

# A VINDICATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD OVER THE CHILDREN OF MEN

OR,

## "THE PROMISE AND OATH OF GOD TO ABRAHAM."

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## **GOD'S PROMISE AND OATH TO ABRAHAM**

### **CHAPTER I.**

This subject we consider one of the greatest importance we have ever presented to the consideration of our readers; because, if this promise and oath are equivocal, or uncertain of fulfillment, what foundations have we on which to stand in relation to any other promise supposed to be made by God? All other promises are made doubtful, if this is proved of uncertain meaning. No promise of God was ever made with greater clearness or more solemnly proclaimed. To treat it, therefore, with neglect or as if it might be explained to suit human theories, is to undermine all faith in the words of God.

### **HAS THIS PROMISE AND OATH EVER BEEN FULFILLED?**

Let us present the subject as it appears in the Bible. God had called Abram out of his country to go into another; "unto a land that I will show thee." He then told him, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Ge 12:1-3.

After this, when Abram was ninety-nine years old, God appeared to him, and said, "As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations: neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name, shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee... I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant," etc. After

this, when God was about to overthrow Sodom and Gomorrah, He said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? — Ge 18:17,18.

At length Isaac is born, the heir of the same promises, and when he was grown to some years, the LORD called Abraham to go to a certain place and offer up his son Isaac "for a burnt offering." Abraham made every preparation to carry into execution this command of God. He had gone to the place pointed out, erected his altar, bound his son and laid him on it. He then stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son. At this point, "The Angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven," forbidding him to proceed any farther. Then followed a second call out of heaven saying, "By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall *all the nations* of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." -Gen. xxii.

This promise was renewed to Isaac, Ge 26:4, as follows, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," etc. The same was more fully confirmed to Jacob, Ge 28:14, "In thee and thy seed shall *all the families* of the earth be blessed." Thus it is seen, by the language used by the LORD, that all nations embraced all the families of those nations. Peter, in referring to this matter, Ac 3:25, says, "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall *all the kindred's* of the earth be blessed." Here all families of the earth are embraced. Paul, also, saith, "The scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." - Ga 3:8. Here is no limitation-"all nations," and of course "all the families of the earth" are to be "blessed" with the gospel proclamation in order that they may be "justified by faith," that is by believing the message of God's love to the world, or to all the families of the earth. In order to believe it, they must have it proclaimed to them. How can a man believe in that of which he has never heard? Have all the families of the earth heard of the love of God, to "the world," in any age or dispensation past or present? Certainly no man living can prove that they have, and the evidence is clearly against any such assumption. If any age could boast of such a result it is the present century in which we live; but what are the facts?

In a work of a late date by Mr. Shimeall, of this city, who has written and preached much on prophecy, he gives the following statistics:

"The aggregate population of the earth is twelve hundred and twenty-five millions. They may be divided into the following religious systems, namely:

1. Of Brahminical Pagans, in Asia-650,000,000.
2. Mohammedans, in Asia and Africa, .- 150,000,000.
3. Pagans in a purely savage state, .- 100,000,000.
4. Jews, the kingdom of Judah, dispersed, .- 14,000,000.

In Christendom there are:

1. Of the Western, or Roman Church, -170,000,000.
2. Of the Eastern, or Greek Church, -60,000,000.
3. of Protestants, throughout the world, - 80,000,000.

Total population, 1,224, 000,000"

He then adds: "It results from the statistics, first, That less than one fifth of the earth's population are included within the pale of Christendom. Second, That of these latter, only about one-third bear the Protestant name. Third, computing, as we must, the real numerical strength of Protestant Christianity by the communion statistics of all the various branches of the Protestant Church, scattered over the world, they do not yield a total of over 15,000,000, of the 1,224,000,000]. What a picture."

All this, notwithstanding the promise and oath of God that in Abraham all the families of the earth shall be blessed. From facts like these, one of two things seem inevitable. First, there is an age or ages yet to come, in which the promise and oath of God will be fulfilled; or, Second *that* promise and oath of God does not mean what it says, and it is impossible to tell what it does mean; and so, the "two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie" cannot be relied on to teach what truth is. No wonder if men are made infidels under the teaching which involves the possibility of the promise and oath of God meaning something entirely different from what is expressed, or is never to be fulfilled at all.

## CHAPTER II.

If we put in connection with that promise and oath certain other statements of the Bible, we see not how any impartial student of scripture can come to any other conclusion in regard to the meaning of this engagement of God to Abraham than its obvious sense. It either belongs to the past or future ages of this world's history. That it has been fulfilled in any past age, or ages, it is impossible for any one to prove.

Let us now look at corresponding testimony, and see if the Bible does not re-affirm the same idea of a period in which all the families of the earth are to be blessed in Abraham and his seed.

Jesus was introduced into the world with this proclamation by "the angel of the Lord:".. "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all people*: for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Lu 2:10,11. This is the same, in substance, as "the angel of the LORD" uttered to Abraham, when He "called to him out of heaven." Ge 22\$., after the trial in offering up his son Isaac. "All people" are announced, by the angel at Jesus' birth, as those who "shall be" the recipients of the "good tidings of great joy," thus proclaimed.

Again. When the child Jesus was brought into the temple at Jerusalem to be "presented to the Lord," old Simeon, full of the Holy Spirit, took the child in his arms and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of *all people*: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." - Lu 2:28-32. "All people" have not yet seen this light in any age past: then it will have a fulfillment somewhere in the future.

John says of "the Word made flesh," "That was the true Light which lighteth *every man* that cometh into the world." - Joh 1:9. Is this not equal to saying, "All the families of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham's seed?" Take this in connection with Jesus' words, Joh 3:16, "God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." If God required belief in his Son, in order to the reception of eternal life, then He is pledged to have all the world, that is, "all the families of the earth, *blessed* with the knowledge of his love and gift. How else could they believe in his Son? To us, this text, in connection with the promise and oath of God to Abraham, is demonstration that in some age "all the families of the earth" are to be blessed with the knowledge of God's love to them, and so have a chance to *believe* the good news.

Again. After his resurrection from the dead, Jesus commanded his disciples, saying, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to *every creature*." - Mr 16:15. Was not that command based on the promise and oath to Abraham? and was it not an announcement and pledge that said promise and oath should be accomplished under His superintendence? and will not He, who was the "propitiation for the sins of the whole world," fail in the work he came into the world to accomplish, if "every creature" does not, in this age or "the ages to come," hear the "glad tidings" under circumstances which shall enable them to embrace or reject the offered mercy? The command was given to the apostles, and through them to the Church universal. But it has never yet been carried out. Will this age close without its being done? Certainly it will, if it is to close near the time in which we live. Does not this fact involve another age or ages in which the promise and oath of God, and the command of Jesus shall all find a full and perfect fulfillment? We have no doubt such will be the fact. Does it not follow, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all who belong to the seed promised, viz., all of the true Church of Christ, must first have their resurrection from the dead, or, if alive when Christ returns from heaven, be changed to immortality?

Abraham did not receive the *land* God swore to give him, during his natural life: therefore, you all say, he must be raised from the dead to have the promise and oath fulfilled. The gospel has never yet been preached to "every creature." Yet the command has never been revoked and must some time be carried out: else how are men to be judged? Justified or condemned? "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved;" or, have life; "but he that believeth not, shall be damned;" or, be condemned. Here the principle of judgment is laid down. Faith brings the life which is eternal. Unbelief is that which brings the condemnation to death eternal.

Here, then, we see that the proclamation of God's love and good will to men must be proclaimed to "every creature" before their final state is determined, or made permanent; *i.e.*, the Gospel message is to be proclaimed to men first; and their reception or rejection of it determines their final state. The Gospel message is that by which they are to be judged. In no age or dispensation has that message ever yet been proclaimed to "every creature:" therefore, an age or ages will be employed to carry out God's promise and oath that all the families of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham and his seed.

Again: "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom *for all*, to be testified in due time." - 1Ti 2:5,6. Here the fact is set forth that Christ gave himself a

ransom for *all "men;"* and that fact is to be testified in *due time to all* for whom he gave himself a ransom. In other words: "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" in the seed of Abraham according to the promise and oath of God.

Yet again: "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels... that he by the grace of God should taste death for *every man.*" - Heb 2:9. "All the families of the earth" are embraced in this language. But, the beloved John says, "Jesus Christ... is the propitiation... for the sins of the *whole world.*" - 1Jo 2:1,2. This expression covers the whole ground—all men, all families, all nations. Still more, John adds, "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior" (LIFE-GIVER) " *of the world.*" "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent His Son, to be the propitiation for our sins." - 1Jo 4:9,10,17.

Do not these testimonies cover the whole ground of the promise and oath of God to Abraham, that in him and his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed? We think they do, and see no way to escape that conclusion; hence, believe a time is to come, in a probationary state, when the promise and oath will be carried out in all their fullness according to God's design and intention. Whether it embraces all that every have lived, or some one age in the dispensation, it may not be so easy to prove; but it cannot fail of being in an age when men are in a state of probation. If, then, no such universal blessing of the families of the earth has taken place in any of the past ages, there must and will be an age or ages in the future, when the promise and oath of God will be seen not to be and unmeaning pledge, but will have fulfillment which shall justify it in all its fullness and beyond all finite conception

We do not hesitate to admit, that we are inclined to believe the promise includes all those who have died without any knowledge of God's love to the world; that by some means, God will, hereafter, cause all men to see the love He has had to them in giving his Son to give them eternal life. What God has promised He is able also to perform; no matter how impossible or improbable the thing may appear to finite wisdom. After God had promised Abraham that in Isaac his seed should be called, He commanded him to offer up this child of promise for a burnt offering. Did Abraham stop to find fault, and say, God cannot fulfill his promise, if Isaac is to die? No: he "accounted that God was able to raise him up, that such would be the case, if Isaac died; for he "accounted that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead;" and his faith embraced the fact that such would be the case, if Isaac died; for, "he staggered not at the promise," through all appearances were against it in that hour of the trial of his faith. Is God less able to raise all the dead to whom the blessing of Abraham and his seed has never yet appeared, than He was to raise Isaac, to fulfill His promise of a multitudinous seed? We hardly come up to the Abrahamic faith in these days, though we perhaps think ourselves strong in faith; yet too many, if they cannot see just how a thing is to be done reject it, as if it were impossible for God to do it because they cannot see the process.

### **CHAPTER III.**

In our previous numbers we have set forth this promise and oath as found in the Old Testament, and shown that the language of the New Testament, both in its letter and spirit, abundantly sustains the certainty of the fulfillment of the same: "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

It is important that we understand what is included in blessing. Blessings are divided into two classes, which we

call *antecedent* and *consequent*. The first is given to enable the recipient to secure the other. Man needs and desires an endless life; but of himself he has it not, nor the means to obtain it. God, in his love of man, provides the means entirely independent of man, and blesses men with those means without any effort on their part: they are presented as a free gift: without this gift, man never could attain to eternal life. This blessing is antecedent to any thing performed by man. God proposes to confer on him a life without end, if he will approve this blessing. This eternal life is a consequent blessing, and dependent on the improvement he must first be put in possession of the antecedent blessing; without which he cannot do anything, because he is destitute of any means with which to do.

To illustrate our meaning. God has not only given man natural life, but he has given him the earth or soil, the sun to warm it, rain to moisten it, and to man wisdom to know how to cultivate the soil, seed suitable to raise fruit for food, etc. All these are antecedent blessings, a free gift of the CREATOR. Without these blessings man, though he has life, could not produce food to sustain life. Notwithstanding these unsought and free gifts of blessings, we all see that man must improve them, or he will not receive food or protract life. The produce of improvements is the consequent blessing; and the man who would argue that because God had given him the antecedent blessings, therefore he need make no effort to secure consequent ones, for God is too good to withhold them, seeing He has done so much entirely gratuitously, -we say, such a man would be condemned by all thinking persons: blessings consequent are always dependent on improvement; or, are conditional.

It is the antecedent blessings; or those which are essential to put man in a condition to obtain eternal life by improvement, that man needs in his helpless state. These God has provided, richly and freely, in the Son of his love: but the provision itself would prove no blessing if never known, and no opportunity ever given to improve it. God, therefore has pledged himself, by promise and oath, that "all the families of the earth shall be blessed." In Abraham and his seed: that is, they shall have those antecedent blessings which are necessary to enable them to secure eternal life; making that further blessing dependent upon improvement-or, conditional.

"Faith" is the first and principal condition. "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through *faith*, preached before *the gospel* unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." - **Ga 3:8**. Is he a preacher of the gospel who does not give the same testimony, or who denies that all nations, not excepting the heathen, are to have the gospel proclaimed to them, and an opportunity to secure eternal life? "All nations" includes all the families of the earth; and "all families" includes every individual of those families; hence, Jesus said, "Preach the gospel to *every creature*." That commission, or command, as we have said, embraces all that the promise and oath of God to Abraham embraces, and is a pledge of the fulfillment of it; and God gave Jesus "power over *all flesh*, that He should give eternal life to as many as" God had "given him." - Joh 17:2. "All flesh" - "all the families of the earth" then, are to have an opportunity, or the means granted them to secure that provision in Jesus, His only begotten Son, "he that believeth and is baptized shall have life;" that is "eternal life." "He that believeth not shall be condemned;" *i.e.*, to death; or, "not to see life."

Our Lord thus fixes the final doom of the sinner on unbelief; which would be no sin, if the individual had never heard the proclamation of a provision made for him: hence, in order to a final condemnation to death, men must have been blessed with a knowledge of God's merciful provision for them; a rejection of that provision fixes their destiny in the dominion of death.

But the idea of a provision made, yet never proclaimed to men, and death eternal inflicted for a sin of which they never could have been guilty, is too much like the administration of an ancient tyrant, who causes his laws to be placed so high as to make it impossible for the people to read them, and yet punish them for not conforming to them. Such an administration is not to be attributed to the God who gave his Son up unto death for us "all, to be testified in due time." - 1Ti 2:6. God's time is not so limited as our finite minds may suppose: and His *time* will

surely come, if not in this age, it will surely come in "the ages to come," - { Eph 2:7}, when "all the families of the earth will be blessed in Abraham and his seed;" which "seed is Christ;" and "if ye be Christ's, then are ye," also Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." - Ga 3:29. Hence, Abraham, personally, and all his seed, by faith, will be concerned in carrying out God's promise and oath of blessing all the families of the earth: therefore, if this present age is soon to end, another age, or ages, is inevitable to complete the work of the promise and oath.

It seems to us that Christians, generally, do not yet understand for what the present age was given. It was not given to "convert the world;" for God well knew it would be a wicked and corrupt age; "evil man and seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived;" { 2Ti 3:13}; and that "the time would come when" men would "not endure sound doctrine; but, after their own lusts," would "heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and... turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables." - 2Ti 4:3,4. Such is the history of the present age; and God foresaw that it would be so. Hence, He provided for "ages to come." { Eph 3:7}, "that He might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

The nation of Israel having failed to become "a kingdom of priests," { Ex 19:6}, by rejecting their King, God determined to "visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name;" { Ac 15:14}; a people to do the work that ancient Israel was called and set apart to do, but utterly failed by their unbelief and final rejection of God's chosen King and Leader in the work of blessing "all the families of the earth." From the time, the grand privilege of doing this work was taken from the nation of Israel, "according to the flesh," and thereafter a people taken "out of the Gentiles" were to constitute the "kingdom of priests," at the head of whom, Jesus was to be placed, as their King and High Priest, to carry out "God's promise and oath to Abraham," that, "In thee and in they seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

The present age or dispensation has been, and still is, the age in which God is gathering that seed of Abraham, of whom Christ was and is the "first-fruits," and preparing them for their work of blessing "all nations and kindred's of the earth." This dispensation, or age, in which we now live, was not designed to witness the fulfillment of the promise and oath of God, but to prepare a people, freed from carnal and selfish designs, earnestly desiring not only to see God's promise and oath to Abraham carried out, but a like one to Moses, by the same God, viz., "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD." - Nu 14:21.

This age, then, so far from being the *final* one, is only a preparatory one, to prepare men and women for the great work of blessing "all the families of the earth" in "the ages to come," of which Paul speaks. Let our hearts be enlarged, then, on the subject of God's love to "the world."

## CHAPTER IV.

The promise and oath, that in Abraham and his seed "all the families of the earth all kindred's, all nations shall be blessed." I understand to relate to all the race of Adam, without exception; to be fulfilled in this life or a future one: all men, of every age or nation, are embraced in it and cannot fail of having an *opportunity*, here or hereafter, of receiving the benefit of that promised blessing.

At this point we are met by the objection that, Such a view conflicts with the doctrine, taught in the Bible, that there is to be no resurrection of the *wicked* dead. Here, then, it is proper to inquire who this class embraces:

## WHO ARE THE WICKED DEAD?

In answering this question, we trust we shall leave all conjectures and be instructed by the Bible alone. That book is a safe guide in all matters of faith. John Wesley, the founder of what is known as "Methodism," gave a definition of sin which is both scriptural and rational. He said, "sin properly so called is the voluntary transgression of the known law of God. Sin improperly so called is the involuntary transgression of the law of God whether known or unknown."

This definition of sin is clearly set forth in the Bible. Said Jesus, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin... If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." - Joh 15:22,24 . Here is a clear recognition of the distinction between voluntary sins and involuntary ones. It is light sinned against that constitutes sin, properly so called: light which gives us the knowledge of God, his love and kind designs. An act may be sin in itself, and yet not be sin properly so called. The apostle John says, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." - 1Jo 5:16.

Here is a clear distinction made as to sins: some are of a worse character than others. Paul saith, "Sin is not imputed when there is no law." - Ro 5:12. Again he says, "Where no law is, there is no transgression." - **Ro 4:15**. Also, Paul, in speaking of the ignorance of the heathen, says, "The times of the ignorance of the heathen, says, "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men, every where to repent," etc. - Ac 17:30. All this testimony shows there is a distinction in what is called sin. In the Bible, which warrants the idea that sin, under some circumstances is such properly so called; and under other circumstances it is improperly called sin, though such in itself. Without enlarging on this point we proceed to show that *the* gospel knows but *one* sin which is punished with the loss of endless life.

That one sin is a "willful" and deliberate rejection of Christ *after* He has been made known to him by a clear presentation of the truth concerning His work of redemption from sin and death, and as the author of an endless life. Such shall not "see" the life of the ages, but "the wrath of God abideth on him." Such is the law (so to speak) of the Gospel: a dispensation under which "every creature" has been or must be placed before an endless life is given or a final death can be inflicted. Whoever has had made known to them "the only *true* God and Jesus Christ," or has "received the knowledge of the truth" concerning God's love to them in sending His Son to "give himself a ransom for them," and thus become "a propitiation for their sins," and then "sins willfully" by rejecting that love and Jesus as the "one Mediator" -such persons commit a sin for which there is "no more sacrifice," nothing remains to them but the fearful death which "devours" them. - ( Joh 17:3 \_ 1Ti 3:5,6 \_ 1Jo 2:2 Heb 10:26,27). But what has this to do with such as have never heard the facts above stated? They have "no sin" in a Gospel sense. "Every creature" must first hear the "Glad Tidings," and have an opportunity to embrace Christ as their Deliverer before their final state is fixed: their faith or unbelief must be a *manifested fact*.

Says the objector, "Then there must be a resurrection of some into a *moral* state; and we cannot believe that." There are many things we may not "believe," nevertheless they may be true. The Scriptures are our rule: they do affirm that "all the families of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham and his seed." If a moral revival into life is necessary to fulfill that promise and oath of God, then there will be such a revival; and who shall say that the ALMIGHTY cannot or will not cause it to take place? Mark well, our view excludes from such revival all those who have been blessed with the truth, and willfully reject Jesus Christ: such are *wicked* in the gospel sense; and dying in their *unbelief* are condemned "not to see life," but to have "the wrath of God" *abide* "on them." - Joh



3:36. Thus our view does not effect the doctrine of the non-resurrection of the wicked dead, but it defines who are properly, or in a gospel sense, *the wicked* dead.

As a resurrection into a mortal state, Scripture acts show such has been the case, both under the Old and New Testaments; and that Abraham expected it in Isaac's case, if he had slain him; because, otherwise God's promise would fail, "that in Isaac shall they seed be called." "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able to perform: and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." - Ro 4:20-22 .

God's promise and oath—"two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie" -must be honored, however improbable or impossible it may seem to us finite creatures, that the thing shall surely come to pass. By unbelief, to say the least, we dishonor God, and bring discredit on His word; and in so plain and clear a case, stated in such a solemn manner, as the promise and oath of God to Abraham, *we* feel bound to accept it as meaning what it says, whatever difficulties might appear to limit its meaning.

No criticism can change this promise and oath. We therefore accept it in all its fullness, and believe to accept it thus, is to accept "*the gospel* preached to Abraham;" the unwavering belief of which, constituted that patriarch the father of all believers.

## CHAPTER V.

At this point our argument, that "all the families of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham and his seed," we will notice the supposed disproof of our views by the text of Ro 2:12 -It reads as follows: "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." Then follows the parenthetical statement, thus, "(for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature" [or, truly do] "the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another;) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

This portion of Scripture is supposed to militate against the idea that those who have died without ever having heard of Christ, may, possibly, be made alive again to hear of him, and so be judged by the gospel as to their final destiny. It is confidently asserted that the Apostle's language shows that the heathen sinners "shall perish without law," or the gospel. This text bears something of the same relation to the view we advocate relating to the promise and oath of God to Abraham, that Joh 5:28,29 does to the non-resurrection of the wicked dead; with this difference, however, this is a solitary text; there being none other that expresses the same sentiment this is supposed to convey. Let us then examine the text and context and see if we can arrive at its true sense and intent.

The Apostle's controversy was especially with the "Jew," who "rested in the law," *etc.*, and was "confident that himself was a guide to the blind," *etc.*; ( Ro 2:17-19). Paul had told them that tribulation would be visited upon "every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also [afterwards] of the Gentile: but the glory, honor, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentiles: for there is no respect of persons with God." Ro 2:9-11. He then adds, "For as many as have sinned without law" [the Mosaic, or Jewish law]

"shall also perish without law:" [the Jew's law]: "and as many as have sinned *in* the law shall be judged by the law... in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

Thus reading the text, (as we must get the sense) without the parenthesis, we see what the Apostle designed to teach. The Gentiles, to whom he preached, were not under the law, of which the Jew boasted; they were not to be judged by that law. If the Gentile sinned (using the term sin in its proper sense) his sin was not against the law, for he was not under it, but he sinned against the gospel light, now brought unto him by the preaching thereof: his sin (be it remembered) is "in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ; or, by the preaching of the gospel." "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." - Heb 4:12.

It is by the preaching of the gospel (which Paul calls, "my gospel") that "God shall judge the secrets of men;" and it is "in the day" when the gospel is preached to them that the judgment takes place on the hearers of it: "the secrets of their hearts are then laid open; their disposition towards God and his Son, the LIFE-GIVER, are manifested, and then, if they reject the proffered mercy, although never under the law, they "shall perish without law;" but not without having first rejected the message of God's love made known to them according to the promise and oath of God.

To suppose those who are said to perish without law, also perish without the knowledge of God's willingness to save them by Jesus Christ, is to envelop God's promise and oath in thick darkness, and is a dishonor done to His government of the creatures He has made, out of all harmony with His revealed character; for, "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." - Ro 5:8. Are we to admit that the same God will doom millions on millions of these same sinners, for whom Christ died, to eternal death for not believing on Him of whom they never heard? We think the Apostle to the Gentiles would characterize such preaching as "another gospel" from that which he had preached.

As to what Paul saith in parenthesis, { Ro 2:13-15}, it only shows there is intelligence in human beings to see truth when made known to them, and lays the foundation for responsibility so far as the truth is presented to their minds; but states nothing of the final doom of such as never have been blessed with the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is to judge those who hear it. It is then, that men pass into the *investigating* judgment, which fixes their final state of life or death eternal. The light which is necessary to this end, is what God's promise and oath to Abraham secures to "every creature" possessed of human nature, and will surely be imparted to them in some way, at some time, before they receive life eternal or are doomed to death eternal. God cannot be thwarted in his work whether we believe it or not. His promise and oath stand and will stand against all the theories and unbelief of good or bad men. He will take care to see the end is reached, however impossible it may seem to us. The means are His. Faith is ours.

After it has been demonstrated that this promise and oath never have been fulfilled, either to all families, nor all nations, it is said, " *Some* of all nations have been blessed in Abraham and his seed, and that some of all nations have been blessed according to the promise and oath. But, for the sake of the argument, suppose we admit this assumption; then the promise and oath should be altered to correspond, and would read thus: "By myself have I sworn... that in thy seed *some* of all nations shall be blessed."

What would be thought of an immensely wealthy man if he should promise, and confirm it by an oath, saying, "In my wealth the United States shall be blessed." But the facts prove that only one of those States ever received any blessing from his wealth, or every heard of his promise and oath? Would any thinking man, knowing these

facts, say the promise and oath had been fulfilled?

What is the difference between a promise to nations and to families? It takes families to make nations; and a nation, as such, cannot be blessed without the families composing it being partakers of the blessing in some degree. God, clearly, included families when he spoke of the blessing to come through Abraham for He expressly said so to Abraham, Ge 28:14, thus, "In *thee* and in *thy seed* shall all the families of the earth be blessed." To say that "all nations mean something short—far short—of "all the families" of which those nations are composed is making a distinction where God has made none, but has expressly joined the two together, so that the one includes the other; and "what God has joined together let not man put asunder," saith Jesus.

## CHAPTER VI.

We shall next notice a very natural conclusion that some draw from Re 7:9-14, that all nations have had the good news of Christ and of redemption through his blood. Of a "multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred's, and people, and tongues," who "stood before the throne, and before the Lamb," it is said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

The general opinion of Commentators is, that this exhibition represents the church, universal, glorified. Our friends, who are opposed to our views of the age to come-or, kingdom of God age—accept the view of the Commentators, and conclude this multitude out of all nations, etc., precludes the idea that all nations have not already been blessed in Abraham and his seed.

In dealing with the book of Revelation; or explaining its figures and symbols, we have need to express ourselves cautiously. Let us look at the idea that this multitude represents the church universal, or all the saved at the end of this age. If it does, we might ask the question once propounded to our Lord by his disciples—"Who then can be saved?" out of those who now lived for the last seventy years, or during the present century? How many professed Christians, for these 70 years, can be numbered as those "who came out of *great* tribulation?" If that is to be the test, we think nearly all of us, who have lived in this nineteenth century, will fail of salvation. What have any of us yet passed through that would entitle us to say we came "out of *great* tribulation?" We must look for some other construction of the language of Re 7:9-14 than that of the Commentators, or give up our hope of salvation among that multitude which John saw there.

This idea may startle some of our friends: but we repeat it, if all that are ever to be saved are from this, or any previous age of the world's history not only multitudes of those who call themselves Christians in this century, but many of previous ages will fail of being of the "great multitude" see in Rev. vii., no matter how great their faith may have been; for very many true believers have died without passing through "*great* tribulation."

We seek, therefore, an explanation of the text which shall harmonize with the facts of history, and the general tenor of Scripture. First: Let us see where the scene of Rev. vii. is laid. It is *after* that scene of chap. vi., in which the sixth seal was opened, and "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men," etc., "said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath has come; and who shall be able to stand?"

This scene shows that the persons represented, upon whom this great tribulation falls, were those who had the knowledge of "the Lamb," and had learned that there would be a "great day of His wrath:" hence it is clear that they had previously had the gospel message and despised or neglected it. A "great tribulation" now overtakes them; corresponding with smiting the image and dashing it to pieces, Da 7\$, and the destruction of the fourth beast, Dan. vii. That "great tribulation" passed, "the kingdom of God" is established on the earth—"the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess it forever and ever."

The "great tribulation," then, is on the wicked rejecters or neglecters of the gospel message; and is the winding up scene of this age, when the corrupters of the earth, and the corrupters of God's word, will find the "great day of the wrath of the Lamb," on them, has come. That "great tribulation" being over, John is presented with a new scene; he says, "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred's, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands," etc. When John was asked by the angel, "What are these...and whence came they?" he evidently did not understand the matter; he must have been surprised at such a glorious multitude, in such a position, and asked the angel an explanation. The angel replied, "These are they which came (*ek*) after the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

But, says one, "you have altered the text; it reads *out of*, and not *after*." Our translators have rendered the Greek word, *ek*, "out of," and it is generally so rendered in our Bibles; but in turning to our Greek Concordance we find the first English word used, in defining the Greek word *ek*, is "after," and it has also the sense of "since." It will also be observed that we have inserted the definite article [*tees, the*] before "tribulation." The article is left out of the text by our translators; but it is in the Greek, and clearly refers to *the* tribulation described at the close of chapter vi.

[Editor: Please forgive my interruption of Bro. Storrs discussion of the Greek word (*ek*), and the poor translation in the King James, and other translations, of this word. Of interest to all Bible Students I have included a remark taken from Thayer's Greek English Lexicon and introduced it here for your inspection: {1537}, before a vowel e x, a preposition governing the genitive. Also, it denotes exit or emission out of, as separation from, something with which there has been close connection; opposed to the prepositions eiv into and en in: "from out of, out from, forth from, from," (Latin e, e x) (cf. Winer's Grammar, 364, 366f (343f); Buttmann, 326f (281)). It is used I. of place, and (660714) Re 7:14; metabainein ek tou qanatou eiv thn zwh n,]

In the account of what John saw, in Re 7\$. -it is expressly laid "after this" —"after this," what? clearly, after the "great day of the wrath of the Lamb" spoken of in the previous chapter. After this day of wrath, which winds up the present age, John saw the fruit of the following age, or the age of the kingdom of God; briefly stated, it is true, but sufficiently clear to be unmistakable as a fulfillment of the promise and oath of God to Abraham.

Let the text be read with the closing of chap. vi., in view, and the fact that the scene of chap. vii., is expressly said to be "after this," and see if the following is not evidently the true sense of the text: "These are they which came [to Christ] after the great tribulation on the kings of the earth, etc., and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

This construction agrees and harmonizes with a similar representation in Rev. xv., where John saw those who had gotten the victory over the beast "stand on the sea of glass, having the harp of God: and they sing the song of Moses... and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and

true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for *all nations shall* come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

Thus, we see, the saints on the sea of glass, glorified—take the same view of the effect, on "all nations," of the judgments—"the great tribulation" —on "the kings of the earth," etc., that we have suggested on the texts in chapters vi. and vii., and the coming of "all nations," or, the "great multitude of all nations," appear in both cases to be *after* the judgments which wind up the present age, and opens the age of the "kingdom of God," which immediately follows the end of this; and "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." - Mt 13:43. Thus shining on the "left of the nations," the world—"all nations" —will be blessed in "Abraham and his seed," and the multitudes of the saved, in the dispensation of the kingdom of God, will as much surprise many of our good brethren, who do not as yet see the matter as we do, as it surprised John when he saw it in vision. Then shall we truly see a multitude of redeemed ones, who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, "which no man can number, out of all nations, kindred's, people, and tongues." How gloriously, then, will the promise and oath of God to Abraham shine forth over the face of the whole earth, and His immortalized saints rejoice that they are honored in having part with Christ in the glorious work of earth's redemption, and the salvation of such untold multitudes.

Who desires a part in this work of God's promise and oath is blessing all the families of the earth, or all nations? O, how blessed the thought that we, who may be among the redeemed of the past ages, will have such glorious employment in "the ages to come." What are all the earth's present joys or glories, when compared with the glory and honor of being "workers together with God" and His dear Son in reducing the earth, so long cursed with sin, to order, peace, universal love and good will; making "wars to cease to the ends of the earth;" and every man "shall sit under his own vine and fig tree, having none to molest or make him afraid." If you dear reader, would share in that glory, come *now* to Christ, that you may live in that blessed age.

The view we have taken of chapters vi. and vii., of Rev.(Re 6\$-7\$), and of chap. Xv ( Re 15\$), might be further urged as the true one from many testimonies of the Old Testament. We will notice Isa 66\$, "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her... that ye may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory: for thus saith the LORD, Behold I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream... Ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem....The hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies for behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire: for by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many." (This corresponds with Re 6:12-17; which please read.)... "For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory: and I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations... and to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles," etc.

Observe, this proclamation is to those who had not heard the LORD'S fame; and it was after the fearful judgment on "many," who were "slain" in that judgment; and there were those who "escape," and they are employed in making the proclamation to the "nations and the isles afar off," who had "not heard" of the LORD'S "fame," etc. Here, also, we might introduce God's oath, Isa 45:21, "I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Compare this with Paul's language- Php 2:10,11, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and in earth: and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Thus a universal proclamation of Jesus Christ is to be made to all; and all are required to give him honor to the glory of God. Here, then, is a proclamation of God's good-will to men which has never yet been made in the fullness set forth to the word; but God has sworn by himself it shall be. Who shall call in question His promise and oath? When that promise and oath is carried into effect, we shall see the innumerable company brought to

the Revelator's astonished view, Re 7\$, "of all nations, and kindred's, and people, and tongues."

No wonder Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." - (Joh 12:32). We knew all the "families of the earth" were to be "blessed" in him; and He hesitated not to accept the cross in his work of blessing all men with the means of securing eternal life. His faith in God's promise and oath was not shaken, though the awful death of the cross lay in his path to the accomplishment of his work of blessing all the families of the earth: and because He became "obedient unto the death of the cross, God highly exalted Him," and gave "Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow," etc. Therefore, his Name is to be proclaimed to all "the families of the earth;" else, how could they be required to bow to it?

Let us rejoice and be glad that God is not so restricted in the means of carrying out his promise and oath as our finite minds might be disposed to think: and let us remember, His thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor His ways as our finite ways. His word will not return void; but will surely be accomplished, every "jot and tittle" of it. "So let it be."

## CHAPTER VII.

*"I do not believe there will be any mortals in the future state: they cannot dwell together with immortals."*

What if you "do not believe?" shall your "unbelief" altar, or change the promise and oath of God? or, "make it of none effect?" Do these objectors not believe that angels visited Abraham, Lot and others, and conversed with them? yea, even eat with them? And more strange still, do they not believe that the only begotten Son of God, came to this earth, and dwelt among mortal beings many years? and even laid down his life among and for mortal beings? Yes, and after his resurrection still remained among mortal beings forty days teaching and instructing them in "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God?" Ac 1:3. All this the objectors believe, we presume. Is the *disciple* above his Lord? If our LIFE-GIVER has done these things, is it either impossible, improbable, or unlikely that his immortal saints may be among, teach and rule over mortal beings? Shall we say "any thing" is "to hard for God?" If God has said it shall be, is not that sufficient to satisfy faith? And what, we pray, are the immortal saints to be *kings* over and *priests* to, during the reign of Christ on earth? Who, if not those who are "left of the nations," after the "Lord my God shall come and all the saints with" him?

The idea that mortal and immortal beings cannot dwell together, is founded in prejudice; is unscriptural, and subversive of the Christian faith. It limits the power of God, and makes our weak judgment the rule to determine what God *can*, or *will* do. If He please to have it so, it can be done. The only thing faith asks, is, the proof that God has said it. That point settles, faith asks no more: it "stagger not," but is "strong, giving glory to God." "That point was "settled" in our mind years ago; and nothing that we have since seen or read has changed it; but we do not disfellowship those who see not as we do.

It no more follows that all *mortals* will cease to live when this age is followed by another, than it did when the antediluvian age ended in the patriarchal age, or that in the Mosaic age, or that in the gospel age. In neither case were all mortals cut off. Enoch was translated, still mortals were left and propagation went on. Jesus was raised from the dead, yet there were mortals still. What then shall hinder there being mortals in a future age, or under the administration of the kingdom of God which is the next dispensation? True, they that attain that age by a

resurrection from the dead, will not marry nor be given in marriage: they are immortal like their risen Lord. But does that prove that none others in that age will marry or be given in marriage? Not at all. Those who use the words of our Lord in Lu 20\$ as proof that there are no mortals in that age read carelessly, we think: they overlook the subject of discourse and the important conjunction "*and*." The Sadducees held that there was "no resurrection of the dead." If such were the case, in their estimation, there would be a difficulty in marriage matters. Our Lord tells them, "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, [ *aionos* —age], *and* the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage," etc. The question was not about the living, but about "the dead." Those who attain to that age, by a resurrection from the dead, are clearly distinguished from mortals by the conjunction "*and*," which would have been needless if all in that age were immortal.

Jesus told his disciples, "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging [ruling] the twelve tribes of Israel." - Mt 19:28. The immortals are the rulers in the kingdom of God "under the whole heaven" { *Da 7:27* } ; that kingdom is an everlasting one, and its rulers "cannot die any more." In that day "the LORD shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord and his name one... And it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feasts of tabernacles: and it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain: and if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain, there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment... of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles." - Zec 14:9,16-19.

Thus we see there will be mortals when the LORD is King over all the earth, and punishments will be inflicted on the disobedient.

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," etc. True: because to *inherit* is to be an heir. Christ is the primal heir. "If children (of God) then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." { *Ro 8:17* }; and we become children of God, in fact, by "being the children of the resurrection." - Lu 20:36. These are those who "inherit the kingdom." But the subjects of that kingdom are not heirs, and do not inherit it, though they are greatly blessed in living under the rule of the heirs of it. The heirs are immortal and cannot die any longer. Does that prove all mortals are excluded from being citizens there? We have shown that there are mortals there, who are liable to "punishment," in our remarks on Zec 14\$, which is only one scripture among many of the same character.

We think we have produced abundant evidences that Christ, after he takes his father David's throne, is to reign over "all people, nations and languages," which includes a wide domain, even over "kings and princes" of the earth, who shall become subject to his government, and offer Him gifts and do Him homage, as saith the prophecy.

Do not let us drop into the narrow notions of the ancient Jews, who supposed they were the only favorites of heaven, and all others reprobates. These ancient, self-righteous Jews had no heart to receive the promise of God to Abraham, that "all the families of the earth," or "all nations," were the objects in that love which led God to give His Son. { *Joh 3:16* }. To suppose the few saved in this and previous ages, are all who are to be saved into eternal life by Him who "tasted death for every man," and "is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world," { *1Jo 2:2* }, is a view, to our minds, as narrow as the selfish platform of the old Jews. "O, but the saved in this and past ages are a great multitude." Jesus calls them a "little flock," and saith but "few find the strait gate." The "great multitude" of saved ones may be found to belong to "the ages to come." God's love hitherto has been eclipsed by the traditions of men and the selfishness of the human heart: but that obscuration will vanish away

when the Sun of righteousness shall arise to shine on this benighted world and a pur-blind church, and "the knowledge of the LORD shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the sea."

It is asserted, by some, that the Scriptures have been translated into all the earth's dialects, and so all nations have them in their own language. This is an assumption which we do not accept: but suppose it were true. What then? How long ago was that accomplished? If at all, it has been done only recently. Does that cover the broad promise and oath of God? By no means. Four thousand years have passed since the promise was made, and hardly a century has passed since the Scriptures have been accessible to one in ten thousand, and even now, out of Christendom, not one in a million, probably, have the Bible within their reach. That fulfills the promise and oath of God, in the estimation of some men. If such a meager fulfillment is all we are to look for, who can tell us how much can be relied on of God's promises in other matters? We are thrown into the mazes no of uncertainty in regard to the future. If there is no more certainty of a literal fulfillment of God's promise and oath to Abraham than some professed believers in the Bible would have us to think, then all faith, in any of His promises, is but a fancy; they may possibly come to pass some how, or in some way, but they say; and what ground for faith that Christ will ever come again to this earth? "O, the Bible says He will." We know it does, and God says, and confirms it with an oath, that in Abraham and his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed; yet some men do not believe it means just that: for they know that very few of the families of the earth have ever yet been thus blessed, and they do not believe they ever will be, for millions on millions and thousands on millions have gone down into the grave without ever having heard of Abraham or his seed; and they think God's promise and oath cannot reach them now; as if their thoughts could bind God's power. "O, but God has said" —! No matter what He "has said," they are not sure that He *means* what He has said to Abraham; and hence, they have no foundation on which to stand in regard to anything else He has said: it may mean something very different from what the language expresses.

This same principle prostrates nearly all that God has spoken of the future in the Old Testament, and carries the idea, that God's thoughts cannot exceed our thoughts, nor His ways our ways. But we care not to press this last point, though it is clear to us, it saps the foundation of all faith, and leaves men exposed to be "tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine" that happens to blow with most positiveness.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Let us throw away our old Jewish spectacles, which enabled them to see no blessings from Messiah but for themselves, and look through the "promise and oath of God" to that blessing promised to "all the families of the earth:" then shall we see, as we have never seen the magnitude of God's love to "the world." This view will cause us to wonder at our past blindness, and to adore the LOVE of God and of "Christ which passeth knowledge." "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end" —or, "the endless succession of ages," as Macknight renders it. Eph 3:21. A literal translation of this text may be given as follows:

"To him be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, through all the generations" ( *genas*, accusative plural) "of the age of the ages. Amen."

Here is a solemn testimony, to which the Holy Spirit, in Paul, adds its oath, by an "Amen." This testimony is, that there shall be "generations" in "the age of ages," and that Christ Jesus" is the administrator; for it is "by" Him, the "glory" is to be revealed in that "age of ages."



What of the "generations?" How many are there? Well, there are at least a thousand. Thus saith the LORD, by the mouth of David, "Be ye mindful always of His covenant; the word He made with Abraham," etc. - 1Ch 16:15; also Ps 105:8. All the generations from Adam to this time, do not exceed two hundred, allowing thirty years to a generation. Eight hundred generations yet to come. If the thousand generations are yet to be made up, which side of the second advent shall we place them? If 6000 years have made only 200 generations, how may will be wanted to fill up the "1000 generations?" *Ans.* Twenty-four thousand. Who are willing to wait that long for the second advent of Christ, rather than admit in age, or ages to come, after the advent, in which generations, and consequently, probations will go on, to fill up the thousand generations? But we will not press this point.

For our own part, we accept the Psalmist's testimony as follows: "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: all the kindred's of the nations shall worship before thee: for the kingdom is the LORD'S: and He is the governor among the nations:" [plural]... "A seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the LORD for a generation:" [singular]: "they" [that seed] "shall come, and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this." - Ps 22:27-31. Generations will go on among the "left of the nations," and people will "be born," after the *one* generation has had its resurrection and are immortal: then, after that, "they shall declare" God's "righteousness" [His infinite mercy to the creatures He has made] "unto a people that shall be born." A blessed and glorious work, which looks like God's fulfilling His "promise and oath to Abraham." Those who do not like such work, will not be compelled to engage in it.

In connection with Ps 22\$, just considered, read Ps 67\$. "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon the earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon the earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and *all the end of the earth* shall fear him."

This again corresponds with Jer 23:5,6: "Behold, the days come saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous BRANCH, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell in safety," etc. Hence are promises, which the LORD is pledged to fulfill, agreeing with Ps 22:27-31, and corresponding with the promises and oath to Abraham.

At this point we may as well look at the testimony of God by Isaiah, chap. xi. On this chapter immense labor has been bestowed to harmonize it with the theory of burning the world at the second advent of Christ; but still it reads just as it always did, and shows conclusively an age in this world that has never yet been seen, and never can be, if there is not a dispensation yet future differing essentially from any that has ever gone before. Here is presented to us a BRANCH out of the root of Jesse. None will doubt but that the Son of David-the Son of God-is here intended. Under his government the animal creation will become changed so as to be harmless and docile; "the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for, the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. And in *that day* [when the earth is thus full of the knowledge of the Lord] there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious." This is not all; "It shall come to pass *in that day* that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria," etc. Not the gathering of spiritual Jews, but his people whom he had once before gathered from Babylon, as will be seen: that gathering was not in "that day" just spoken of. "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."

Here the language distinctly marks the two nations into which the posterity of Jacob were divided in the days of Rehoboam, son of Solomon: one nation was called Judah, and the other Israel, and sometimes Ephraim, from the principal tribe of the nation of Israel. This latter nation was not "scattered," but was "cast out" of the land of Israel into Assyria, some hundred years before Judah was carried captive into Babylon. Israel was therefore called "outcasts," as in the text before us; see also 2Ki 17:20. Nor was "Judah dispersed" to the "four corners of the earth" till their Temple was destroyed by the Romans. The promise in this text, therefore, clearly relates to their gathering subsequent to that destruction; and as no such gathering ever has taken place, it must still be future, and is not "conditional," and is as certain as "Thus saith the LORD" can make it. [*Editor: Remember! this paper was published in 1874*] If any doubt remained, the next verse would dispel it: "The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim."

Before Ephraim or Israel was carried away into Assyria, there was continual strife, contention, and war between the two nations. When one shall be assembled and the other gathered, this envy and vexing each other shall be known no more. And let it never be forgotten, these things are to be done "in that day" when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord;" of course, future, and a glorious day. In that day, Isa 11:16, "There shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came out of the land of Egypt." Here we see what the first "recovering" was, which is alluded to, Isa 11:11, where it is said, "The Lord shall set his hand again the *second* time to recover the remnant of his people," etc. It was their being brought up out of Egypt, and it is "the remnant" of the people of whom the prophet speaks.

The prophet then goes on to tell us what that people will say when gathered: "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God *is* my salvation. I will trust, and not be afraid; for the LORD JEHOVAH *is* my strength and my song: he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall we say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." - Isa 12\$.

This subject is made so plain by the prophet that it does really seem wonderful that any should call in question the meaning of the prophecy, or attempt to spiritualize it. That it applies to any events in the past has never yet been shown. That it is not a conditional promise, is equally manifest. So surely as the BRANCH of Jesse's root ever reigns on earth, so surely, "in that day," will these things come to pass. So we believe.

The text relied upon to prove the *end* of the world, or mundane system, is to come when the gospel of the kingdom has been preached in all the world for a witness to all nations. { *Mt 24:14* }, has no such sense as is attached to it by the advocates of burning the world or earth at the second advent. Let us carefully examine the text and the context.

As Jesus went out of the temple his disciples called attention to the "buildings of the temple." "Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." The subject then was the destruction of Jerusalem and her temple. The disciples inquired of him, "privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of *aionos* —age," not of the "world," as our translation has it: for the end of the world, proper, had no connection with the Saviour's language in relation to the destruction of the temple. This destruction of the buildings of the temple, involving, as it necessarily would, the end of services there, the disciples construed into an end of that *age*, as it truly was.

In his reply, Jesus tells them, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the (*oikoumenee*) world for a witness unto all (*ethnesi*, heathen) nations; and then shall the end come." The end of what? The end of the *age* spoken of, when the temple should be thrown down. This, to our mind, is clearly the sense.

Now as to the *oikoumenee*, translated world, Mt 24:14, it is the same word found in Lu 2:1, "There went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the (*oikoumenee*) world should be taxed." All the world, here, was the Roman empire, and no more. Jesus uses the same word in his statement of how extensive the gospel should be preached before the temple at Jerusalem would be destroyed, and the Jewish age would come to an end.

Some persons take the ground, from Paul's language 1Co 15:24-28, that "the end" of probation to all the families of the earth will come at the second advent of Christ and the resurrection of the dead in Him. The correctness of such assumption depends upon whether such persons give a true interpretation to the language employed by the apostle.

We ask, What is "the end" spoken of? What is "the kingdom" referred to, and when is it "delivered up?" What is meant by death as "the last enemy," and to whom does Paul state it to be the last enemy? This chapter is devoted to the proof of the resurrection of the believers in Christ. Their last enemy, who shall ever have dominion over them, is death: to them therefore death is destroyed by resurrection. That Christ does not deliver up the kingdom at that time is evident from many prophecies. First: Ps 72., "In His days shall the righteous flourish." (Surely not till raised from the dead). "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth... The Kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve him... His name shall endure forever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed." This entire prophecy relates to what transpires after Messiah reigns on David's throne, which reign is after the resurrection spoken of in 1Co 15\$.

Still another prophecy-Dan. vii. After the fourth "beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame," one like the Son of man appears before the Ancient of Days, "And there was given him dominion," [not 1800 years ago], "that all people, nations, and languages, should serve and obey him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." The angel explains this to Daniel as the reign of the saints, made immortal, of course, thus: "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." The horn of the fourth beast prevailed against the saints "Until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment [rule] was given to the saints of the Most High: and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."... "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominion shall serve and obey Him."

Thus prophecy makes "people, nations, and languages" to exist, after the saints are made immortal; and they are all put in subjection to the saints in a kingdom that has no end.

## **CHAPTER IX.**

It is said, "There can be no age of probation after the second advent of Christ, for he leaves the Mediatorial seat and ceases to be a Priest at that time." This we consider an unfounded assumption, and a palpable contradiction of the promise and oath of God to Messiah himself; which speaks as follows: "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." - Ps 110:4; Heb 5:6; 7:17; 7:21.

Such is God's testimony concerning the Priesthood of Messiah, David's Lord, who is the Christ. God's oath makes sure that his priesthood is unchangeable and never to pass away; for God has sworn to it "and will not repent," or, change His mind: the thing is as fixed and eternal as it is possible to be made. "The law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of *the oath*, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated forever more." - Heb 7:28. There is no limitation to the Son's priesthood here: "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he *ever liveth* to make intercession for them." - Heb 7:24,25. Here is no limit to the priesthood of Christ, unless he shall cease to live: if He can die, his priesthood may end; not without.

He is made a Priest, by the oath of God, after the order of Melchizedek. This personage was, "King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; ... having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually." - Heb 7:2,3. Here is no countenance of the idea that the priesthood of Christ is ever to end, but the reverse. The date of the commence of the priesthood of the Son of God and its end (if it ever is to end) is clearly hidden from view. In this character, He hath "neither beginning of days nor end of life," so far as is revealed, but "abideth a Priest continually." Whoever attempts to limit it, undertakes to "be wise above what is written," and should be careful that his theory does not set aside the oath of God.

Christ, during this present age or dispensation, is a priest upon his Father's throne: but the time will come when He will sit upon his own throne—that to which He is heir, *viz.*, David's throne. "I have sworn unto David, my servant, thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." - Ps 89:3,4. "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me: it shall be established forever," etc.- Verses 35-37. But this throne has been "overturned" for more than two thousand years; yet God's oath secures its re-establishment to Him "whose right it is *viz.*, David's Son, Jesus the Messiah. Eze 21:27. This throne is Jesus' own throne; and, when re-established, is perpetual and eternal. That throne is upon this earth, for David never had a throne in heaven, nor is what some people call "the new earth" -meaning a literal new earth, formed after this earth has been dissolved by fire. If such an earth ever exists, David's throne never did exist there, and never will, unless it is removed from the scene of David's rule. But be that as it may, David's throne is secured to an heir, which all admit is Jesus the Christ.

The question then arises, Will he exercise the office of his priesthood on his own throne? Let JEHOVAH himself answer: "Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and He shall be a *priest* upon his throne." etc. - Zec 6:12,13.

We do not care whether the temple here spoken of is the literal or spiritual temple. If it is the spiritual, then we must look beyond this age for its completion, when all the materials are collected by a resurrection from the dead; and His sitting and ruling upon *His throne* is when the temple is completed; "and He shall be a *priest* upon his throne:" hence his priesthood continues into the age following the present, or the 'kingdom of God' age. The next age is the kingdom of God, which is to follow the present "wild beast" governments. Then will David's throne be re-occupied by its rightful heir, and his priesthood continues; "for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

The, and not till then, if ever, will a mediatorial kingdom be established. God offered to ancient Israel to make "a kingdom of priests" (see Ex 19:5,6), if they would obey His voice. But they did not: and that kingdom came not into their hands, but God visited the "Gentiles, to take out of them a people," (Ac 15:14), which Peter characterizes as "a royal priesthood." These are being trained, in this dispensation, to be rulers in "the kingdom of God," or dispensation to follow the present: for saith Jesus, "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne." - Re 3:21. So, if a mediatorial kingdom is ever to be established it will be when the "royal priesthood" sit down with Christ on his throne, where he will still exercise the office of High Priest, and his brethren, honored with a place on his throne, will exercise the office of subordinate priests.

This order of things, like all other good things, the papists have attempted to forestall, by their human arrangements, by calling their mode of operations the "Mediatorial Kingdom;" (and Protestants have borrowed their phraseology), thus "making the words of God of none effect by their traditions;" displacing God's arrangements of the ages, or dispensations, to exalt themselves in this mortal state.

We have not designed to give more than an outline of this subject in this chapter. We trust we have said enough to set candid inquirers after truth to thinking. By prayerful thinking we shall "grow in grace, and in the *knowledge* of our Lord and LIFE-GIVER, Jesus, the Anointed." - 2Pe 3:18. Let no one suppose they have come to know all the truth; for at present, "we know in part," said the Apostle to the Gentiles. The ancient Jews stumbled and fell at the doctrine, brought out by the Apostles, "that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel," (Eph 3:6); it was "the mystery, which in other *ages* was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." - Eph 3:3,5. Let us see to it that we do not, like the Jews, stumble and fall at the doctrine of the great blessings to come to the Gentiles (who have never yet had the gospel) when the dispensation of the kingdom of God is opened; which is now nigh at hand, and is "the age to come," when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." - Isa 11:9 Ps 72:19 Hab 2:14 .

## **OUR POSITION.**

1. God has promised, and confirmed it with an oath, that, In Abraham and his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
2. This promise and oath is to be understood in the literal sense of the words in which it is made.
3. This promise and oath is not yet fulfilled in its fullness.
4. Therefore, there is to be an age, or "ages to come," in which its fulfillment will be perfectly accomplished.

(1.) Did God mean with the words express in the promise and oath?

(2.) Has that promise and oath had a fulfillment in the past?

These are the two questions at issue. We have answered the first in the affirmative; and the second in the negative.

No argument will avail any thing, in our mind, that evades either of them. Even if it can be shown that we are mistaken in our exposition or explanation of some texts of Scripture, that will not prove our general view of the promise and oath is incorrect.

We regard the subject as one of first importance. If the kingdom of God is soon to be developed, we desire to know all that can be known about it, while preparing for it; and just how reliable God's promises are. We wish to know if we are to receive them literally, or are to construe them figuratively or hyperbolically. This knowledge must deeply affect our faith; and, therefore, is highly important at this near approach of the kingdom of God. So we regard it.

## APPENDIX.

To prevent mistakes, we make the following definitive statement of our views concerning those who live in what is called "Christendom." We have no idea that any very large portion of them ever hears *the* Gospel as it came from Christ and his apostles. They have heard a corrupted message by professed teachers of the gospel; and multitudes of them, for centuries, have had no means of determining what the pure gospel is; and have been really in as great darkness, as to the character of God, and His love to the world, as the darkest pagans now are, or ever were. Who these persons are, in Christendom, God only can certainly know. All such will yet hear the Gospel in its *purity*, sometime and somehow. So we think.

But such as hear the Gospel as Christ gave it with the Holy Spirit, and willfully reject it, "It shall not be forgiven them, neither in this world, neither in the world to come;" *they* have had their *final* trial, and "shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on them." - Mt 12:32, and Joh 3:36. Such, when once dead will remain eternally dead. This is our idea of the "non-resurrection of the wicked dead," with present light. Who have thus sinned, God only can decide. This class have all sinned against the Holy Spirit, and "die *the* death" that is "the wages of sin."

Men who have been deprived of *the* Good news of God's love (not by their own fault) will yet be made to hear it, by some means; which will determine their final destiny. Those who improve this trial, of God's "abounding grace," will not be made "*heirs* of the kingdom;" but will become subjects of Christ and His Bride, "the Church of the First-born" from the dead; and if subject to Christ, of choice, will be perpetuated in life by means of "the tree of life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations." - Re 22:2. If they reject the service of Christ, they will die for their own sin, and live no more. There is but one sin known in the Gospel which excludes men from life: that is, *unbelief*; or a rejection of God's message of love and life, attended by "the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven." - 1Pe 1:13.

That the Gospel is corrupted and is not preached as Christ commissioned His disciples to preach it, needs no other proof, in these days, than the fact that very few are found who preach it "with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven." This work is to be revived in "the ages to come." - Eph 2:7.

## SUPPLEMENT

TO

"A VINDICATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD OVER THE CHILDREN OF MEN:

OR,

‘THE PROMISE AND OATH OF GOD TO ABRAHAM.’

"THE AGES TO COME."

There are legitimate subjects of inquiry by every student of the Bible. To say otherwise, is to call in question a God-given right to man, as man, and an infringement of the privilege given to responsible beings. The command to "Search the Scriptures," by our Lord, justifies us in an earnest and diligent search after all the information contained therein in regard to the present state and the future of ourselves and of our race. To contend that there is but *one* future age, and that an eternal one, is a palpable contradiction of Bible testimony. To contend that probation ends to all the race of Adam at death, or with the present age, has been proclaimed with a positiveness which might be becoming in professing Christians if they had a "Thus saith the LORD" for it; but they have no such foundation on which to build; and it is only a tradition of men, which has been so long proclaimed that it has come to be accepted for truth, the same as the doctrine of inherent immortality; while the Bible never speaks of either; and both are unknown in the language of that Book. Like most popular errors, professed Christians "take them for granted" without proof and against evidence.

We are among those who believe it is a Christian's privilege and duty to "Grow in grace and the *knowledge* of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," and all that pertains to His government and work over and for the human race, whether in this age or "the ages to come." But knowing only "in part," now, error will be more or less mixed with all our advance in knowledge, and require correcting, modifying, or improving, if we are to make any progress. Those who think otherwise, may boast of their stability, but give sad evidence of self-conceit and an imaginary infallibility, such as is claimed at Rome. Such persons are in no condition to increase knowledge, and may be said to be stereotyped, or petrified.

Thirty years ago we thought and taught, with many others, that this age was to wind up everything with respect to the human family, except the saints, to be swept away by the fires of the day of the second advent of Christ. Difficulties we found in the way of the theory, but we were swept on, for a time, by the current that surrounded us, till finally, in 1844, we were so arrested as to bring us to a review of the whole question; and after careful and prayerful study we became settled, that this age did not end God's work in the salvation of the race of Adam, though it would end it with many.

With this change of views, we gave a lengthy article in the *Bible Examiner*, of which we were the sole Editor and

Publisher, in the month of August, 1844. We have not advanced backward on this topic since; but have "followed on to know the LORD," and have found "His going forth is prepared as the morning." - Ho 6:3.

Our present views are, as briefly as possible, set fourth in this pamphlet, "A Vindication of the Government and Oath of God to Abraham," Which all of our friends are requested to read. We have placed the subject before you in the pamphlet so distinctly that all can understand what the question at issue is, viz.:

1. Did God mean what the words express in the promise and oath to Abraham?"
2. Has the promise and oath had a fulfillment in the past?"

Those who wish to have their objections noticed must keep to these questions. We *affirm* the first, and *deny* the last. Do you deny the first, and affirm the last? If so, speak; and we will give you a candid hearing.

## **A SINGULAR ASSUMPTION.**

A good brother says on the first question:

"God does not say whether the *blessing* is Spiritual, National, or Commercial. To say either is an assumption," etc.

What is this but saying, "The Promise and Oath of God does not mean any thing—it has no application, for no one can tell what it means?" If what the blessing is, is uncertain, then who can have any faith in it? Paul was of a different mind from this brother on this point, for he says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness... And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, *In thee shall all nations be blessed,*" — Ga 2:6,8.

Paul's idea, then, was, that the promised blessing is "the gospel," and related to the question of how men could be *justified*, and be children of Abraham *spiritually*: hence, the blessing related to spiritual things. If "national and commercial blessings" followed, they were like the paper and twine the merchant uses to cover his goods, delivered to the purchaser: they are thrown in *gratis*. The idea that we cannot tell to what the promised blessing relates, is, in fact, and "assumption" that it does not mean any thing on which to found faith; so the promise and oath of God is of no more value than a heathen oracle, which is given so equivocally that it may be construed one way, or another directly opposite. Not so does the God of Abraham deal with the children of men. He means what he says, and says what He means. In no other way can we have a ground of faith.

## **LIFE BELIEVERS FEARS**

With Life believers, however, the great fear is that our present view will uproot the idea of no future life out of Christ, which has been a grand point with them. We confess it *modifies* that view, but it does not uproot it. In the



doctrine of "No Life out of Christ," one grand and important truth of the Bible has been overlooked. The truth we will now endeavor to set forth by the following remarks:

### FUTURE AND ETERNAL LIFE.

Future life and Eternal life are not necessarily synonymous, or expressions of the same import. Christ is "the resurrection and the life." There is no future life but what comes as a *favor* of God by Christ; hence, there is no future life except such as is a *blessing* bestowed on him who is the subject of it, or that is not the result of God's *love*. That life is eternal to all who have improved the present life, to form a union with Christ by the reception of his Spirit; thus becoming "partakers of the Divine nature." - 2Pe 1:3,4. These being raised *from among* the dead, thereby become permanently "the children of God," and cannot "die any more," or are possessed of eternal life. If others have a future life, it is because "where sin abounded, grace did *much more* abound." - Ro 5:20. And, "If through the offence of the one (that is Adam) *the many* have died; much more, the grace of God, ... by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto *the many*." - Ro 5:15. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:.. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; *even so* by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life: for as by one man's disobedience [the] many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall [the] many be made righteous." - Ro 5:12, 18, 19. On Ro 5:19 we give the following remarks from "Dr. Bloomfield's Critical Notes on the Greek New Testament," edited by the late Prof. Stuart. Dr. Bloomfield says:

"This verse is explanatory of the preceding, and *oi polloi* should be rendered 'the many,' which, as appears from the foregoing, is equivalent to *pantes*. It is very important to attend to this force of the Article, and to bear in mind that throughout this whole passage it is (as Abp. Whately observes) 'the main drift of the Apostle to *set forth the universality* of the Redemption, as being *co-extensive* with the evil introduced at the fall, which it was designed to remedy.' So the great BENTLY, in his masterly Sermon on Popery, after quoting what is said in Ro 5:12, and the *redditio* at Ro 5:15, remarks: 'Who would not wish that our translators had kept the Article in the version they saw in the original? thus, 'If through the offence of the one (that is Adam) *the many have died*, much more the grace of God, by one *man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto the many*.' By this accurate version, some hurtful mistakes about partial redemption, and absolute reprobation, had been happily prevented. Our English readers had then seen, what several of the Fathers saw and testified, that *oi polli, the many*, in an antithesis to the *one*, are equivalent to *pantes*, *all*, in Ro 5:12, and comprehend the whole multitude, the entire species of mankind, exclusive only of the one. So again, Ro 5:18, 19, our translators have repeated the like mistake; where, when the Apostle has said, that "as the offence of one was upon all men ( *eis pantas anthropous* ) to condemnation, so the righteousness of one was upon all men to justification:' 'for," adds he, 'as by *the one* man's disobedience ( *tou enos* ) *the many* ( *oi polloi* ) were made sinners, so by the obedience of *the one* ( *tou enos* ) *the many* ( *oi polloi* ) shall be made righteous.' By this version the reader is admonished and guided to remark, that the many in Ro 5:19 are the same as *pantes, all*, in verse 18.' The meaning therefore of Ro 5:18, 19, may be thus expressed (with Mr. Holden): 'As, by Adam's disobedience, all men are brought into a state of condemnation; so, by Christ's obedience, all men are brought into a state of justification and life; *i.e.*, have the means of attaining that justification which will be crowned with eternal life.'"

So much for the critical examination of this portion of Scripture. Thus much is made evident, No man remains in death for Adam's "one transgression" except himself. Christ is constituted "Lord both of the dead and the living." **Ro 14:9**, and that includes "the many," or all men descended from Adam. In this respect, Jesus has taken "away the sin of the world," Joh 1:29; so that nothing can hold any man in death but a willful rejection of the Son of God as the LIFE-GIVER, whom God gave, in His love, to "give life unto the world;" for, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have

everlasting life." - [Joh 6:33](#), and [Joh 3:16](#).

Are we to admit the idea that because millions on millions have gone down in death without ever having heard of the love of God to them, or the provision for their obtaining life everlasting, that therefore God has no means to reach them with the Gospel message? Perish the thought. If there are no other means of their hearing that message, they will as certainly be revived from the dead as that Abraham will be revived from the dead to inherit the *land* promised because he never did inherit the *land* promised because he never did inherit it while in this life. So "all the families of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham and his seed;" and literal death is no obstacle in the way of God's fulfilling his "Promise and Oath" that it shall be done. If any choose to "stagger through unbelief," in this matter, let them enjoy the pleasure of that unbelief; but it will not annul "the word of God," which "shall not return to" Him "void, but it shall accomplish that which" He please; and that to which He has sworn; and all for whom Christ died, whether dead or living, shall hear of God's marvelous love to them, and have the offer of life eternal through Him, "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." - [1Ti 2:6](#). God's "times and seasons" He hath put and kept "in His own power." - [Ac 1:7](#). If He pleases to take "the ages to come" ([Eph 2:7](#)) to "show the exceeding riches of His grace," and to unfold "the unsearchable riches of Christ," ([Eph 3:8](#)), who of the children of men, saints or sinners, shall say He cannot or will not do it, even though we, short-sighted mortals, cannot see *how* it is to be done?

## **UNION WITH CHRIST ESSENTIAL; OBJECTOR'S LAST RESORT.**

The objector to this view, as a last resort, says, "No man can be revived from the dead without a union with Christ." That is true: but he overlooks a Scriptural fact, viz., *Union with Christ is two-fold*. First, Christ has united himself with *the race*, as such. "He was made flesh," ([Joh 1:14](#)): God sent "his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh," ([Ro 8:3](#)): "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same... For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." ([Heb 2:14,16](#)) And again, "He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and made in the likeness of men." - [Php 2:7](#).

Such texts are a sample of Scripture testimony going to show that Christ was connected with the race of men, as such, *i.e.*, with all men, everywhere, and of every age; for, "the head of every man is Christ." - [1Co 11:3](#). By which means he was enabled to "taste death *for every man*," ([Heb 2:9](#)); and being "the *man* Christ Jesus, he gave himself a ransom for all," ([1Ti 2:6](#)); and by his death and resurrection he became "Lord both of the dead and living," ([Ro 14:9](#)); has the disposal of both dead and living by virtue of his own life, death and resurrection; for, "He is Lord of all." - [Ac 10:36](#). Thus is Christ connected with the whole race of Adam, and is the Seed of the woman that shall bruise the serpent's head, and shall "destroy the works of the devil," ([1Jo 3:8](#)) thereby rendering the death, which entered into the world by *one* transgression (Adam's), inoperative to hold Adam's posterity; and so by Christ's one offering of himself he "taketh away the sin of the world," ([Joh 1:29](#)), by rendering death powerless to hold any of the human family, unless they have rejected the LIFE-GIVER; which they cannot do till they have first heard of Him: till that personal rejection of Christ, the union, by His taking upon him our nature, remains unbroken, and if raised into life it is by virtue of that relation, and is an act of grace, favor, or love: none are raised in a hopeless state.

Such is the first ground of union with Christ.

## **SECOND GROUND OF UNION.**

But there is a second ground of union; this it is which secures the resurrection to immortality, eternal life. This union is by becoming "partakers of the Divine nature," { 2Pe 1:4}; having received the "Holy Spirit of promise," { Eph 1:13}, so that the Spirit which raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken their mortal bodies," { Ro 8:11}, being members of Christ's spiritual body; and hence, like their Head, *they* cannot die any more; { Lu 20:36}. These are raised incorruptible, immortal; { 1Co 15:52-54}.

Thus we think we have shown, that while union with Christ is essential to revival from death, this union is both human and divine; the latter only securing eternal life and immortality; while the former may secure the LIFE-GIVER. Such as have, without fault on their part, not heard Him, and never had the means of knowing Him, and hence have never severed the human union or relationship with Him, are perfectly within the resurrection power of the LIFE-GIVER; who is "Lord both of the dead and living;" and as "the Father raised up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will;" { Joh 5:21}; for, "the head of *every* man is Christ." - 1Co 11:3.

Well might the Apostle say, while contemplating a portion of this subject, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!... For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." - Ro 11:33,36.

Some, in these days, appear to talk as if they knew and had "found out" that God cannot or will not fulfill his promise and oath to Abraham and his seed, to bless all the families of the earth, because so many of them are dead who never had that blessing or heard of it. Let them remember that God has promised He is able to perform. "Is any thing too hard for God?" Shall His word return to Him void, and not accomplish that whereto He sent it? Are his ways no higher than our finite ways? Are His thoughts to be confined to our thinking? Are things impossible to Him because they seem so to us? It is time to "put away childish things," { 1Co 3:11}, and see if we cannot bear a little "strong meat" which "belongeth to them that are of full age." - Heb 5:14.

### THE QUESTION ABOUT CHILDREN.

The view we now take settles another "vexed question;" it secures the revival of infants, or all such as have died before personal knowledge of God's love to the world. They are revived by virtue of their union to Christ's *humanity*, which has never been dissolved; for when Christ returns from heaven He comes as "The *Son of man*:" ( Mt 25:31; and xvi. 27); "for the *Son of man* shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels," etc. He is both the *Son of man* and the *Son of God*. As the *Son of man* he is united with the entire race of Adam, and is the "one" who "*died for all*," { 2Co 5:14}, because "*all were dead*:" and those who are not in the dominion of death by a rejection of the LIFE-GIVER, will have the benefit of the union of Christ's *humanity*, and death cannot hold them till such time as they reject the *divine* union which is to be preached to "every creature" for their acceptance. All raised by virtue of union with Christ's *humanity* will be in a probationary state, and to them continued life will be the result of the acceptance of the LIFE-GIVER, personally; and "the second death" will, to them, be the result of the rejection of Him.

### THE SHADOW AND THE SUBSTANCE.

The law, given by Moses, was "the *shadow* of things to come; but the *body* is of Christ." - Col 2:17. The law required that a redeemer (Heb. *Gouail*) should be a *kinsman*, a man of the same race or family. "One of his

brethren may redeem him." - Le 25:48. Christ, therefore, must become a kinsman of the race in order to be a Redeemer. For this end He became "*the man*, Christ Jesus." "Who gave himself a *ransom for all* ' ' the race, "to be testified in due time." - 1Ti 2:5,6. When that ransom is made known, or "testified" to the ransomed, if rejected, death takes its course and holds its victim in its bondage; for, as there is but "one Mediator," so there is but one Redeemer; hence, if the testimony concerning him has come to the knowledge of those for whom the benefit is intended, and they despise or reject it, there remaineth no deliverer for them.

This rejection, however, can only take place after the Redeemer's presentation to them; or, after He has been so presented to them that there can be no excuse for the unbeliever's rejection of Him. Till then, death cannot hold one of the race redeemed; they live again by virtue of the connection with "*the man* Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all" men, by the virtue and right of his kinsmanship. But, "If we sin willfully after that we have received the *knowledge* of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." - Heb 10:26,27. Till such willful sin of the rejection of the Redeemer, his relationship remains, and life somehow will be secured till the trial of the individual is fairly and fully made. To suppose otherwise, is to suppose that the whole scheme of human redemption is a mockery and deception to the vast majority of those "for whom Christ died."

### GOD'S PLEDGE.

God has pledged himself, that "He will destroy... the face of the covering cast over *all* people, and the vail that is spread over all nations," and "swallow up death in victory." - Isa 25:7,8. And he further said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts: for as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." - Isa 55:8-11.

### A "MORTAL RESURRECTION."

The idea of a *mortal* resurrection for the purpose of inflicting torment (however short a time) and then killing again, is a baseless assumption, having no foundation in the Bible, in justice or reason. The character of such a transaction must ever be looked upon as an arbitrary act of revenge; as unlike God as the act of eternal torment, which justly shocks the reason of all thinking and unprejudiced minds. Neither of those views has any likeness of the God who "so loved *the world* as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life," No revival into life of an man, once dead, will ever take place except as an act of grace or favor. God has given his "Son power over *all flesh*, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him." In order to attain this eternal life, "all flesh" must first "know Thee, the only True God, and Jesus Christ," etc. - Joh 17:2,3. In order to obtain such knowledge the "true God and Jesus Christ" must be made known, as proclaimed to "all flesh," or to all Adam's race: and the Father hath given Christ power over all flesh for this very purpose, and none can fail of that life except by a willful rejection of it; which they can *never* be guilty of doing till the Truth is made know to them.

### THE TRUTH TO BE MADE KNOWN

That the truth shall be made known to all men, is affirmed in the most positive manner by the apostle Paul thus: "God our LIFE-GIVER; who would have all men live (Syriac); and to come to the knowledge of the Truth." - 1Ti 2:3,4. What "Truth?" Let Paul continue: "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus: who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." - 1Ti 2:5,6.

Here is *the* truth which God wills all men shall come to the knowledge of: He "will" have all men "live," and receive this knowledge; for upon the reception or rejection of this "*one* Mediator" turns the final state of all for whom He "gave himself a ransom." On verse 5, Dr. Bloomfield says:

"This seems to have reference to what immediately precedes; q. d. '[God our Saviour will have all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth];' *for* He is the God alike of all; and the Man Christ Jesus is the Mediator between God and men, who gave himself a ransom for all. Here it is *implied* that it is alone by a recognition of the truth, as regards God and the Mediator between God and man that can be saved."

The "recognition" can only be made from having the knowledge of "the truth" to be recognized; and God "*will* have *all men* to come to the knowledge of the truth." Who shall say, He cannot or will not do it, because it has never yet been done? Is death an insurmountable obstacle in the way of God's *will*, or too mighty for almighty power? Must His *will* be thwarted because we cannot comprehend the greatness of His power? Are our theories too mighty for God's promise and oath?

On the expression, "And come to the knowledge of the truth," Dr. Adam Clarke says:

"The *truth*, the Gospel of Christ, should be *proclaimed* to them... and when it is made known, then it is the duty of those who hear it, to acknowledge and receive it: this is the proper import of the original word, that they may come to the *acknowledgement* of the truth."

Dr. Clarke, on the expression. "To be testified in due time," quotes from ROSENMULLER as follows:

"This is the doctrine which is reserved for its own time: the doctrine which in its own time shall be delivered to all the inhabitants of the earth."

So much for the testimony of the learned commentators. They, probably, hardly comprehended the fullness of their own statements; but the fullness is in the text, and thereby it is made certain that all, for whom Christ gave himself a ransom, will, some time or other, "come to the knowledge of the truth;" and, if they accept it, will be saved, or have an endless life. But if they reject it, they will die for their own sins, and "be as though they had not been."

**"IT LEADS TO UNIVERSALISM"**

And now what have the opposers to say further? "Oh," say they, "it leads to universal salvation." We deny the allegation; there is no such result necessary from our position. Any doctrine may be abused. The preaching of the doctrine of the abounding grace of God and justification by faith, led some to accuse the apostles of teaching a licentious doctrine, saying that they taught, "Let us do evil that good may come." Life believers have had to meet, continually, the cry of "Infidelity," because they rejected the doctrine of inherent immortality. Shall they now take up the cry of "Universal salvation," because we believe and teach that God will literally fulfill his promise and oath to Abraham? Or, in other words, because we believe *the* Gospel must and will be preached "to every creature," and a fair chance given every soul of Adam's posterity to secure and endless life, before they are finally doomed to an endless death, for non-improvement of the grace of God in Christ.

The persons who thus find fault with our position show, conclusively, it is for lack of other and better arguments. We have clearly stated that some will utterly perish, and never find eternal life, because they willfully refuse it on the terms God has offered it, *i.e.*, by *faith* in, or reliance on Jesus Christ as the One Mediator and LIFE-GIVER. No man can come unto God but by Jesus the Messiah; for says our Redeemer, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father; but by me." - Joh 14:6.

## IS OUR VIEW HURTFUL?

We ask, then, What meaneth this bitter opposition to our views of the promise and oath of God to Abraham? Is it because the view is pernicious and will work dishonor to God and evil to men? It certainly cannot be the first; for no doctrine can be more honorable to God or better vindicate the righteousness of His government over the children of men. It cannot work *evil* to men. Pray tell us who it can harm? Will it make *you* love God less? To say that, would be to say you do not love Him now. Does it give encouragement to sinner to continue in sin, because God's grace does so abound? Let all such know their "damnation is just," (*Ro 3:3*); they have "the way, the truth and the life" set before them; and if they "sin willfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin," etc. - Heb 10:26. Who then is harmed by our view of the subject? It cannot harm the generations who have gone in death; they are past the evil effects of the doctrine we proclaim, if there by any evil in it. As it cannot work evil to the living nor the dead, even it be an error, why all this hostility to it, especially among those who have abandoned so many of the traditions of men, and profess to be anti-sectarian? What is the root of *their* hostility? Let them ask themselves, Is it not because it interferes with some pet theory that they have espoused and are unwilling to give up, or even to *modify*? What less is it than to claim an infallibility that does not belong to man? Even Paul could say, "We know in part... but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." - *1Co 13:9,10*. That which is perfect has not yet come: so we may and ought to be growing in grace and knowledge, and not get stereotyped or petrified, but "follow on to know the Lord."

## OUR FIRST THOUGHTS.

We have referred to an article we published in the *Bible Examiner* in 1844 on "Probation after the Second Advent." The following is an extract from it:

It is said—"The parable of the ten virgins shows there is no salvation for those who were not ready when the bridegroom came." True. But who are represented by the foolish virgins? Not all the inhabitants of the earth, if the Bible is the Lamp; for all the inhabitants of the earth have not the Bible, and never did have it. Admitting, then, that all who have had the Scriptures, and are not ready when Christ comes, will be forever excluded, and

their probation cease, that does not prove that it will cease with all others on the earth. But after all, that parable *may* have a more restricted application, and in that sense be an awful warning to those who have *professed* to believe that our Lord was about to make his personal advent. They have taken their lamps, the Bible, and gone forth to meet the Bridegroom; but now is the *tarrying* time: how many are suffering their lamps to go out, or have no oil, not having been careful to possess personal grace and piety; their sin will be more aggravated than the sin of any other class of men, and they will then understand the text, Heb 10:38, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

It will still be urged, "The Master of the house has shut the door and none can enter." The foolish virgins cannot enter-to them the door is shut; and to all who reject mercy offered the door will be shut sooner or later, but to prove it is shut to all men at the advent is another matter.

What the apostle says, 2Th 1:6-10, is supposed to form an insurmountable difficulty to the idea that there is probation to any one after the advent. We observe in the first place, this text must not be interpreted as to make it contradict the plain and positive testimony of the Bible, in other places; but must be harmonized with the general scope of the Scriptures. We have already shown that there are those who are "*left*" after the great battle that is immediately to attend or follow the advent. But if it be insisted that the text teaches the destruction of sinners living at the advent, and their destruction at the *time* of the advent, then it is clear, to our mind, that it is a particular class of wicked men. First-They have "troubled" the saints; consequently they must have lived *among* the saints, or about them, else they could not have troubled them. Second-They appear to be marked as a class of sinners who are inexcusably ignorant of God, where the gospel had shone. They seem to be characterized not only as not knowing God, but as having disobeyed the gospel, and consequently persons who had the gospel, or an opportunity to have it if they had not willfully shut their eyes against it; but this cannot now be said of multitudes of the heathen; they have not yet "heard God's fame, neither have seen his glory;" but God says, it shall be *declared* among them that are "left" of the nations, and that some, yea, "many" of them "shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord." -See Isa 66:19,20; and Zec 8:20-33.

If it still be said that the expression, "them that know not God," includes all that are unconverted, wherever they are, why then should it have been added, "*and* that obey not the gospel," if it was not designed to specify a particular class of the unconverted? The first expression would have included *all* the unconverted, had not the apostle qualified it by the expression following. The apostle teaches that Christ will not always leave his saints in their present state of "tribulation," but that he is coming again, and will then appear, not as at his first advent to be despised, but to vindicate his truth, gospel, and people; —revealed in such a manner that his enemies might as well think to escape devouring fire as to prevent his government and reign; and that under his government and reign all who will not have him to reign over them will "be punished with everlasting destruction from" his "presence, and from the glory of his power."

The parable of the "wheat and tares" is also urged against the idea that there is probation to any after the "end of this world," *aoinos*, *age*, or *dispensation*, for so the term signifies. But if it proves that there is probation to none after this dispensation, it proves equally that there will be none "left of the nations;" but as it cannot have that interpretation, for the reasons already given, we must understand it in the same way that we do the apostle's language just considered. Besides, the parable warrants us in giving it such an interpretation. The tares were sown "*among* the wheat," and "both grow *together*," showing that it is a class of sinners under the gospel, and possibly may refer especially to a class of *professors* of religion, as some commentators have said the original expression, translated *tares*, denotes "*bastard* wheat" —a spurious grain, looking like wheat and known only by its "*fruit*" when it is grown. A plenty of such "bastard wheat" the devil has *sown* in these last days, and they are ready to be bound, being already fast in *sectarian* "bundles," nearly prepared for the burning, and if they do not speedily repent they will be "cast into a furnace of fire." At the end of this age, or dispensation, our Lord will fully separate the tares from the wheat: he will "gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, [all *scandals* —

so the margin has it,] and them which do iniquity;" [all these hypocritical *professors*, represented by the tares, or bastard wheat,] and shall cast *them* into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. *Then* shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." "Shine forth" upon what? Upon them that are "*left*" of the nations;" because their "light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;" *then*, "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." -See Isa 60\$. *Then*, also, "Ye shall be named the *Priests* of the Lord: men shall call *you* the *ministers* of our God." - Isa 61:6. All the glory and efforts of the true church has been hid and paralyzed by the bastard wheat, but our Lord will thoroughly take it away when he comes, so that on earth he will have a holy priesthood and royal nation, that shall show forth his praise till the whole earth is full of his glory.

A main pillar, however, that probation ceases to all men at the advent, is Re 10:7: "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." This text is supposed to prove conclusively that there are to be no more offers of mercy. It is claimed that "the mystery of God," that is then to be "finished," is the gospel of salvation. Suppose that should be admitted, it would not prove that there were to be no further offers of mercy to any one; for, mark, it "should be finished *as* he hath declared to his servants the prophets." The question then, arises, has God anywhere, in "the prophets," declared that there is to be no more offers of mercy to any one after the advent? *Nowhere*, but just the reverse, as will appear in the further examination of the subject. The term *mystery* signifies secret, or hidden. In this 10th chap., appears the same angel that Daniel saw in the 12th chapter, and nearly in the same attitude; and while the direction to Daniel was to "*seal* the book; "the angel in 10th appears with "a little book *open*." And, why, open? Because the covering is not taken off—the mystery is finished—the time has come for it to be understood, " *as* God declared to his servant" Daniel it should be at "the time of the end." We might also say further—There are many things in the Bible which are a mystery, more or less hidden, which will not be *fully* understood when he shall begin to sound, " when that "mystery" shall be "finished" — made an end of—or taken away. That there are many things in the Bible not fully understood, yet, is evident from the fact that good men, men of God differ in their interpretation of the Scriptures.. Paul says, 1Co 13:9,10,12: For we know in part, and we prophecy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away... For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." But his darkness, and knowing in part—the mystery—is to be finished, and knowing in part—the mystery—is to be finished—to be ended "*as* he hath declared unto his servant," { Isa 52:8} "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Then the mystery is "finished *as* he hath declared to his servant," { Isa 25:7} "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations."

But once more, "the mystery of God" may relate to another subject, viz., God's determination to have a "kingdom of priests," which was first offered to the descendents of Jacob; which, if the rejected, was to be filled up, "finished," or completed from among the Gentiles was a mystery, or hidden.

The Lord determined the kingdom of priests should be filled up, and the "mystery of God," that was kept hid till the apostle's days, was, that it should be filled up from among the Gentiles, and should be done on the principle of all believers in Christ being united to that kingdom as priests and kings. So Peter understood it. See 1Pe 2:9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Also 5th verse: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer of a spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." They are spoken of in Re 1:6: "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." Again, Re 5:9, 10: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hath redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation: And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."



Now, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, that mystery of God will be finished, and it will be fully and clearly seen who this kingdom of priests are; and John is told in the 10th chapter of Revelation, 11th verse ( Re 10:11), " *Thou* must prophecy *again* before, many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings;" which we think, will literally take place. The mystery of God will then be finished; or his whole purpose concerning this kingdom of priests will then be unfolded, and their number completed, and we shall be brought to the "third day," when Christ, in his mystical body, "the church of the first born," will "be perfected." This, we conceive, is the mystery of God finished; and Paul says, Eph 5:32, "This is the great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." See the connection.