all these be figures, where can you find a passage which speaks of a personal advent of Christ at all? Is the Lord Jesus to be revealed from heaven, *in flaming fire*, according to 2 Thess. i.? The passage in Is. lxvi. declares that the Lord will come *with fire*. Is the Lord Jesus to be attended by *his mighty angels*, in 2 Thess. i.? In Is. lxvi. he comes with *his chariots*, like a whirlwind. And we are told, in Ps. lxxviii. 17, that "*the chariots of God are twenty thousand, thousands of angels.*"\* Do we read in 2 Thess. i., "To you who are troubled, rest with us"? In Is. lxvi. we are told that "the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants;" and, in a former verse, "he shall appear to your joy." Does he come, in 2 Thess. i., to take *vengeance* on them that know not God? In Is. lxvi. he makes known his *indignation* toward his enemies, and renders his *anger* with fury. Does he, according to 2 Thess. i., punish the wicked with everlasting destruction? In Is. lxvi. he renders his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. And in the last verse of that chapter, after describing the state of universal blessedness which is to succeed this terrible judgment, after speaking of all flesh coming to worship before the Lord, it is said, "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the

\* So that if the expression "his chariots" be figurative, we have an inspired explanation of what the figure denotes.

men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." These are the words employed by our Lord himself to set forth the eternity of the punishment of the wicked. So as to the other two passages. Does the prophecy of our Lord's second advent, recorded by Jude, speak of his coming with ten thousands of his saints? And all acknowledge this to be his real, personal advent. We read, in Zech. xiv., "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." And in this passage the very spot of earth on which he shall stand is specified; the very place where the angels said to his disciples, "Why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." This very place is here named as that on which he shall again appear on the earth. "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives." And how any one who reverences the Word of God can attentively read this chapter, and not see that the judgment therein described is identical with that termed "the harvest" in Matt. xiii., I cannot tell.

IV. But let us examine this chapter (Zech. xiv.), and see whether the three marks by which "the harvest" is distinguished are not to be found in it. Is it not at the end of the present age or period, during which the wheat and the tares grow together, the period in which good and evil, the righteous and the wicked, are mixed together? Verses 7-9 of the

preceding chapter, which are evidently connected with this, treat of a period commencing with that all-important transaction in which the sword of Jehovah's justice awoke against the man who is Jehovah's fellow, in which, the Shepherd being smitten, the sheep were scattered. It speaks of fearful sufferings on the part of the guilty nation who were the instruments of his death, and of a remnant being brought through the fire. "It shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein." Chapter xiv. opens with the circumstances of this remnant, this third part, just prior to their deliverance. "Behold, I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." Here I pause to make two remarks. 1. This cannot be the assault of Gog and Magog on the beloved city (in Rev. xx.), just prior to the consummation of all things. There is not a word there of the city *being taken*; but as soon as the nations of the earth *came up against* the camp of the saints and the beloved city, fire comes down from God out of heaven and destroys them all. Besides, the Gog and Magog of Rev. xx. make their assault after the loosing of Satan at the end of the millennium. The conflict here, in Zech. xiv., is, as we shall see, introductory to the millennium. 2. Much less can

it be any past event that is foretold in Zech. xiv. The only past event which any have supposed to be indicated by it, is the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. I would put it to any simple-minded Christian, who, when he reads God's Word, trusts in God to teach him by his Spirit what it means, *whether this passage can possibly be made to mean the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans?* 1. It is well known, that when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem the city was completely demolished: a plough was passed over the foundations, and the miserable residue of the Jews, who were spared from the sword, went *all of them* into captivity. But Zech. xiv. speaks of a siege of Jerusalem, in which the city shall be taken indeed, and *half of the city* shall go forth into captivity, *but the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.* Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the residue, that is, *the other half*, shall not be cut off *from the city.* Was this the case, I ask, at the destruction of Jerusalem, by Titus? 2. When Jerusalem was taken and pillaged and destroyed by the Romans, the victors returned in unmolested triumph to Rome, and the Roman empire continued to flourish for centuries afterwards. But in Zech. xiv. all nations are gathered against Jerusalem to battle: the city is taken, half of the inhabitants go into captivity, and the other half are not cut off from the city; and "then"—while half of the inhabitants remain in the city—"then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those



nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." Did this occur to the Romans at the destruction of Jerusalem? In verses 12-15, where we have a more detailed account of the judgment on those nations, what do we read? "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague." Was all this fulfilled on the Roman armies which destroyed Jerusalem? Did they, and their horses, and camels, perish by this plague? Did their flesh consume away from their bones, and their eyes from their sockets, and their tongues from their mouths? Were the Jews also instrumental in destroying the Roman armies, after those armies had completely vanquished *them*, and reduced their city to ashes? "Judah also shall fight *at Jerusalem*." In chapter xii., where the same events are un-

questionably treated of, we read: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all people round about, *when they shall be in the siege*, both against Judah and against Jerusalem. *And in that day* will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stare for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." (Verses 2, 3.) "In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem." (Verse 6.) And if any one should call in question whether these are the same events as are foretold in chapter xiv., the ninth verse is a full answer. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." Compare this with verses 3 and 12 of chapter xiv., and I think you can hardly have a doubt that they both treat of the same events. And were all these predictions fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? 3. But again, it is not only said, "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle;" but also, "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall

be a very great valley." Now, *did* this take place at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? It avails nothing to say, that Christ sat and taught his disciples on the mount of Olives. This was forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem. And how could Christ, sitting on the mount of Olives, telling his disciples that Jerusalem should be destroyed, be the same thing as Christ standing on the mount of Olives *to fight against those nations who took Jerusalem*? Besides, *did* the mount of Olives cleave in the midst and form a valley, either when Christ sat upon it teaching his disciples, or at the destruction of Jerusalem forty years afterwards? Has this disruption ever taken place to this day? 4. Did the Lord my God come, and all the saints with him, at the destruction of Jerusalem? The literal coming of Christ in humiliation was seventy years *prior* to this event. And, should it still be said that his coming here is a strong figure of speech, or that it was his coming to set up his spiritual kingdom, I ask, In what sense did all his saints come too? Is that a figure likewise? And as to his coming to set up his spiritual kingdom, did he do that at the destruction of Jerusalem? Was not his spiritual kingdom set up long before? At least, so long before as the day of Pentecost? The living waters flowing out of Jerusalem are often explained as the going forth of the gospel from Jerusalem. But was it never till Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans that the living waters flowed out in this sense?

Nay, did they ever, in this sense, flow out of Jerusalem *after it was destroyed*? 5. Finally, did the millennium commence at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? Has the Lord been King over all the earth since then, and has there ever since been but one Lord, and his name one? (Verse 9.) Was all the land turned to a plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem? Has it been lifted up and inhabited in her place, ever since that time, from Benjamin's gate to the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's wine-presses? (Verse 10.) Have men dwelt in it, and has it been *safely* inhabited, ever since its destruction by the Romans? Has there been no more utter destruction since then? (Verse 11.) Alas! what else has there been from that day to this? And what is it now? A scene of desolation and ruin, as all bear witness who have beheld it. And yet to suppose, as some do, that this chapter begins with its destruction by the Romans, and that the remaining predictions find their fulfilment in the course of the present dispensation! Has it been ever since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans that every pot in Jerusalem has been holiness to the Lord, and all they that sacrifice and seethe therein? Has there been since that day no more Canaanite in the house of the Lord? (Verse 21.) Alas! my brother, the fulfilment of these predictions is not to be found in the past or present, but in the future.

It is not the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, but "the harvest," the end of this age, that is pointed to in this prophecy—"the harvest," which ends the present period of evil and of sorrow, and introduces the millennial age, when all the blessed things here foretold shall be actually fulfilled. And if language has any fixed, determinate meaning, we are told in this chapter, that at that time, "the harvest," the end of this age, the commencement of the millennium, "the Lord my God will come, and all his saints with him."

V. Let us now turn to Dan. vii., and see if we shall not there also find all the distinguishing marks of the crisis termed "the harvest," in Matt. xiii., and whether we have not there a distinct prediction of the coming of the Lord. Daniel sees four great beasts, which are interpreted to him as follows, in verse 17: "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth." The fourth beast, as he describes it in verse 7, "was dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly . . . and it had ten horns." I am not aware that any sober-minded Christians, who have considered these things at all, doubt the general meaning of this to be, that these four beasts represent the same four empires or kingdoms which, in chap. ii., are represented by the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. That the fourth kingdom is that of Rome, and that the ten horns of the beast, like the ten toes of the image, represent the division of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms or states. But here we read of a little horn who

does great things; and the divine interpretation of this, in verses 24, 25, is as follows: "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." All who pay any regard to the prophetic scriptures are, I suppose, agreed that this little horn is Antichrist, whether, as some believe, that be Popery, or, as others believe, that Antichrist is a person yet to come. This little horn is Antichrist. And what does the apostle John say? (1 John ii. 18.) "Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." So that the period had commenced in John's day, of which the distinguishing mark was, that Antichrist should come in it. The great Antichrist had not come, but there were many Antichrists, many enemies similar in principle and working to him, whereby, says the apostle, we know that it is the last time. Just as Paul, speaking of the same subject—the coming of Antichrist—says, The mystery of iniquity doth already work. And just as, in the parable of the wheat and tares, the tares are sown by the wicked one, they were to grow on till the harvest, thus

characterizing the whole period from the moment when they were sown to the harvest, when they are gathered in bundles to be burnt. Well, it is of the close of this period that Dan. vii. 26 treats. After speaking of the actings and blasphemies of the little horn that should arise, and of its continuance through a certain specified period, the passage thus proceeds: "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Can this be any thing but "the harvest" in Matt. xiii.? Is not the judgment here spoken of at the close of the present age or period described by John as the last time, and known to be the last time by this very mark, that in it Antichrist has his existence and reign? And this judgment is to destroy Antichrist. Is it not followed, too, just as "the harvest" in Matt. xiii., is by the millennium? Read verse 27: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Surely this is language too plain to be mistaken. Even to minuter details, there is a most marked parallel between the judgment in this chapter and "the harvest" in Matt. xiii. What becomes of the tares in the latter passage? Are they not cast into a furnace of fire, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth? And what becomes of the body of the beast in Dan. vii.? "I beheld then because

of the great words which the horn spake ; I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." And what occurs besides, at the time of this judgment? "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Verses 13, 14.) This passage is quoted by our Lord himself in Matt. xxiv. 30, and xxvi. 64. It is evidently referred to by him in Luke xix. 12-15.) It is quoted in Rev. i. 7. And in every one of these instances it is his coming that is spoken of.

VI. But let us examine Luke xix. 11-27 a little more particularly. The three marks by which we have seen that "the harvest" is distinguished from every thing else are, that it is at the end of this age, that it is at the commencement of the millennial period, and that a destroying judgment is at that time inflicted on the wicked, by which all who offend and do iniquity are gathered out of Christ's kingdom. Have we not all these marks in the passage before us? Have we not the end of this age or period? The disciples thought that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear, and our Lord spake a parable to correct this idea: "A certain



nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." And what occurs during his absence? His servants occupy, some faithfully, others unfaithfully, till he comes; his citizens hate him, and send a message after him, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Can any thing be more evidently descriptive of the present period, during which the tares and the wheat grow together? What takes place at the close of this period? The unfaithful servant is punished, the faithful are rewarded, and the enemies of Christ, who would not that he should reign over them, are slain. Is not this just what takes place at "the harvest"? And what follows? Clearly the time when the kingdom of God appears, for it was to shew what must occur up to that time that the parable was spoken. Yes, the kingdom—not in mystery, as at present, with tares and wheat growing together, but in open manifestation, according to the testimony of Dan. vii., already considered—is what follows upon this judgment. And it is worthy to be observed, that while Dan. vii. gives us the general fact that the saints shall possess this kingdom—not Christ only, but his saints along with him—Luke xix. shews us that the degree of authority and honour which each one shall have in the kingdom is in proportion to the faithfulness with which he now occupies in the Master's absence. And when is it that the judgment takes place? When is it that the faithful servant is made ruler

over ten or five cities, as the case may be? When is it that the enemies are slain? It is when the nobleman returns. It is when Christ descends from heaven with clouds, as all the passages we have considered with one consent declare. And thus is it indubitably established that the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is at the time of "the harvest"—at the end of this age—at the commencement, not at the close, of the millennium.

VII. Many other passages might be brought forward, in addition to those which have been adduced. But let me solicit your attention to one point in the parable of the wheat and tares. You distinctly allowed the other evening, that the kingdom of the Father, in which the righteous shine forth as the sun, is the millennial kingdom. But have you considered the meaning of those words, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun"? If Scripture is to be the interpreter of Scripture, where must we look for the meaning of this passage, but to such other passages as the following? Matt. xvii. 2, where we read of the Saviour that he "was transfigured before them, *and his face did shine as the sun.*" Also Rev. i. 16, where we read of the same blessed person, when he appeared in his glorified body to John in the isle of Patmos, that "his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." And is it not said, "that when he shall appear, we shall be like him"? (1 John iii. 2.) Is it not said, that "as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also

bear the image of the heavenly"? (1 Cor. xv. 49.) Nay, are we not told that Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself"? (Phil. iii. 21.) And when is it that we shall thus be changed into the image of our glorified Lord? All Scripture declares, and all Christians agree, that it is when the sleeping saints are raised, and that both the resurrection of those who sleep, and the transformation of those who are alive and remain, take place at the coming of the Lord. "When he shall *appear*, we shall be like him." "Every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's *at his coming*." (1 Cor. xv. 23.) "For our conversation is in heaven; *from whence also we look for the Saviour*, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body," &c. (Phil. iii. 20, 21.) "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we be ever with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) And how exactly this harmonizes with Rev. xx. 4-6: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the

beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection ; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years." How simple and conclusive is the testimony of God's Word, when we allow it to speak for itself, and compare one part of it with another ! And who does not see, that if it is in the sense these passages point out that the righteous are to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (which you allow to be the millennium), then Christ's coming must be at the commencement of the millennium ? for it is *at his coming*, and *by his coming*, as all allow, that the saints, whether asleep or awake, are changed, and made to resemble him in the radiance and incorruptibleness of his glorified body.

VIII. But there is one more passage on this subject which I must touch upon, and it will shew you that the proof just advanced does not rest *merely* upon the sense attached to the words "shine forth as the sun," in Matt. xiii. ; no, nor even on the plain statements of Rev. xx. These are certainly sufficient, amply sufficient, to support the argument based upon them. But turn for a moment to 1 Cor. xv. 51-54 : "Behold, I shew you a mystery ; we shall not all

sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Now, let me ask you, where is this saying written, and in what connection does it stand ? It is only in one place, and that Isaiah xxv. 8, that this saying is written. The context proves beyond controversy that the fulfilment of it is in connection with what is called "the harvest," in Matt. xiii. Isaiah xxiv. contains throughout predictions of a most awful, desolating judgment, such as has never been inflicted on the earth from that day to this, and such as answers to nothing but "the harvest," as portrayed in the several passages we have been considering. It concludes thus : "Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." I suppose it will be allowed that this is the millennium. Chap. xxv. 1-5 seems to be a song or strain of thanksgiving offered up by the prophet in anticipation of these wonderful events ; verse 6 resumes the prophecy, where it breaks off at the close of the former chapter. There we read of Mount Zion, and

of the Lord of hosts reigning there, and here the prophecy proceeds: "And in this mountain [Mount Zion] shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." The swallowing up death in victory is thus connected here with the removal of the vail that is spread over all nations—the making a feast for all nations of fat things, &c.—and with the taking away the rebuke of God's people Israel from off all the earth; in other words, with the introduction of the millennium. And the apostle tells us when this prophecy shall be fulfilled. "*So when* this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *THEN* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." And it is only at the coming of the Lord, as all admit, that this corruptible puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality. How then can the conclusion be evaded, that it is at the commencement of the millennium that the second advent of our Lord takes place?

I have thus, my dear brother, referred you to eight distinct passages of Scripture, in which I have shewn

you every distinguishing mark of what is termed "the harvest" in the parable of the wheat and tares; and in every one of these it is connected with a plain prediction of the second advent of our Lord, or, as in the last case, with events which we all know and agree will take place at his coming. And it was admitted, when we last conversed, that "the harvest" is at the end of the present age or period, and at the commencement of the millennium. If so, the coming of the Lord is at that crisis also. Let me entreat you to weigh these passages. Let me remind you, too, *that there has not been one single passage adduced to prove that the Lord will not come then, or that the world will be converted before his coming.* The passages last touched upon may serve also as one answer to the question you proposed, What good would the Lord's coming do? Surely, the resurrection of all who sleep in Jesus, the change into his glorious image of both them and the living saints, to say nothing of the restoration and conversion of God's ancient people, and the filling the whole earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, are events desirable enough to make us long for the coming of him, at whose coming all these things will be accomplished. But I hope to answer this question more at large in another communication, as also to furnish further proofs from Scripture of the pre-millennial advent.

Meanwhile, with sincerest respect and affection for you as a brother in the Lord, I remain,

Yours in him,

W. T.

THE  
JUDGMENTS ON THE WICKED WHICH ATTEND  
THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have to thank you for your kind note, in which you express your intention “prayerfully to weigh over the passages referred to” in my last. I would beg to remind you that each of these passages is a separate, distinct proof of the coming of our Lord at the commencement of the millennium. If I connected them all with “the harvest” in the parable of the wheat and tares, it was only because on that we were pretty nearly agreed. Leave that out altogether, if you choose, and the passages\* adduced in my last are still as good proofs of the pre-millennial advent as they are when viewed in connection with that parable. My remarks in this communication may perhaps be of a more desultory character; still, I hope you will find them bearing strictly on the question before us.

If I recollect aright, while you admitted that “the

\* Of course, it will be understood by this that I mean each passage *adduced in proof* of the pre-millennial advent.



harvest" in Matt. xiii. is the end of the present age or period, and that the righteous and the wicked will then be separated from each other, the latter being destroyed by the angels, who gather them together and cast them into a furnace of fire,—while you admitted this, I say, you still suggested a doubt whether there would be any great destruction as to the number of those cut off; and intimated also, that the wicked being destroyed by angels, might simply mean that they would be taken away by death and cast into hell, as each impenitent sinner now is, when his mortal career is run. I would now solicit your attention to several passages, which shew, first, that a great number will be destroyed; and, secondly, that the judgment by which they are cut off is a great public event; not the unnoticed death of individuals in the common course of things, but a calamity so fearful and notorious, as to be the object of universal attention, both in heaven and earth.

Let me here ask you to remember, that I am not now proving that the second advent will take place in connection with this judgment. Passages in proof of this were adduced in my former letter, and I may bring others forward, if space allow, in this; but what the following passages are alleged to prove is, that the judgment on the wicked at the period termed "the harvest," in Matt. xiii., is terrible in extent as to the number of those involved in it, and that it is public, moreover, beyond any thing which has occurred since the days of Noah or of Lot. If

there be such a judgment impending, it is surely to be desired that neither saint nor sinner should be unapprized of its approach.

I.—Joel iii. 9–16. “Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel.” This passage is so plain as to need no remark; still, just by way of setting down *what is in the passage*, rather than giving any interpretation of it, I would remind you—1. That the period is the same, and described by the same terms as that in Matt. xiii.: “Put ye in the sickle, for ‘THE HARVEST’ is ripe.”

2. It is followed (as any one may see who reads from verse 16 to the end of the chapter) by the millennium. 3. The angels, who are the executioners of vengeance in Matt. xiii., are here also spoken of: "Thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord." 4. It is not the unnoticed removal of wicked men by death, in the ordinary course of things, but a gathering of God's enemies into one place, and judgment executed upon them there; "Assemble yourselves, and come, *all ye heathen*, and gather yourselves together round about . . . . . Let the heathen be awakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: *for there* will I sit to judge *all the heathen* round about." Just as in Matt. xiii., the tares are *gathered together* and *bound in bundles* to be burnt. 5. It is not a small number of wicked persons who are thus judged. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. 6. It is the abounding and overflowing of wickedness which brings on the judgment. "Come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great." 7. Every variety of expression almost is used to shew the publicity of the event. The assembling of the heathen, the darkening of the sun, and moon, and stars, the Lord roaring out of Zion, the shaking of the heavens and the earth—*can* all this be the mere removing by death, in an ordinary way, of a few wicked persons? Impossible! If language can pourtray scenes of universal interest and observation, both to heaven and earth, surely it

is the language here employed. And can any thing be clearer than that all this is at the commencement of the millennium? "For, behold, in those days, and in that time *WHEN* I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, *and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat*, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." (Verses 1, 2.) Now, is it at the commencement or at the close of the millennium that the Lord brings again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem? Ponder this question, beloved brother; and remember that the Lord, the faithful witness, says: "In those days, and *in that time when I* shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat." What takes place here we have already seen; and what follows, any one may see by reading the remainder of the chapter. Would you not yourself say that it was a prediction of millennial blessedness? And, if so, is it not most evident that "the harvest," which, as you admit, closes the present period and introduces the millennium, is a period of judgment, desolating and terrific beyond expression, and involving in sudden, unlooked-for destruction, not a little few, but vast multitudes of the human race? I would only ask further, whether such declarations as the following do not imply that the Lord is *personally present* amid these scenes of

solemnity and terror? "For there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about." "The day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem." If language like this does not imply that the Lord will be personally present amid those scenes of judgment, I am at a loss to know by what language this could have been expressed.

II.—There is one point in the passage just considered which has not been noticed. It is this: *the vintage*, as well as *the harvest*, is used to represent the judgments foretold in it. "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great." This evidently connects the passage with others in which the vintage and the treading of the winepress are spoken of. These passages, as we shall see, treat of the same period of judgment as this in Joel iii., and their testimony is in fullest harmony with what we have seen above, as to the character and extent of the judgment; and this, be it remembered, is the point to which our inquiry at present relates.

1. Let us consider Isaiah lxiii. 1–6. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the

winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me ; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury ; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help ; and I wondered that there was none to uphold : therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me ; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth." One remark here in passing as to the amazing accuracy of Scripture. In chap. lxi., we have the memorable passage quoted by our Lord in Luke iv., and which he applied to himself in the synagogue at Nazareth. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings . . . . to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, *and the day of vengeance of our God.*" When our Lord quoted this in the synagogue at Nazareth, did he quote the whole of it? Read the passage in Luke iv., and you will see that he breaks off in the middle of the sentence, leaving out the clause which I have underlined, "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord ;" and he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down . . . . And he began to say unto them : "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Now, could he have said that, if he had read the whole passage? Did he come then to

proclaim the day of vengeance of our God? No, he came then, not to judge the world, but to save it; to *endure* the wrath of God *for* sinners, not to *execute* the wrath of God *upon* sinners. But this latter is as much a part of this commission as the former. And though, when he was here before, it was but to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord; when he comes again, it is to usher in "the day of vengeance of our God." And this is what we have in Is. lxiii.: "The day of vengeance," he says, "is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." And what is it, let me ask, that is here described? The unnoticed removal by death, in an ordinary way, of some few wicked persons who have failed to be converted by the Gospel? Is this what we have here? No one can suppose so. The prophet beholds in vision a mighty warrior returning victorious from the slaughter of his enemies, his garments red with their blood, and he asks, astonished with the sight, Who is this? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Can that be any but Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah? Could any other use such language, and not blaspheme? Hear him further. "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." Some would interpret this of the sufferings of Christ when he was here eighteen hundred years ago. But could any thing be more

unlike a fulfilment of this prophecy than the sufferings of Christ? He was crucified through *weakness*. (2 Cor. xiii. 4.) Here he travels in the *greatness* of *his strength*. It was *his own* blood (wondrous grace that was thus displayed!) which was shed for sinners, and by (!) sinners when he was here before. In Is. lxiii. he says; "I will tread *them* in mine anger, and *trample* them in my fury; and *their* blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." He says further, "I will tread down *the people* in mine anger, and make *them* drunk in my fury, and I will bring down *their* strength to the earth." How any one can look one moment on Jesus suffering without the gate at Jerusalem, like a lamb led unresisting to the slaughter, and the next moment look on this prophetic vision of the vengeance he will yet execute upon his enemies—how any one can look on these and say that they are the same, I cannot understand. And I am so completely at a loss to imagine how any one can read this passage in Is. lxiii., so evidently descriptive of the same scene of judgment as Matt. xiii. 40, 41, and Joel iii., and yet maintain that it is only the quiet, unnoticed removal by death of a few wicked persons, that we are to understand as foretold in these passages!

2. Isa. xxxiv. is a very solemn passage, identified as to the general subject with the one just considered, and with Joel iii. by several marks too plain to be mistaken. We have been hearing the prophet ask,



Who is this that cometh from *Edom*? with dyed garments from *Bozrah*? And in chap. xxxiv. 56 we read: "For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon *Idumea*, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord hath a sacrifice in *Bozrah*, and a great slaughter in the land of *Idumea*." In chap. lxiii. the Lord says: "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." In this chapter, verse 8, we read: "For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion." In Joel iii. we have read, "The sun and the moon shall withdraw their shining." Here we read, verse 4: "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree." And what do we learn here, as to the character and extent of the judgment we are considering? Is it a mere taking away by death, in the usual way, of a very few wicked persons? Is it thus undistinguishable from what is passing around us continually? Read the first verse of this chapter: "Come near, ye nations, to hear, and hearken, ye people; let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all the things that come forth of it." Surely, it is no ordinary event to which universal attention is thus solemnly called.

Then, as to the extent of the judgment, see verses 2, 3, 7, and 9: "For the indignation of the Lord is upon *all nations*, and his fury upon *all their armies*; he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. . . . . And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. . . . . And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch." With such predictions as these before us of wide-spread terrible destruction on the ungodly, it does appear to me, my dear sir, a serious thing to solace our own minds and the minds of others with the idea that there may perhaps be but a very few cut off at the end of the present period or dispensation. This seems so like saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace; but sudden destruction is coming upon the world of the ungodly, that I should tremble to hold out such a delusive prospect. God, who knows the end from the beginning, has not overstated the horrors of that day of darkness and destruction which is hastening on; and any one seriously examining the Word of God will be amazed to find how large a portion of prophecy relates to this subject, and portrays in colours so dark, that their gloom could not by any means be deepened, the

sudden overwhelming destruction which shall overtake the wicked in that day. A few passages have already passed in serious review before us. Many more remain ; so many, that all I can do is to select some of the principal among them.

3. Rev. xiv. 14–20. Here we have this solemn judgment represented both by the harvest and the vintage. “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap : for the time is come for thee to reap ; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth ; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire ; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth ; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.” It would be superfluous to point out in detail the identity of

this prophetic scene with that portrayed in the other passages we have been considering. It is obvious enough, on the very surface of them, that all describe the same period of judgment. Each one, it is true, presents this general subject in some particular phase or aspect, which distinguishes it from the rest. Still, the general identity of subject I see not how any one can doubt who reads the passages with ordinary attention. The analogy between the one just quoted and that in Joel iii. is most striking. And what is the testimony of the one just quoted, as to the character and extent of the judgment? Need I give any other answer, than simply to refer you to the passage itself? The last verse, be it ever so figurative in style, surely indicates a most fearful slaughter of God's enemies. The bare reading of the verse is enough to make one's ears to tingle. And, be assured, the God of truth gives no false alarms: the event will not be found less terrible than the prediction.

I would just remark besides, in passing, that the coming of one like to the Son of man, seated on a cloud, is a part of this prophetic vision, as it was beheld by the beloved apostle.

4. Rev. xix. 11-21 is another passage in which this treading of the winepress is brought before us. St. John sees heaven "opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

From the entire description of this heavenly Conqueror, there can be no doubt as to who it was that the prophet of Patmos saw. "He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." He is followed by his saints. "The armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." The fine linen has been explained, in verse 8, to be "the righteousness of saints." Can any one fail to be reminded by this of a passage referred to in my former letter?—"The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." What is the object for which this rider upon the white horse and his heavenly armies appear? "Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Need I ask here what is the character and the extent of the judgment foretold in these solemn words? Do not the words themselves supply the answer? If any further be needed, you have it in what follows: "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all, free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the

beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." Make what allowance you please for the figurative language here employed, you can never persuade yourself to believe that this is the quiet unnoticed taking away by death, in the usual course of things, of a very few wicked persons who had failed to be converted by the gospel. Here is war, with mighty preparations for it on either hand, issuing in the utter dismal overthrow of the congregated enemies of Christ, who, like grapes in the winepress, are trodden under his feet; "he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." This is the end, beloved brother, of all this world's greatness and glory; this is the event which is hastening on, and which must surely come to pass before the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

We have now examined five passages, viz. Joel iii., Isa. lxiii., Isa. xxxiv., Rev. xiv. 14-20, and Rev. xix. 11-21, to ascertain the character and extent of the

judgment spoken of in Matt. xiii. as the "harvest," the end of this age, and which, as you allowed, is succeeded by the millennium. Two of those passages, Joel iii. and Rev. xiv., speak of it in the very terms as Matt. xiii.; they describe it as the "harvest." Another representation is used besides in those passages, viz., the vintage. This connects them with Isa. lxiii. and Rev. xix., where we have the treading of the winepress. The distinct mention of Edom and Bozrah in Isa. lxiii. connects that passage with Isa. xxxiv., where we have more in detail the judgment on Idumea, or Edom, and on Bozrah. It is connected with it by other marks as well, which have been pointed out. We thus have the testimony of five passages clearly speaking of the same general period of judgment as in Matt. xiii. is termed "the harvest." And what is their united testimony? Verily, it is of such scenes of slaughter and desolation as exceed in horror nearly all besides. I might easily have quoted as many more passages. Indeed, all those (or nearly all) quoted in my last, are as full and plain to this point as any others. Surely, it is not for us to be lulling the Church and the world to deeper sleep with dreams of continued peace and increasing blessing, when a crisis like this is to terminate the present age and introduce the period of millennial blessedness and joy. Bright days there are in prospect for this earth, and never would I forget the testimony of God's holy Word to this. But a dark and dreadful day must intervene; and

they entirely mislead the minds of men, who teach them to look for the peaceful spread of truth and holiness till all, or nearly all, the human family are converted. No: the harvest, which, as you admit, is the end of the present period or age, is itself a period in which Christ comes to execute vengeance on his enemies; and those enemies are at that time so numerous and stout-hearted, as to be gathered together to battle against the Lion of the tribe of Judah. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is the Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." (Rev. xvii. 14.) And this is the scene towards which the course of this world is fast tending. Surely, it must be a matter of no small importance for our souls to be awake to this, that we may be enabled, through grace, to stand apart from all that which is hastening on this final crisis, and on which the judgment of that great and terrible day will fall. The Lord grant us, even now, to act as becomes those called, and chosen, and faithful ones, who are to be with him in that day!

III.—We come now to a very important passage, which, with those inseparably connected with it, I have reserved for distinct consideration. I wish now to look at it, both as to the evidence it affords of a pre-millennial advent, and as to the light it throws on the character and extent of the judgment by which that advent will be attended. I now refer to 2 Thess.



ii., and request your patient consideration of the following suggestions:—

1. It is worthy to be noted, that, in the first epistle, the coming of the Lord is named *in every chapter*; and so named, that no doubt can be entertained by any one as to what coming is spoken of. It is, confessedly, the second personal coming of Christ, which is so often referred to in the first epistle to the Thessalonians.

2. The apostle returns to the subject in the first chapter of the second epistle: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,” &c. This, I suppose, all will agree, is the second personal appearing of Christ. “When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.” This also, none will deny, refers to the second personal coming of our Lord.

3. The second chapter begins thus: “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him.” Is not this the same event that he had been speaking of throughout the first epistle, and the first chapter of the second? No one questions this, that I am aware of.

4. He goes on to speak of the idea that the day of Christ was at hand, and assures them that there must be a falling away first, and the Man of Sin be revealed; he reminds them of what he had before told them, that there was something withholding or

hindering the revelation of this Man of Sin, and that what was then letting would let until it was removed; "And then," says he, "shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of *his coming*." Now, is it another coming that he speaks of here, distinct from that of which he has spoken so immediately before? Throughout the first epistle, and three times already in this, he has spoken of the coming of Christ. In all these instances it is confessed he speaks of the actual personal advent of our Lord. He has not changed his subject; so far from this, he begins this second chapter by beseeching them, by the coming of Christ, and our gathering together to him; and then, in the same paragraph, in the unfolding of the argument which he thus introduces, he speaks of "that wicked whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy *with the brightness of his coming*." Now, can it be another coming, and another kind of coming, he speaks of here? Would it not be doing the utmost violence to Scripture to suppose such a thing? Could we understand any other book, if it was to be interpreted on such principles as would lead us to an interpretation of Scripture like this? Suppose a mere human author to write two treatises, the latter intended to throw further light on the subject of the former. Suppose that there is a certain term or phrase which occurs more frequently in these writings than in any other, and that this

phrase is always used in one fixed determinate sense. Suppose that it has been thus used twelve or thirteen times without one exception, and that this is acknowledged by all who read the writings in question. Here is, however, a fourteenth instance in which this phrase occurs. There is no intimation on the part of the writer that he uses it in a different sense; there is nothing in the immediate context to require that it should be understood in any different sense. Nay, so far from this, it is used in the usual sense at the commencement of the paragraph in which it again occurs in the instance supposed: now, what would you think of any one who would contend, in a case like this, that the phrase is to be understood in a different sense the fourteenth time of its occurrence, from that in which it is used in all the other instances? Would you not say that his mind was warped, and that, for some reason or other, he did violence to the sense of the writer? And if you would shrink from thus reflecting on the consistency of a mere human author, ought not reverence for the Word of God to make you shrink from attributing such obscurity and inconsistency to it?

5. The case before us is even stronger than that just supposed. And it is stronger as read in the original than in our translation. The word translated "coming," in 2 Thess. ii. 8, is *παρουσία*, and the sense of this word will best appear from the invariable rendering of it in those passages where it

is not *the Lord's* coming at all that is spoken of, but where it is used in reference to others.

The following is the list :

I am glad of the *coming* of Stephanas. (1 Cor. xvi. 17.)

God...comforted us by the *coming* of Titus. (2 Cor. vii. 6.)

And not by his *coming* only. (2 Cor. vii. 7.)

But his bodily *presence* is weak. (2 Cor. x. 10.)

That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my *coming* to you again. (Phil. i. 26.)

As ye have always obeyed, not as in my *presence* only, but now much more in my absence. (Phil. ii. 12.)

Even him whose *coming* is after the working of Satan. (2 Thess. ii. 9.)

Is it not manifest that in every one of these instances the word means an actual coming or presence? This word is used seventeen times in the New Testament with reference to the coming of the Lord. It is the word translated "coming," in 2 Thess. ii. 8, the passage under consideration.

But this is not the whole of the case. There is another word used in this passage. It is not only said "whom he shall destroy by *his coming*," but "by *the brightness* of his coming." Now the word here rendered brightness is *ἐπιφάνεια*: it occurs five times besides, in the New Testament, and its force you may judge of from the following list of the passages:

Until the *appearing* of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Tim. vi. 14.)

By the *appearing* of our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
(2 Tim. i. 10.)

At his *appearing* and his kingdom. (2 Tim. iv. 1.)

And not to me only, but unto all them also who love his *appearing*. (2 Tim. iv. 8.)

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious *appearing* of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. (Titus ii. 13.)

Can any one doubt, who calmly and prayerfully considers these things, that the coming, the appearing of Christ, spoken of in 2 Thess. ii. 8, is a real actual coming or appearing? It does seem to me that, if evidence like this is to be set aside as inconclusive, we have no marks left by which, in any case, the meaning of the sacred text can be determined; or, indeed, the meaning of any writings or any subject whatever.

6. Leaving this point, then, and henceforth assuming it as settled that it is the second personal advent of Christ which is spoken of in this passage, I proceed to inquire what is the testimony of the passage as to the period of the advent, whether it be before or after the millennium? What says the apostle? "Now, we beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." The Greek word *ἐνίστημι*, here rendered "is at hand," occurs in six other passages of

the New Testament, and in five of these it is rendered "present."\* This, I have no doubt, is the proper rendering of it here. We know, from 2 Tim. ii. 18, that there were some who said that the resurrection was passed already, and overthrew the faith of some; and it would appear that some person or persons had been endeavouring in like manner to trouble the Thessalonians and overthrow their faith, by teaching them that the day of Christ was "present," that it *had* come. The living saints were still in unchanged bodies, and the sleeping saints were still in their graves, and yet there were those who taught that the day of Christ had come, that it was "present." This is the error which the apostle opposes. He proceeds thus: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed,

\* They are—Rom. viii. 38; 1 Cor. iii. 22, viii. 26; Gal. i. 4, and Heb. ix. 9. In 2 Tim. iii. 1, it is rendered "shall come," but there "*shall be present*" is evidently the true rendering.

whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Now, is there here any opening for a millennium before the second advent of our Lord? The apostle speaks of the commencement, progress, and close of a certain period. It had commenced when he wrote. Its close is at the second advent. And what is it that intervenes? A period of universal and long continued blessedness? A millennium? No; he speaks only of the continuance of evil, of its progress from the incipient state in which it existed even then, to that maturity of daring wickedness which is exhibited in the Man of Sin, the wicked one; and this wicked one is to be consumed by the spirit of Christ's mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming. The day of Christ cannot come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed. Well, but may there not be a millennium brought about by the gradual spread of the Gospel, and this falling away come after that—the Man of Sin be revealed after that? No; for he says the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth will let till he be taken out of the way. And then—yes, what then? A millennium? No, *then* shall that wicked be revealed. Well, but may he

not be revealed, and have his day, and the millenium follow, and then the Lord come at the close of it? No; that cannot be, for it is by the second advent of our Lord, by the brightness of his coming, that that wicked is destroyed. Thus are we guarded by the apostle, as to both ends of this period. The millennium could not be at the former, for the mystery of iniquity was working then, and was to work till it issued in the revelation of the Man of Sin, the wicked one. It cannot be at the latter end of the period, for the wicked one, the Man of Sin exists to the end, and the period closes with his destruction by the brightness of Christ's coming. Thus are we shut up to the conclusion that there can be no millennium between the time at which the apostle wrote and the second coming of Christ. The mystery of iniquity, the falling away, the revelation and blasphemies of the Man of Sin, fill up the whole period; and if there is to be a millennium, it must be after the second coming of our Lord. It cannot be before. The only way of evading this conclusion is, to say that the coming of Christ, by the brightness of which the wicked one is destroyed, is not his actual second, personal advent. But this I have already shewn to be doing violence to Scripture, and adopting a principle of interpretation which, if carried out, would rob all language of any fixed, determinate meaning, and render it impossible to decide what was the import of any statement made by any writer, on any subject whatever. Surely, we



cannot adopt such a principle in the interpretation of God's holy Word!

7. One remark more. If it should be said, that "consumed by the spirit of his mouth" means a gradual weakening of the anti-Christian power by the spread of truth: I answer, if this even were so, it does not affect the conclusion in the least. The Man of Sin must not only be *weakened*, but *destroyed*, before there can be any millennium. And he is destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming. But then, further, to consume is not to weaken. 'Αναλίσκω, the word here rendered "consume," strictly means to take away, to destroy. It is the word used in Luke ix. 54, where the disciples ask our Lord if they may command fire to come from heaven and *consume* the Samaritans. Surely, it means no gradual weakening there, but utter and sudden destruction. There is another word, δαπανάω, which is once rendered "consume," (James iv. 3,) and it does signify to devour, to spend, to waste, and is so translated commonly. But it is not this word that is used here, but another, signifying to take away, to destroy. Neither does the expression, "spirit of his mouth," signify the Gospel or the influences of the Spirit. Πνεῦμα, the word translated "spirit" in the New Testament, has for its primary meaning, as you are doubtless aware, wind, air in motion, a breathing, breath; and this is marked in the Lexicon before me as the meaning of the word in this passage. "Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the

Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." For the force of this phrase, "the breath of his mouth," in the Old Testament, see Job iv. 9, xv. 30; Isa. xxx. 28 and 33; also Isa. xi. 4.

8. I would consider this last passage a little more particularly. The prophet is speaking of the rod which was to come forth out of the stem of Jesse, and the Branch which was to grow out of his roots. It is of Him he says: "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, *and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.*" This is obviously the passage which the apostle quotes in the chapter we have been considering. And what follows this destruction of the Man of Sin, the wicked one, by the breath of Christ's lips and by the brightness of his coming? Read the remainder of the chapter, Isa. xi., and you will find that this overthrow of Antichrist is succeeded by the millennium, when "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy

mountain ; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Where is there a child of God who has not rejoiced in the prospect of all this quietness, and harmony, and blessing, which are yet in store for this miserable world ? But, how is it that this season of universal blessedness is introduced ? "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." When does He thus overthrow his daring and blasphemous enemy ? The apostle gives the answer. "Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy WITH THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS COMING." Yes, it is the coming of our blessed Lord which destroys the Man of Sin, and which introduces that blissful period, of which we have such a glowing description in Isa. xi. Thus do the prophet and the apostle confirm and illustrate each other's testimony. We begin with the apostle in his day, and he tells us that the mystery of iniquity was working then. He speaks of some hindrance to the full display of this mystery of evil, and of its continuance up to a certain time. He tells us of its being taken out of the way, and of that wicked being revealed, and of his destruction by the breath of Christ's mouth and by the brightness of his coming. And there he pauses. It is at this point the testimony of the prophet begins. He also tells us of the triumphs of Jesse's Offspring, that "he shall smite the earth with the

rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked." But he leads us onward, and shews us, as the fruit of this victory, a peaceful, holy, happy earth, reposing beneath the sceptre of him who is Jesse's Root as well as Jesse's Offspring. Can any thing be more conclusive than the combined, harmonious testimony of these holy men, who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?

9. I would notice, too, the harmony between all this and some of the other passages which have been considered. In the parable of the wheat and tares, we are told that he who sows the tares is the devil, and that the tares and wheat are to grow together till the harvest. In 2 Thess. ii., Paul tells us the mystery of iniquity was working then. The tares had been sown. Were they to be plucked up? Was the mystery of iniquity to cease from working? No: it was to work on, and in the end, when the hindrance was removed, it was to issue in the revelation of the Man of Sin, and he was to continue till his destruction by the brightness of Christ's coming; in other words, till "the harvest." In my former letter, it was shewn from Dan. vii. how the blasphemies of the little horn, or Antichrist, are the occasion on which the thrones are placed, the judgment set, and the books opened; and how, because of his great words, the beast is slain, his body destroyed and given to the burning flame; and how all this is connected with the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. So, in 2 Thess. ii., it is to consume

Antichrist with the breath of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming, that the Lord appears. All this is followed in Dan. vii. by the millennium. The kingdom, and glory, and dominion, are given to the Son of man, and with him his saints take the kingdom and possess it. So, as we have just been seeing in Isa. xi., when Christ has smitten the earth with the rod of his mouth, and slain the wicked (one) with the breath of his lips, he reigns in peace over the whole earth. So also in Rev. xix. and xx. What shews that these together form one strain of prophecy is this, that the destruction of the beast and false prophet in chap. xix. 20 is spoken of in chap. xx. 10 as a past event. Let any one read from the beginning of chap. xix. to verse 8 in chap. xxi., and he can hardly doubt that it is one unbroken strain of prophecy, and ought so to be read. And when thus read, how marked the coincidence between it and all the passages we have been examining! As has been already pointed out, we have the coming forth from heaven of the King of kings and Lord of lords, followed by the armies which were in heaven. Then we have the overthrow and destruction of the beast and the false prophet, and their followers. Then follows the binding of Satan and the reign of the risen saints with Christ a thousand years. And when is it that the saints rise? All Scripture answers what all saints subscribe to, *At the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ*. And then, to show that this is not the final judgment, the judgment of

the great white throne, it is said, "The rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished." The thousand years expire—Satan is loosed from his prison—he deceives the nations of the earth—they gather together against the beloved city—fire comes down from God out of heaven, and destroys them—Satan, who deceived them, is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are—(observe this, *where they are*, for they had been cast there a thousand years before,) a great white throne appears—heaven and earth flee away—the rest of the dead are raised, and all whose names were not in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. I can conceive of nothing more plain, more straightforward, and more entirely harmonious with all the Scriptures we have been examining, than this comprehensive portion thus read. I say *read*, for I have not been interpreting or explaining it, but simply pointing out what it contains.

10. There is another point on which I cannot enlarge. A remark or two must suffice. It is allowed by all students of prophecy that the beast and the false prophet, who meet their doom amid the scenes portrayed in Dan. vii., 2 Thess. ii., and Rev. xix., are more largely described, as to their character and power and the number of their adherents, in previous passages of Revelation. And what is the testimony of those passages, as to the number of the followers of Antichrist? "And it was given him

to make war with the saints, and to overcome them : and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (chap. xiii. 7, 8.) So much for the beast. As to the false prophet, which is spoken of in chap. xiii., as another beast with horns like a lamb, and speaking like a dragon ;\* it is said of him that "he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he has power to do in the sight of the beast. . . . And he had power to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads : and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark," &c. (Verses 12-17.)

And it is this beast, and this false prophet that wrought miracles before him, that perish by the hand

\* False prophets are spoken of, by our Lord, as wolves in sheep's clothing.

of Him who comes forth out of heaven on a white horse, in Rev. xix. And when they thus perish, they are at the head of the kings of the earth and their armies, who perish with them. See the passage. Surely, dear brother, this is not *a few* wicked persons cut off by death in the usual way! And depend upon it, with scenes like these hastening on, and the whole course of the world, *the religious* WORLD, as well as the civil and political, tending towards this point, it is a dangerous delusion to suppose that the world is improving and will improve, till only a few wicked persons are left who have to be taken away by death, and that then there will be none but the righteous on the earth. No; what God has revealed of the closing scenes of the present age shews clearly enough, if we have but ears to hear, that his enemies will then be congregated in immense multitudes under one daring and impious leader, with a false prophet as his ally and his tool, who, according to 2 Thess. ii., as well as the passage we have been glancing at, will be permitted to deceive them by the miracles and signs he will be able to produce, they being given up to strong delusion, to believe a lie, that they all may be damned; and on this assembled host, gathered together in haughty defiance of God Almighty and the Lamb, will the thunderbolts of his vengeance fall; the two chiefs in iniquity will be cast ALIVE into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone, and the rest will be slain with the sword which proceedeth out of the mighty conqueror's



mouth. If, instead of believing God's testimony, and anticipating those dreadful scenes, we are filling our minds with visions of continued and increasing peace, and blessing and prosperity, we shall be, doubtless unconsciously, yet not less surely, helping on those principles and systems which are preparing the professing Church, as well as the openly unbelieving world, for this maturity of wickedness and this ripeness for destruction. Let us remember that the mystery of iniquity precedes the manifestation of the Man of Sin ; and if Satan, disguised as an angel of light, can persuade us that the spreading of the mystery of iniquity is the success of the Gospel and the prelude to millennial blessedness, it is easy to see how, with the very desire to do good and to help onward the conversion of the world, we may be unconsciously promoting the designs of Satan, and preparing the way for the open manifestation of the Man of Sin. The question before us is thus seen to be a solemn, practical question ; and it is only as our expectations of the future are regulated by simple faith in the testimony of God, that our conduct in the present will be in harmony with God's mind. If I see where this world's course is tending, and what the end of this world's boastings and exultations will be, I shall not be found sailing down its smooth and rapid current, but in holy separateness from it ; separateness from it which will seem madness to any one who is deceived by its fair appearances ; I shall be found waiting and longing for *His coming*, whose

return is as full of joy to those who look for him, as it will be of dismay and horror to those who have despised the testimony of his grace, and are found amongst his enemies when He comes. It is not at all, dear brother, that we are to be always pondering on the gloomy side of the subject, and thinking of the thickening darkness and the approaching judgment. No; but knowing this to be true, because God has said it, we are to wait for him whose coming shall dispel every shade of darkness; and, while he executes these terrible judgments on the wicked which we have been considering, will do this, that he may purge the earth of its destroyers and corrupters, gathering out of his kingdom all that offends and them which do iniquity, that in the peaceful days of millennial rest and blessing which succeed, the righteous may shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. And it is this, the light and joy and blessing of the age which follows, that should be uppermost in our thoughts; and yet the joy of anticipating this, chastened and sobered in our souls by the certain knowledge afforded us in Scripture of the dreadful events which intervene. There is a passage in Rom. viii. with which I would close this communication. We have seen in Isa. xi. how the overthrow of the wicked (one) is succeeded by those blessed days in which the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, &c. In Rom. viii. the whole creation is represented as groaning and travailing in expectation of this. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this

present time are not to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." And when will the sons of God be manifested? "Beloved," says St. John, "now *are* we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear [it is not yet manifest] what we shall be ; but we know that *when he shall appear*, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is." It is when Christ appears that the sons of God will be manifested. And it is for this that the earnest expectation of the creature waits. "For the creature [creation, literally] was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope ; because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Isa. xi. is the exposition of all this. When the destroyers of the earth have been themselves destroyed, and Christ and his risen, glorified saints reign over the earth a thousand years, the curse will be removed, the bondage of corruption cease, all things, both in heaven and earth, be reconciled, and none shall hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now ; and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus the Spirit of God in the saints

makes them groan for the adoption—the redemption of the body. That takes place when Christ appears. It is then and *thus* that the sons of God are manifested. All creation waits for that. Why? Because creation itself shall then be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Blessed, joyful period! What effect has the anticipation of it on our souls? Does it give joy and gladness? Yes verily. But the contrast of all around us and *all before us till Christ comes*, with that blissful age—the contrast, I say, seen in the light of that glory, makes us groan. That we may all know more of those exercises both of sorrow and of joy, and that by the Spirit, and be more separate from all that will not bear the light of the coming day of Christ, is, dear brother, the prayer of yours in Him,

W. T.

## EPHESIANS VI. 10-18.

THIS Scripture shews both the power possessed by the believer for maintaining the spiritual conflict in which, while abiding in the wilderness, he is engaged, and the character of the enemies with whom he has to contend. He is exhorted to be strong *in the Lord*, because he alone it is who *can* give the Christian soldier ability to contend successfully against his opponents.

There is nothing more injurious to those who are called to fight the good fight of faith, than the forgetfulness of the strength and wiliness of the enemies with whom they have to contend. Because of the power possessed by his enemies, and of his utter incapacity to cope with it by any might of his own, the believer is directed to seek for strength adequate to his need, and to look to the only source from whence he can be supplied; in a word, he is to "be strong *in the Lord*, and in the power of his might."

One man may be enabled to overcome another by the exercise of his *own* strength; but in no other way than by the mighty power of God can a man be victorious over the devil, who is here so presented to our view, that we may discern the means by which he obtains victories over men.

There are two ways in which Satan is here presented to us—he has wiles, and he has fiery darts; as respects the children of God, the great object that Satan seeks is, to keep them from knowing their standing in Christ; their union with him in his death and resurrection.

But the Holy Spirit, through the apostle, shews that the victory of Christ is one in which every child of God shares. The ready answer to the doubts and fears suggested by Satan is this, “Christ is risen.” The shield of faith enables us to know that we are conquerors *in Christ*; and the most effectual way of combating successfully the enemy is to see the place to which we are risen, as being united to Christ—parts of his mystical body.

This wondrous standing is revealed to *faith*, which enables the believer to know himself united to Christ, who is raised “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:” therefore it is said to him, “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

A consideration of the first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, and of the connection existing between it and the 6th chapter, will lead to a more correct understanding of this subject. In the first chapter, from the 3rd to the 9th verse, we see that all the blessings possessed by believers are *bestowed* on them by God, and are his *free gift*: originating in his will, they flow from the Father in the way of

grace. And it is their privilege not only to be conscious of this standing (that they are seen by the Father in Christ, and loved even as he is loved), but to live in the enjoyment of these things.

We are told afterwards what these blessings are. Satan would fain prevent our enjoyment of them, by suggesting to us that they are too great, too glorious to be possessed by creatures so weak, so helpless and depraved, as all the descendants of fallen Adam are; but the believer sees them by faith, and knows they have been *freely given* to him; and because he has a perception of them, in proportion to the clearness of that perception, he is regardless of the riches, honours, and pleasures of the world.

All Satan's objections are met by the consideration of the *grace* and *good pleasure* of God. If we believe not God's declarations, we rob *him* of his *glory*, and *Christ* of his *honour*; and the doing this answers the object of Satan; it is acting as he would have us to do.

The whole armour of God is exactly fitted to the saint, whose blessing is to use it in the full apprehension of its value.

The power of all separation to God is, "ability to discern the greatness, the extent, and variety of the blessings which result from redemption, to the praise of God's grace and glory." The saint has all these blessings, and God has all the glory accruing from the saint's possession of them. The character of the conflict in which the saint is engaged is *heavenly*;

indeed, the whole epistle relates to what is heavenly ; thus the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd chapters give us the heavenly calling of God's children ; the 4th gives (not the ablution of the flesh, as practised among the Jews) but the heavenly ministries ; the 5th gives us the heavenly creature's walk while in the wilderness ; the 6th presents to our view the saint in combat with his enemies. And here we see that his calling is heavenly, that he is God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works ; and that his walk is to be (like his calling) heavenly, being strengthened in the Lord, for his calling, and having the power of his might ; thus the heavenly creature is presented to us, as taken into a new condition, and sustained by divine power, in the circumstances in which he is graciously placed. We see him, throughout the epistle, in his call, walk, and combat.

The conflict, detailed in the book of Joshua, between Israel and the nations with whom they warred, is not our pattern, because the Lord is not now contending for the *earth*. David, armed only with a sling and a few smooth stones taken out of the brook, engaged in combat with Goliath the Philistine giant, gives us more the character of our conflict ; for we are utterly weak, while our enemy is possessed of great strength : but though we have no might in ourselves, we may be stronger than all who are against us in the Lord's strength.

The power of God is ever exercised in behalf of his weak, helpless children, and *their* power consists



in the perception of this truth ; to be strong they must know their standing, portion, hope, and calling. When possessed of this apprehension, they are enabled to stand against the wiles of Satan ; to contend successfully with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with spiritual wickedness in high places. God shews them their strength in the use of the armour wherewith he supplies them ; but Satan seeks to keep them from the knowledge of what belongs to God's armour.

The 10th verse of the 3rd chapter discloses to our view what the purpose of God is, as regards the enemies with whom his children have to contend. We are there told that principalities are learning by the Church God's manifold wisdom ; with this wisdom those principalities become acquainted by the way in which he acts towards saints, and by what he has given to them. What is said in the 12th verse of the 6th chapter, respecting the believer's spiritual enemies, that they are the rulers of the darkness of this world, gives us a striking view of the awful power possessed by them over this world, and over those who are walking according to its course : it shows the fearful case of vast multitudes around us. Now Satan desires to throw the saints off from God ; to keep them at a distance from him ; not to let them see their portion : and he seeks to attain this object by suggesting to them wrong views of Scripture. When a person's eyes are enlightened by the Holy Ghost (who alone can communicate a

right apprehension of the truths revealed in Scripture—who only can impart a saving understanding of them), he from that moment ceases to be of the world, the moral world, which is blinded by Satan, whose lies tend to darken the minds of men in every thing that relates to God. All who are in darkness are of the world, but when a sinner's eyes are enlightened by God to believe in Jesus, he is no longer of the night, nor of darkness, but is a child of light and of the day; he can then say, "I am not of the world;" he then becomes a heavenly man, and is enabled to enjoy heavenly things. Being Christ's, united to him in death and resurrection, he has crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts; and, being dead with Christ, he is to "reckon himself to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God." Satan often throws a man's thoughts off Christ on himself, and thus deprives him of the peace which it is his privilege ever to have.—But the believer is continually to remember that God has blessed him with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places *in* Christ Jesus; that what is Christ's is his portion, and that his combat is with him who is the ruler of this world. Carnality of mind arises from not having a clear perception of our wondrous standing—of the position in which grace has placed us.

Believers have only *one person* to encounter as their adversary, that is the Devil. The world and the flesh indeed are things which work against the believer if he does not walk in the Spirit, and they are means

often used by Satan against us ; but he is the only *person* who is against us. God is never against us ; but we are always able to say, "God is for us." (Rom. viii<sup>†</sup> 31.) This was not so with Jesus. Satan was his adversary, as he is ours ; but besides this *one* adversary, common to us and Jesus, he had to meet God's justice and holiness, and God was not *for him* when he, through grace, was made sin for us. Believers have not to meet God as their adversary, because Jesus, to whom no wrath was due, has borne the wrath due to them, and God always acts towards them as towards children whom he loves. Jesus, when baptized, heard a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well pleased*." It was not until after this that he was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. So all believers are declared to be the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. iii. 26) ; to be loved by the Father even as he is loved (John xvii. 23), and they should see the existence of the relationship subsisting between him and them while they are engaged in conflict with Satan. The Epistle to the Ephesians discloses their union with Christ and God. And it is to be remembered that, as the only-begotten obedient Son he *once* bore God's wrath due to us that we might find God always for us.

The Church, when shown its standing, is made acquainted with the state and circumstances of the world—is taught to know that the present is an evil day, and that it has numerous and powerful enemies

to contend with, even "the rulers of the darkness of this world, with spiritual wickedness in high places," but that God has provided an armour offensive and defensive, suited to its necessities; an armour of which he has also given a full description. The great question between *God* and *it* is settled: it is loved as Christ is loved; but its members have each moment to settle a question between themselves and *Satan*. In conflicting with *him*, they are put on the exercise of the love which they have to God; and are thus afforded an opportunity of shewing the extent of it, and growing in it. It is the devil with whom they have to contend; they meet Satan in every circumstance in which they are at any time placed, and they can only conquer him when they are clothed with God's armour. Satan, because of the dominion exercised by him over it, is called the god of this world; he is the spirit who now works or energizes in the children of disobedience, which all unbelievers are. The saints are in the evil day, yet they may obtain strength, enabling them to withstand the assaults of their enemies, and to overcome continually the devil, the world, and the flesh. They are called upon to be "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." Their standing in Jesus is shewn in the previous part of the Epistle; by this standing, which is of grace, their conduct is to be settled, and NOT their standing by their conduct; for just in proportion as they have discernment of their standing (as they see what it is) they are strong. It

is *in the Lord* they are strong: while they walk in the power of those things which they have in Him, they are more than conquerors. Jesus walked in the intelligence of sonship, and in the view of the glory; and thus should the saints ever walk—in the consciousness of their high standing—in the apprehension of their relationship to God, and of what they shall be when mortality will be swallowed up of life. “We wrestle,” says the apostle in writing to the Ephesians, “not against flesh and blood, but against principalities,” &c.; “Wherefore, take unto you the *whole* armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day.” Here we are taught to use, not a *part* of the armour only, but the whole of it, because we require *all* truth—the entire of the armour—to be enabled to contend successfully with Satan. God knows what we want that we may possess ability to conquer Satan, and he gives us an armour adequate to our need, designing that we should unceasingly use *all* of it. For the present is the evil day, throughout the whole of which it is necessary that we should be constantly clad in this armour: and it is very important that we should remember there will be no termination of the evil day until Jesus shall come again. We are to seek throughout the whole day to be strong, and to shew the power of faith, manifesting it in overcoming temptations, and withstanding the fiery darts of Satan.

The armour, as here described, shews us what the

suitable walk of a saint is ; he should "stand, having his loins *girt* about with truth ;" having all his energies upheld by the truth, by an intelligent acquaintance with what Scripture reveals ; "putting on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness," or holiness of *truth* ; truth should keep his affections, and guide the members of his body in practical holiness.

. He should have on the *breastplate* of righteousness ; his conscience, being enlightened by the Holy Spirit, should affect his heart and life, leading him to act righteously, though always in grace, towards others. Having, by means of an enlightened conscience, ability to distinguish good from evil, and to know what the will of God is, in the different circumstances in which from time to time he may be placed, he should yield the members of his body (as one possessing a consciousness that he is alive from the dead) as instruments of righteousness unto God.

And his feet should be *shod* with the preparation of the gospel of peace : wherever he goes he should bear about with him the gospel or message of peace. Not giving way to the lusts of the flesh, not yielding to its affections, but denying ungodliness, mortifying his members which are upon the earth, seeking those things that are above, and using the shield of faith to protect the whole man ; the other pieces of armour being more *local*. The power of faith is especially needful.

The *helmet* of salvation is the assured—the confi-

dent hope of glory. We are to remember that when scripture speaks of *salvation*, we are not always to understand by it *justification*; for this term is sometimes used in reference to the glory which awaits all true believers; the undoubting expectation of which is their helmet: and their thoughts should be occupied by the contemplation of what they are speedily to possess.

The *sword* of the Spirit is the word of God; this sword the Spirit alone can enable us to wield effectually in our conflict with Satan, who cannot be overcome by the word, unless when it is used by the energy of the Holy Spirit. The saint, though clad in this armour, is nevertheless to remember his own utter weakness; that he is entirely dependent for strength on God's power, and that unless upheld by him, he can do nothing against Satan: because of this, he is to be always in the spirit of *prayer*. His *path* is here shewn, as is also the *object* on which he is to set his affections. He is to walk righteously, while he walks in peace. He can put on this armour, because he is a saint. The first and last chapters of this Epistle are connected; and that connection shews us that *we* do not enter into conflict with Satan as Christ did; but that it is in the power of his *victory* that we are enabled to conquer. He is above all principalities and powers; his engagement with them is terminated, and *in him* believers are raised up above them; *in him* they are more than conquerors.

In reference to the saint, we see in Scripture that two things are always presented as connected ; one is, what *he is* as united to Christ, the other, what *his walk* through this wilderness should be. We cannot rightly engage in the conflict spoken of in the 6th chapter, until we see our standing as that is shewn in the first chapter ; there we learn that Christ's death is a life-giving death ; there we see *Christ's* victory, and ours in him. He died that sin might be deprived of its dominion—that its reign might terminate. The perception of our victory over Satan, because of our being united to Christ, fits us for the conflict in which we are to be engaged with principalities and powers, &c. We enter into this conflict not to be *made* one with Christ, but because we have been united to him ; we fight, not to *attain a standing*, but to *evidence* our thankfulness for such a standing having been given to us. The question of condemnation as to *sin* is at an end, because the flesh is judged, and we stand before God as *children*, and are seen by him in Jesus. Nevertheless, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth : the Father in love and in wisdom disciplines his children, and in doing so deals with them as with sons ; “for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ?”

Believers are not to make light of their walk, but should walk as in communion with the Father, as in fellowship with him who is light, and in whom is no darkness at all, as witnesses for Christ, who has been rejected of the world. The moral power of the new



birth is kept up by holiness. It would be well if the conscience of believers were kept tender, as well *after* they see their standing as *before* they discern it. While this epistle shows what the *standing* of believers is, that they are dead and risen with Christ, it also discloses the conversation which becomes the gospel; it informs us that we are not now to take carnal weapons, or to fight with them, but to use the spiritual armour which is provided for us: that we have not an earthly place to contend for, but that we are to fight for heavenly places with principalities and powers, and that the enemy who could keep us from earthly places is not the one with whom we have to contend.

The book of Joshua furnishes us with principles for the regulation of our conduct whilst journeying through this wilderness-world. There, in the capture of Jericho, a city strongly fortified and defended by a numerous and powerful army, while the Israelites were in themselves weak and powerless, we yet see them victors, *because God* fought for them: there, too, we learn principle in the discomfiture of the Israelites by the men of Ai, a place so small and destitute of strength, that the men who were sent to view it returned to Joshua, saying, "Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand go up and smite Ai, for the inhabitants thereof are few." Israel, however, fled before them, because evil was with them, *Achan* having taken of the accursed thing: "Therefore the children of Israel could not

stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before them, because they were accursed, having taken of the accursed thing, putting it among their own stuff, and having also stolen and dissembled." From the record of these things contained in Scripture, valuable lessons are learned, and very important instructions are received; thus, the wily conduct of the inhabitants of Gibeon presents to our view the power of *deceit*, a deep evil which God only can unravel. The principles taught in the book of Joshua show that, in this dispensation, believers are not to go to war, because their calling is a *heavenly* one; each of them is now a new man, a new creation in Christ Jesus; there is neither Jew nor Gentile among them, but both are alike sons of God; they have their place and calling, as standing in that relationship to him, and they contend with an enemy whom they have already conquered in Christ.

The perfect security of believers is shown in various parts of Scripture; it is set before us in Hebrews ii. 10, where it is declared that God is engaged in bringing his many sons to glory; and surely his purpose with respect to them cannot be frustrated. We see the security of believers also in 1 Peter i. 5, where the apostle tells us that the children of God are "kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time:" here we find the term *salvation* connected with the glory which awaits all the children of God; but in the 9th verse we see it in connection with the

state of the soul ; thus we perceive this word connected both with justification and with glory. While the saint has received the one, he is waiting for the other. The exhortation in Philippians ii. 12, "Work out your own salvation," shows the intermediate state. This passage, in connection with the following verse, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do," though often wrongly interpreted, is a most comforting one to those who have a right apprehension of it.

In the previous chapter, the apostle says, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now ; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ ;" this shows the *certainty* of every believer's participation of eternal bliss and glory. "Christ being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him." So all who have died with Christ will live and reign with him.

In the 3rd chapter, we see Paul exhibiting the effect resulting from an apprehension of union with Christ in resurrection ; humbling himself after his example, renouncing all confidence in the flesh, and despising all that it could glory in. He says, in the 12th verse of the 2nd chapter, "As ye have always

obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:" in speaking thus to them, he wanted to draw their thoughts to God away from men, and to throw them on the exercise of his power in their behalf; his design was, not that they should doubt their full acceptance, not that they should question their justification, but that they should, through strength imparted to them by God, manifest the relationship which existed between him and them, while they showed by their conduct in the eyes of men that they were the sons of God. Their fellowship in the gospel took them out of the flesh, which was crucified, and they became united to the second Adam, and he desired that they might be "blameless and harmless, living as the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse people, shining as lights in the world." By the "fear and trembling" with which they were to work out their salvation, we are to understand a fear, lest the flesh should come in and spoil God's work: the flesh had no power either to will or to do in the matter of this salvation. Paul, in this passage, shows that the saint is possessed both of strength and security, though it is frequently so interpreted as to occasion fright and apprehension, rather than *trust* and *confidence*: he does not call on the Philippians to *make* themselves the sons of God, but to *act* as such; he tells them, for their encouragement, that God, who begins a good work in believers, *will* carry

it on till the day of Christ: in order to strengthen them, while engaged in contending with their spiritual enemies, he tells them that God takes part with them in the conflict.

While we have, in Ephesians vi. 10-18, a description of the conflict in which the believer is engaged, and of the armour which is needed by him for the contest, we have also a description of the *soldier* who is to fight; it is he who is *in the Lord*—who is a new creation in Christ Jesus; this armour can be used only by such. God's children have two blessed things in him—infinite *power*, as seen in the first chapter of Ephesians, and boundless *love*, as shown in the third chapter: their array is to consist of both this power and love; and should they not see their perfect security, when almighty power and unfathomable love are continually exercised towards them? when, because of this, they are in an impregnable citadel, in a fortress so strong as to be capable of resisting all the assaults of their enemies? Paul first shows us the man *in the Lord*, and then this man engaged in conflict, clad in the armour provided for him. But we should ever remember that the *standing* of the believer is always *above his experience*; for God dwelleth in light which no man can see. The man who is in the Lord is to put on the armour provided for him: *his* is a heavenly fight; he is not to wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, &c.; he is not to look for an earthly inheritance; being a new creation in Christ, he is to possess a

heavenly inheritance ; the *throne*, not the *footstool*, is his. He is to "put on the whole armour of God, that he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." *Thus* armed, he is to stand in the midst of the battle.

Jesus was the first person engaged in this battle, from which he returned victorious ; and in his glorious triumph all believers, members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, are sharers.

Joshua acted rightly in taking a spear, as he had earthly enemies to contend with, as he had to wrestle with flesh and blood ; but now our conflict is altogether different ; a spear is not suitable for a saint, is not a part of God's armour ; we have to combat not with men, but with spiritual wickedness in high places. Our feet are *to be shod*, because we are to walk as dear children. If we *patiently* endure while trampled on by men, while subjected to mockery and violence for Christ's sake, in this we show that we are victors, even as Jesus overcame by meekly submitting to reproach and enmity from the world—by walking in peace, though reviled and trampled on. The exhortation, "Above all, take the *shield of faith*," throws us back on the consideration of our standing. We are to live in the consciousness, that being in Christ we are rooted and grounded in love, and blessed with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places. The Spirit values faith ; and we here see the extent of the value which he puts upon it, by his saying, "*Above all, take its shield.*" In thus speaking of

faith, he shows that it is valued by him above even the hope of glory.

The *sword*, which is a part of this armour, is an *aggressive* weapon; it is expressive of the advancement of him who takes it; he is to use not only what is *defensive*, but also what is *offensive*; he is not merely to withstand the attacks of the enemy, but to be often engaged in *assailing* him.

He is, moreover, to "pray always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit; watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints," looking around him to see how his fellow-combatants are acting while engaged in their conflict; for they are all dear to the heart of God. "And for me," adds the apostle, "that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." He thus desired their prayers because he was prominent in the conflict, and therefore the eyes of the other combatants were directed to him.

This armour carries us beyond our standing, even into the combat in which we are to be incessantly engaged. While occupied in the conflict, mindful of the glory secured for us, we should be able to say in faith with one of old, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

To be trampled on is *our victory*; but if *Joshua* had been subjected to this treatment from his enemies, it would have been an evidence of his *defeat*: and herein we see the difference between the past and

the present dispensation. Both faith and patience ought to be exhibited by every saint, exposed as each is while here to trial and suffering; indeed, for the manifestation of faith and patience, the Lord has left believers to sojourn for a fleeting period in this world. Faith enables its possessor confidently to expect admission into never-ending bliss and glory; and to look at Satan as a vanquished foe; but the power which he uses against the saint requires the exercise of faith and patience. The shield of faith enables us to know that Satan is a conquered enemy; that he has power only for a short time; and that the conflict in which we are engaged with him is not ours, but the Lord's. When we forget these truths, we are borne down easily enough.

*If we wrongly imagine that Satan is no more formidable, no more to be dreaded than earthly enemies, he dwindles down into a nothingness similar to our own, and we, being deceived as to the facts of the case, do not feel our need of divine power to enable us to overcome him.*

We should hear God saying to us, as he did to Jehoshaphat, in 2 Chronicles xx. 15, "Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but mine." We should always remember that we are God's children, and that, having conferred upon us great and distinguishing favours, he has put on us the responsibility of glorifying him, and of showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into marvel-



lous light. We cannot walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, without constant prayer and communion, which are needful to enable us to keep up the apprehension of what our standing is: setting before us, while acquainted with that standing, the example of Christ: and as he, in serving the Father, had a knowledge of his worthiness, so we, in serving Christ, should have a perception of his worthiness.

As standing in the relationship to God of *children*, we are called upon to act consistently with our obligations, to walk worthy of God, and to maintain to the end a conflict not with the powers of earth, but with principalities in heavenly places; regarding as our directory through the wilderness that word which is given to us for a rule of faith and practice, just as the Israelites had the fiery and cloudy pillar to guide their steps, while they were journeying towards the promised land.

It is encouraging, when noticing the number and power of our spiritual enemies, to dwell on the fact, that the battle is not ours but the Lord's, and that therefore victory over them must be certain; to consider that God's object in dealing as he is doing with the Church, is by it to shew in ages to come his wisdom, love, and power. Our Lord has two battles to fight, the *earthly* and the *heavenly*; though he is now disowned and rejected by the world, yet the time is at hand when all shall call him blessed. These two battles are the Lord's; in each of them victory in the issue is certain.

The Christian warrior is here presented to our view, protected by the shield of faith, and sustained in conflicting with powerful foes by the confident hope of glory. But while belonging to *the day*, and waiting for it, he should be ashamed to remain on the defensive only, for the character of offensive war also belongs to him ; he is called to use the sword of the Spirit in advocating truth and exposing error ; being moreover linked to the body of Jesus, he is to look not merely to his own conduct, but also to that of others.

Believers are not contending for the *life* which they already possess, nor for the *glory* which is secured for them, but they are fighting with enemies for the maintenance of the Lord's glory. It seems strange that the same person can be a *child* and a *warrior*, and that though a warrior he should yet be employed in bringing to others the gospel of *peace* ; that, though utterly weak in himself, he should nevertheless be successfully engaged in conflict with him who is the *god* of this world (2 Cor. iv. 4), and who exercises all his power and wiles in endeavouring to overcome him.

It is solemn and important to consider eternity as connected with this conflict ; to know that all in which the sinner had previously trusted must be thrown away ere victory can be obtained ; to perceive God's strength revealed to aid the weakness of the children, and *provided* for that very purpose ; to see that though the child of God may be occasionally

overcome, yet this final victory is registered; that though *he* may forget God, yet he is not forgotten *by* God,—that the Lord is not ashamed of those who are poor and weak. If believers were acting consistently with their profession—were exhibiting that entire separation from the world which they ought evermore to manifest;—if they were bold and uncompromising in testimony to Christ, they would now, as they formerly were, be subjected to the mockery and enmity of those whose conduct they would thus reprove; and if they followed the example of Christ, they would be regardless of the riches, honours, smiles, and frowns of a world, the whole of which lieth in the wicked one. To see a saint *hiding* himself in earthly splendour, *veiling* his real dignity with the reputation or rank of the world, is very grievous to those whose minds are spiritual. The only suitable place for the believer to occupy, during his abode on earth, is one of suffering and trial, for the disciple is not above his master nor the servant above his Lord. It is comforting to know that the name of every one of the Lord's warriors is written in the book of life (Phil. iv. 3): unless we have this conviction as to our own names, we shall faint while contending with our powerful enemies. We are taught in Exodus iii. to know, that when any one is engaged in the Lord's work, all things are ordered for his advantage. The same comforting truth we see in 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, where Paul says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course,

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

God settled every thing with Moses before he sent him to Pharaoh for the purpose of delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt. 1st, He makes known to him his name, directing him to say to the Israelites, "I AM hath sent me unto you." 2ndly, He tells him of the hindrance which they should experience from the king of Egypt, who would refuse to let them go, exercising his great power to prevent them. 3rdly, He shews him his own interference in behalf of Israel, saying, "I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof, and after that he will let you go." We, in the blindness of our understandings, would prefer passing along at our ease through smooth things, while journeying towards heaven, to being placed in circumstances of trial and difficulty ; but these are always so ordered as to promote the advantage of the Lord's children. So, we find him saying to the Israelites, "I will give you favour in the sight of the Egyptians ; and it shall come to pass, that when ye go ye shall not go empty." Every thing is settled for the saint before he begins the battle. Paul had to go into prison, that by means of his confinement there the conversion of the gaoler should be effected : this shews that situations

of difficulty, subjecting us to temporary suffering and sorrow, may be the most salutary for us, while, at the same time, they conduce most to the welfare of others and the glory of God. If we unreservedly obey the Lord, following fully the example of Christ, we may confidently rely on his power, repose in his love, and feel a peaceful serenity of mind, whatever be the trial to which we are exposed. The only place in the wilderness where manna could be obtained, was round about the camp of the Israelites, all of whose movements were directed by the Lord ; but had they, regardless of the pillar's guidance, pursued their own way, they would have been left destitute of the provision graciously made for the supply of their wants. Faith is manifested by placing an implicit dependence on God's power, from whom it must have a warrant ; and this world is the place where it is to be exercised : in proportion as we manifest it, we honour him who bestows it, and possess comfort and joy in our own souls.

“ When Israel, by divine command,  
The pathless desert trod,  
They found, throughout the barren land,  
A sure resource in God.

Like them, we have a rest in view,  
Secure from hostile powers ;  
Like them, we pass a desert too,  
But Israel's God is ours.”

## THE LAMB OF GOD.

REV. v.-xxii.

It would be too wide a field to comment in succession on each instance in this book in which, in different aspects and varied connections, we are brought into contact with the *Lamb*. In tracing through, from the fifth chapter to the end, "the Lamb" is ever in the ascendancy.

The song of heaven is, "Worthy is *the Lamb* that was slain." (v. 6-13.) It is from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of *the Lamb*, that the men of this world seek to hide themselves in fear. (vi. 15, 16.) The palm-bearing multitude before the throne have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (vii. 9-14.) It is *the Lamb* that feeds them, and leads them (as a shepherd) "to living fountains of waters." (vii. 17.) It is the blood of the Lamb that answers all the accusations of Satan, as the accuser of the brethren day and night, on high. (xii. 10, 11.) It is in the book of life of *the Lamb slain* that the names of the faithful are found written amidst the corruptions of the beast. (xiii. 8.) It is *the Lamb*, also, on Mount Zion with the sealed ones, whose honour and privilege it is to "follow *the Lamb* whithersoever he goeth." (xiv. 1-4.) Again, whoever worships the beast or his image, and receives his mark in his forehead or in his hand, will be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of *the Lamb*.

(xiv. 9, 10.) It is the song of Moses, and the song of *the Lamb*, that is sung with the "harps of God" by those who, in victory over the beast, stand on "the sea of glass." (xv. 2-4.) It is against *the Lamb* that the beast and the ten kings make war; and *the Lamb* shall overcome them; for he is "*King of kings, and Lord of lords.*" (xvii. 12-14.) It is the marriage of *the Lamb* that strikes the note of joy in heaven; and to be *called* to the marriage supper of the Lamb is the mark of honour and blessing then. (xix. 7-9.) And after the seals are loosed, and the trumpets are blown, and the vials poured out—when Satan is bound, and the clangour of earth's judgment is hushed, it is "*the Bride, the Lamb's wife,*" that is the wondrously glorious spectacle on which the apostle is called to gaze. (xxi. 9.) They are the twelve *apostles of the Lamb*, whose names are in the twelve foundations of the "holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." (xxi. 14.) Of this city the Lord God Almighty and *the Lamb* are the temple, and "*the Lamb* is the light thereof." (xxi. 22, 23.) There is to be no inhabitant in this glorious city "whose name is not written in the Lamb's book of life." (xxi. 27.) And onwards "the river of the water of life" flows out of "the throne of God and *the Lamb.*" (xxii. 1.) And finally, there is to be *no more curse*, because the throne of God and of *the Lamb* are to be there. (xxii. 3, 4, 5.)

"Rest of the saints above,  
Jerusalem of God,  
Who in thy palaces of love,  
Thy golden streets, have trod?

To me thy joy to tell,  
Those courts secure from ill,  
Where God Himself vouchsafes to dwell,  
And every bosom fill.

Who shall to me that joy  
Of saint-thronged courts declare,  
Tell of that constant sweet employ  
My spirit longs to share?

That rest, secure from ill,  
No cloud of grief e'er stains;  
Unfailing praise each heart doth fill,  
And love eternal reigns.

The Lamb is there, my soul!  
There God himself doth rest;  
In love divine diffused through all,  
With him supremely blest.

God and the Lamb—'tis well!  
I know that source divine  
Of joy and love no tongue can tell,  
Yet know that all is mine.

But who that glorious blaze  
Of living light shall tell,  
Where all his brightness God displays,  
And the Lamb's glories dwell?

God and the Lamb shall there  
The light and temple be,  
And radiant hosts for ever share  
The unveiled mystery."