



VERSE 1. And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads. 2. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: 3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. 4. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb. 5. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

**I**T is a pleasing feature of the prophetic word that the people of God are never brought into positions of trial and difficulty, and there abandoned. Leading them down into scenes of danger, the voice of prophecy does not there cease, leaving them to guess their fate, in doubt, perhaps despair, as to the final result; but it takes them through to the end, and shows the issue in every conflict. The first five verses of Revelation xiv. are an instance of this. The thirteenth chapter closed with the people of God, a small and apparently weak and defenceless company, in deadly conflict with the mightiest powers of earth under the leadership of the dragon. A decree is passed that they shall worship the image and receive the mark, under pain of death if they refuse to comply. What can the people of God do in such a conflict and in such an extremity? What will become of them? Glance forward with the apostle to the next scene in the programme, and what do we behold?—The very same company standing on Mount Zion with

the Lamb—a victorious host, harping on symphonious harps their triumph in the court of heaven. Thus are we assured that when the time of our conflict with the powers of darkness comes, deliverance is not only certain, but will immediately be given.

That the 144,000 here seen on Mount Zion are the saints who were just before brought to view as objects of the wrath of the beast and his image, we have the very best reasons for believing.

1. They are identical with those sealed in Revelation vii., and these have already been shown to be the righteous who are alive at the second coming of Christ.

2. They are the overcomers in the sixth or Philadelphian state of the Church. (See Rev. iii. 11, 12.)

3. They are “redeemed from among men” (verse 4), an expression which can be applicable only to those who are translated from among the living. Paul laboured, if by any means he might attain to a resurrection out from among the dead. Phil. iii. 11. This is the hope of those who sleep in Jesus—a resurrection from the dead. A redemption from among men, from among the living, must mean a different experience; it can mean only one thing, and that is translation. Hence the 144,000 are the living saints, who will be translated at the second coming of Christ. (See on verse 13, note.)

On what Mount Zion does John see this company standing?—The Mount Zion above; for the voice of harpers, which no doubt is uttered by these very ones, is heard from heaven; the same Zion from which the Lord utters His voice when He speaks to His people in close connection with the coming of the Son of man. Joel iii. 16; Heb. xii. 26-28; Rev. xvi. 17. A just consideration of the fact that there is a Mount Zion in heaven and a Jerusalem above would be a powerful antidote for many errors concerning the age to come.

A few more particulars only respecting the 144,000, in addition to those given in chapter vii., will claim notice in these brief remarks.

1. They have the name of the Father in their foreheads. In chapter vii., they are said to have the seal of God in their foreheads. An important key to an understanding of the seal of God is thus furnished us; for we at once perceive that the Father regards His name as His seal. That commandment of the law which contains God's name is therefore the seal of the law. The Sabbath com-

mandment is the only one which has this; that is, it is the only one that contains the descriptive title which distinguishes the true God from all false gods. Wherever this was placed, there the Father's name was said to be (Deut. xii. 5, 14, 18, 21; xiv. 23; xvi. 2, 6; etc.); and whoever keeps this commandment has, consequently, the seal of the living God.

2. They sing a new song which no other company is able to learn. In chapter xv. 3, it is called the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. The song of Moses, as may be seen by reference to Exodus xv., was the song of his experience and deliverance. Therefore the song of the 144,000, is the song of their deliverance. No others can join in it; for no other company will have had an experience like theirs.

3. They were not defiled with women. A woman is in Scripture the symbol of a church, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a corrupt woman an apostate church. It is, then, a characteristic of this company that at the time of their deliverance they are not defiled with, or have no connection with, the fallen churches of the land. Yet we are not to understand that they never had any connection with these churches; for it is only at a certain time that people become defiled by them. In chapter xviii. 4, we find a call issued to the people of God while they are in Babylon, to come out, *lest* they become partakers of her sins. Heeding that call, and leaving her connection, they escape the defilement of her sins. So of the 144,000; though some of them may have once had a connection with corrupt churches, they sever that connection when it would become sin to retain it longer.

4. They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. We understand that this is spoken of them in their redeemed state. Having followed Him fully on the earth, they sustain a correspondingly close relation to Him in heaven. They are the special companions of their glorified Lord in the kingdom. Chapter vii. 17, speaking of the same company and at the same time, says: "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and *shall lead* them unto living fountains of waters."

5. They are "firstfruits" unto God and the Lamb. This term appears to be applied to different ones to denote especial conditions. Christ is the firstfruits as the antitype of the wave-sheaf. The first receivers of the Gospel are called by James (chapter i. 18) a kind of firstfruits. So the 144,000, ripening for the heavenly garner here



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on earth during the troublous scenes of the last days, being translated to heaven without seeing death, and occupying a pre-eminent position, are, in this sense, as would seem very consistent, called firstfruits unto God and the Lamb. With this description of the 144,000 triumphant, the line of prophecy commencing with chapter xii. comes to a close.

VERSE 6. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, 7. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. 8. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. 9. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: 11. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. 12. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

*The First Message.*—Another scene and another chain of prophetic events is introduced in these verses. We know that this is so, because the preceding verses of this chapter describe a company of the redeemed in the immortal state—a scene which constitutes a part of the prophetic chain commencing with the first verse of chapter xii., and with which that chain of events closes; for no prophecy goes beyond the immortal state; and whenever we are brought in a line of prophecy to the end of the world, we know that that line there ends, and that what is introduced subsequently belongs to a new series of events. The Revelation, in particular, is composed of these independent prophetic chains, of which fact we have had a number of examples.

The messages described in these verses are sometimes spoken of as “the three angels’ messages of Revelation xiv.” We are justified by the prophecy itself in applying to them the ordinals, first, second, and third; for the last one is distinctly called “the *third* angel,” from which it follows that the one preceding was the *second* angel; and the one before that, the *first* angel.

These angels are evidently symbolic; for the work assigned

them is that of preaching the everlasting Gospel to the people. The preaching of the Gospel has not been intrusted to literal angels; it has been committed unto men, who are responsible for this sacred trust placed in their hands. Each of these three angels, therefore, symbolizes a body of religious teachers, who are commissioned to make known to their fellow-men the special truths which constitute the burden of these messages respectively.

But we may consider further that angels, literally, are intensely interested in the work of grace among men, being sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. And as there is order in all the movements and appointments of the heavenly world, it will not be fanciful to suppose that a literal angel has charge and oversight of the work of each message. Heb. i. 14; Rev. i. 1; xxii. 16.

In these symbols we see the sharp contrast the Bible draws between earthly and heavenly things. Whenever earthly governments are to be represented—even the best of them—the most appropriate symbol that can be found is a cruel and ravenous wild beast; but when the work of God is to be set forth, an angel, clad in beauty and girt with power, is employed to symbolize it.

The importance of the work set forth in the verses last quoted will be apparent to anyone who will attentively study them. Whenever these messages are due, and are proclaimed, they must, from the very nature of the case, constitute the great theme of interest for that generation. We do not mean that the great mass of mankind then living will give them attention; for in every age of the world the present truth for that time has been generally overlooked; but they will constitute the theme to which the people would pay most earnest regard if they were awake to that which concerns their highest interests. When God commissions His ministers to announce to the world that the hour of His judgment is come, that Babylon has fallen, and that whoever worships the beast and his image must drink of His wrath poured out unmingled into the cup of His indignation—a threatening more terrible than any other which can be found in the Scriptures of truth—no man, except at the peril of his soul, can treat these warnings as non-essential, passing them by with neglect and disregard. Hence the necessity, and especially in the present age, when so many evidences betoken the soon coming of earth's final crisis, to understand the work of the Lord, lest we lose the benefit of the present truth.

This angel of Rev. xiv. 6 is called "another angel," from the fact that John had previously seen an angel flying through heaven in a similar manner, as described in chapter viii. 13, proclaiming that the last three of the series of seven trumpets were woe trumpets. This was near the close of the sixth century. (See under chapter viii. 12.)

The first point to be determined is the chronology of this message. When may the proclamation, "The hour of His judgment is come," be consistently expected? The bare possibility that it may be in our own day renders it very becoming in us to examine this question with serious attention; but the great probability, nay, more, the positive proof that this is so, which will appear in the development of this argument, should set every pulse bounding, and every heart beating high with a sense of the thrilling importance of this hour.

Three positions only are possible on this question of the chronology of this prophecy, and as might be expected, all of them are taken by different expositors. These positions are (1) That this message has been given in the past; as, first, in the days of the apostles; or, secondly, in the days of the Reformers; (2) that it is to be given in a future age; or (3) that it belongs to the present generation.

We inquire, first, respecting the past. The very nature of the message forbids the idea that it could have been given in the apostles' days. They did not proclaim that the hour of God's judgment had come. If they had, it would not have been true, and their message would have been stamped with the infamy of falsehood. They did have something to say respecting the judgment; but they pointed to an indefinite future for its accomplishment. By Christ's own words (Matt. x. 15; xi. 24) the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah, Tyre, Sidon, Chorazin, and Capernaum, was located indefinitely in the future from that day. Paul declared to the superstitious Athenians that God had appointed a day in which He would judge the world. Acts xvii. 31. He reasoned before Felix "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Acts xxiv. 25. To the Romans he wrote directing their minds forward to a time when God should judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. Rom. ii. 16. He pointed the Corinthians forward to a time when we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. 2 Cor. v. 10. James wrote to the brethren scattered abroad that they were,

at some time in the future, to be judged by the law of liberty. Jas. ii. 12. And both Peter and Jude speak of the first rebel angels as reserved unto the judgment of the great day, still in the future at that time (2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6), to which the ungodly in this world are also reserved. 2 Pet. ii. 9. How different is all this from ringing out upon the world the startling declaration that "the hour of His judgment *is* come," a cry which must be heard whenever the solemn message before us is fulfilled!

From the days of the apostles nothing has taken place which anyone, so far as we are aware, could construe into a suggestion of the fulfilment of the message, till we come to the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Here some seem disposed to make quite a determined stand, claiming that Luther and his co-labourers gave the first message, and that the two following messages have been given since his day. This is a question to be decided by historical fact rather than by argument; and hence we inquire for the evidence that the Reformers made any such proclamation. Their teaching has been very fully recorded, and their writings preserved. When and where did they arouse the world with the proclamation that the hour of God's judgment had come? We find no record that such was the burden of their preaching at all. On the contrary, it is recorded of Luther that he placed the judgment some three hundred years in the future from his day. Such records ought to be decisive, so far as the Reformers are concerned.

The foregoing considerations being sufficient to forbid utterly the application of the message to the past, we now turn to that view which locates it in a future age. By "future age" is meant a period subsequent to the second advent; and the reason urged for locating the message in that age is the fact that John saw the angel flying through heaven, immediately after having seen the Lamb standing on Mount Zion with the 144,000, which is a future event. If the book of Revelation were one consecutive prophecy, there would be force in this reasoning; but as it consists of a series of independent lines of prophecy, and as it has already been shown that one such chain ends with verse 5 of this chapter, and a new one begins with verse 6, the foregoing view cannot be urged. To show that the message cannot have its fulfilment in a future age, it will be sufficient to remark:—

1. The apostolic commission extended only to the "harvest," which is the end of the world. If, therefore, this angel with the

"everlasting Gospel" comes after that event, he preaches another gospel, and subjects himself to the anathema of Paul in Gal. i. 8.

2. The second message cannot, of course, be given before the first; but the second message announces the fall of Babylon, and a voice is heard from heaven after that, saying: "Come out of her, My people." How absurd to locate this after the second advent of Christ, seeing that all God's people, both living and dead, are at that time caught up to meet the Lord in the air, to be thenceforward for ever with Him. They cannot be called out of Babylon after this. Christ does not take them to Babylon, but to the Father's house, where there are many mansions. John xiv. 2, 3.

3. A glance at the third angel's message, which must be fulfilled in a future age if the first one is, will still further show the absurdity of this view. This message warns against the worship of the beast, which refers, beyond question, to the papal beast. But the papal beast is destroyed and given to the burning flame when Christ comes. Dan. vii. 11; 2 Thess. ii. 8. He goes into the lake of fire at that time, to disturb the saints of the Most High no more. Rev. xix. 20. Why will people involve themselves in the absurdity of locating a message against the worship of the beast at a time when the beast has ceased to exist, and his worship is impossible?

In verse 13 of Revelation xiv., a blessing is pronounced upon the dead which die in the Lord "from henceforth;" that is, from the time the third message begins to be given. This is a complete demonstration of the fact that the message must be given prior to the first resurrection; for after that event all who have a part therein (and this includes all, both living and dead, who are not assigned to the second death) become as the angels of God, and can die no more. We therefore dismiss this view concerning the future age as unscriptural, absurd, and impossible.

We are now prepared to examine the third view, that the message belongs to the present generation. The argument on the two preceding points has done much to establish the present proposition; for if the message has not been given in the past, and cannot be given in the future after Christ comes, where else can we locate it but in the present generation, if we are in the last days, as we suppose? Indeed, the very nature of the message itself confines it to the last generation of men. It proclaims the hour of God's judgment come. But the judgment pertains to the closing up of the work of salvation for the world; and the proclamation

announcing its approach can therefore be made only as we come near the end. It is further shown that the message belongs to the present time when it is proved that this angel is identical with the angel of Rev. x., who utters his message in this generation. That the first angel of Rev. xiv. and the angel of Rev. x. are identical, will appear from comments on the latter chapter.

But the strongest and most conclusive evidence that the message belongs to the present time will consist in finding some movement in this generation through which its fulfilment has been, or is going forward. On this point we refer to a movement of which it would now be hard to find anyone who is wholly ignorant. It is the great Advent movement of the present time. As early as 1831, Wm. Miller, of Low Hampton, New York, by an earnest and consistent study of the prophecies, was led to the conclusion that the Gospel dispensation was near its close. He placed the termination, which he thought would occur at the end of the prophetic periods, about the year 1843. This date was afterward extended to the autumn of 1844. (See diagram and argument under Dan. ix. 24-27). We call his investigations a consistent study of the prophecies, because he adopted that rule of interpretation which will be found lying at the base of every religious reformation, and of every advance movement in prophetic knowledge; namely, to take all the language of the Scriptures, just as we would that of any other book, to be literal, unless the context or the laws of language require it to be understood figuratively; and to let scripture interpret scripture. True, on a vital point he made a mistake, as will be explained hereafter; but in principle, and in a great number of particulars, he was correct. He was on the right road, and made an immense advance beyond every theological system of his day. When he began to promulgate his views, they met with general favour, and were followed by great religious awakenings in different parts of the land. Soon a multitude of co-labourers gathered around his standard, among them many who were then eminent for piety, and men of influence in the religious world. The period marked by the years 1840-1844 was one of intense activity and great progress in this work. A message was proclaimed to the world which bore every characteristic of a fulfilment of the proclamation of Rev. xiv. 6, 7. The preaching was emphatically such as might be called the everlasting (age-lasting) Gospel. It pertained to the closing up of this age, and the incoming of the everlasting age (*αἰών*) of the King of righteous-



ness. It was that Gospel of the kingdom which Christ declared should be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then the end should come. Matt. xxiv. 14. The fulfilment of either of these scriptures involves the preaching of the nearness of the end. The Gospel could not be preached to all nations as a *sign* of the end, unless it was understood to be such, and the proximity of the end was at least one of its leading themes. The "Advent Herald" of 14 Dec., 1850, well expressed the truth on this point in the following language:—

\* "As an indication of the approach of the end, there was, however, to be seen another angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Rev. xiv. 6. The burden of this angel was to be the *same* Gospel which had been before proclaimed; but connected with it was the additional motive of the *proximity* of the kingdom—'saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.' Verse 7. No mere preaching of the Gospel, without announcing its *proximity*, could fulfil this message."

The persons who were engaged in this movement supposed it to be a fulfilment of prophecy, and claimed that they were giving the message of Rev. xiv. 6, 7.

With this movement also began the fulfilment of the parable of the ten virgins, recorded in Matthew xxv., which our Lord uttered to illustrate and enforce the doctrine of His second coming, and the end of the world, which He had just set forth in Matthew xxiv. Those who became interested in this movement went forth to meet the Bridegroom; that is, they were aroused to expect the coming of Christ, and to look and wait for His return from heaven. The Bridegroom tarried. The first point of expectation, the close of the year 1843, which according to Jewish reckoning ended in the spring of 1844, passed by, and the Lord did not come. While He tarried, they all slumbered and slept: Surprised by the unexpected doubt and uncertainty into which they were thrown, the interest of the people began to wane, and their efforts to flag. At midnight there was a cry made: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh! go ye out to meet Him." Midway between the spring of 1844, where it was at first supposed that the 2,300 days would terminate, and that point

in the autumn of 1844 to which it was afterward ascertained that they really extended, just such a cry as this was suddenly raised. Involuntarily, this very phraseology was adopted: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." The cause of this sudden arousing was the discovery that the great prophetic period of 2,300 days (years) did not end in the spring of 1844, but would extend to the autumn of that year, and consequently that the time at which they supposed they were warranted to look for the appearing of the Lord had not passed by, but was indeed at the door. At the same time, the relation between the type and the antitype relating to the cleansing of the sanctuary was partially seen. The prophecy declared that at the end of the 2,300 days, the sanctuary should be cleansed; and as in the type the sanctuary was cleansed on the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish year, that point in the autumn of 1844 was accordingly fixed upon for the termination of the 2,300 years, It fell on the 22nd of October. Between the midsummer of 1844, when the light on these subjects was first seen, and the day and month above named when the 2,300 years terminated, perhaps no movement ever exhibited greater activity than this respecting the soon coming of Christ, and in no cause was ever more accomplished in so short a space of time. A religious wave swept over the United States, and the country was stirred as no people have been stirred since the opening of the great Reformation of the sixteenth century. This was called the "seventh-month movement," and was more particularly confined to the United States and Canada.

But the general movement respecting the second advent of Christ, and the proclamation that "the hour of His judgment is come," was not confined to the Western Hemisphere. It was world-wide. It fulfilled in this respect the proclamation of the angel "to every nation and kindred and tongue and people." In "Advent Tracts," Vol. II, p. 135, Mourant Brock, an English writer, is quoted as saying:—

"It is not merely in Great Britain that the expectation of the near return of the Redeemer is entertained, and the voice of warning raised, but also in America, India, and on the continent of Europe. In America, about three hundred ministers of the Word are thus preaching 'this Gospel of the kingdom'; while in this country [Great Britain], about seven hundred of the Church of England are raising the same cry."

Dr. Joseph Wolff travelled in Arabia Felix, through the region

inhabited by the descendants of Hobab, Moses' father-in-law. In his "Mission to Bokhara," he speaks as follows of a book which he saw in Yemen:—

"The Arabs of this place have a book called 'Seera,' which treats of the *second coming of Christ, and His reign in glory!* In Yemen, I spent six days with the Rechabites. 'They drink no wine, plant no vineyards, sow no seed, live in tents, and remember the words of Jonadab, the son of Rechab.' With them were the children of Israel of the tribe of Dan, who reside near Terim in Hatramawt, *who expect, in common with the children of Rechab, the speedy arrival of the Messiah in the clouds of heaven.*"

"The Voice of the Church," by D. T. Taylor, pp. 342-344, speaks as follows concerning the wide diffusion of the advent sentiment:—

"In Wurtemberg there is a Christian colony numbering hundreds who look for the speedy advent of Christ; also another of like belief on the shores of the Caspian; the Molokaners, a large body of Dissenters from the Russian Greek Church, residing on the shores of the Baltic—a very pious people, of whom it is said, 'Taking the Bible alone for their creed, the *norm* of their faith is simply the Holy Scriptures'—are characterized by the 'expectation of Christ's immediate and visible reign upon earth.' In Russia, the doctrine of Christ's coming and reign is preached to some extent, and received by many of the lower class. It has been extensively agitated in Germany, particularly in the south part among the Moravians. In Norway, charts and books on the advent have been circulated extensively, and the doctrine has been received by many. Among the Tartars in Tartary there prevails an expectation of Christ's advent about this time. English and American publications on this doctrine have been sent to Holland, Germany, India, Ireland, Constantinople, Rome, and to nearly every mission station on the globe. At the Turk's Island, it has been received to some extent among the Wesleyans.

"Mr. Fox, a Scottish missionary to the Telugu people, was a believer in Christ's soon coming. James McGregor Bertram, a Scottish missionary of the Baptist order at St. Helena, has sounded the cry extensively on that island, making many converts and pre-millennialists; he has also preached it at South Africa at the missionary stations there. David N. Lord informs us that a large proportion of the missionaries who have gone from Great Britain to

make known the Gospel to the heathen, and who are now labouring in Asia and Africa, are millenarians; and Joseph Wolff, D.D., according to his journals, between the years 1821 and 1845, proclaimed the Lord's speedy advent in Palestine, Egypt, on the shores of the Red Sea, Mesopotamia, the Crimea, Persia, Georgia, throughout the Ottoman Empire, in Greece, Arabia, Turkestan, Bokhara, Afghanistan, Kashmer, Hindustan, Tibet, Holland, Scotland, and Ireland, at Constantinople, Jerusalem, St. Helena, also on shipboard in the Mediterranean, and at New York City to all denominations. He declares he has preached among Jews, Turks, Mohammedans, Parsees, Hindus, Chaldeans, Yesedees, Syrians, Sabians, to pashas, sheiks, shahs, the kings of Organtsh and Bokhara, the queen of Greece, etc.; and of his extraordinary labours the "Investigator" says: 'No individual has, perhaps, given greater publicity to the doctrine of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ than has this well-known missionary to the world. Wherever he goes, he proclaims the approaching advent of the Messiah in glory.'

J. N. Andrews, in his work on the Three Messages of Revelation xiv. 6-12, pp. 32-35, speaks as follows concerning the message under consideration:—

"None can deny that this world-wide warning of impending judgment has been given. The nature of the evidence adduced in its support now claims our attention, as furnishing the most conclusive testimony that it was a message from Heaven.

"All the great outlines of the world's prophetic history were shown to be complete in the present generation. The great prophetic chain of Daniel ii., also those of chapters vii., viii., xi., and xii., were shown to be just accomplished. The same was true of our Lord's prophetic description of the Gospel dispensation. Matt. xxiv.; Mark xiii.; Luke xxi. The prophetic periods of Daniel vii., viii., ix., xii.; Revelation xi., xii., xiii., were shown to harmonize with, and unitedly to sustain, this great proclamation. The signs in the heavens and upon the earth and sea, in the church and among the nations, with one voice bore witness to the warning which God addressed to the human family. Joel ii. 30, 31; Matt. xxiv. 29-31; Mark xiii. 24-26; Luke xxi. 25-36; 2 Tim. iii.; 2 Pet. iii.; Rev. vi. 12, 13. And besides the mighty array of evidence on which this warning was based, the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in connection with this proclamation set the seal of Heaven to its truth.

"The warning of John the Baptist, which was to prepare the way for the first advent of our Lord, was of short duration, and limited in its extent. For each prophetic testimony which sustained the work of John, we have several which support the proclamation of Christ's near advent. John had not the aid of the Press to disseminate his proclamation, nor the facility of Nahum's chariots; he was a humble man, dressed in camel's hair, and he performed no miracles. If the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves in not being baptized of John, how great must be the guilt of those who reject the warning sent by God to prepare the way of the second advent!

"But those were disappointed who expected the Lord in 1843 and 1844. This fact is with many a sufficient reason for rejecting all the testimony in this case. We acknowledge the disappointment, but cannot acknowledge that this furnishes a just reason for denying the hand of God in this work. The Jewish Church was disappointed when, at the close of the work of John the Baptist, Jesus presented Himself as the promised Messiah. And the trusting disciples were most sadly disappointed when He Whom they expected to deliver Israel was by wicked hands taken and slain. And after His resurrection, when they expected Him to restore again the kingdom to Israel, they could not but be disappointed when they understood that He was going away to His Father, and that they were to be left for a long season to tribulation and anguish. But disappointment does not prove that God has no hand in the guidance of His people. It should lead them to correct their errors, but it should not lead them to cast away their confidence in God. It was because the children of Israel were disappointed in the wilderness that they so often denied divine guidance. They are set forth as an admonition to us, that we should not fall after the same example of unbelief.

"But it must be apparent to every student of the Scriptures that the angel who proclaims the hour of God's judgment does not give the latest message of mercy. Revelation xiv. presents two other and later proclamations before the close of human probation. This fact alone is sufficient to prove that the coming of the Lord does not take place until the second and third proclamations have been added to the first. The same thing may also be seen in the fact that after the angel of chapter x. has sworn that time shall be no longer, another work of prophesying before many people and

nations is announced. Hence we understand that the first angel preaches the hour of God's judgment come; that is, he preaches the termination of the prophetic periods; and that this is the time which he swears shall be no longer.

"The judgment does of necessity commence before the advent of Christ; for He comes to execute the judgment (Jude 14, 15; Rev. xxii. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 1); and at the sound of the last trumpet He confers immortality upon every one of the righteous, and passes by all the wicked. The investigative judgment does, therefore, precede the execution of the same by the Saviour. It is the province of the Father to preside in this investigative work, as set forth in Dan. vii. At this tribunal, the Son closes up His work as High Priest, and is crowned king. Thence He comes to earth to execute the decisions of His Father. It is this work of judgment by the Father which the first angel introduces.

"The great period of 2,300 days, which was the most important period in marking the definite time in that proclamation, extends to the cleansing of the sanctuary. That the cleansing of the sanctuary is not the cleansing of any part of the earth, but that it is the last work of our great High Priest in the heavenly tabernacle before His advent to the earth, has been clearly shown. [See on Dan. viii. 14.] And we understand that it is while the work of cleansing the sanctuary is taking place, that the latest message of mercy is proclaimed. Thus it will be seen that the prophetic periods, and the proclamation which is based upon them, do not extend to the coming of the Lord."

That the mistake made by Adventists in 1844 was *not* in the *time*, has been shown by the comments on the seventy weeks and twenty-three hundred days of Daniel ix; that it *was* in the *nature of the event* to occur at the end of those days, has been shown in the argument on the sanctuary in Daniel viii. Supposing that the earth was the sanctuary, and that its cleansing was to be accomplished by fire at the revelation of the Lord from heaven, the advent believers naturally looked for the appearing of Christ at the end of the days. And through their misapprehension on this point, they met with a crushing disappointment, though everything which the prophecy declared, and everything which they were warranted to expect, took place with absolute accuracy at that time. There the cleansing of the sanctuary began; but this did not bring Christ to this earth, for the earth is not the sanctuary; and its cleansing



does not involve the destruction of the earth, for it is accomplished with the blood of a sacrificial offering, not with fire. In this great disappointment was the bitterness of the little book to the Church. Rev. x. 10. Here was the coming of One like the Son of man, not to this earth, but to the Ancient of Days. Dan. vii. 13, 14. Here was the coming of the Bridegroom to the marriage, as set forth in the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew xxv. We have spoken of the midnight cry of that parable in the summer of 1844. The foolish virgins then said to the wise: "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone [margin, going] out." The wise answered: "Go and buy for yourselves." And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came. This is not the coming of Christ to this earth; for it is a coming which precedes the marriage; but the marriage, that is, the reception of the kingdom (see on chapter xxi.) must precede His coming to this earth to receive to Himself His people, who are to be the guests at the marriage supper. Luke xix. 12; Rev. xix. 7-9. This coming, in the parable, must therefore be the same as the coming to the Ancient of Days spoken of in Dan. vii. 13, 14.

And they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage, and the door was shut. After the Bridegroom comes to the marriage, there is an examination of guests to see who are ready to participate in the ceremony, according to the parable of Matt. xxii. 1-13. As the last step before the marriage, the King comes in to see the guests, to ascertain if all are properly arrayed in the wedding garment; and whoever, after due examination, is found with the garment on, and is accepted by the King, never after loses that garment, but is sure of immortality. But this question of fitness for the kingdom can be determined only by the investigative judgment of the sanctuary. This closing work in the sanctuary, therefore, which is the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the atonement, is nothing else than the examination of the guests to see who have on the wedding garment; and, consequently, until this work is finished, it is not determined who are "ready" to go in to the marriage. "They that were *ready* went in with him to the marriage." By this short expression we are carried from the time when the Bridegroom comes to the marriage, entirely through the period of the cleansing of the sanctuary, or the examination of the guests; and when this is concluded, probation will end, and the door will be shut.

The connection of the parable with the message under examination is now apparent. It brings to view a period of making ready the guests for the marriage of the Lamb, which is the work of judgment to which the message brings us when it declares: "The hour of His judgment is come." This message was to be proclaimed with a loud voice. It went forth with the power thus indicated between the years 1840-1844, more especially in the seventh-month movement of the latter year, bringing us to the end of the 2,300 days, when the work of judgment commenced as Christ began the work of cleansing the sanctuary.

But, as has already been shown, this did not bring the close of probation, but only the period of the investigative judgment. In this judgment we are now living; and during this time other messages are proclaimed, as the prophecy further declares.

*The Second Message.*—This message, following the first, is announced (verse 8) in these few words: "And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." The chronology of this message is determined, to a great extent, by that of the first message. This cannot precede that; but that, as has been shown, is confined to the last days; yet this must be given before the end, for no move of this kind is possible after that event. It is therefore a part of that religious movement which takes place in the last days with especial reference to the coming of Christ.

The inquiries therefore naturally follow: What is meant by the term *Babylon*? what is its fall? and how is it fulfilled? As to the etymology of the word, we learn something from the marginal readings of Gen. x. 10 and xi. 9. The beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel, or Babylon; and the place was so called because God there confounded the language of the builders of the tower; and the word means *confusion*. The word is used figuratively in the Revelation to designate a great symbolic city, probably with special reference to the signification of the term, and the circumstances from which it originated. It applies to something on which, as its chief characteristic, may be written "Confusion."

There are but three possible objects to which the word can be applied, and these are (1) the apostate religious world in general, (2) the papal church in particular, and (3) the city of Rome. In examining these terms, we shall first show what Babylon is not.

1. Babylon is not confined to the Romish Church. That this church is a very prominent component part of great Babylon, is not denied. The descriptions of chapter xvii. seem to apply very particularly to that church. But the name which she bears on her forehead, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth," reveals other family connections. If this church is the mother, who are the daughters? The fact that these daughters are spoken of, shows that there are other religious bodies besides the Romish Church which come under this designation. Again, there is to be a call made in connection with this message, "Come out of her, My people" (Rev. xviii. 1-4); and as this message is located in the present generation, it follows, if no other church but the Romish is included in Babylon, that the people of God, as a body, are now found in the communion of that church, and are to be called out. But this conclusion no Protestant, at least, will be willing to adopt.

2. Babylon is not the city of Rome. The argument relied upon to show that the city of Rome is the Babylon of the Apocalypse runs thus: "The angel told John that the woman which he had seen was the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth, and that the seven heads of the beast are seven mountains upon which the woman sitteth." And then, taking the city and mountains to be literal, and finding Rome built upon just seven hills, the application is made at once to literal Rome.

The principle upon which this interpretation rests is the assumption that the explanation of a symbol must always be literal. It falls to the ground the moment it can be shown that symbols are sometimes explained by substituting for them other symbols, and then explaining the latter. This can easily be done. In Rev. xi. 3, the symbol of the two witnesses is introduced. The next verse reads: "These are the two olive-trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." In this case, the first symbol is said to be the same as another symbol which is elsewhere clearly explained. So in the case before us. "The seven heads are seven mountains," and "The woman is that great city;" and it will not be difficult to show that the mountains and the city are both used symbolically. The reader's attention is asked to the following points:—

(a) We are informed in chapter xiii. that one of the seven heads was wounded to death. This head therefore cannot be a literal

mountain; for it would be folly to speak of wounding a mountain to death.

(b) Each of the seven heads has a crown upon it. But whoever saw a literal mountain with a crown upon it?

(c) The seven heads are evidently successive in order of time; for we read: "Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come." Revelation xvii. But the seven hills upon which Rome is built, are not successive, and it would be absurd to apply such language to them.

(d) According to Dan. vii. 6, compared with Dan. viii. 8, 22, heads denote governments; and according to Dan. ii. 35, 44; Jer. li. 25, mountains denote kingdoms. According to these facts, the Revised Version of Rev. xvii. 9, 10 removes all obscurity: "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth, and they are seven kings." It will thus be seen that the angel represents the heads as mountains, and then explains the mountains to be seven successive kings, or forms of government. The meaning is transferred from one symbol to another, and then an explanation given of the second symbol.

From the foregoing argument, it follows that the "woman" cannot represent a literal city; for the mountains upon which the woman sitteth are symbolic, and a literal city cannot sit upon symbolic mountains. Again, Rome was the seat of the dragon of chapter xii., and this was transferred to the beast (Rev. xiii. 2), thus becoming the seat of the beast; but it would be a singular mixing of figures to take the seat, which is sat upon by the beast, and make that a woman sitting upon the beast.

(e) Were the city of Rome the Babylon of the Apocalypse, what nonsense should we have in chapter xviii. 1-4; for in this case the fall of Babylon would be the overthrow and destruction of the city, in fact, its utter consumption by fire, according to verse 8. But mark what takes place after the fall. Babylon becomes a habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. How can this happen to a city after that city is destroyed, even being utterly burned with fire? But worse still, after all this a voice is heard, saying: "Come out of her, My people." Are God's people in Rome?—Not to any great extent, even in her best estate. But how many can we suppose to be there, to be called out, after the city is burned with fire? It is not necessary to say more to show that Babylon cannot be the city of Rome.

3. Babylon signifies the universal worldly church. Having seen that it cannot be any one of the only other three possible objects to which it could be applied, it must mean this. But we are not left to *a priori* reasoning on this subject. Babylon is called a woman. A woman, used as a symbol, signifies a church. The woman of chapter xii. was interpreted to mean a church. The woman of chapter xvii. should undoubtedly be interpreted as signifying also a church. The character of the woman determines the character of the church represented, a chaste woman standing for a pure church, a vile woman for an impure or apostate church. The woman Babylon is herself a harlot, and the mother of daughters like herself. This circumstance, as well as the name itself, shows that Babylon is not limited to any single ecclesiastical body, but must be composed of many. It must take in all of a like nature, and represent the entire corrupt or apostate church of the earth. This will perhaps explain the language of Rev. xviii. 24, which represents that when God makes requisition upon great Babylon for the blood of His martyrs, in her will be found "the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all" that have been slain upon the earth. The Greek Church is the established church of Russia and Greece; the Lutheran Church is the established church of Prussia, Holland, Sweden, Norway, and a part of the smaller German States; England has Episcopacy for her State religion; and other countries have their established religions, all of which zealously oppose Dissenters, while Dissenters too often, when they grow numerically strong, display the spirit of the church from which they came out. Babylon has made all nations drunken with the wine of her fornication, that is, her false doctrines; it can therefore symbolize nothing less than the universal worldly church.

The great city, Babylon, is spoken of as composed of three divisions. So the great religions of the world may be arranged under three heads. The first, oldest, and most widespread is paganism, separately symbolized under the form of a dragon; the second is the great Romish apostasy, symbolized by the beast; and the third is the daughters, or descendants, from that church. Under this head comes the two-horned beast as a leading representative. Strife for exaltation, oppression, conformity to the world, the worship of mammon, the creed-power, pursuit of pleasure, and the maintenance of very many errors of the old Romish Church, identify, with sad and faithful accuracy, the great body of the so-

called Protestant churches as a constituent part of this great Babylon.

A glance at some of the ways in which the Protestant Church has deported herself will still further show this. Rome, having the power, destroyed vast multitudes of those whom she adjudged heretics. The Protestant Church has shown the same spirit. Witness the burning of Michael Servetus by the Protestants of Geneva with John Calvin at their head. Witness the long-continued oppression of Dissenters by the Church of England. Witness the hanging of Quakers and whipping of Baptists even by the Puritan fathers of New England, themselves fugitives from like oppression by the Church of England. But these, some may say, are things of the past. Very true; yet they show that when persons governed by strong religious prejudice have the power to coerce Dissenters, they cannot forbear to use it—a state of things which we look for in every country under a further fulfilment of the closing prophecy of chapter xiii.

Mark also how far they have departed from the teachings of Christ in other respects. Christ forbade His people to seek after the treasures of this world. But the popular church, as a body, exhibits greater eagerness for wealth than do worldlings themselves. In how many churches does mammon bear rule! Christ says: "Be not ye called Rabbi," that is, master, or doctor; "for one is your Master, even Christ." To do this is to partake of that same spirit which has led aspiring men to assume to be the head of the church, the successors of St. Peter, the vicegerent of Christ, and a god upon earth. Many in the Protestant Church, in imitation of the Romish, adopt the title of "Reverend." The New Testament speaks in the most decided terms against adornments and extravagance in dress; yet where shall we look for a display of the latest fashions, rather than in a wealthy assembly in a Protestant church on a pleasant Sunday? Such is now the state of the religious world that many seek through the avenue of church connection success in business, honour in society, and lucrative positions. To adopt the form of godliness from such motives must be most abominable in the sight of God; yet these very classes are welcomed by the churches.

It was the will of Christ that His Church should be one. He prayed that His disciples might be one, as He and the Father were one; for this would give power to His Gospel, and cause the world



to believe in Him. Instead of this, look at the confusion that exists in the Protestant world, the many sectional walls that divide it up into a network of societies, and the many creeds, discordant as the languages of those who were dispersed at the tower of Babel. God is not the author of all these. It is just this state of things which the word *Babylon*, as a descriptive term, appropriately designates.

The true church is a chaste virgin. 2 Cor. xi. 2. The church that is joined with the world in friendship is a harlot. It is this unlawful connection with the kings of the earth that constitutes her the great harlot of the Apocalypse. Revelation xvii. Thus the Jewish Church, at first espoused to the Lord (Jeremiah, chapters ii., iii., and xxxi. 32) became a harlot. Ezekiel xvi. This church, when it thus apostatized from God, was called Sodom (Isaiah i.), just as "the great city" (Babylon) is so called in Revelation xi. The unlawful union with the world of which Babylon is guilty is positive proof that this is not the civil power. That the people of God are in her midst just before her overthrow is proof that she is professedly a religious body. For these reasons, is it not very evident that the Babylon of the Apocalypse is the professed church united with the world?

The fall of Babylon will next claim attention. Having now learned what constitutes Babylon, it will not be difficult to decide what is meant by the declaration that Babylon is fallen. As Babylon is not a literal city, the fall cannot be a literal overthrow. We have already seen what an absurdity this would involve. And besides, between the fall and the destruction of Babylon, the clearest distinction is maintained by the prophecy itself. Babylon "falls" before it is with violence "thrown down," as a millstone cast into the sea, and "utterly burned with fire." The fall is therefore a moral fall; for after the fall the voice is addressed to the people of God who are still in her connection, "Come out of her, My people"; and the reason is immediately given—"that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Babylon, therefore, still exists to sin, and her plagues are still future, after the fall.

Those who make Babylon apply exclusively to the papacy claim that the fall of Babylon is the loss of civil power by the papal church. But such a view would be inconsistent with the prophecy in several particulars:—

1. Babylon falls because she makes all nations drink of her

wine, or instils among them her false doctrines. But this by no means caused the loss of the Pope's temporal power; on the contrary, it was the very means by which he so long maintained his supremacy.

2. Because of the fall of Babylon, she became the hold of foul spirits and hateful birds; but such is not at all the result to Rome of the loss of civil power.

3. The people of God are called out of Babylon on account of her increasing sinfulness resulting from the fall; but the loss of the temporal power of the papacy constitutes no additional reason why the people of God should leave that church.

The reason given why Babylon meets with this moral fall is "because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath [not anger, but intense passion] of her fornication." There is but one thing to which this can refer, and that is false doctrines. She has corrupted the pure truths of God's Word, and made the nations drunken with pleasing fables. Among the doctrines she teaches contrary to the Word of God may be mentioned the following:—

1. The doctrine of a temporal millennium, or a thousand years of peace and prosperity and righteousness all over the earth before the second coming of Christ. This doctrine is especially suited to shut the ears of the people against the evidence that the second advent is near, and will probably lull as many souls into a state of carnal security which will lead to their final ruin as any heresy which has ever been devised by the great enemy of truth.

2. Sprinkling instead of immersion, which is the only Scriptural mode of baptism, and a fitting memorial of the burial and resurrection of our Lord, for which purpose it was designed. Having corrupted this ordinance, and destroyed it as a memorial of the resurrection of Christ, the way was prepared for the substitution of something else for this purpose, which she attempted in—

3. The change of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, the seventh day, into the festival of Sunday, as the rest-day of the Lord and a memorial of His resurrection, which has never been commanded, and can by no possible means appropriately commemorate that event. Fathered by heathenism as "the wild solar holiday of all pagan times," Sunday was led to the font by the Pope, and christened as an institution of the Gospel Church. Thus an attempt was made to destroy a memorial which the great God had set up by His own magnificent creative word, and erect another

in its stead to commemorate the resurrection of Christ, for which there was no occasion, as the Lord Himself had already provided a memorial for that purpose.

4. The doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul. This also was derived from the pagan world. As distinguished converts from heathenism entered the ranks of Christians, they soon became "Fathers of the church," and foster-fathers of this pernicious doctrine as a part of divine truth. This error nullifies the two great Scripture doctrines of the resurrection and the general judgment, and furnishes a well-laid track for the car of Modern Spiritualism with its load of pollution. From it have sprung such other evil doctrines as the conscious state of the dead, saint-worship, Mariolatry, purgatory, reward at death, prayers and baptisms for the dead, eternal torment, and universalism.

5. The doctrine that the saints, as unclothed, immaterialized spirits, find their eternal inheritance in far-away, indefinable regions, "beyond the bounds of time and space." Thus multitudes have been turned away from the scriptural view that this present earth, in which the true people of God are pilgrims and strangers, is to be destroyed by fire at the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, and that from its ashes the voice of Omnipotence will evoke a new earth, which will be the future everlasting kingdom of glory, and which the saints will possess as their eternal inheritance.

6. That the coming of Christ is a spiritual, not a literal event, and was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, or is fulfilled in conversion, in death, in Spiritualism, etc. How many minds have by such teaching been for ever closed against the scriptural view that the second coming of Christ is a future, definite event, literal, personal, visible, resulting in destruction to all His foes, and everlasting life to all His people!

7. Trailing the standard of godliness in the very dust. Men are made to believe that a form of godliness is all-sufficient, and that the words, "Lord, Lord," or some other empty formula, will be a safe passport to the kingdom of heaven.

The world has gone mad in the pursuit of riches and honour; but in these things the church takes the lead, and thus openly sanctions what the Lord strictly forbade. If the churches were united as they should be, what a stumbling-block would be taken out of the way of sinners! And if it were not for the false

doctrines which she has instilled into the minds of all men, how the plain truths of the Bible would move the world! But people are held by the errors of Babylon as under the stupefying influence of the most powerful intoxicant.

To come now more particularly to the application of the prophecy concerning the fall of Babylon, let us see how the religious world stood with reference to the possibility of such a change when the time came for the proclamation of this message, in connection with the first message, about the year 1844. Paganism was only apostasy and corruption in the beginning, and is so still; and no moral fall is possible there. Catholicism has been for centuries about as low in the scale as it is possible for a church to sink. No room for a moral fall in that church. Two great branches of Babylon were, therefore, when the second message became due, in so low a condition morally that a further declension with them was scarcely possible. Not so, however, with the Protestant branch of this great city. These churches, which commenced the great work of reformation from corruption, had done a noble work. They had run well for a season. They reached a moral plane vastly higher than that of the other divisions named. They were, in a word, in such a position that with them a moral fall was possible. The conclusion is therefore inevitable that the message announcing the fall had reference almost wholly to the Protestant churches.

It may be proper to inquire further how the reason assigned for the fall of Babylon, namely, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, would apply to the Protestant churches at the time in question. And the answer is, It would apply most pertinently. The fault with Babylon lies in her confusion and false doctrines. Because she industriously propagates these, clinging to them when light and truth which would correct them is offered, she falls. With the Protestant churches, the time had come for an advance to higher religious ground. They could accept the proffered light and truth, and reach the higher attainment, or they could reject it, and lose their spirituality and favour with God, or, in other words, experience a moral fall. The truth which God saw fit to use as an instrument in this work was the first message. The hour of God's judgment come, and the approximate second advent of Christ, was the doctrine preached. After listening long enough to see the blessing that attended the doctrine, and the good results that flowed from it, the churches, as a whole,

rejected it with scorn and scoffing. They were thereby tested; for they then plainly betrayed the fact that their hearts were with the world, not with the Lord, and that they preferred to have it so. But the message would have healed the evils then existing in the religious world. The prophet exclaims, perhaps with reference to this very time: "We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed." Jer. li. 9. Do you ask how we know this would have been the effect of receiving the message? We answer, Because this was the effect with all who did receive it. They came from different denominations, and their denominational barriers were levelled to the ground; conflicting creeds were shivered to atoms; the unscriptural hope of a temporal millennium was abandoned; false views of the second advent were corrected; pride and conformity to the world were swept away; wrongs were made right; hearts were united in the sweetest fellowship; and love and joy reigned supreme. If the doctrine did this for the few who received it, *it would have done the same for all, if all had received it.*

But the message was rejected; and what was the result? The result upon those who rejected it will be spoken of by and by; the result upon those who received it demands mention here. Everywhere throughout the land the cry was raised, "Babylon is fallen," and those who uttered the cry, in anticipation of the movement brought to view in Rev. xviii. 1-4, added, "Come out of her, My people." As a result about fifty thousand severed their connection with the denominations where they were not allowed to hold and teach their views in peace.

A marked change then came over the churches in respect to their spiritual condition. On the hypothesis that the proclamation of the second coming of Christ was in the order of prophetic fulfilment, and that the message was the "present truth" for that time, the result could not have been different. When a person refuses the light, he necessarily shuts himself in darkness; when he rejects truth, he inevitably forges the shackles of error about his own limbs. Loss of spirituality—a moral fall—must follow. This the churches experienced. They chose to adhere to old errors, and still promulgate their false doctrines among the people. The light of truth must therefore leave them. Some of them felt and deplored the change. A few testimonies from their own writers will describe their condition at that time.

The "Christian Palladium" of 15 May, 1844, spoke in the

following mournful strain: "In every direction we hear the dolorous sound, wafting upon every breeze of heaven, chilling as the blasts from the icebergs of the north, settling like an incubus on the breasts of the timid, and drinking up the energies of the weak, that lukewarmness, division, anarchy, and desolation are distressing the borders of Zion."

In 1844 the "Religious Telescope" used the following language: "We have never witnessed such a general declension of religion as at the present. Truly, the Church should awake, and search into the cause of this affliction; for as an affliction every one that loves Zion must view it. When we call to mind how 'few and far between' cases of true conversion are, and the almost unparalleled impenitence and hardness of sinners, we almost involuntarily exclaim: 'Has God forgotten to be gracious? or is the door of mercy closed?'"

About that time, proclamations of fasts and seasons of prayer for the return of the Holy Spirit were sent out in the religious papers. The Philadelphia "Sun" of 11 Nov., 1844, had the following: "The undersigned ministers and members of various denominations in Philadelphia and vicinity, solemnly believing that the present signs of the times—the spiritual dearth of our *churches generally* and the extreme evils in the world around us—seem to call loudly on all Christians for *a special season of prayer*, do therefore hereby agree, by divine permission, to unite in *a week of special prayer to Almighty God*, for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit on our city, our country, and the world."

Professor Finney, editor of the Oberlin "Evangelist," in February, 1844, said: "We have had the facts before our minds, that, in general, the Protestant churches of our country, as such, were either apathetic or hostile to nearly all the moral reforms of the age. There are partial exceptions, yet not enough to render the fact otherwise than general. We have also another corroborative fact—the almost universal absence of revival influence in the churches. The spiritual apathy is almost all-pervading, and is fearfully deep; so the religious Press of the whole land testifies. Very extensively, churchmembers are becoming devotees of fashion, joining hands with the ungodly in parties of pleasure, in dancing, in festivities, etc. But we need not expand this painful subject. Suffice it that the evidence thickens and rolls heavily upon us, to show that the *churches generally are becoming sadly degenerate*. They have

gone very far from the Lord, and He has withdrawn himself from them."

Should it be said that our views of the moral fall and spiritual dearth of the churches are shown to be incorrect by the great revivals of 1858, the testimony of the leading Congregational and Baptist papers of Boston relative to these revivals would correct that impression.

The "Congregationalist," November, 1858, said: "The revival piety of our churches is not such that one can confidently infer, from its mere existence, its legitimate, practical fruits. It ought, for example, to be as certain, after such a shower of grace, that the treasuries of our benevolent societies would be filled, as it is after a plentiful rain that the streams will swell in their channels. But the managers of our societies are bewailing the feebleness of the sympathy and aid of the churches.

"There is another and sadder illustration of the same general truth. The 'Watchman and Reflector' recently stated that there had never been among the Baptists so lamentable a spread of church dissension as prevails at present; and the sad fact is mentioned that this sin infects the very churches which shared most largely in the late revival. And the still more melancholy fact is added that these alienations date back their origin, in most cases, to the very midst of that scene of awakening. Even a glance at the weekly journals of our own denomination will evince that the evil is by no means confined to the Baptists. Our own columns have, perhaps, never borne so humiliating a record of contentions and ecclesiastical litigations as during the last few months."

A Presbyterian pastor of Belfast, Ireland (1858), used the following language respecting the then recent revivals in the United States, according to the New York "Independent" of December, 1859: "The determination to crush all ministers who say a word against their national sin [slavery], the determination to suffocate and suppress the plain teachings of Scripture, can be persisted in and carried out at the very time these New York Christians are expecting the religious world to hail their revivals. Until the wretchedly degraded churches of America do the work of God in their own land, they have no spiritual vitality to communicate to others; their revivals are in the religious world what their flaunted cries of liberty, intermingled with the groans of the slave, are in the political."



During the time of the great Irish revival of 1859, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland held its session in Belfast. Of a strange scene that occurred in that Assembly, the Belfast "News Letter" of 30th September, said: "Here in this venerable body of ministers and elders, we find two ministers openly giving each other the lie, and the whole General Assembly turned into a scene of confusion bordering upon a riot."

This is a sad and deplorable picture; and what has been the course of events, and the tendency in the deportment of professed Christians, since that time? There is considerable spasmodic action in some localities, and much effort put forth by sensational revivalists to excite the emotions, but no permanent good seems to be accomplished, and the standard of godliness sinks lower and lower.

Some new features have been added to the facilities for church work, and have now come to be considered almost indispensable appendages to the house of worship; and one of these is nothing less than a well-appointed kitchen, where the feast can be made ready, and dainties prepared. One instance may serve as an illustration of all in this line. When the "Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church" was erected in Chicago, the "Tribune," of that city, in its description of the building, made particular mention of the following features:—

"Beneath the vestibules and parlours is a basement, consisting of a *large dining-hall*, furnished with table accommodations for one hundred and fifty persons; a *kitchen*, with *cooking apparatus*, sinks, closets, dressing-rooms, etc. The basement, under the vestibule and parlours, secures some desirable advantages; the social gatherings can be made agreeable and pleasant without introducing the refreshments into the lecture room or parlours."

Think of a *kitchen* as being considered a necessary apartment in a house of worship! What would the venerable and godly church fathers and mothers of a generation ago have thought of this? The Scriptures declare that eating and drinking and pleasure-seeking, instead of God-serving, even on the part of professed Christians, will characterize the last days as a sign of the times. Luke xvii. 26-30; 2 Tim. iii. 4, 5. Have we not reached the time when this is fulfilled?

The "Christian Advocate," of 30 Aug., 1883, contains an article headed, "The Greatest of Questions," from which we copy these statements:—

"1. Disguise it as you like, the church, in a general sense, is spiritually in a rapid decline. While it grows in numbers and money, it is becoming extremely feeble and limited in its spirituality, both in the pulpit and the pew. It is assuming the shape and character of the church at Laodicea.

"2. There are thousands of ministers, local and conference, and many thousands of the laity, who are as dead and worthless as barren fig-trees. They contribute nothing of a temporal or spiritual nature to the progress and triumphs of the Gospel throughout the earth. If all these dry bones in our Church and its congregations could be resurrected, and brought into requisition by faithful, active service, what new and glorious manifestations of divine power would break forth!"

The New York "Independent," of 3 Dec., 1896, gave an article from D. L. Moody, from which the following is an extract:—

"In a recent issue of your paper I saw an article from a contributor which stated that there were over three thousand churches in the Congregational and Presbyterian bodies of this country that did not report a single member added by profession of faith last year. Can this be true? The thought has taken such hold of me that I can't get it out of my mind. It is enough almost to send a thrill of horror through the soul of every Christian.

"If this is the case with these two large denominations, what must be the condition of the others also? Are we all going to sit still and let this thing continue? Shall our religious newspapers and our pulpits keep their mouths closed like 'dumb dogs that cannot bark' to warn people of approaching danger? Should we not all lift up our voice like a trumpet about this matter? What must the Son of God think of such a result of our labour as this? What must an unbelieving world think about a Christianity that can't bring forth any more fruit? And have we no care for the multitudes of souls going down to perdition every year while we all sit and look on? And this country of ours, where will it be in the next ten years, if we don't awake out of sleep?"

The second angel's message is addressed to those organizations where the people of God are mainly to be found; for they are specially addressed as being in Babylon, and at a certain time are called out. The message applies to the present generation; and now God's people are to be looked for, certainly, in the Protestant organizations of Christendom. But as these churches depart far-

ther and farther from God, they at length reach such a condition that true Christians can no longer maintain a connection with them; and then they will be called out. This we look for in the future, in fulfilment of Rev. xviii. 1-4. We believe it will come, when, in addition to their corruptions, the churches begin to raise against the saints the hand of oppression. (See further under the chapter last named.)

*The Third Message.*—Commencing with verse 9, the third message reads as follows: "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

This is a message of most fearful import. No severer threatening of divine wrath can be found in all the Bible. The sin against which it warns must be a terrible sin, and it must be one so plainly defined that all who will may understand it, and thus know how to avoid the judgments denounced against it.

It will be noticed that these messages are cumulative; that is, one does not cease when another is introduced. Thus, for a time the first message was the only one going forth. The second message was introduced, but that did not put an end to the first. From that time there were two messages. The third followed them, not to supersede them, but only to join with them, so that now we have three messages going forth simultaneously, or, rather, a threefold message, embracing the truths of all three, the last one, of course, being the leading proclamation. Till the work is done, it will never cease to be true that the hour of God's judgment has come, nor that Babylon has fallen; and these facts still continue to be proclaimed in connection with the truths introduced by the third message.

There will also be noticed a logical connection between the messages themselves. Taking our stand just before the first message was introduced, we see the Protestant religious world

sadly in need of reformation. Division and confusion reigned among the churches. They were still clinging to many papal errors and superstitions. The power of the Gospel was impaired in their hands. To correct these evils, the doctrine of the second coming of Christ was introduced, and proclaimed with power. They should have received it, and been quickened by it into new life, as they would have been had they received it. Instead of this, they rejected it, and suffered the consequences spiritually. Then followed the second message, announcing the result of that rejection, and declaring what was not only a fact in itself, but a judicial judgment of God upon them for their recreancy in this respect; namely, that God had departed from them, and they had met with a moral fall.

This did not have the effect of arousing them and leading them to correct their errors, as it was sufficient to do had they been willing to be admonished and corrected. And now what follows?—The way is open for a still further retrograde movement—for deeper apostasy and still greater evils. The powers of darkness will press forward their work, and if the churches still persist in this course of shunning light and rejecting truth, they will soon find themselves worshipping the beast and receiving his mark. This will be the logical sequence of that course of action which commenced with the rejection of the first message. And now another proclamation is sent forth, announcing in solemn tones that if any man shall do this, he shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation. That is to say, you rejected the first message, and met with a moral fall; continue to reject truth and disregard the warnings sent out, and you will exhaust God's last means of grace, and by and by meet with a literal destruction for which there will be no remedy.

The proclamation of the third message is the last special religious movement to be made before the Lord appears; for immediately following this, John beholds One like the Son of man coming upon a great white cloud to reap the harvest of the earth. This can represent nothing else than the second coming of Christ. If, therefore, the coming of Christ is at the door, the time has come for the proclamation of this message. There are many who claim the name "Adventist," and who with voice and pen are earnestly teaching that we are in the last days of time, and that the coming

of Christ is at the door; but when we remind them of this prophecy they are suddenly at sea, without anchor, chart, or compass. They know not what to do with it. They can see as well as we that if what they are teaching respecting the coming of Christ is true, and the Lord is at hand, somewhere—yes, all over the land—should be heard the warning notes of this third message. It is now due; and if it is not now going forth, it follows that we are not in the last days, or that this prophecy is a failure; but this they cannot consistently admit. At the same time, they know that they are not giving it, and they do not claim to be giving it; and they can point to none who are giving it, except it be a certain class who profess that that is the very work they are doing. But to admit the claims of this class would be to condemn themselves. Their perplexity would be deserving of commiseration, were it not that those who will accept an embarrassing dilemma rather than acknowledge the truth are not justly entitled to much sympathy.

The arguments on the two preceding messages fix the chronology of the third, and show that it belongs to the present time; but, as in the case of the former, the best evidence in behalf of the proposition that the message is now going to the world, is to be able to point to events which demonstrate the fulfilment. Having identified the first message as a leading proclamation with the great Advent movement of 1840-1844, and having seen the fulfilment of the second message in connection with that movement in the latter year, let us look at what has taken place since that time.

When the time passed in 1844, the whole Adventist body was thrown into more or less confusion. Many gave up the movement entirely; more jumped to the conclusion that the argument on the time was wrong, and immediately went to work to readjust the prophetic periods, and set a new time for the Lord to come—a work in which they have continued more or less to the present time, fixing a new date as each one passed by, to the scandal of the Advent movement, and the discredit, so far as their limited influence extended, of all prophetic study; a few, searching closely and candidly for the cause of the mistake, were confirmed in their views of the providential character of the Advent movement, and the correctness of the argument on the time, but saw that a mistake had been made on the subject of the sanctuary, by which the disappointment could be explained. They learned that the sanctuary was not this earth, as had been supposed; that the cleansing was

not to be by fire; and that the prophecy on this point did not involve the coming of the Lord at all. They found in the Scriptures very clear evidence that the sanctuary referred to was the temple in heaven, which Paul calls "the sanctuary," the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man"; and that its cleansing, according to the type, would consist of the final ministration of the priest in the second apartment, or most holy place. They then saw that the time had come for the fulfilment of Rev. xi. 19: "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament."

Having their attention thus called to the ark, they were naturally led to an examination of the law contained in the ark. That the ark contained the law was evident from the very name applied to it. It was called "the ark of His testament"; but it would not have been the ark of His "testament," and it could not have been so called, had it not contained the law. Here, then, was the ark in heaven, the great antitype of the ark which, during the typical dispensation, existed here on earth; and the law which this heavenly ark contained must consequently be the great original of which the law on the tables in the earthly was but a transcript, or copy. That law, then, is still the law of God's government, and its fourth precept, now as in the beginning, demands the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. No one who admits the argument on the sanctuary pretends to dispute this point. Thus the Sabbath reform was brought to view; and it was seen that whatever had been done in opposition to this law, especially in the introduction of a day of rest and worship which destroyed the Sabbath of Jehovah, must be the work of the papal beast, that power which was to oppose God, and try to exalt himself above Him. But this is the very work in reference to which the third angel utters his warning; hence it began to be seen that the period of the third message synchronizes with the period of the cleansing of the sanctuary, which began with the ending of the 2,300 days in 1844, and that the proclamation is based on the great truths developed by this subject.

Thus the dawning light of the third message rose upon the Church. But they saw at once that the world would have a right to demand of those who professed to be giving that message, an explanation of all the symbols which it contains—the beast, the image, the worship, and the mark; hence these points were made

subjects of special study. The testimony of the Scriptures was found to be clear and abundant; and it did not take a great while to formulate from the truths revealed, definite statements and propositions in explanation of all these points.

The argument showing what constitutes the beast, the image, and the mark, has already been given in chapter xiii.; and it has been shown that the two-horned beast, which erects the image and enforces the mark, is the United States, now in full career, and hastening forward to perform the very work assigned it in the prophecy. It is this work, and these agents, against which the third message utters its warning, which is still further proof that this message is now in order, and shows the most conclusive harmony in all these prophecies. The arguments we need not here repeat; it will be sufficient to recapitulate the points established.

1. The "beast" is the Roman Catholic power.
  2. The "mark of the beast" is that institution which this power has set up as proof of its authority to legislate for the Church, and command the consciences of men under sin. It consists in a change of the law of God, by which the signature of royalty is taken from the law—the seventh-day Sabbath, the great memorial of Jehovah's creative work, is torn from its place in the decalogue, and a false and counterfeit Sabbath, the first day of the week, is set up in its stead.
  3. The "image of the beast" is some ecclesiastical combination which will resemble the beast in being clothed with power to enforce its decrees with the pains and penalties of the civil law.
  4. The two-horned beast, by which the image, after being made by the people, is given power to speak and act, is the United States; and all but the final steps toward the formation of the image are already seen.
  5. The two-horned beast enforces the mark of the beast; that is, he establishes by law the observance of the first day of the week, or Sunday Sabbath. What is being done in this direction has already been noticed. The movement is urged on by individuals, by organized "Sabbath" committees, by politicians, indirectly by the labour element, by the National Reform Association, by the American Sabbath (Sunday) Union, by the W.C.T.U., and by the Christian Endeavourers, with their Good Citizenship Leagues, etc.
- But the people are not to be left in the dark in this matter. Third message utters a solemn protest against all this evil. It



exposes the work of the beast, shows the nature of its opposition to the law of God, warns the people against compliance with its demands, and points out to all the way of truth. This naturally excites opposition; and the Church is led so much the more to seek the aid of human authority in behalf of its dogmas as they are shown to lack the divine.

In the interests of this message, there are now (1908) in different parts of the world, twenty-two publishing houses in which are employed about five hundred persons engaged in the manufacture of books and papers. The literature put out by these institutions comprises 99 periodicals; 697 tracts, containing 8,042 pages; 174 pamphlets, containing 15,212 pages; and 215 books, containing 69,167 pages. These are published in fifty-one languages, and more than one thousand persons are devoting their entire time to their sale.

The educational interests of this movement are represented by sixty-seven schools of various grades (including a large number of well-equipped colleges), and thirty-nine sanitariums, nearly all of which conduct medical missionary training-schools, for the purpose of preparing evangelical and medical missionaries. And there are already in the field more than twelve hundred ministers of the Gospel zealously proclaiming the truths of this message in many parts of the world.

This movement is at least a phenomenon to be explained. We have found movements which fulfil most strikingly and accurately the first and second messages. Here is another which now challenges the attention of the world as a fulfilment of the third. It *claims* to be a fulfilment, and asks the world to examine the credentials on which it bases its right to such a claim. Let us look at them.

1. "The third angel followed them." So this movement follows the two previously mentioned. It takes up and continues the promulgation of the truths they uttered, and adds to them what the third message involves besides.

2. The third message is characterized as a warning against the beast. So this movement holds prominent among its themes an explanation of this symbol, telling the people what it is, and exposing its blasphemous claims and works.

3. The third message warns all against worshipping the beast. So this movement explains how this beast-power has brought into

Christendom certain institutions which antagonize the requirements of the Most High, and shows that if we yield to these, we worship this power. "Know ye not," says Paul, "that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?" Rom. vi. 16.

4. The third message warns all against receiving the mark of the beast. So this movement makes it a burden of its work to show what the mark of the beast is, and to warn against its reception. It is the more solicitous to do this because this anti-Christian power has worked so cunningly that the majority are deceived into making unconscious concessions to its authority. It is shown that the mark of the beast is an institution which has been arrayed in Christian garb, and insidiously introduced into the Christian Church in such a way as to nullify the authority of Jehovah and enthrone that of the beast. Stripped of all disguises, it is simply setting up a counterfeit Sabbath of its own on the first day of the week, in place of the Sabbath of the Lord on the seventh day—a usurpation which the great God cannot tolerate, and from which the remnant Church must fully clear itself before it will be prepared for the coming of Christ. Hence the urgent warning, Let no man worship the beast or receive his mark.

5. The third message has something to say against the worship of the image of the beast. So this movement speaks of this subject also, telling what the image will be, or at least explaining the prophecy of the two-horned beast, which makes the image; how the image is to be formed; that the prophecy concerns this generation; and pointing to the evidence that it is on the very verge of fulfilment.

There is no religious enterprise going forward in the world except this by the Seventh-Day Adventists, which claims to be a fulfilment of the third angel's message—no other which holds forth, as its prominent themes, the very subjects of which this message is composed. What shall we do with these things? Is this the fulfilment?—It must so stand, unless its claims can be disproved, unless it can be shown that the first and second messages have not been heard, that the positions taken in reference to the beast, image, mark, and worship are not correct, and that all the prophecies and signs and evidences which show that the coming of Christ is near, and consequently that this message is due, can be wholly set aside. But this the earnest Bible student will hardly undertake.

The result of the proclamation, as declared in verse 12, still further proves the correctness of the positions here taken. It brings out a company of whom it can be said: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." In the very heart of Christendom this work is done; and those who receive the message are rendered peculiar by their practice in reference to the commandments of God. What difference is there in practice, and what only difference, among Christians, in this respect?—Just this; some think that the fourth commandment is kept by devoting the first day of the week to rest and worship; others claim that the seventh day is the one set apart to such duties, and accordingly spend its hours in this manner, resuming on the first day their ordinary labour. No plainer line of demarcation could be drawn between two classes. The time which one class regard as sacred, and devote to religious uses, the other look upon as only secular, and devote to ordinary labour. One class are devoutly resting, the other zealously labouring. One class, pursuing their worldly vocations, find the other class withdrawn from all such pursuits, and the avenue of commercial intercourse abruptly closed. Thus for two days in the week these two classes are kept apart by difference of theory and practice in regard to the fourth commandment. On no other commandment could there be so marked a difference.

The message brings its adherents to the observance of the seventh day; for in this way only are they made peculiar, inasmuch as an observance of the first day would not distinguish a person from the masses who were already observing that day when the message was introduced. And in this we find still further evidence that Sunday-keeping is the mark of the beast; for the message presenting as its chief burden a warning against receiving the mark of the beast will, of course, bring its adherents to discard that practice which constitutes the mark, and to adopt the opposite. It does lead them to discard the observance of the first day of the week, and adopt that of the seventh day. In view of this, it is at once seen that there is here more than an inference that Sunday-keeping is the mark of the beast against which it warns us, and the observance of the seventh day, to which it leads us, is its opposite.

This is in harmony with the argument on the seal of God, as given in chapter vii. It was there shown that sign, seal, mark, and token are synonymous terms, and that God declares His Sabbath to be His sign, mark, or seal, in reference to His people. Thus God

has a seal, or mark, which is His Sabbath. The beast also has a seal, or mark, which is his sabbath. One is the seventh day; the other is the first day. Christendom will at last be divided into just two classes: to wit, those who are sealed with the seal of the living God—that is, have His mark, or keep His Sabbath—and those who are sealed with the seal of the beast—that is, have his mark, or keep his sabbath. Upon this issue, the third angel's message both enlightens and warns us.

As so much importance, according to this argument, attaches to the seventh day, the reader may ask for some evidence that a person cannot be said to keep the commandments of God unless he does keep the seventh day. This would involve a discussion of the whole Sabbath question, which it is not the province of this work to give, though it may be proper to present here, as this much perhaps is called for in this connection, the leading facts connected with the Sabbath institution—facts which are fully sustained by the results of thorough investigation.

1. The Sabbath was instituted in the beginning, at the conclusion of the first week of time. Gen. ii. 1, 2.

2. It was the seventh day of that week, and was based on facts which are inseparably connected with its very name and existence—facts which never can become untrue, and never can be changed. God's resting on the seventh day made it His rest-day, or the Sabbath (rest) of the Lord; and it can never cease to be His rest-day, as that fact never can be changed. He sanctified, or set apart, the day then and there, the record states; and that sanctification can never cease, unless it be removed by an act on the part of Jehovah as direct and explicit as that by which He placed it upon the day in the beginning. No one claims that this has ever been done, and he could not prove it if he did so claim.

3. The Sabbath has nothing in it of a typical, shadowy, or ceremonial nature; for it was instituted before man sinned, and hence belongs to a time when, in the very nature of things, a type, or shadow, could not exist.

4. The laws and institutions which existed before man's fall were primary in their nature; they grew out of the relation between God and man, and man and man, and were such as would always have remained if man never had sinned, and were not affected by his sin. In other words, they were, in the very nature of things, immutable and eternal. Ceremonial and typical laws owed their

origin to the fact that man had sinned, as they never would have existed had this never been a fact. These were from dispensation to dispensation subject to change; and these, and these only, were abolished at the cross. The Sabbath law was a primary law, and therefore immutable and eternal.

5. The sanctification of the Sabbath in Eden renders its existence certain from creation to Sinai. Here it was placed in the very bosom of the decalogue as God spoke it with an audible voice, and wrote it with His finger on tables of stone—circumstances which for ever separate it from ceremonial laws, and place it among the moral and eternal.

6. The Sabbath is not indefinite—any seventh day after six of labour. The law from Sinai (Exod. xx. 8-11) makes it as definite as language can make it; the events that give it birth (Gen. ii. 1-3) confine it to the definite seventh day; and the 6,240 Sabbath miracles in the wilderness, three each week for forty years; namely, (1) a double portion of manna on the sixth day, (2) the preservation of the sixth-day manna on the seventh day, and (3) none on the seventh day (see Exod. xvi.), show that it is one particular day, and not simply a proportion of time.

7. The Sabbath is a part of that law which our Lord openly declared that He came not to destroy. On the other hand, He most solemnly affirmed that it should endure in every jot and tittle while the earth should continue. Matt. v. 17-20.

8. It is a part of that law which Paul declares is *not* made void, but established, by faith in Christ. Rom. iii. 31. The ceremonial or typical law, which pointed to Christ and ceased at the cross, *is* made void, or superseded, by faith in Him. Eph. ii. 15.

9. It is a part of that royal law, a law pertaining to the King Jehovah, which James declares is a law of liberty, and which shall judge us at the last day. God does not have different standards of judgment for different ages of the world. Jas ii. 11, 12.

10. It is the "Lord's day" of Rev. i. 10. (See on that verse.)

11. It appears as the institution in reference to which a great reform is predicted in the last days. Is. lvi. 1, 2, compared with 1 Pet. i. 5. Under this head would also come the message under consideration.

12. And in the new creation, the Sabbath, true to its origin and nature, again appears, and will thenceforward shed its blessings upon God's people through all eternity. Is. lxvi. 22, 23.

Such is a brief synopsis of some of the arguments to show that the Sabbath law has been in no wise relaxed, and the institution in no way changed; and that a person cannot be said to keep the commandments of God unless he keeps the Sabbath. To have to do with such an institution is a high honour. To pay heed to its claims will prove an infinite blessing.

*The Punishment of Beast-Worshippers.*—These shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. When is this torment inflicted? Chapter xix. 20 shows that at the second coming of Christ there is a manifestation of fiery judgments which may be called a lake of fire and brimstone, into which the beast and false prophet are cast *alive*. This can refer only to the destruction visited upon them at the commencement, not at the end, of the thousand years. Again, there is a remarkable passage in Isaiah to which we are obliged to refer in explanation of the phraseology of the threatening of the third angel, and which unquestionably describes scenes to take place here at the second advent, and in the desolate state of the earth during the thousand years following. That the language in the Revelation was borrowed from this prophecy can hardly fail to be seen. After describing the Lord's anger upon the nations, the great slaughter of their armies, the departing of the heavens as a scroll, etc., the prophet says: "For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever." Isa. xxxiv. 8-10. And since it is expressly revealed that there is to be a lake of fire in which all sinners perish at the end of the thousand years, we can only conclude that the destruction of the living wicked at the commencement of this period, and the final doom of all the ungodly at its close, are very similar.

*Duration of the Punishment.*—The expression "for ever and ever" cannot here denote eternity. This is evident from the fact that this punishment is inflicted on this earth, where time is measured by day and night. This is further shown from the passage in Isaiah already referred to, if that is, as above suggested, the language from which this is borrowed, and applies to the same

time. That language is spoken of the land of Idumea; but whether it be taken to mean literally the land of Edom, south and east of Judea, or to represent, as it doubtless does, this whole earth at the time when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion comes, in either case the scene must eventually terminate; for this earth is finally to be made new, cleansed of every stain of sin, every vestige of suffering and decay, and to become the habitation of righteousness and joy throughout eternal ages. The word *αἰών* here translated *for ever*, Schrevelius, in his Greek Lexicon, defines thus: "An age; a long period of time; indefinite duration; time, whether longer or shorter."\*

The period of the third message is a time of patience with the people of God. Paul and James both give us instruction on this point. Heb. x. 36; James v. 7, 8. Meanwhile this waiting company are keeping the commandments of God—the ten commandments, and the faith of Jesus—all the teachings of Christ and His apostles as contained in the New Testament. The true Sabbath, as given in the decalogue, is thus brought out in vivid contrast with the counterfeit Sabbath, the mark of the beast, which finally distinguishes those who reject the third message, as already set forth.

VERSE 13. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. 14. 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. 15. 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. 16. And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

*A Solemn Crisis.*—Events grow solemn as we near the end. It is this fact which gives to the third angel's message, now going forth, its unusual degree of solemnity and importance. It is the last warning to go forth prior to the coming of the Son of man, here represented as seated upon a white cloud, a crown upon His head, and a sickle in His hand, to reap the harvest of the earth.

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\*For a discussion of the meaning of this term, see the work entitled, "Here and Hereafter." Apply to publishers.



We are fast passing over a line of prophecy which culminates in the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven in flaming fire, to take vengeance on His foes, and to reward His saints. Not only so, but we have come so near its accomplishment that the very next link in the chain is this crowning and momentous event. And time never rolls back. As the river does not retard its flow as it approaches the precipice, but bears all floating bodies over with resistless power: and as the seasons never reverse their course, but summer follows in the path of the budding fig-tree, and winter treads close upon the falling leaf; so we are borne onward and onward, whether we will or not, whether prepared or not, to the unavoidable crisis. Ah! how little dream the proud professor and the careless sinner of the doom that is impending! And how hard for even those who know and profess the truth to realize it as it is!

*A Blessing Promised.*—John is commanded by a voice from heaven to write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth;" and the response of the Spirit is, "Yea, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." "From henceforth" must signify from some particular point of time. What point?—Evidently from the commencement of the message in connection with which this is spoken. But why are those who die after this point of time blessed? There must be some special reason for pronouncing this benediction upon them. Is it not because they escape the time of fearful peril which the saints are to encounter as they close their pilgrimage? And while they are thus blessed in common with all the righteous dead, they have an advantage over them in being, doubtless, that company spoken of in Dan. xii. 2, who are raised to everlasting life at the standing up of Michael. Thus, escaping the perils through which the rest of the 144,000 pass, they rise, and share with them in their final triumph here, and occupy with them their pre-eminent place in the kingdom.\* In this way, we understand, their works follow

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\*Those who die after having become identified with the third angel's message are evidently numbered as a part of the 144,000; for this message is the same as the sealing message of Revelation vii., and by that message only 144,000 were sealed. But there are many who have had their entire religious experience under this message, but have fallen in death. They die in the Lord, and hence are counted as sealed; for they will be saved. But the message results in the sealing of *only* 144,000; therefore these must be included in that number. Being raised in the special resurrection (Dan. xii.

them: these works are held in remembrance, to be rewarded at the judgment; and the persons receive the same recompence that they would have had, had they lived and faithfully endured all the perils of the time of trouble.

It will be noticed that in this line of prophecy three angels precede the Son of man on the white cloud, and three are introduced after that symbol. The idea has already been expressed that literal angels are engaged in the scenes here described. The first three have charge of the three special messages, and may also symbolize a body of religious teachers. The message of the fourth angel is evidently to be uttered after the Son of man, having finished His priestly work, takes His seat upon the white cloud, but before He appears in the clouds of heaven. As the language is addressed to Him Who is seated upon the white cloud, having in His hand a sharp sickle ready to reap, it must denote a message of prayer on the part of the church, after their work for the world is done and probation has ceased, and nothing remains but for the Lord to appear and take His people to Himself. It is doubtless the day-and-night cry spoken of by our Lord in Luke xviii. 7, 8 in connection with the coming of the Son of man. And this prayer will be answered; the elect will be avenged; for does not the parable read, "And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him?" He that is seated upon the cloud will thrust in His sickle, and the saints, under the figure of the wheat of the earth, will be gathered into the heavenly garner.

*The Wheat Garnered.*—"And He that sat on the cloud," says the prophecy, "thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." By this language we are carried down past the second advent, with its accompanying scenes of destruction to the

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2; Rev. i. 7) which occurs when the voice of God is uttered from the temple, at the beginning of the seventh and last plague (Rev. xvi. 17; Joel iii. 16; Heb. xii. 26), they pass through the period of that plague, and hence may be said to come "out of great tribulation" (Rev. vii. 14), and being raised from the grave only to mortal life, they take their stand with believers who have not died, and with them receive immortality at the last trump (1 Cor. xv. 52), being then, with the others, changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Thus, though they have passed through the grave, it can be said of them at last, that they are "redeemed from among men" (Rev. xiv. 4), that is, from among the living; for the coming of Christ finds them among the living, waiting for the change to immortality, like those who have not died, and as if they themselves had never died.

wicked and salvation to the righteous. Beyond these scenes we must therefore look for the application of the following verses:—

VERSE 17. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 18. 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. 19. 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. 20. 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.

*The Winepress of God's Wrath.*—The last two angels have to do with the wicked—the wicked represented by the purple clusters of the vine of the earth. May it not be that the closing doom of that class at the end of the thousand years is here presented, the prophecy thus making a final disposition of both the righteous and the wicked; the righteous clothed with immortality, and safely established in the kingdom, the wicked perishing around the city at the time of its ultimate location upon the earth?

This can hardly be applied at the time of the second advent: for events are here given in chronological order; and the destruction of the wicked would be contemporaneous with the gathering of the righteous. Again, the living wicked at Christ's coming drink of the "cup" of His indignation; but this passage brings to view the time when they perish in the "winepress" of His wrath, which is said to be trodden "without the city," answering completely to the description of Rev. xx. 9; and this latter expression would more naturally denote their complete and final destruction.

The angel comes out of the temple, where the records are kept and the punishment is determined. The other angel has power over fire. This may have some connection with the fact that fire is the element by which the wicked are at last to be destroyed, although, to carry out the figure, the wicked, having been likened to the clusters of the vine of the earth, are said to be cast into the great winepress, which is trodden without the city. And blood comes out of the winepress, even to the horses' bridles. We know that the wicked are doomed to be swallowed up at last in a flood of all-devouring flame descending from God out of heaven; but what preceding slaughter may take place among the doomed host, we know not. It is not improbable that this language will be literally fulfilled. As the first four angels of this series denoted a

marked movement on the part of the people of God, the last two may denote the same; for the saints are to have some part to act in meting out and executing the final punishment of the wicked. 1 Cor. vi. 2; Psa. cxlix. 9.

*The Saints Triumphant.*—Thus closes this chain of prophecy—closes, as others close, with the complete triumph of God and Christ over all their foes, and with the glorious salvation that awaits the faithful followers of the Prince of life, for ever secured.

