

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
BOOK 7

REVELATION 2:18-29

EPISTLE TO THE
CHURCH IN THYATIRA

EDWARD IRVING

1831



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CHURCH IN THYATIRA

EDWARD IRVING

*Exposition of the Book of Revelation:
in a series of Lectures*

1831

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Revelation 2

¹⁸ And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things says the Son of God, who has His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass;

¹⁹ I know your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and your patience, and your works; and the last to be more than the first.

²⁰ Notwithstanding I have a few things against you, because you suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

²¹ And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

²² Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

²³ And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He which searches the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

²⁴ But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

²⁵ But that which you have already hold fast till I come.

²⁶ And he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

²⁷ And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

²⁸ And I will give him the morning star.

²⁹ He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches.

FOREWORD

THE first time I came across the writings of Edward Irving, deep in the back shelves of the Theology Library at UBC (Vancouver, BC, Canada), I was deeply impressed with the unusual treatment he gave to the final book of the Bible. He wrote as one who knew his calling, and knew that he had a message from God for his generation.

Combined with that urgency, Irving had a large sense of the glory of God in Christ, and God's purposes through Christ to reveal himself unto the world through the Church. He also possessed a large gift for language and expression, and apparently was quite an orator, as well as being a man of great compassion and sensitivity.

His work on the book of *Revelation*, which originally comprised two volumes, but only covered the first six chapters, towers above other similar commentaries because of its unique blend of gospel and prophecy.

Coming from a church founded on the Advent movement of the mid-1800's, I was somewhat familiar with books on the prophetic parts of Scripture. Irving's commentary was nothing like those.

Whereas the standard prophetic works tended to get quagmired in historical events and details, thus dwelling on the vessel by which God's purposes were worked out, Irving kept his eye single to the glory of God, and searched into those deep purposes as far as he was able. He rightly dwelt on the treasure that was in the vessel of prophecy. Like Moses, he wanted to see God's glory, or as much as was humanly possible. And he did see much, indeed.

And because most of the treasure he unearthed is practically lost to the Church today, I have for a long time had a strong desire to make these works more widely available.

In this new edition, I have taken only a few liberties: correcting and modernizing spelling and grammar in a few places (including the language in the KJV Bible references), breaking up large paragraphs and sentences, and inserting full Bible references where appropriate. I have separated the original 2-volume work into

smaller books, one for each of the fifteen original lectures. Otherwise it is as Irving wrote it.

This is Edward Irving's parting gift to the Church of Christ. In his own words, from the exposition on Laodicea:

"But my confidence in truth never fails me. I know that these things are not published in vain. It is not for myself, nor for my flock, but for the church of God, that I write these things, which I pray God for His own name's sake to hasten and bless."

Frank Zimmerman
practicaprophetica.com

Gather up the fragments, that none be lost.



INTRODUCTION

IF THE first epistle might be entitled of “Pastoral Love,” and the second of “Martyrdom,” and the third of “Discipline,” this fourth epistle, addressed to the Church in Thyatira, might be entitled: “Works.” Twice over, in acknowledging the services of its angel, does the chief Shepherd commend his works:

Revelation 2

¹⁹ I know your works...and your works, and the last to be more than the first.

And in the reproof which He administers to him for permitting that woman Jezebel to seduce certain of the Church, He calls them His servants, and commands them to repent of their works; by which judgment He says that He will teach the churches this lesson, that He will render unto every one according to his works.

And again, He exhorts the faithful, by the consideration that He will not put upon them any other load or burden, language proper to a workman, servant, or slave.

And, finally, the promise is made, not in the common phrase, “he that overcomes,” but with the addition, “and keeps my works unto the end;” and the promise itself is the promise of work: the work of a conqueror, to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and to break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

This epistle is manifestly written in the language of a master to his workmen, and is, I think, intended to exhibit that side of truth which looks towards obedience and good works.

If the epistle to the Church at Ephesus set forth the excellency of love, and that to Smyrna the excellency of faith, and that to Pergamos the excellency of holiness, this epistle to the working Church of Thyatira sets forth the excellency of good works.

Thyatira was a place of no great celebrity in the region of Asia Minor, called Lydia: more anciently its name was Pelopia and Euhippa, and now by the Turks, Akhizar or Akhissar. It was a

colony of Macedonian Greeks, situated between Pergamos and Sardis, about forty-eight miles south-east of the former.

At this day it consists of about one thousand houses, with two hundred or three hundred huts, and possesses only one Greek church, with nine Turkish mosques. The church, and indeed the whole place, is wretchedly poor; and the last visitants found the priest so ignorant of, and indifferent to, the truth, that he would not accept the gift of a New Testament, not thinking it worth the having.

The ruins of its ancient churches are all under ground, as it were sunk into the earth; and the present church stands beneath the level of the churchyard around. Everything betokens poverty and wretchedness.

Of this city was Lydia, a seller of purple, whom the apostle brought to the knowledge of the truth at Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia; for, as we have said, Thyatira was a Macedonian colony. It stood upon a branch of the river Caicus, upon an extensive plain, and seems, from the extent of its ruins, to have been a place formerly of much greater consideration and extent than it is at present.

The Church here planted, once acknowledged the superiority of Sardis; but now its priest looks up to the bishop of Ephesus as his arch-priest. Such was, and such is, the place in which was planted that Church to which this epistle is addressed, consisting, as usual, of three parts, the style of the writer, the message to the angel, and the promise to the Church.

I. THE STYLE OF THE CHIEF SHEPHERD

SON OF GOD

Revelation 2

¹⁸ These things says the Son of God, who has His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass.

THIS consists of two parts, first, the name “Son of God,” which, for the first time, and indeed the only time in this book here occurs; the second, the symbolical description,

¹⁸ ...who has His eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass.

With respect to the name, I think there are good grounds for believing that here it is taken from the 2nd *Psalm*, where it is given to Him with great solemnity as the decree of God:

Psalm 2

⁷ I will declare the decree: the Lord has said unto me You are my Son, this day have I begotten You.

⁸ Ask of me, and I shall give You the heathen for your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession.

⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

My reason for thinking that this part of Scripture is referred to by the Lord in the name under consideration is, that those very words of the Psalm are quoted in the body of the epistle, of which the title, Son of God, is the superscription:

Revelation 2

²⁶ And he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

²⁷ And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

Believing therefore that our Lord is here revealing himself, and speaking to His Church in that dignity of Son of God to which by God’s decree He was advanced, I would now, by His grace, endeavor to unfold the import of this name Son of God, by a diligent

study of the Scriptures, especially of the 2nd *Psalm*. The first tidings which came to this world, that a son of earth should be entitled the Son of God, was brought to King David, by Nathan the prophet, when he was meditating in his heart to build a house for the Most High: and it is recorded in these words:

2 Samuel 7

¹² I will set up your seed after you, which shall proceed out of your bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

¹³ He shall build a house for your name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

¹⁴ I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son.

Now, the Apostle Paul expressly applies these words, “I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son,” to Christ.¹ And indeed to no one else but an eternal King, of an eternal kingdom, could they be applied.

Solomon, indeed, the son of David, did build a house, and sit upon the throne of David his father, and otherwise prefigure the true Son of David and Prince of Peace, who shall build the temple of the Lord. But to him it is impossible to apply any of the promises of this blessing in their full import; and least of all that which we are now considering, “I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son.”

This promise was so sacredly devoted by the Jews to Messiah, that it was accounted the highest treason for any one to call himself Son of God. And because Jesus witnessed this good confession before the high priest, He was arraigned of blasphemy, and cut off out of the land of the living.

Now observe, that this promise of the Son of David’s divine generation is given in the bosom of an oracle concerning kingly power upon the earth for ever; and wherever this glorious seed of hope appears in the Psalms, bearing the fruit of praise and thanksgiving, it is always in the like connection with an eternal and universal kingdom.

¹ *Hebrews* 1:5.

For example, in the 89th *Psalm*, which is no more than a divine commentary upon Nathan's words, the promise occurs in this connection:

Psalm 89

²⁵ I will set His hand also in the sea, and His right hand in the rivers.

²⁶ He shall cry unto me, You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.

²⁷ Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.

And in the 132nd *Psalm*, where the same oath of God to David is built upon, the connection is not so much with the power as with the holiness of the promised Seed of Heaven. That *Psalm* has to do not so much with the throne which He is to establish, as with the temple which He is to build forever; not so much with the royalty, as with the Priesthood of our Melchizedek. Indeed, these two attributes of the great King are never separated from one another, for:

Hebrews 1

⁸ ...a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of His kingdom.

Behold the connection in which the word of God by Nathan is introduced:

Psalm 132

¹¹ The Lord has sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it, Of the fruit of your body will I set upon your throne.

¹² If your children will keep my covenant, and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children also shall sit upon your throne for evermore.

But perhaps of all others the 72nd *Psalm* is that in which the glory of the estate of the King's Son is most fully enlarged upon, of which we cannot quote a part, but must refer to the whole portraiture therein contained of the glorious kingdom which the Son of God is yet to establish among men.

Psalm 72

¹ Give the king your judgments, O God, and your righteousness unto the king's son.

² He shall judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with judgment.

³ The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

⁴ He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

⁵ They shall fear You as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

⁶ He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.

⁷ In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endures.

⁸ He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

⁹ They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him; and His enemies shall lick the dust.

¹⁰ The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

¹¹ Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him.

¹² For He shall deliver the needy when he cries; the poor also, and him that has no helper.

¹³ He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

¹⁴ He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in His sight.

¹⁵ And He shall live, and to Him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for Him continually; and daily shall He be praised.

¹⁶ There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things.

¹⁹ And blessed be His glorious name forever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen.

²⁰ The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

The 110th *Psalm* springs, I think, from the same root of Nathan's oracle unto David; for there David addresses his own Son as his Lord, and makes mention of His Melchizedek priesthood, the priesthood of the oath or the decree, and represents Him as going forth to root out and to destroy all His enemies, all the enemies of righteousness, from the face of the earth.

Psalm 110

¹ The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.

² The Lord shall send the rod of your strength out of Zion: rule in the midst of your enemies.

³ Your people shall be willing in the day of your power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: you have the dew of your youth.

⁴ The Lord has sworn, and will not repent, You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

⁵ The Lord at your right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.

⁶ He shall judge among the heathen, He shall fill the places with the dead bodies; He shall wound the heads over many countries.

⁷ He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall He lift up the head.

All these Psalms do most beautifully embody the office and function of Him who should arise and call God His Father, while they sweetly interweave the power and holiness of His reign; whereof the former in our text is, I think, represented under the name Son of God, and the latter under the symbolic imagery:

Revelation 1

¹⁴ His eyes were like a flame of fire;

¹⁵ And His feet unto fine brass.

But, after all, it is in the 2nd *Psalm* that the peculiar glory of this name Son of God is revealed. This Psalm presents to us, in the first three verses, the description of a very turbulent, ungodly,

and blaspheming condition of the earth, wherein the Gentiles and the peoples—that is, the heathen and the nations who know God—are meditating a vain thing. What this proud and vain imagination is we are not told, until the heads of this confederacy have likewise been mentioned. These are the kings of the earth and the rulers. The apostle’s commentary in the 4th chapter of *Acts*, shows that the former signify the civil and the latter the ecclesiastical authorities, the heads of the nations and the rulers of the synagogues:

Acts 4

²³ And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

²⁴ And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, You are God, which has made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

²⁵ Who by the mouth of your servant David has said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

²⁶ The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ.

²⁷ For of a truth against your holy child Jesus, whom You have anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

²⁸ For to do whatsoever your hand and your counsel determined before to be done.

The confederacy, therefore, consists of both the heathen and the professedly Christian nations, who combine together against the Lord and against His Christ, to compass the vain and blasphemous imagination of breaking their bands asunder, and casting their cords away from them.

This is a state of the world, both of the heathen and of Christendom, unto which this *Psalms*, containing the proclamation of Him whom the nations despised and would cast out, is earnestly yet severely spoken. It is a psalm for reclaiming them from their mad career and their horrible purpose, by proclaiming the decree of God that this Jesus, whom they crucified and would cast out, is

the Son of God, and cannot by any combination of men be resisted or withstood.

This state of things presupposes that Christ has been preached as Lord over the nations, as the co-equal with God in the government of the earth. It implies that God has made common cause with Christ in the work of governing mankind; for, otherwise, how should they confederate against both God and His Christ? Otherwise, how could they aim to break their bands and cast their cords away from them?

It is not the Jewish state of the world before Christ appeared, nor yet the state of the world during the ministry of Jesus, ere yet He had been declared the Son of God, the Christ, the Lord, by the resurrection from the dead; but it is the state of the world after His resurrection, and the promulgation thereof by the preaching of the gospel, that is especially and properly the subject-matter of this *Psalm*.

Wherefore also the apostles, when, after the day of Pentecost, they preached Jesus of Nazareth both Christ and Lord, and saw the kings of the earth and the rulers confederate against Him, were directed by the Holy Ghost to apply this *Psalm* to the state of things which then came into being, and which has been ever since. Wherever the nations of the earth, under their kings and priests, have confederated to reject the authority of God and his Christ, preached unto them by the Church, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,—whether these priests be Pagans, or Papists, or Protestants,—this state of things mentioned in the 2nd *Psalm* has been there exhibited.

And, let me say it, except in a few places, and these but spots on the face of the earth; except in a few times, and these long and far between; this has been the conduct of the nations and kings of the earth, of professing Christendom and its rulers.

But while there has been this constant and continuous fulfillment of the antichristian spirit, from the day of Pentecost until now, there is a crisis and a consummation which is near at hand, when that wicked one shall be revealed, whom Christ will con-

sume with the breath of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming. To this crisis and consummation the hope of the faithful in the Church of Thyatira, and all other churches, is directed in these words:

Revelation 2

²⁶ He that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations;

²⁷ And he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I have received of my Father.

²⁸ And I will give him the morning star.

The mention here made of the morning star fixes the time of this great catastrophe of nations to be on the eve of the morning of the first resurrection:

Numbers 24

¹⁷ I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand,² and the day star is ready to rise on our hearts.³ So near, also, is the consummation of confederacies against God and against His Christ.

The first out-bursting of this God-denying and Christ-rejecting spirit, was exhibited at the French Revolution, to the terror of the whole world. Since that ebullition of hell was stopped by the mercy of God, and the instrumentality of this Protestant kingdom, in order to try the nations a little longer, and give them space for repentance, there has been a season of underground workings and collections of materials in all parts of the world, especially in Christendom, which only wait for the permission of God, for His withdrawal of His hand, to burst forth in direful desolation of everything established under the sanction of the Father and the Son.

² *Romans* 13:12.

³ *2 Peter* 1:19.

The loosed winds raging to rush forth and destroy the earth, and to attack the throne of God itself, are still held back, by the four mighty angels, until the servants of God shall have been sealed; and then shall they go forth to subvert the fear and worship of God, and to confederate the world in one great enterprise against the Lord and His Anointed, to break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from them.

This is described as the last act of the antichristian spirit in the 17th chapter, where the beast with the kings of the earth having destroyed the corrupted and corrupting Church, combine to make war with the Lamb and with His faithful ones; and the issue of this vain imagination is described in the 19th chapter, where the beast and the false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire, and the kings of the earth are slain with the sword.

That this, the last event of the time state of things, whereupon follows instantly the millennial age of the Church, is the event referred to in the second *Psalms*, is put beyond a doubt by the Holy Ghost himself, who has expressly identified that action with this prophecy, in the very heart of the action itself:

Revelation 19

¹⁵ Out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He may smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron, and He treads the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God.

These words, “He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron,” are taken from this *Psalms*, and put it beyond a doubt, that the action of the *Psalms* is the last action of God and His Christ against apostate Christendom and the confederate heathen, wherein Christ acts in the character of the Son of God, which the preachers of the Gospel have been claiming for Him since His resurrection and ascension up on high.

Having thus ascertained beyond question the futurity of this confederation, as an historical event, notwithstanding its continual presence as a condition of things since the day of Pentecost, we now go on to unfold the power of the name, Son of God, in

the *Psalm*, which, having opened the revelry of wickedness and blasphemy that filled the earth, does thus proceed:

Psalm 2

⁴ He that sits in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

⁵ Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His hot displeasure.

These words express the madness of the undertaking, its vanity greater than its villainy; seeing it excites the contempt, ere it enkindles the wrath of God.

But will men indeed be so mad as to lift their hand against the throne of the Eternal, where Christ is seated? or with what arms will they invade the realms of the invisible God and of His Christ? The question may well be asked; for the thought is perplexing in the extreme, and the answer is not at hand save to those who know the constitution of the Church, I mean the body of Christ upon the earth.

But to one who understands and well believes that there is a people, and ever has been, and ever will be, upon whom God's name is named, in whom God dwells, and to whom Christ is united by ties indissoluble, one with them as He is one with the Father; He, I say, who thus comprehended the constitution of the Church on earth as God inhabited, as one with God through union in the Spirit with the risen Christ, finds himself at no loss to conceive the manner of this horrible action, in which the powers of darkness shall league themselves with the sons of men.

It will consist in a systematic undertaking on the part of kings and priests to bring to an end the race of the godly, and utterly suppress the witnesses of God in the flesh; which to undertake is to undertake the casting out of God and Christ from this world and its affairs. It is to attempt to nullify God's thousand promises, His everlasting covenant, His unchangeable word.

But it will be undertaken, as sure as God has written this *Psalm* to warn men from undertaking it; and how near it is God only knows. May I be disappointed when I give my conjecture that it

will be within our generation, and that our eyes shall look upon it.

I believe this fell work will proceed under the fair show of serving the well-being of the earth; and that it will find its chief promoters among the benevolent, the enlightened, and the moral, and, as they are called, the religious classes of mankind. Those holding the faith of the risen Christ, of His very flesh and His very lordship, and His very coming and kingdom; those who stand up to the very letter for the gifts and powers and privileges of the Church, will be looked upon as they now are, as mad enthusiasts, blasphemous, impious, and fanatical, whom to destroy is to do God service.

This is not a speculation; even now it is a reality. No sobriety of mind, no force of argument, no accomplishment of learning nor mastery of eloquence, nor honesty of heart, nor piety of life, can even now screen such as hold these doctrines, and stand stiffly for them, from being derided, abused, libeled, and persecuted, by all those classes of the community who claim to themselves the honor of knowledge, morality, good sense, and religion.

If only God proceeds with His work of enlightening the eyes, confirming the hearts, and strengthening the hands of those faithful ones, who know, and are standing for, His truth, it must needs come to pass that the hostility of the world, religious and irreligious, will increase more and more, to the truth, and to those who hold the truth, until at length nothing will satisfy them but excommunication from the Church, expatriation from their country, and extinction from the earth.

Then shall be consummated that which is written in the 2nd *Psalms*. Then shall God's wrath come up into His face: then shall He arise as a strong man out of His place: then shall He begin to shake terribly the earth. So very awful now shall His controversy with men become, so unprecedented in the annals of His long-suffering and merciful government, that this period is emphatically denominated in Scripture the day of His wrath; and as such in the *Apocalypse* it is described in the act of the seven vials; and

in our Psalm it is thus described, as by words issuing forth from the offended majesty of God:

Psalm 2

⁶ Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.

⁷ I will declare the decree: the Lord has said unto me, You are my Son; this day have I begotten you.

⁸ Ask of me, and I shall give You the heathen for your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession.

Part of this is spoken in the person of Jehovah, the omnipotent Father, who declares that notwithstanding these confederacies of the children of men, He has accomplished His purpose of establishing His Son, as the ruler of the earth, upon Mount Zion, the throne of His glory.

In the former part of the *Psalm*, Messiah has the name of Christ; but now He has the name of King, God's King. This is the act spoken of in the prophet Daniel, when the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven receives from the Ancient of Days an everlasting kingdom over all the nations which are under the face of the whole heaven.

Daniel 7

¹³ I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him.

¹⁴ And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

It is the same event to which our Lord refers, when He says:

Matthew 24

³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Upon Mount Zion, His rest is to be, within the sanctuary of His holy temple:

Psalm 132

¹³ For the Lord has chosen Zion; he has desired it for His habitation.

¹⁴ This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

Symbolically the same thing is set forth in the 14th chapter of the *Apocalypse*, where the Lamb is represented as standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred-and-forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads; and it is the substance of all the prophets that...

Isaiah 24

²³ ...the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously.

Here it is that the throne shall be established, here it is that the thrones of the house of David shall abide forever.

Micah 4

² For the law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

This is the action of God, described in these words:

Psalm 110

¹ Sit on my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.

And there Christ sits, expecting that blessed consummation: which is the Father's way of demonstrating Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of God.

The Son is known by inheriting His Father's name and the Father's possession. The former of these, Christ inherited in virtue of His generation of the Holy Ghost, but only in the Spirit; for in the flesh He was the Son of David, the seed of Abraham. At His resurrection, when the substance of His flesh was changed into the glorious brightness of the Father, He was declared to be the Son of God with power. And now, as God's Son and heir, He sits in the throne of God.

But though thus, in virtue of His spiritual generation, and of His resurrection, as the first-begotten from the dead, He be determined and defined from among all creatures, as He of whom it

was prophesied that He should call God Father, and God should call Him Son,⁴ still it remains to the complete demonstration of His Sonship, that He should be brought into His Father's inheritance. And this is accomplished when He is put in possession of Mount Zion, the temple, and the palace, and the citadel of the Most High; which inheriting, He inherits the earth; which inheriting, He inherits creation.

With all this He was invested by the Father, when He was seated in His own throne, in the heavens, and all power was given unto Him in heaven and in earth. Nay, more early still, with all this He was invested even in the days of His flesh, when He said,

Matthew 11

²⁷ All things are delivered unto me of my Father.

John 16

¹⁵ All things that the Father has are mine.

But though rightfully His, as their Creator, from the generation of His creature-being, they are not His in possession, until the time set forth in this Psalm, when as King He is...

Psalm 2

⁶ ...set upon the holy hill of Zion.

Then has He the name and the inheritance, and also the worship of the Son of God. For,

Hebrews 1

⁶ When He brought the first-begotten into the world, He said,
And let all the angels of God worship Him.

This act, therefore, of destroying the confederacy of the kings and nations against Christ, is likewise the act of dispossessing them, and putting Him in sole possession as man, of all which as God He created. And thus is Jesus of Nazareth declared to be not man only, but likewise the Son of God, and heir of all. Christ being thus instated in His Father's kingdom, thus utters His voice:

⁴ *Hebrews 1:5; 2 Samuel 7:14.*

Psalm 2

⁷ I will declare the decree: the Lord has said unto me, You are my Son; this day have I begotten you.

⁸ Ask of me, and I shall give you the heathen for your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession.

⁹ You shall rule them with a rod of iron, you shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

This declaration or promulgation of the decree takes place, as I understand, from the holy hill of Zion, after He has been placed thereon as King over all the earth, answering to the proclamation which lately was made of our present gracious king throughout all his dominions. It is called the decree, to signify that He holds of God, that He reigns under God, is clothed with the authority of God, and that His scepter has in it the strength, duration, and unchangeableness of God, being the same with that in the 110th *Psalm*, of which the apostle makes such great account:⁵

Psalm 110

⁴ Jehovah has sworn, and will not repent, You are a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.

Now though the promulgation of this decree upon the earth be not until the time He comes unto the earth, and receives the scepter thereof and the inheritance thereof from His Father's hand, we are not therefore to suppose that the decree itself dates from that day; but, on the contrary, that it properly dates from the day of the resurrection, which the Apostle Paul teaches in the 13th chapter of the *Acts*.

Then when He was taken from among all creatures, and placed in the throne of the Father, God did make manifest to all the invisible creation, that this was His Son. That day He was begotten out of perishable flesh into spiritual glory. Then became He first-begotten, in being the first-begotten from the dead; and forasmuch as no one has yet entered into that glory, He is also the only-begotten.

⁵ *Hebrews* 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 17, 21.

And thus the mystery of His eternal generation is manifested by His resurrection and installation in the throne of God. His generation, begun in the Virgin's womb, was perfected in the grave; just as ours, begun in our regeneration, is perfected in our resurrection. But none of us shall ever sit where He now sits in the Father's throne. This is His eternal supremacy among creatures, that He has, since His resurrection, sat down in the majesty on high; where also He shall for ever sit in right of that co-essential and consubstantial Godhead which His manhood neither mars nor meddles with at all.

In the Father's throne, in the light of the Father's countenance, in the bosom of the Father's counsel, shall He be as God; while as man upon the throne of David He shall sit, and we along with Him, ruling the world in righteousness and the people with equity.⁶

I hold therefore, being taught by the Apostle Paul,⁷ that Christ received the decree on the day of His ascension into glory, and has ever since had the homage of all the invisible creation, being worshiped as the Son of God. But He waits for the Father's time to be put in possession also of the visible creation. He is still in the condition of an expectant and of a suppliant; wherefore these words,

Psalm 2

⁸ Ask of me,

—are introduced into the *Psalm*. This supplication Christ presents through His Church, both living and dead. For the martyrs beneath the altar continually cry aloud for this consummation of His power; and the Church on earth should ever say, "Come"...

Revelation 22

²⁰ ...Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

⁶ *Psalm* 98:9.

⁷ *Acts* 13:33.

And when the happy time arrives, all heaven peals with the acclamation:

Revelation 11

¹⁵ The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.

When the Church on earth ceases from asking of the Father this completeness of power and kingdom for His Son, she does so far forth deny her Lord, and refuse her vocation. If the Church's prayers could be compressed into one word, that word should be:

“Father, crown Him with the diadems of the earth.”

But though we may be silent, though we may by error and delusion dislike to hear of His coming, much more to pray for it; there is one who is not silent, but makes intercession continually for His appearing, and that is the Spirit, who ever says, “Come.” Nor can the bride be silent, though the harlot may; for she does likewise ever say, “Come.”⁸ And so let us also say,

Revelation 22

²⁰ Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

At length the Father shall bring the Only-Begotten into the world, and give Him...

Psalm 2

⁸ ...the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.

When the law shall go forth from Mount Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, it shall go forth first in the way of judgment, and afterwards in the way of blessedness: judgment upon the ungodly, who shall dare to make war against the Lamb and His chosen ones, whom He shall...

Revelation 2

²⁷ ...rule with a rod of iron, and break in pieces as a potter's vessel.

⁸ Revelation 22:17.

Psalm 110

⁵ The Lord [that is, Christ the Lord] at your right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.

⁶ He shall judge among the heathen, He shall fill the places with the dead bodies; He shall wound the heads over many countries.

And thus shall He approve himself the Son of His righteous Father, by putting down the ungodly from the earth, and destroying all those who destroy the earth. And then He shall give the reward to every faithful servant of His Father. There shall not a promise of God fail to any person who relied thereon. Every jot and every tittle of His word will the Son make good; and thus is the Father glorified by the Son, His truth vindicated, His righteousness exalted on high, His goodness, His mercy, and His truth.

And thus shall the Son of man be shown out to be the very Son of God; all God in Him, the fullness of Godhead embodied in, the weight of Godhead trust sustained by, Him. This day of judgment being accomplished, the Son, having cast out of the kingdoms all that offend and do iniquity, having cast them into the perdition of the second death, into the outwardness of the lake that burns, shall forever show forth the benignity and the goodness of God in the midst of His goodly creation.

And by the sustentation of all power, and the communication of all blessedness, and the conservation of all being, which every one shall feel and acknowledge to be of Him and for Him, He shall be honored of all as the Son of God, and for ever mediate between God and creation, laying His hand upon them both.

Such is the outward history and eternal demonstration of that dignity which is contained in the name Son of God. Thus does that Divine relationship between the Father and the Son, incomprehensible in the Godhead, become visible and comprehensible to the creatures.

By looking at the progressive opening and eternal perfection of this work of the Father to make the Son known, and of this work of the Son to make the Father known, we obtain the only adequate—yea, I think, the only possible idea of the relationship eter-

nally subsisting between these two Persons of the blessed Trinity. It appears, therefore, from an examination of those portions of Scripture, where the name Son of God is especially treated of, that it expresses dignity and dominion, and heirship over every creature that God has made.

1. In His generation by the Holy Ghost, we have the principle, and as it were ground of the name:

Luke 1

³⁵ ...therefore...shall [He] be called the Son of God.

2. In His baptism, we have the proclamation of the name:

Mark 1

¹¹ You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

3. In the transfiguration, which is the resurrection anticipated and foreshown, we have the outward manifestation of the name:

Matthew 17

⁵ This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him.

4. In the session at the right hand of God, we have the spiritual realization of the name:

Hebrews 4

¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

5. And in the second coming and kingdom, we have its complete realization over all things, visible and invisible.⁹

And in like manner we become sons of God by regeneration of the Holy Ghost, and are proclaimed such in our baptism; and in the first resurrection are openly avowed as such, receiving the adoption of sons.

But there is this immense difference between us and Christ, that in His case these are but outward and visible demonstrations of a glory which He had with the Father before the world was; in

⁹ *Psalm 2, 72, 110; Daniel 7, &c.*

our case, they are the origination of a new dignity and a new name, not inherited by right, but received by the adoption of the grace of God.

In Christ the title of Son, or if not the title itself, that to which the title corresponds, is a thing in the essence of the incomprehensible Godhead commonly called by divines the eternal generation of the Son. Of this relation the essence is, that between the Father and the Son there is such a union as that the Father is ever pouring forth upon the Son, and the Son ever desiring to have poured forth upon Him, the fullness of the Father's love; which office of intercommunion is sustained by the Holy Ghost, while again the Son ever returns back unto the Father the offering of His joy and enjoyment in the plenitude of His counsel and His love.

To make this outward, to show it to the world as the great source of creation, and the great end of it, and its only blessedness, this is the end of the incarnation of the Son; who continually receives upon himself, through the Holy Ghost, the Father's counsel and love, and returns unto the Father, by the same Holy Ghost, His acquiescence and delight. And we who are taken into the same spiritual relation, through union with the Son, do manifest the same mystery of Godhead.

Now, forasmuch as creation is one of God's works, it must be seen as the offspring of the Father's will communicated to the Son, and by the Son performed and established according to that will, for ever and ever. And here we see not only the reason why the title Son of God should always be connected with the headship of creation, but likewise why this title should be prefixed to an epistle concerning the works of the Church; for the Son of God is the workman of creation, to whom the Father communicates it as a purpose, which He completes as a work, and then presents it completed unto the Father.

The first part of His work was, to bring all things out of nothing, according to the Father's mind; the second was, to redeem all things from the power of sin and dissolution, and fix them for

ever in the estate of infallible blessedness. And because certain of the creatures, into whose hands power and trust had been committed by the Son, had risen in rebellion against the Father, it becomes the labor of the Son to put them down, and wrest out of their hands those weapons of knowledge and power which they had turned against Him who made them.

His work is, to break them with a rod of iron, and to dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. These are His labors, to drive the wicked forth from the creation of God, into the lake that burns, because as creation now stands it does not exhibit the perfect and complete purpose of the Father.

The Son has not yet finished the edifice of which He received the plan from the Father. The time is not yet come to deliver it up unto the Father. It does not yet throughout all its chambers speak the praise of the invisible God. And this is the reason why the title Son of God is, I think, prefixed to this epistle of works, both to declare that all power is in Him, and that all work for God is done by Him; and therefore it is also that the epistle concludes with promise of power over the nations to those who overcome, and with privilege to rule them with a rod of iron, and to break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

EYES LIKE A FLAME OF FIRE

Revelation 2

¹⁸ ...who has His eyes like unto a flame of fire and His feet of fine brass.

Now with respect to the symbolical features given to Him in these words, I have little to add to what was set forth in our third lecture¹⁰. His eyes are likened to flames of fire, because He is sent upon the errand of burning up wickedness round about; and His feet are likened unto fine brass, because He is coming to tread down wickedness like the mire of the streets.

¹⁰ See *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Book 3 "Christ the Universal Head and Bishop of the Church," Chapter: "The Vision," Section: "His Eyes and Feet."

The only other two instances in Scripture of the like symbols are in the 19th chapter of this book, where He comes to destroy the wicked powers of the world, and to cast Antichrist and the apostate Church into the lake of fire: and in the 10th chapter of *Daniel*, where He comes in the same guise to make revelation of the same grand catastrophe of the time of the end.

When God added the law to the promise, and gave Moses the vocation of lawgiver, He appeared in a flame of fire at the bush, and on the top of Sinai He showed himself in consuming fire; and with fire He consumed those that offered strange incense, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up into her fiery pit Korah and his rebellious company.

Fire, as we have observed, under the law, was the great element for purification: water was but the substitute to be used upon things which would not stand the fire. Into fire shall the material world be cast, and out of fire shall come like silver out of the furnace seven times refined. These eyes of fire therefore are the symbols of devouring wrath against the wicked; as it is written:

Jeremiah 4

⁴ ...lest my fury come forth like fire and burn that none can quench it...

Lamentations 2

³ He burned against Jacob like a flaming fire which devours round about.

⁴ He has bent His bow like an enemy...He poured out His fury like fire.

This symbol therefore gives a definiteness to the particular action which, as Son of God, the Father's potentate, the Father's servant, He is coming to perform. It is the work of searching out wickedness to destroy it. It is the work of inspecting the sacrifice and purifying it with fire. It was the office of the priest to look into the inwards of the victims, to look upon the plague spot of leprosy, and to see that there was no uncleanness in the camp of Israel.

So comes our High Priest here to look into the doings of the Church of Thyatira, to search their inward parts; and in order to show that all things are naked and open unto Him, He takes eyes of fire, which penetrates and pervades all matter, and which consumes all wood and hay and stubble, and all dross, and everything but the most precious and pure, to signify that His glances are like the lightning,¹¹ which in an instant bursts forth from the dark cloud and enlightens the world, and in the next instant smites the earth and rends its adamantine rocks.

Psalm 18

¹² At the brightness that was before Him His thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire.

¹⁴ Yea, He sent out His arrows, and scattered them; and He shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

Psalm 104

³² He looks on the earth, and it trembles: He touches the hills, and they smoke.

When He shall lift up the veil of dark clouds that encompass Him,¹² His enemies shall reel, and stagger, and fall, and cry unto the mountains and rocks:

Revelation 6

¹⁶ Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb:

¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?

It shall be like that glance of the eye, that look of terror which He sent forth upon the Egyptians, when they pursued Israel by the Red Sea: as it is written:

Exodus 14

²⁴ And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked upon the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians.

¹¹ *Daniel 10:6; Matthew 28:3.*

¹² *Psalm 18:11.*

Such a look is there in the merciful eye of Jesus, to scatter hateful terror over marshaled hosts in the pride of their triumphant career. He hates them not now: gentle and meek, patient and long-suffering, are His ways and His dealings with the sons of men.

But the time comes when He shall put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and repay fury to His enemies. How terrible shall His coming be! what a moment of trouble and dismay! what a world of desolation and death! O you sons of men, how long will you love folly, turn at length and fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come.¹³

FEET OF FINE BRASS

These eyes of fire are coupled with feet of fine brass; that is, brass untarnished, and which will not take on the soil of that which it treads down. This carries an allusion to His act of treading the winepress of the wrath of God, which is His act of judging the Church for her apostasy; as it is written:

Matthew 5

¹³ You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

John 15

⁶ If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered: and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

These threatenings of the Saviour have their accomplishment continually in His Church, where all unprofitable members, who have in them no savor of life or godliness, are continually enduring this casting forth from the presence of the Lord. It goes on silently and unseen, but not the less surely.

I believe there is not a Church, or hardly any Church, in which there are not branches lopped off for their fruitlessness, and left without to perish and decay; but, like every other spiritual truth,

¹³ *Revelation 14:7.*

it shall have an historical fulfillment in that day when the vine of the earth shall be ripe for judgment.¹⁴

Then when Christendom shall have cast off, or be in the act of casting off, the bands and cords of God and His Christ, and Church and State shall be setting themselves up in the name and place of the Lord and His Anointed, it shall come to pass that the Son of God shall come forth, as a Refiner among the sons of Levi, as a refiner's furnace and fuller's soap, to purify those that will stand the fire, and to give them raiment white as the light; and those that cannot, to consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

- He shall come with His fan in His hand, and thoroughly purge His floor: the wheat to gather into His garner, the chaff to consume with fire unquenchable.¹⁵
- He shall come with His ax in His hand to cut down every tree that bears not fruit, and cast it into the fire.¹⁶
- He shall come to tread the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God,¹⁷ and all they who have trodden under foot the Son of God, shall be trodden under His feet, as straw is trodden down for the dunghill.¹⁸ The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under foot.¹⁹

To this act of the Lord's judgment, so oft and so variously set forth in Scripture by the figure of treading down, have these feet of brass a manifest allusion. Brass is chosen, as at once the symbol of purity and durability. It was a sacred metal, used in the temple for all large and massive utensils.

Before the invention of iron it was used for all weapons of war: it was put upon the feet of the oxen which were employed to tread out the corn, to separate the wheat from the chaff and the

¹⁴ *Revelation* 14:18.

¹⁵ *Luke* 3:17.

¹⁶ *Matthew* 3:10.

¹⁷ *Revelation* 19:15.

¹⁸ *Isaiah* 25:10.

¹⁹ *Isaiah* 28:3.

straw, whereto allusion is made by the prophet Micah,²⁰ in a passage which is exactly parallel with this before us.

In the passage before us, Christ has feet of brass, as being about to promise unto His people power over the nations to tread them down, and break them in pieces; so, in the corresponding passage of *Micah*, it is promised unto the Jews in these words, which are in the letter what this epistle to Thyatira is in the spirit:

Micah 4

¹¹ Now also many nations are gathered against you, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion.

¹² But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel: for He shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor.

¹³ Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hoofs brass, and you shall beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.

Strength of materials to do the work of treading down seems to be the thing conveyed by the symbol “feet of brass.” Job, in his sore agony, questions thus:

Job 6

¹² Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh the flesh of brass?

Here, in the passage before us, the flesh of Christ’s feet is the flesh of brass; and so shall the flesh of His Church be, in that the day of her triumphant labors. Again Job, describing leviathan, that king over all the children of pride, says:

Job 40

¹⁸ His bones are as strong pieces of brass...

Job 41

²⁷ He esteems iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.

And shall not Christ and His Church, whose work it is punish that leviathan, and to slay him, and to tread him down, have feet as strong and hardy as the brass?

²⁰ *Micah* 4:13.

Thus then, to conclude this first part of our epistle, the style adopted by the universal Bishop to the Church of Thyatira, we observe upon the whole, that it seems intended to convey the idea of supreme power, putting itself forth in the work of judging and executing judgment, to the intent of inviting and exhorting His people to the same holy severity and powerful destruction of iniquity within them, and before them, and around them; to the intent also of dismay to the workers of iniquity upon the earth, and especially the promoters of iniquity in His Church.

In the Church of Thyatira, things had come to a worse pass than they were in the Church of Pergamos; for here the woman Jezebel, a name dreadful to God's Church, had obtained authority, and carried on her seductions of a long time. She had received both warning to repent and space for repentance, but had not repented; whereas the seducers in Pergamos were only in the stage of being called upon to repent.

To this prior stage of apostasy, the sword of discipline, the pruning hook, is appropriate; to that latter stage the eyes of flaming fire to consume, the feet of irresistible brass to tread down. For the reason therefore of indicating by His appearance what was in His mind towards that Church far gone into apostasy, the great Shepherd clothes himself in this terrific array, and announces himself with this omnipotent name.

And because in every Church there may be, and commonly are, individuals come to this same pass of backsliding from the way of righteousness, it is most necessary that the Head of the Church be oftentimes, yea continually, presented to them in this attire.

Nay, more, because I believe that the flesh is the parent of all seduction and apostasy; which flesh we carry about with us, ready to revive in proportion as our faith decays; I hold it to be most necessary for every Christian to have these flesh-consuming attributes of Christ, the eyes of fire, and the feet of brass, ever present to his mind, as an essential, constituent part of his idea of the great Shepherd and Bishop of his soul.

And finally, because our great Ensample and Forerunner, when minded to come forth as the great servant and workman of the Father, in the putting down of iniquity, does present himself in the high character of God's Son, with eyes flaming forth against evildoers, and feet omnipotent to tread them down to hell, we who all the day are called to labor in the same vocation, we who are called for no other end but to serve God, in making sin to cease and righteousness to prevail, ought ever to bear in mind and announce ourselves by our high and heavenly name of "sons of God," and in that character go forth to search out iniquity both in ourselves and others, with a strong hand to war against it, and with a heavy foot to oppress it to the earth.



Separating the Wheat and Chaff (Matthew 3:12)

II. THYATIRA AND JEZEBEL

IN OUR last lecture we opened an opinion more recently, and indeed during the progress of writing out these lectures, come to, That the seven epistles, besides containing a universal and catholic code of instruction and promise from the chief Shepherd to every congregation, and to every member of His Church, in all times, and places, and conditions, until He come again, do also contain a prophetic anticipation of the seven successive states into which His Church should be brought for the purpose of contending against the sevenfold forms of temptation with which she should be assailed of the devil.

The first or Ephesian state is that of pastoral love and watchfulness, triumphing over decline of zeal, decay of love, and the natural temptation to cool in every spiritual work through the manifold allurements of the devil, the world, and the flesh.

This had its period from the constitution of the Church by the Holy Ghost at the day of Pentecost, until the time when a second trial arose to rouse the Church from her lethargy. This was the temptation of outward violence and persecution to the death, conquered and prevailed over by faith in Christ the resurrection and the life, and by the hope of deliverance from the second death.

When this had exhausted itself by two centuries of persecution, there arose a third form of temptation from compromising teachers who sought to accommodate the separateness of the Christian Church to the laxity and latitude of Pagan worship; of which evil the miserable fruits to this day subsist in those relics of Pagan and Jewish worship which form the mainstay and chief characteristic of Papal superstition. It is the season during which the prophets, or ministers of the word, intrigue with the kings of the earth, in order to bring the Church into base thralldom to their evil influence, through forgetfulness of her heavenly King.

Next comes the season in which she sits as their base concubine, the panderess to their ambition and tyranny, their adulteress spouse; having forsaken Christ to whom she was betrothed, from whom she had received the pledge of the Holy Ghost, in earnest of that kingdom in which she is to be glorified, his queen forever against the day of His appearing.

The chaste and beautiful spouse of Christ bringing forth the firstfruits of their mutual love, is exhibited to us in the 12th chapter of this book; at the conclusion of which she takes her flight into the wilderness, to escape the persecution of the beast; where she abides during forty-and-two months, nourished of God. During this time her seduction has been accomplished; for at the end of that period she comes forth in the 17th chapter riding upon the beast which had fed upon the blood of her children. And she herself also is drunk with the blood of saints; with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

This transfiguration of the Church from the beautiful woman of chapter 12, into the mother of harlots of chapter 17, which takes place during the 1260 days' abode in the wilderness, is, according to my notion of the historical succession of the seven churches, the same as the transition from the state of the Church of Smyrna to the state of the Church of Thyatira.

The intervening Church of Pergamos presents the wretched accommodations and evil intermixtures through which this sad transaction was accomplished. The one is, the prophet, or minister of the word, pandering to the State, Balaam to Balak, in order to bring the Church into fornication and harlotry; the other is, the Church thus brought into the state of a harlot, and exercising her evil practices, like Jezebel, to destroy all the true prophets of God, and to promote the prophets of Baal.

And both together teach this sad but true lesson, that if the ministers of the word, through facility and courtesy, will indulge themselves, and make their suit to the powers that be, it will at length be returned upon their own head; for in process of time the Church, taking into her bosom worthless and worldly per-

sons, will come to be intolerant of any prophet who, like Elijah, dares to speak the truth, and will enact the part of Jezebel against him.

Pergamos is the state of the Church seduced by her ministers into the embrace of the world; Thyatira is the state of the Church devoted to the kings of the earth, and using their power to slay and to extirpate all faithful ministers, who would remind her of her affianced Christ, and them of their subjection to Him. They mutually confederate against the Lord and His Anointed, to break asunder their bands, and cast away their cords from them.

While, therefore, the 13th chapter presents, as we showed in our last lecture, the parallel of the Church of Pergamos, the 17th presents the parallel of the Church of Thyatira: here they are represented in spiritual forms, there in ecclesiastical and political forms: here it is their relation to Christ the invisible Head of the Church, which is in question; there it is the relation of Church and State to one another and to Christ the Head of kingdoms, which is in question.

But still though in their structure diverse from one another, there are such points of resemblance and hints of parallelism as cannot escape an observant mind, and struck my own long before I had adopted the idea of an historical succession as well as a catholic instruction to be present in the vision of the seven churches.

We have already shown the points of correspondence between the Church of Pergamos and the vision of the 13th chapter,²¹ and we shall now do the same in respect to the Church of Thyatira and the vision of the 17th chapter.

The woman Jezebel, whose action in the bosom of the Church of Thyatira forms the chief part of the epistle, carries, as we have already treated, an allusion to that daughter of the Sidonian king who was married to Ahab, king of Israel, and brought with her

²¹ See *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Book 6 “Epistle to the Church in Pergamos,” Chapter: “Christ’s Third Designation,” Section: “Antipas, the Faithful Martyr.”

the idolatries of her father's house, and particularly the worship of Astarte or Astaroth, or the moon; whose licentiousness was so great as to have induced the fathers of the Church, when treating of it, to be silent rather than to speak fully out.

Solomon, seduced by his Sidonian queen, was the first to introduce it among the people of the Lord; but Jezebel established it, as well as the worship of Baal, and conceived the evil and vain thought of utterly rooting out the worship of the true God from among the ten tribes of Israel. And to such an extent did she succeed, as that Elijah thought that he was the only one left witnessing for God in the whole land. Nevertheless, God had seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal.²²

During those days it was that Elijah stood up, and prophesied that there should be neither dew nor rain in all the land for three years and a half; which being accomplished, and being about to prophesy of floods of water unto the thirsty land, he must first make a sacrifice, and offer up a hecatomb of the priests of Baal unto Jehovah.

This was done at the foot of Carmel in the sight of all Israel: whereupon the prophet, after seven sendings of Gehazi, his servant, received from God, first a cloud as a man's hand, then a very deluge of rain upon the thirsty ground. To this event, or rather series of events, there be many allusions in the Apocalypse.

The three years and a half is the time of the prophecy of the two witnesses, who have power²³ to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy. Likewise of the mother of harlots, it is said that she was drunk with the blood of the saints. And of Jezebel it is written,²⁴ that she slew the prophets of the Lord.

But perhaps the most striking point of identification between the mother of harlots and Jezebel, is the notice of her end:

²² *1 Kings* 19:18.

²³ *Revelation* 11:6.

²⁴ *1 Kings* 18:4.

Revelation 17

¹⁶ And the ten horns which you saw upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

The remarkable circumstance of “eating her flesh” is derived from the history of Jezebel, of whom it was prophesied by Elijah,

1 Kings 21

²³ ...dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.

Even as it was fulfilled by the hand of Jehu.²⁵ And, in general, of Ahab’s terrible idolatry, to which he was tempted of Jezebel, it is written:

1 Kings 21

²⁵ There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.

Take all these things together, and I think there can be no doubt that in the three years and a half of Elijah’s prophecy against the wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel, and in the manner and plan of them, and there is a typical foreshowing of the great apostasy into which the ten kingdoms of the Western Roman Empire should fall under the beast and the false prophet.

Indeed, it is to my own mind beyond a doubt that the latter is represented under the figure of the mother of harlots, for this reason, among others, of pointing our attention to the great historical type of Ahab and Jezebel, and Elijah the prophet.

Having said this in general upon the temptation to which the Church of Thyatira was exposed, and of the condition in which it was found, we now proceed to interpret the message delivered to the angel, as it lies in the order of the text.

²⁵ 2 Kings 9.

III. THE COMMENDATION

Revelation 2

¹⁹ I know your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and your patience, and your works: and the last to be more than the first.

HERE is a large and plentiful commendation; of which one of the most remarkable circumstances is, that the “works” are mentioned twice over, and that with a particular note drawing our attention to it,

¹⁹ ...and the last [works] to be more than the first.

By which I understand that, having been called in the providence of God for a fresh putting forth of zeal and energy, this faithful servant had not been slack to put to his hand, but had shown himself abundant in labors, and yet notwithstanding this readiness to good works, he had permitted his Church to fall into sad disorder, through want of discipline; teaching us, that a laborious life is not the whole of a minister’s function. And besides works, and over again works, he has charity and service, or deaconship, or ministry for the good of the whole, and faith also, and likewise patience.

And yet, with all these ornaments and gifts, because he lacked holiness to separate between the evil and the good, and dignity to prevent his office from being trampled under foot, his Church has come into a condition almost ripe for destruction. He had suffered a woman to divide his authority with him, and by her immodest carriage, and unholy doctrines, to bring many into sore calamities, into the very region of the shadow of death.

WORKS

Revelation 2

¹⁹ I know your works.

Concerning the works and patience of a minister, we have already discoursed in the Epistle to the Church of Ephesus²⁶, and shall not add anything more than is necessary for the complete representation of the angel of Thyatira.

The apostle, in writing to Timothy, entreats him to prove himself a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.²⁷ A working minister is one who is ever in his work; who is always turning himself to one duty or another, and never idle; full of business, never out of occupation. It is the quality very much cried up in these times, when every man is loud in his call for a working clergy.

I suppose the angel of Thyatira to have been a man guided with a strong sense of duty to all professional tasks, and, so long as he saw others busy, not very concerned what they were busied about. Otherwise he would have taken a nearer observation and a narrower survey of that woman who vexed his Church. But perceiving her also to be full of business, he was content to let her go on, without any strict scrutiny as to what she was about.

How like this is to the condition of many who are called the evangelical clergy of those days, who being come to a parish straightway are all in bustle to set on foot this work and that work, this society and that society, to appoint committees, and secretaries, and treasurers, and Sabbath schools, and clothing societies, and other works and labors of love; without any very close inquiry into the faith or opinions, or even characters, of those whom they engage in the work of well-doing.

And the whole parish is like a religious workshop. To speak of opening afresh some of the wells of doctrine, or actually to do it, is idle and unprofitable speculation; to speak of reconstituting discipline is worse than troublesome. If it can be done by a society, it is all well: anything which can take the form of an outward work is excellent; what cannot, is at best suspicious.

²⁶ See *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Book 4 “Epistle to the Church in Ephesus,” Chapter “His First Charge,” Section: “Bearing and Laboring with Patience.”

²⁷ 2 Timothy 2:15.

These are the works which I suppose the Lord to commend in the angel of the Church of Thyatira; such as are now the boast of the religious world, commendable in their place and good in their way, yet capable of co-existing in great and growing plenty along with a state of the Church so corrupt as to be ripe for destruction.

LOVE

Revelation 2

¹⁹ I know your...love.

After his works he is commended for his charity, or love, the greatest of the Christian graces; as it is written:

1 Corinthians 13

¹³ Now abides faith, hope, charity; these three; but the greatest of them is charity.

And without which no gift is of any account in the sight of God; wherefore it is called a more excellent way than the gifts of the Holy Ghost:

1 Corinthians 12

³¹ Covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet show I unto you a more excellent way.

Charity, in its largest sense of love, is there signified in contradistinction from those “gifts of the Holy Ghost, and powers of the world to come,”²⁸ which might be possessed without departure from iniquity; for many whom Christ never knew shall declare in the day of judgment that they prophesied in His name, and in His name cast out devils, and in His name did many wonderful works. These various gifts of...

1 Corinthians 12

⁸ ...the word of wisdom,...the word of knowledge,...

⁹ ...faith,...healing,

¹⁰ ...miracles,...diversities of tongues,...and interpretation of tongues,

–come upon the members of the Church to give them their several places of membership in the body of Christ: but charity, or

²⁸ *Hebrews* 6:4-5.

love, is union with Christ, union with all the members, and union with God himself; as it is written:

1 John 4

¹⁶ He that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him.

In this largest sense, love is called the fulfilling of the law, without which no work is good, with which every work is good: it is made the root of all graces of the Christian life in that account which Paul gives of it:

1 Corinthians 13

⁴ Charity suffers long, and is kind; charity envies not; charity vaunts not itself, is not puffed up,

⁵ Does not behave itself unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil;

⁶ Rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;

⁷ Bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Charity never fails.

In this delineation of charity, the form and fashion of the mind and Spirit of Christ, as it bears upon others, is set forth by these characteristics:

⁴ Charity suffers long.

Long-suffering, the opposite of hastiness and headiness, a disposition of mind the most needful in a judge or ruler, in a teacher or pastor, and in every Christian who is set for the witness of truth against abounding error, and through much tribulation must enter the kingdom.

1 Corinthians 13

⁴ Charity...is kind.

Kindness, accompanying the long-suffering, and employing itself all the while to prevent the evil from arising to a greater head, and to undo what is past by converting the evil-doer from the error of his ways. And these two qualities of love not only heal breaches, but prevent discords and confer enjoyment, and are the atmosphere which a loving heart exhales on all around.

1 Corinthians 13

⁴ Charity...envies not.

It envies not, or, more accurately, is no zealot, but preserves the golden mean; is temperate in all things, and makes its moderation to be apparent in the sight of all men. This is parallel with a feature of...

James 3

¹⁷ The wisdom from above,...without partiality, and without hypocrisy;

–for zealotry always arises from some mental reservation or partial dealing with the cause of truth; exaggeration of one part to the neglect of another: which even-handed and honest-hearted charity prevents.

⁴ Charity...vaunts not itself.

It vaunts not itself, or is not rash. The root of zealotry is mingling ourselves or our party up with the cause of truth; and the consequence of it is boastfulness and lordliness and insolence and hard-heartedness towards others, which again engenders tumults, both in the mind itself and in the Church without. Unbridled zeal is partisanship in the mind, and produces partisanship in the conduct, which leads on to tumultuousness. Against this it is the good property of charity to defend us: for charity, or love, is full of condescensions, and never thinks of itself more highly than it ought to think, but thinks soberly.

⁴ Charity...is not puffed up.

And thus also does it prevent a man from being puffed up, which is the fifth quality of this excellent grace.

⁵ Charity...does not behave itself unseemly.

This refers to a modest carriage, chaste manners, and purity both of mind and of word; true love being of all things most opposed to sensual lust, which is continually covering itself with the pure raiment and calling itself by the holy name of love. But of all the excellent attributes of love, the next is, perhaps, the most radical and comprehensive:

1 Corinthians 13

⁵ ...it seeks not her own,

–but has the good of others in her eye; and attains her own ends by the means of well-doing, being content to become the office-bearer of the commonweal.

⁵ Charity...is not easily provoked.

Then she is not sharp to see faults, or, upon the sight of them, prone to fall into a paroxysm of wrath, but bears all things or covers and hides all things, as God covers our sins by His grace, nor imputes the transgression.

Which is also one of the features of love, that she...

⁵ ...thinks no evil;

–or rather, imputes not the evil, though well she observes it: for nothing is so holy as love, in which he that dwells dwells in the most holy God.

⁶ Charity...rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.

And yet, though thus she is ready to forgive all evil, it is not that she has any joy or enjoyment in evil; for all her joy is in the truth, and in that only; but that being filled with grace, she is open to forgive, not seven times only, but seventy times seven.

Then, as to faith and hope and endurance, love is the only soil in which they are capable of coming to full maturity and complete perfection; wherefore it is said,

⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.

⁸ Charity never fails.

And finally that it is not of the nature of knowledge and prophecy, and the like gifts, which have their form and condition according to the present circumstances of the Church, and will assume new forms in the world to come; but is of an unchanging and perpetual character, never failing, but constituting, both in God and godly men, the essence of their being, and not a mere attribute of it. Love puts itself forth in these many forms, in the

midst of this present evil world; but in the holy and heavenly world to come, these forms of long-suffering and forgiveness shall not be called into action, and so have they all a certain transitoriness compared with love.

I have chosen to take this grand description and noble panegyric of love from the Apostle Paul, rather than to attempt any of my own; and when I look at it in its largeness, I cannot sufficiently admire the perfection and beauty of it, nor enough covet it as the most necessary endowment of a Christian minister, who is exposed at all hands to temptation, both from within the Church, and from without.

It is the subjugation of the turbulent passions of the flesh; it is the submission of the proud imaginations of the mind; it is the repression of all the divisive and selfish humors of the natural man, and the practice of that meekness and gentleness, poverty of spirit and peace-making, which are the standing features of the true Christian character.

It is no small commendation, therefore, of the angel of the Church of Thyatira, that the chief Shepherd, when looking with His eyes of fire, should say,

Revelation 2

¹⁹ I know your...love.

Would that there were some drops of it scattered from above over this arid soil of the courts in which the clergy of our churches assemble.

Oh that each brought with him this gentle and forbearing spirit! How soon would their rage and schism vanish, their errors and heresies come to an end! Lying open to light and truth, they would soon grow into the knowledge of the secret of the Lord; the withered stump would by the scent of waters revive, and put forth boughs like a plant.

Ah me! what a fearful thing it is to reflect upon the absence of love in the assemblies of the elders, where it should have its chosen habitation! What can the Christian people think, when they

see the Christian ministers stirred up with such paroxysms, and discharging against each other such envenomed words, like sharp arrows and two-edged swords?

SERVICE

The next ground of commendation is His service:

Revelation 2

¹⁹ I know your...service.

When the word occurs in Scripture in this absolute form, it almost always signifies what we understand by the word ministry; for example:

2 Timothy 4

⁵ Make full proof of your ministry.

1 Timothy 1

¹² He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.

Ephesians 4

¹² For the work of the ministry.

Now if we would find out what particular part of the pastor's or bishop's or angel's function was signified by the word ministry, we must betake ourselves to the examination of one or two passages of Scripture. That it is a spiritual function, connected with the preaching of the word, is evident from that saying of Paul's:

Acts 20

²⁴ But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Here the ministry and testifying the gospel of the grace of God are one and the same thing. In *Acts* 6:4, it is called "the ministry of the word;" in *2 Corinthians* 3:8, "the ministry of the Spirit;" and in the next verse, "the ministry of righteousness;" and in chapter 5:18, "the ministry of reconciliation." In all these cases, and others of the like kind, it seems to me that the word or truth of the gospel is the thing ministered, and that the ministry of it is the

servicing of it out to others, as the stewards of the household serve out the bread to the family.

In the Church of Scotland, as it is constituted in its *Books of Discipline*, there ought to be a minister and a doctor or teacher; the former for applying and dealing out the truth to the people in its profitable and practical forms, the latter for teaching its elements, whose office is to open up the mind of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures simply, without such applications as the ministers use. The doctor's is the word of knowledge; the pastor's is the word of wisdom.

In the Primitive Church there were a greater variety of ministries, diversities of ministries,²⁹ corresponding to the diversities of gifts,³⁰ which, taken together, constituted the "manifestation of the Spirit,"³¹ and were the proof of an inworking God.³² Of these ministries and gifts, there are only two which concern the word:

1 Corinthians 12

⁸ To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

But when the apostle, in the same chapter, comes to enumerate the diversities of appointments which the Spirit gave in the Church, by giving divers gifts, to be ministered by divers persons for the common weal, he enumerates them thus:

²⁸ And God has set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

And in the corresponding passage in the 11th chapter of *Romans*, we find the diversities of gifts in the one body of Christ thus expressed:

²⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:5.

³⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:4.

³¹ 1 Corinthians 12:7.

³² 1 Corinthians 12:6.

Romans 12

⁶ Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

⁷ Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teaches, on teaching;

⁸ Or he that exhorts, on exhortation; he that gives, let him do it with simplicity; he that rules, with diligence; he that shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Here the ministry is separated from prophecy on the one hand, and teaching on the other, from exhortation also, and from rule or government. And so also in the *Epistle to the Ephesians*,³³ we have the gift of the Holy Ghost, sent down from Christ after He ascended up on high, constituting some apostles, others prophets, others evangelists, others pastors, and others teachers; whom He distributed, says He...

Ephesians 4

¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

I confess myself totally unable to discover any reason for which certain of these gifts and ministries are now spoken of as extraordinary, intended only for an emergency, and forever ceased. I do not believe this, and long ago I publicly expressed my conviction that it was erroneous. If they be restored, I will greatly rejoice; that they are not with us, I greatly grieve and lament.

Well am I assured, that they are every baptized person's privilege, as much as the forgiveness of sins. For when Peter first preached Christian baptism, it was...

Acts 2

³⁸ ...for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

And what he means by the gift of the Holy Ghost he distinctly declares to be that promise of *Joel*, which Christ had received,³⁴

³³ *Ephesians* 4:11.

³⁴ *Acts* 2:33.

and which they now saw and heard in them;³⁵ adding these words:

Acts 2

³⁹ For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call.

This is the promise of Joel, in his very words.

³⁹ You, and your children,

–is the substance of *Joel 2:28*.³⁶

³⁹ ...as many as the Lord our God shall call,

–is the substance of verse 32,³⁷ which in the Septuagint, commonly quoted by our Lord, is:

“...the evangelized whom the Lord shall call.”

The word “afar off,” added by the apostle, if we may judge by the corresponding language of Paul,³⁸ denotes the Gentiles, upon whom, in the case of Cornelius and his company, without the intervention of any person, the gifts were poured out, with what freedom they were upon the disciples at Pentecost.

Now, if the promise of the Holy Ghost, as foreshown by *Joel*, and shown on Pentecost, were not as much connected with baptism as the remission of sins itself, why would the apostle have held it out to all to whom he preached? Why would the Lord have given it to Cornelius, in connection with baptism? And if so be the baptized are as responsible for their possession and use, as for the possession and use of the remission of sins, what have we to answer unto God for the lack of them? I fear it will be but a sorry apology to say:

³⁵ Verse 16.

³⁶ **Joel 2** ²⁸ And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

³⁷ **Joel 2** ³² And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.

³⁸ *Ephesians 2:17*.

“They taught us in the schools of the Church, that these Pentecostal gifts were only for a season, and that it were blasphemy in us to expect them.”

Who taught you? Doctors, very learned doctors. And what are they? God, or man? They are but men. Then you are not taught by the word of God, but by the precepts of men.³⁹ You make void His word by your traditions.⁴⁰ And this indignity do you offer as your apology? But to return.

The gift which the angel of the Church possessed, he had faithfully ministered. The Lord knew his ministry, and had no fault to find with him on this head. He had not neglected the gift which was in him; but according as he had received it, he had ministered it as a good steward of the manifold grace of God.

These various gifts were given to every one for the common benefit, and not for partial enjoyment, or personal distinction, or vain glory. The Corinthian Church, instead of thus using them as a trust of God for the well-being of the whole body, had turned them to the service of their own selfish vanity, and used them in the Church as the subject of boasting, the one over the other. Not so the minister of the Church of Thyatira, who had well occupied his talent, and made merchandise of souls with it; using it for the perfecting of the saints, and the edification of the body of Christ.

Here also, in looking upon the present state of the Church, I see many and grievous things to lament. The ministers are content to use their gifts one day only in seven, and then as little as possible: the weekday services of the churches in our parishes, and in most of our towns, are almost all gone down. I have heard of the ministers of a town conspiring to do away with them.

The ministrations with which the meetings of Presbyteries were wont to be begun, are almost or altogether suspended. Domestic ministrations, from house to house, are for the most part discountenanced. The good old custom of requiring a minister, as he passed through your parish, to give a word of instruction to the

³⁹ *Matthew 15:9, Mark 7:7.*

⁴⁰ *Mark 7:13.*

people is entirely lost. Like everything else, the work of the ministry is fallen into a mere shred.

And if any one steps forth to the multitude, and, Culdee-like, begins to break unto them the bread of life in markets, villages, and on market-days, straightway your sober-minded ministers rail at him as bringing the ministry into disgrace, and your zealous and religious magistrate counts it very dutiful to interdict him from prosecuting such a suspicious calling within the bounds of his jurisdiction.

Ah, me! poor souls of the people, wander on and be lost! It is no more a Christian minister's duty to lift up his voice, and call aloud to you in the gates and corners of the streets. Ah, me! Christ's ministers think the people well off if they get a service once in the week; and when the tithe of the population which comes to receive it have been served, the rest, all the rest, may with a clear conscience be left to perish, unpitied, unsought, uncared for.

Is this the meaning of being appointed by the Church, and by the State, the minister of such and such a bounds? Surely no. Is this the reason why every other minister is prevented opening his mouth therein without your consent? that you only may have the privilege of starving them? that no one may interfere between you and their destruction?

O God, I intercede for my order in the Church. Lay it not to our charge. Remember it not against us. Grant us repentance unto the acknowledgment, and faithfulness unto the declaration of your truth; over which you have constituted us the stewards.

FAITH

Revelation 2

¹⁹ I know your...faith.

The faith which leads unto Christ is a work of the Father, without whom no one can know the Son, or ever come unto Him. To the Father, as the fountainhead of power and of knowledge, the Son himself, as Son of man, continually referred back in the days

of His flesh; and to Him still refers all whom He calls to the imitation of His faith, and the following of His footsteps.

The gospel of Christ is the preaching of the Father, as having sent His Son to seek and to save that which was lost. The very name Father, with which our Christian prayers commence, implies that God has been gracious to mankind, in receiving the representative of them all into the condition of the Son; in which, though in the Divine essence He was from everlasting, He was in the Spirit only from His generation, and in the flesh also only from the resurrection.

The gospel therefore, in teaching us to call God Father, teaches us that for man the highest and most honorable place of being sons of God is fully purchased, and is freely proclaimed throughout this world to every creature under heaven. Preaching, therefore, directs faith to the Father-God, whom Christ preaches away from every other god; and therefore whatever fruits of faith appear must unequivocally be given to that Father from whom Christ in the days of His flesh received all strength and sustenance.

The Father of Jesus Christ being received as our God and Father, does straightway direct us to His only-begotten and first-begotten from the dead, as the source of life and light in this dark and mortal estate as our deliverer from sin, and the author of an everlasting righteousness, and complete salvation to all who believe.

This work the Father performs by the Holy Ghost, who takes the things of Christ, and shows them to our souls, but still it is only outward teaching of the Spirit, such as all the fathers under the law possessed; the very same in kind, though different in degree:

- God taught them by the words of the Prophets, foreshowing, and by the services of the Law, prefiguring Him who was to come for our salvation;

- God teaches us by the words of Christ and His apostles, and the services of the Church, referring back to the work which Christ has done for our salvation.

Still, however, it is but an outward act, done by presenting to our minds the work of the Lord Jesus Christ; the doer of it is the Holy Ghost; and the originator of it is the Father; and the means by which it is done is the work of Christ. This now is the first kind of faith which was common to a Jew and a Christian, and which requires no work of regeneration, no translation out of the state of the natural into the state of the spiritual man; and, moreover, it is the only work of faith which is dreamed of in our modern theology; which I am bold enough to pronounce a mere rag of the garment from which it has been torn away.

The second work of God is the work of regeneration; and to this the former is only preparatory. The whole Jewish dispensation is only preparatory to the Christian; the natural to the spiritual; and has still its place in the progress of a sinner's salvation. All that precedes regeneration is as old as Abraham, and since his day has undergone no change in the method or principle of it, but only an enlargement and clearing up of the subject.

But regeneration is the passing out of the natural into the spiritual. We do in the laver of baptism drown and bury the natural man, and receive a new spiritual subsistence, holding directly of the risen Christ, the quickening Spirit. And now we become one substance with Christ in Spirit; as at the resurrection we shall become one substance with Him in body also.

In this present life, the Spirit of Christ which is the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, is in us of a very truth, as truly as He was in Christ during the days of His flesh: who was not more truly Son of God by the Spirit, than we are now sons of God by the same Spirit. God, thus dwelling in us in the person of the Holy Ghost, works oneness, perfect oneness with Christ in the Spirit: and this is the feeding faith, the appropriating faith, the faith which participates of His substance, which eats His flesh and drinks His blood.

The worker of this uniting faith is also the Holy Ghost, who is ever that person of the Trinity who touches the creature, and has to do with him in the way of giving life of regeneration, and resurrection into life. But for this effect he proceeded from Christ; into whose hands the Holy Ghost has been given for the procreation of this spiritual seed; and from whom, when we believe, we receive power to become the sons of God; and are sealed with the Holy Ghost, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.⁴¹

Historically, therefore, until the resurrection of Christ, the Holy Ghost is exhibited as proceeding from the Father upon His creatures, to take Christ and show Him as their hope, and bring them into His faith. Since the resurrection He is exhibited as proceeding from Christ to work a new creature, or the regeneration of the natural man, into a new subsistence; and thus the great doctrine of the Creed, “that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son,” receives a manifestation in both its parts.

But the historical view of any truth is always a broken and incomplete one, and only the means of arriving at the spiritual view which is altogether independent of place and time. The spiritual form of the truth is, that every believer is continually delivered by the Father unto Jesus, and, being received from the Father by Jesus, is fitted of Him for the prerogative of the Son of God, and for the office of one of the Father’s kings and priests. And the Holy Ghost which works this preparation comes from the Father and the Son; from the Father to incline our hearts to Jesus, from the Son to prepare and provide us for the service of the Father.

The Head of the natural man, of man as he was created, is not manifest, is therefore God the Father. The Head of the spiritual man, of man as he is regenerated, is manifest, is Christ, God manifest in the flesh. One who is brought into the spiritual state by regeneration, has a double subsistence; the one the natural, the other the spiritual: with the former of which the Father has ever

⁴¹ *Ephesians* 1:14.

to do; with the latter of which Christ has ever to do, as their several heads.

The work of the Father, with His natural creature, is to put him to death for Adam's sin: the work of the Son, with His spiritual creature, is to quicken him to life for Christ's righteousness. But these are not two creatures, but one creature, having one will, on which, as being the spiritual part of a man, the Holy Ghost operates.

His operation, therefore, is felt double; one from the Father, to mortify the natural man, by making him willing to sacrifice his wisdom and his prudence, in order to lay hold on the regeneration and nursing of Christ; the other, from Christ, to give him that quickening and milk of life which the Father has made him willing to desire, and so the Holy Ghost dwelling in us becomes the indwelling of the Father and the Son, the witness of the Father and the Son, the fellowship of the Father and the Son.

Enough, and more than enough, has been said for a topic of a very large and complex lecture; and yet far less than enough has been said for the unfolding of the subject: but it must stand as it is, with the risk of being by some considered as tedious, by others as mystical: but no one can deny that it is most important to clear that great point of the orthodox creed, that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son in His working of faith in the soul of man.

For that faith the angel of the Church of Thyatira is commended: his faith was true and unfeigned; he had root in Christ, and was in a condition to bear fruit. He was built upon the foundation, a living stone of the spiritual temple. He was feeding on the body and blood of Jesus. He was continually willing to put down, and keep down, the natural endowments of his mind, out of an entire conviction of their unprofitableness in themselves; and being better taught by the Father, every faculty came near to Jesus of its own will, and couching low at His feet, yea, crucifying itself on His cross, receives from Him a new life, which grows up

from babyhood, after the image of the risen Christ, in righteousness and true holiness, in power and joy and glory.

So much is included in general, under the acknowledgment of a man's having faith; but if I err not, there is something more specific than this signified. Among the divers gifts of the Holy Ghost mentioned by the apostle, one is entitled faith:

1 Corinthians 12

⁹ To another faith by the same Spirit.

And in the commendation of charity, the existence of faith to a very great extent is supposed without charity:

1 Corinthians 13

² And though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

This carries us almost by a direct reference to the famous rebuke which our Lord administered to His disciples upon His descent from the mount of transfiguration:

Matthew 17

²⁰ Verily, I say unto you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Nor was this word confined to those persons who heard Him, or to the apostolical times, or to any age of the Church; for thus it is pronounced by our Lord in the largest language possible:

John 14

¹² Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

And when He went to His Father He poured down the gifts of the Holy Ghost with which they did greater works than He had ever done; such as speaking with tongues, and other things proper to their larger commission as ministers of the word: whereas He was only a minister of the circumcision, or sent unto the lost sheep of Israel.

Now the faith which is here spoken of and commended in the angel of the Church of Thyatira, is, I take it, not only that saving faith which is the gift of God, and without which there cannot be any union to Christ or participation of His benefits; but also that special gift which fitted a minister for the faithful discharge of his ministry, a continual dependence upon God for the regular supply of that which he was to serve out unto the flock, a continual trust in God to defend him from all the enemies of the truth round about, a continual looking unto Jesus the Head for the nourishment of all the members of the body:

- faith for the gift of wisdom and of knowledge which he was called upon to minister,
- faith for the words in which he should utter it,
- faith for strength in the midst of trials,
- faith for the whole flock, that each might receive the supply of the Spirit for ministering to the body that office to which he was called.

For herein Christ does constitute the angel representative of the whole Church, in that with the strength or decline of his graces, the graces of the Church do all strengthen or decline. Without such a mutual sympathy and dependence, the relationship would be merely nominal and not real, for serving an expediency, not for manifesting a verity.

And because the Church lives by her faith, and is delivered out of all extremities by no present or visible help, but by the faith of an invisible Lord, it becomes a very important part of a minister's qualification that he should be filled with faith; to set the example, and give courage to his Church; to go before the flock and boldly face all the wolves and robbers who would scatter and destroy them.

Faith, therefore, as a fruit of the Spirit, as well as that faith which is unto the knowledge of Christ and of the Spirit, I conceive to be here signified in our Lord's commendation,

Revelation 2

¹⁹ I know your...faith.

PATIENCE

Revelation 2

¹⁹ I know your...patience.

Of this grace we have, already discoursed in the lecture upon the Ephesian Church,⁴² and have the less need to enlarge upon it in this place. In a very remarkable manner is patience connected in the Scriptures with perfection; as by the Apostle James in these words:

James 1

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations;

³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience.

⁴ But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

And this which is asserted of others is likewise asserted of the Lord in these words:

Hebrews 2

¹⁰ It became Him...to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Hebrews 5

⁸ Though He were a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered;

⁹ And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.

The Apostle Paul, in like manner, connects his desire of participation in Christ's sufferings and conformity to His death with perfection.⁴³ And it is also worthy of observation, that our apostle calls the present kingdom of Christ in the Spirit,

Revelation 1

⁹ ...the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

⁴² See *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Book 4 "Epistle to the Church in Ephesus," Chapter: "His First Charge," Section: "Bearing and Laboring with Patience."

⁴³ *Philippians* 3:7-16.

And the chief Shepherd not only notices this virtue three times over in these epistles; but gives by far the greatest promise to the angel of the Church of Philadelphia:

Revelation 3

¹⁰ Because you have kept the word of my patience.

What then is there so precious and profitable in the grace of patience? It puts all the other graces to the proof, gives them time to ripen into maturity, and affords us the means of ascertaining in what points they are defective. Like the storm which tails upon the new-built ship, it shows the strength and weakness of the several parts, and enables the shipbuilder to bring his work to perfection.

The perfection of a Christian, like the perfection of Christ is, in all things, in the agony and on the cross, to do not His own will but the will of God. All trials are so many temptations of evil, to raise discontent and murmuring, or to make us swerve from the law of our God; and the patient endurance of them is the proof of our steadfastness and immovableness, and never fails to bring from God a rich supply of His own holiness. How beautiful is that saying of Paul's:

Hebrews 12

¹⁰ [God chastises us] for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.

Oh that I could teach to my fellow-sufferers and companions in tribulation what I continually seek to learn; that, ever after God has named His name upon us, He has His honor at stake, that we should not fall before Satan. His name, so precious to himself, is in us; and surely He will not fail to support the honor of His own name. Of this truth let our faith take hold, and conquer all assaults of the enemy whatsoever, by the mighty power of God which is in us. If we fail, He has not denied himself, but we have doubted and disbelieved Him. Every victory is a victory to Him. How beautiful is that saying of Peter's:

1 Peter 1

⁷ That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

The baptized man is the arena or field on which Christ offers battle to the devil, the world, and the flesh. The time of sore trial is the stress of battle, and to win through it is to glorify God, and bear hardship like a good soldier of Jesus Christ. It is a most precious point of character, whether in a man or a Christian, to be able to look upon what is unpleasant, and face what is painful! There is no perfection nor stability without it.

A man who habitually shuns what is disagreeable, becomes timorous as a child; whereas, on the other hand, he who endures patiently the evil, becomes stout and hardy, and fit for any service on which the Captain of his salvation may employ him.

Now that which enables the soul to bear its courage up under the sore fight of afflictions which it has to encounter is:

1. The assurance of victory, through the indwelling mighty power of God; and,
2. The assurance of speedy relief by the coming of the Lord. This is James' consolation and encouragement to the brethren:

James 5

⁷ Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord...

⁸ Be also patient, establish your heart, for the coming of the Lord draws nigh.

3. And with Him comes the reward, which is the third encouragement to patience: and that reward shall be according to our patience:

Romans 2

⁷ To them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for honor and glory and immortality, eternal life.

There is much need that ministers of the gospel begin to prepare themselves with patience for the conflict, for the time of their trial is at hand.

- The day of mockery and derision, of cold neglect and cruel scorn, of violation of all brotherly affections and Christian bonds, is already dawned.
- The spirit is revealed in the Church, which will make mockery of everything real and substantial in divine truth, and set at naught the preachers of it, as deceived, and deceivers of the people. Ignorance is about to have a triumph, hypocrisy a reign, in the Church.
- The substitution of mere names for realities, of theological fictions for divine truths, of man's precepts for the teaching of God, is now at a height, and will trample under foot every bold man who will face it in its career and call it by its proper name of hypocrisy—hypocrisy working by a law, hypocrisy sanctifying itself into a religion.

I believe the Pharisees of our Lord's day to be the only counterpart to the religionists, especially the guardians of religion, the religious world of this day. He that has an ear to hear, let him hear and understand what I say, that every man who now has conscience to discern and faithfulness to preach the truth, must suffer persecution from the ministers of religion, especially from those called evangelical and spiritual.

So let them not be astonished; for surely it will come, yea, at this moment it is come, as I write. There is not a man who has stiffly stood for the second advent and kingdom of our Lord; for the love of God to all men, in giving His Son to die; for the reality and consubstantiality of Christ's flesh with ours, who has not drawn down upon him, at least in our Church, the persecutions of the evangelical clergy; who are at this moment the chief impediment to the dissemination of the truth in this land.

God give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth; and God give us whom He has set for the testimony of His truth patience, that we may not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt

to teach; counting it all joy, that in behalf of Christ it is given to us, not only to believe or hear, but also to suffer for His sake.

WORKS AGAIN

Revelation 2

¹⁹ ...and your works; and the last to be more than the first.

The preceding good qualities, for which the angel of this Church has been commended, bespeaks a season of hardship through which he had passed, and by which his graces of faith and patience had been exercised: perhaps some persecution of the Jews or Gentiles, some tumults of the townsmen, or some other outward violence of Satan, to cut off the Church in its infancy.

These trials had been met by the angel of the Church with new diligence in his vocation, with fresh labors in the ministry of the word, and the consolation of the flock, with a more plentiful supply of good works than at the beginning of his ministry. This Christ acknowledges: He forgets not anything which can be commended: He compares the latter with the former, and marks the improvement. This is very sweet and gracious. Oh, that we could remember what a Master He is whom we serve! We always act in the evil spirit of that servant who said:

Matthew 25

²⁴ I know that you are a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not strawed.

But how wide this is of the truth! How beautifully does the kindness and love of our chief Shepherd appear in these seven epistles! His words are the words of a gracious and good, of a considerate and indulgent, Master. We have indeed a Bishop to deal with who is the Father and Friend of His clergy.

Ah, my fellow-laborers in the vineyard of the Lord, if we should experience faithlessness and foolishness, persecution and ridicule, from our brethren in the ministry, let us look up to Him whose eye is upon the righteous, and whose ear is open to their cry. We have a bosom on which we can rest our sore pained head; we have an ear into which we can pour our sorrowful hearts; we

have a High Priest who can be touched with the fellow-feeling of our infirmities, having been in all points tempted as we are.⁴⁴ Therefore go forth and be valiant and do exploits,⁴⁵ for He beholds and succors you.

Think not of yourselves at all, but be filled with His glory and power. Exalt His name, and stand for His truth. Lift up your voice, and cry aloud. Be instant in season and out of season.

And when they say all manner of evil against you falsely for His name's sake, rejoice and be exceeding glad. And when you shall be brought before the rulers of the synagogue or the kings of the earth for His sake, take no thought how or what you shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what you shall speak: for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you.⁴⁶



John Huss imprisoned for his faith

⁴⁴ *Hebrews* 4:15.

⁴⁵ *Daniel* 11:32.

⁴⁶ *Matthew* 10:18-20.

IV. THE REBUKE TO THE ANGEL

ONE would think that after such an ample commendation for laborious and renewed works, for love and ministry and faith and patience, there was little room for rebuke or reproof of this excellent servant of the Lord.

But He who is holy and true, whose eyes are like a flame of fire and His feet are like fine brass, sees otherwise than man sees. His love is great, but His holiness is co-extensive with His love; and His faithfulness unto His Father rules over all.

He does not strike a compromise between the good and the evil, or allow so much of the one to be a compensation for so much of the other. He loves holiness for its own sake: yea, holiness is the form of His love in this world, where sin is present; because without it no man can see the Lord. Nothing will satisfy Him but that we should be holy as our Father in heaven is holy, and holy because He is holy.

NO EXCUSE FOR IMPERFECTION

It is a fatal error with many to excuse their imperfections and infirmities, yea and their wickednesses, by saying that everything which man does must necessarily partake of his inherent sinfulness: which is, in other words, to believe that Christ is not able to redeem the soul of man from the devil, the world, and the flesh; and that the Holy Ghost is not so powerful to sanctify as they are to defile; which I consider to be little less than blasphemy against the Holy Ghost: and certainly it is very far from the orthodox creed, which maintains that He is irresistible.

This way of speaking finds an apology and justification for itself, by another like unto it, which is, that those works of ours which are called good and holy and acceptable are not so in very deed and truth, but only reckoned so of God's complacency, for the sake of Jesus Christ. What a mischief, what a deadly poison is folded up in this innocent and devout form of words,

“God accepts our unholy works as holy for Christ's sake.”

First, it makes God see a thing to be unholy, and yet accept it as holy; that is, admit into His favor and speak in good terms of what is essentially unholy; which is very much like putting a lie into God's mouth.

Secondly, it makes Christ the storehouse and treasury of good works, from which a man may eke out the imperfections and cover the blemishes of his own, according to His own disposition and judgment: which is just the doctrine of indulgences in another form.

Thirdly, it makes Christ no Redeemer of the creature, the Holy Ghost no Sanctifier of the creature, who continues as obstinately bent and necessarily prone to sin as ever.

And lastly, it makes Christ and the Holy Ghost to have brought God to compromise His holiness, instead of showing His holiness as unimpeachable and most glorious.

But, blessed be the Lord, this doctrine of the schools has no foundation in Scripture, which teaches, that the whole man,

1 Thessalonians 5

²³ ...body, soul, and spirit,

–may and ought to be...

Romans 12

¹ ...presented a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God;

–may and ought to prove what is that holy and acceptable and perfect will of God; which asserts that:

1 John 3

⁹ He that is born of God cannot sin,

–and that...

1 Peter 4

¹ ...he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

This glorious work of bringing holiness forth from the fallen mortal creature, is done by the power of the indwelling Godhead of the Spirit, through union with Christ our Head. It is Christ in us, renewing us after the image of God, in righteousness and true

holiness. It is Christ glorifying God in His own creature, despite the devil's murderous work, and making the creature under the conditions of the fall to bring forth goodness unto God.

This capacity of goodness, of perfect and unceasing goodness, we are all baptized into: for baptism is the burial of the natural man, that it may trouble us no more, the quickening of the spiritual man, that it may serve God forever. And after baptism we are in the condition of the apostle, who thanks God that he had received the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ;⁴⁷ and that the law of the Spirit of life had made him free from the law of sin and death.⁴⁸

Every sin committed after baptism is without any apology from the fallen and sinful condition of man, out of which we are delivered into the standing of grace and righteousness in Christ Jesus. Such sin is to be traced to unbelief: we believe not in the sufficiency of Christ to do the will of God in our mortal flesh; and out of this unbelief comes the power of the flesh over us.

Christ, knowing and being assured of the power and will of God to sustain His own creature, made no hesitation to take up the mortal and corruptible flesh of man, and showed himself able to make it obedient in all points; and He is able to continue the work, and He is presented as the continuer of the work of making mortal flesh to do the Father's will.

But if, as our so-called evangelical ministers cry aloud, it be heresy to believe that Christ took, and bore, and forever sanctified this flesh of ours, then, indeed, there is no ground for believing that it can be sanctified, but every ground for believing the contrary: and we are left to make of it the best we can; a poor compromise at the best, a botch, a failure so far as this life is concerned; God defeated on this earth, in this creature flesh.

Oh, what awful issues are dependent upon this question, which hardly musters a dozen ministers that think it important enough

⁴⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:57.

⁴⁸ Romans 8:2.

to write or speak of it; hardly half-a-dozen who will bide the brunt of fierce and fiery conflict. But:

Luke 12

³² Fear not little flock; it is the good pleasure of the Father to give you the kingdom.

Not so the great Bishop and Overseer of our souls, who, knowing the power given to His saints of being holy, as He is holy, to His Church of being entirely purged from the leaven of malice and unrighteousness, an unleavened lump, does after this full commendation of His servants works: charity, ministry, faith and patience; proceed to point out a few things which He had against him, whereof the sum is expressed in these words:

THAT WOMAN JEZEBEL

Revelation 2

²⁰ Because you suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

There is only one point of difference between this office in the Church of Thyatira, and that in the Church of Pergamos; that here it is a woman calling herself a prophetess, there it was men who held and taught the doctrine,—the one the office of Jezebel, the other the office of Balaam.

The apostle had forbidden women to speak in the Church, but to be silent and learn from their husbands with all obedience.⁴⁹ But in the same *Epistle to the Corinthians* he makes it manifest by the way in which he teaches prophetesses to carry themselves, when they prophesied,⁵⁰ that the spirit of prophecy was given to the women even as to the men, according to the prophecy of *Joel*; and that, when so given, it was their custom to exercise the gift in the Church, even as the men: and he teaches them how they ought to do it, without extravagance or imitation of the heathen Pythonesses.

⁴⁹ *1 Corinthians* 14:34, 33; *1 Timothy* 2:11-12.

⁵⁰ *1 Corinthians* 11:5.

Moreover, that the Spirit is free, and was wont to endow women with the gift of prophecy, is manifest from many parts of Scripture besides this:

Acts 2

¹⁷ Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.

Acts 21

⁹ Philip the evangelist had four daughters virgins, which did prophesy.

And surely if we men who minister the word claim our right and ability to do so from the Holy Spirit, we may not limit him so as to say he may not as heretofore give that gift to a woman, or that a woman receiving it may not use it. In the two passages referred to above, the apostle merely forbids women who had no gift from speaking in the Church and troubling the congregation with questions which were better answered by their husbands at home.

While the office of prayer in all places is appointed to the men,⁵¹ he commands the women to keep silence.⁵² The truth seems to be therefore, that silence in the Church was imposed upon a woman in every case save where the Holy Spirit opened her mouth. And in all such cases, while she was at liberty, yea, and under the obligation of using her gift, she ought to use it with the modesty which becomes a woman, and with a deference to the authority of the angels of the Church. The passage to which I allude is:

1 Corinthians 11

¹⁰ For this cause ought the woman to have power over her head, because of the angels.

By which I understand, that when a woman prophesied, she should not do so with disheveled hair and frantic gestures, but with her head covered, and in a modest manner, in deference to the angels of the Church. She ought, were it only for their sake, to observe the rules the apostle there prescribes, both for the proph-

⁵¹ 1 Timothy 2:8.

⁵² 1 Timothy 2:11.

esyings and the prayers of such women as were gifted of the Holy Ghost for, and called by Him to, these ministries.

This also shows us, by inference, that it was the power and dignity of the angels to take oversight of all persons; even of those in whom the Spirit dwelt in a manner, and with a power, in which He dwelt not in them. He stood there representing Christ, the Head of all the ministries; and to Him all the ministers of all the gifts must pay their reverence, and defer as their over-ruler.

Now, the angel of the Church of Thyatira had been remiss in this part of his sacred function, and had permitted one, who called herself a prophetess, to teach and to practice grievous errors in the midst of the Church. She was not a prophetess, but she claimed to be one; and haply she had the gift, though certainly she had not the grace of it:

Matthew 7

²² Many will say to me in that day [of judgment], Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? and in your name have cast out devils? and in your name done many wonderful works?

²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.

Doubtless this woman must have had some gifts, to deceive so good and faithful a man, to mislead so many of His flock. It might be that she had the power of miracles and prophecy, being possessed by an unclean spirit, such as that which spoke forth the name and divinity of Christ:

Mark 1

²³ And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

²⁴ Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with you, you Jesus of Nazareth? are you come to destroy us? I know you who you are, the Holy One of God.

For certainly the evil spirits have great power, as we see by the magicians of Egypt, and the soothsayers mentioned in the *Acts*, and those prophesied of in this very book, when speaking of the

mystical Jezebel.⁵³ Now, all such false spirits were to be tried by their doctrines, whether they agree with the truth of God, as written in His word, and approved by the conscience of an honest-hearted man.

1 John 4

¹ Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God.

The angel of the Church of Thyatira had been negligent of this part of his duty; and, instead of trying this woman's pretensions by her doctrine, had permitted her to sow the seeds of error in his flock. As a prophetess he permitted her to teach and seduce the servants of Christ away from their duties to their Lord and Husband, to join themselves to the idolatries round about, and to partake in their idol feasts.

It is remarkable how the offense reproved by the Head of the Church, in these Epistles to Ephesus, to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, should be constantly the intermingling of His holy service with the unholy services of the heathen; pointing out to us the way in which the apostasy was working, and should work unto the end; by the amalgamation of things contrary and contradictory, the service of God and the service of demons.

The Church of Christ is placed by regeneration of the Holy Ghost in a dignity of its own, spiritual and divine, above sin and death, above the flesh and the world; from which to descend and mix with the abominations of the heathen, or even with the fleshly ordinances of the law, is like the sons of God leaving their habitation and intermarrying with the daughters of men; to which confusion the deluge is ascribed,⁵⁴ by the example of which the Church also is warned from apostasy.⁵⁵

It is remarkable, moreover, that in none of the three following churches is there any allusion to this unnatural sin of the spiritual seed mingling with the carnal; as if the first four epistles had his-

⁵³ *Revelation* 13:14.

⁵⁴ *Genesis* 6.

⁵⁵ *2 Peter* 2 and *Jude* 6.

torical reference to a state of the Church distinct from that referred to in the three last.

In the midst of each division, there is one Church which stands faithful; among the former, that of Smyrna; among the latter, that of Philadelphia: which distinction will come to be more fully examined hereafter.

For the present, we observe, that the common sin of these three churches, Ephesus, Pergamos, and Thyatira, is exactly the same with that set forth in the history of the woman and the beast⁵⁶ when the two most violently opposed systems of Christ, and of Paganism, at length meet together and harmonize into one, which ends in the destruction of both.

If death be the consequence of Adam's transgression, the wages of sin; then the deluge, and the destruction of Sodom, and the conflagration of the earth by fire, are the consequence of attempting to mingle and confuse righteousness and unrighteousness, holiness and sin, the seed of God and the seed of Satan. The Church are the children of God; the world are the children of the evil one. While these two continue separate, God's end of testifying against iniquity is served: when, they intermingle, His end is lost, and the world must be destroyed. This is a great truth, into which I cannot at present enter more particularly.

SPACE TO REPENT

But, even to this woman, whether considered personally as the troubler of the Church of Thyatira, or typically as the mother of harlots who was to trouble the Church of Christ, God gave space to repent. And so also He did to the antediluvians, when He appointed them a time of 120 years, during which the ark was preparing, to warn them of their coming judgment, that they might repent of their wickedness.

And Noah, being God's faithful witness, and obedient servant in preparing the ark, did thereby condemn the world which then was. So also Lot, by living in the midst of Sodom, and keeping

⁵⁶ *Revelation* ch. 12, ch. 13, ch. 17.

himself from their pollutions, did condemn that and the neighbor cities of the plain: who also had a warning by the hand of Ched-erlaomer, and a deliverance at the hand of Abraham, the father of the faithful.

And when for their unnatural wickedness⁵⁷ God raised up Christ to be the Judge of all men, he gave them space for repentance, and sent His gospel to be a witness unto all nations, among which His Church, like Noah, continue to build the spiritual ark of salvation, with its open door and plentiful rooms for all men to enter in and be saved. But the time shall wear out, the witnesses of God shall cease, their prophecy against the wickedness and profanation of the Gentiles, and the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men shall at length arrive.

To show forth the liberty of repentance unto all, this poor deluded woman, who lived to delude the servants of God, had space for repentance, even as also had Simon Magus.

Revelation 2

²¹ I gave her space to repent of her fornication, but she repented not.

So also do we find that the servants of the whore, who had the mark of the beast, and the number of his name, have after the sixth trumpet space to repent, but they repent not.⁵⁸ Also after the fifth vial,⁵⁹ which, if we interpret aright, in the time of peace, which has now continued for fifteen years, but they will not repent, and therefore when the sixth vial upon the Mohammedan powers is exhausted, then judgment, the final judgment of the quick, falls heavy upon them in the time of the seventh vial.

Oh, how admirable is the long-suffering of God, and how obdurate the impenitency of men! That woman Jezebel repented not in the Church of Thyatira; nor will her antitype, the mother of harlots, which sits upon seven hills, repent. She is now as full of her murders, and sorceries, and fornications, and thefts as ever she

⁵⁷ *Romans 1.*

⁵⁸ *Revelation 9:20-21.*

⁵⁹ *Revelation 16:10-11.*

was; and so will she continue until destruction come upon her like a whirlwind.

The door of admission into the bride-chamber shall be shut, and no one shall be able to enter in. They shall stand and cry aloud, but they shall not be heard. They shall be carried away in their desperation to conceive terrible thoughts of evil upon the earth, against the Lord and His anointed, and they shall perish in the midst of their deceivings, and blasphemies, and horrid undertakings.

HER END

Of all which, the manner, as well as the certainty, is shown forth in God's dealings with this woman Jezebel.

Revelation 2

²² Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation; except they repent of their deeds.

²³ And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He which searches the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you, according to your works.

There is some difficulty in coming at the exact meaning of the threatening, "I will cast her into a bed." Some think it means a sick-bed, disabling her from the further prosecution of her mischievous practices; but this is not equal to her offense, nor yet commensurate with the punishment of her paramours, who are "cast into great tribulation," nor of her children, who are "killed with death."

The best interpretation seems to me to be, that as the bed had been the place of her fornication, so should it be of her judgment; which judgment is common to her with her fornicators. That they and she, caught in the act of their fornication, should, as were the prince of Israel and the Moabitish woman, by the hand of Phinehas, have judgment executed upon them, she had had time to repent, but would not; and therefore she should have no notification of the judgment, but at once, in one hour, while she enjoyed

her wickedness, and in the midst of it, should the wrath of the great tribulation alight upon her and her paramour.

The expression, "I will cast her into a bed," to my mind therefore presents the evil case and condition in which she should be apprehended, and it gives introduction and force to the following expression, "those who commit adultery with her;" while the punishment of both follows in these words, "great tribulation." Yet is this tribulation such as permits to them still a space for repentance; but none to her anymore.

However it be, whether the punishment of both be contained in the same words, or whether there be contained under the expression, "I will cast her into a bed," some severe judgment which I do not at present perceive; this is clear, that while she receives her final sentence, they have a further space for repentance.

Now, it is very remarkable to find how this is confirmed in God's dealings with the mystical Jezebel:

Revelation 17

⁵ ...Babylon the great, the mother of harlots,...

² With whom the kings of the earth committed fornication.

She comes to her end before them; and they are represented as bewailing her, and lamenting for her, when they shall see...

Revelation 18

⁹ ...the smoke of her burning,

¹⁰ Standing afar off for the fear of her torment...

And so also do all the classes of the earth, who knew her in the pride of her glory and boasting, when she said in her heart:

⁷ ...I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

⁸ Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

There is then a space left for the kings of the earth during which they confederate together, and make war with the Lamb, and perish utterly in their undertaking.

This coincidence between God's dealings with that woman Jezebel and the whore of Babylon, which corrupted the whole earth, is made the more remarkable from the expression, "great tribulation," which is once more spoken of in this book, as that out of which the white-robed and palm-bearing company came.

Revelation 7

¹⁴ These are they that come out of great tribulation.

And when we refer to the seventh vial, which is the great tribulation, the great earthquake, when all the winds get loose to rend the earth, we find immediately before it⁶⁰ mention made of a company who are warned to keep their garments; being the last portion of that glorious company of martyrs who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. This time of the coming of the Lord is so remarkable for the distress of nations which shall then be felt on earth, that it is often referred to in the Gospels, and by the very name of the time of the "great tribulation":

Matthew 24 [also Mark 13:19, 24]

²¹ For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

²⁹ Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened...

³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven...

These coincidences I cannot look upon as accidental, connected as they all are with the coming of the Lord; and being taken in conjunction with the observations made at the outset of this second part of our lecture, they are to be looked upon as strong confirmations of the view which we have taken of this epistle as having a reference to the mother of harlots, as well as to the woman in the Church of Thyatira, and so discovering to the primitive churches the varieties of those temptations with which Christ's Catholic Church was to be assailed.

The meditation of these things has several times suggested to my mind the idea that by the bed here spoken of is signified the

⁶⁰ *Revelation 16:15.*

lake of fire into which the woman and her paramour, or, in other words, the beast and the false prophet, are cast at the conclusion of the judgment: but lacking Scripture authority for thus speaking of hell as a bed, I have shrunk from giving it the form of an interpretation, and mention it merely as a conjecture.

It is said in one of the Psalms,

Psalm 139

⁸ Though I make my bed in hell,

—and if casting him into a bed, signify the bed of mortal agony, and death itself, then is hell the bed of the second death. This interpretation, if it could be brought out clearly as such, would also give great force to the diversity of treatment between her and her children, of whom it is said that they are killed with death:

Revelation 2

²³ And I will kill her children with death...

For in the last judgment, when the beast and the false prophet who consummated the adultery were cast into the lake of fire together, the kings of the earth, and their captains, and their mighty men, are slain with the sword of Him who sat upon the horse. The one is a continued torment, the other is an instant death. This would give still a higher significancy to “the great tribulation,” as that state of torment during the millennium which even the devil is spared from enduring, and which is described in these words:

Revelation 14

⁹ If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

¹⁰ The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.

However this may be, whether it is to be looked upon as just interpretation, or mere analogy, one thing is certain from the

comparison of this judgment with that of the Church of Pergamos; namely, that the highest aggravation of wickedness is when the Church herself becomes the seducer, when she, who should have remained the model of chastity and virtue, becomes the pander to all wickedness, the seducer of the magistrates, and the kings, and the peoples of the earth into all idolatry.

This is the exact difference between the Papal and the Protestant Churches. The Papal is the seducer, the Protestant is the seduced. The former is artfully deceiving the nations, and leading them away from Christ; the latter are tempted by the powers that be to love and kiss them instead of Christ. The former is the unnatural, the latter is the natural state of wickedness. That we should be tempted is our calling; that we should yield to temptation, is our sin; but that we should become the tempter, is a sin of a far deeper dye.

No one can deny that the churches of this land have sore and grievously gone astray after the desire of carnal ornaments and endowments from the State; and that at this moment they are sore enthralled to the powers that be, and make a most shameful compromise of duty between Christ and the powers of this present evil world.

But there is another stage in wickedness, when they shall become the creatures of the State, to the prevention of the truth, or to the hindrance and destruction of those who hold it. If this ever should come to pass, and God only knows how near or how distant it is, then verily destruction shall come upon us to the very uttermost. It is not yet clear to me in what way we are to be induced, or by what means we are to be prevented; but this I clearly perceive, that it is a time of great peril, from which I continually pray that the Lord may deliver us.

Revelation 2

²³ ...and all the churches shall know that I am He which searches the reins and hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

The language of this passage is taken almost verbally from:

Jeremiah 17

¹⁰ I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

The expression, “I search the heart and the reins,” is a common form in Scripture for the deep knowledge and thorough scrutiny of God:

Psalm 7

⁹ ...the righteous God tries the hearts and reins.

Psalm 26

² Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

The reins were looked upon among the Hebrews, and still are in the Eastern parts of the world, as the seat of the deepest and inmost affections, even more inward than the heart itself. Wherefore in the 16th *Psalm* Christ says of himself:

Psalm 16

⁷ ...my reins also instruct me in the night season,

This signifies that the workings of His soul within, under the power of the Holy Ghost, His holy reflections upon the deep counsels of God, were a continual instruction to Him.

And in *Psalm* 63:21, the Psalmist (whoever he be) represents himself, when under agonizing doubts concerning an overruling Providence, as being “grieved in his heart, and pricked in his reins,” expressing that sensation to which every man of deep feeling must often have been conscious of a thrilling, and more than thrilling, a prickling sensation, in that part of the body where the reins or kidneys are seated.

Like the “moving of the bowels,” under yearning affection; and “the breaking of the heart,” through long continued and sore grief; the “pricking of the reins,” is used to express very deep and inward emotion. To search the heart and the reins, is therefore to go into the inward parts of a man, and inspect him through and through. No man knows the things of a man, but the spirit of a man which is in him; this, which no creature knows, God knows,

and thereby is His knowledge distinguished from that of every creature. Of His word—that is, the personal word, with whom “we have to do,” it is written:

Hebrews 4

¹² 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.

¹³ Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked, and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

While this expression,

Revelation 2

²³ I am He which searches the reins and the heart,

—is in constant use to express the all-searching eye of God, I do not find that it is anywhere in Scripture, save in the passage of *Jeremiah* above referred to, connected with the retribution and recompence,

²³ ...giving unto every one according to his works.

It may therefore be regarded, if not as a quotation, certainly as a distinct reference to that place of the prophet where the discourse is concerning the judgment of the Lord upon Judah: and curses are denounced upon the man who makes flesh his arm, blessings upon the man that trusts in the Lord. Then, to put away all hypocrisy and prevarication, He says:

Jeremiah 17

⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

¹⁰ I Jehovah search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways.

And then He instructs the prophet to go and summon the kings of Judah to repent, even then at the eleventh hour, and the Lord would remove His threatenings every one, and establish their thrones for ever.

And so in the passage before us, Christ presenting himself to the Church of Thyatira, with these eyes like flames of fire, does describe, first the faithful angel who stood as His representative, then the impure woman who led His servants astray; and then declares that He is conversant with the utmost working of every heart, and will come to recompense every one according to His works.

“Wherefore,” says He, “repent, you followers of that wicked woman; and you who have stood true, hold fast that which you have till I come.”

There is no doubt that this woman had proceeded with great hypocrisy, in order to be able to escape the detection of so vigilant and faithful a bishop of the Church. She and her followers said, that they knew the very depths of Satan; and they were wont to make their boast of their familiarity with his wiles, of their power to deliver themselves out of all his snares: and the deceitful serpent suffered them to sport with his name, and play themselves with the beauty of his crest, and the many foldings of his tail, until he had them grasped firmly in his hold, and thoroughly imbued with his poison.

To great power of seduction, she had added great craftiness, and brought the people into great depths of Satan, where their minds were utterly lost and astray. No doubt there was a good seeming, and a fair show in the flesh; words which savored of the truth, plausible interpretations of deep mysteries, and outward form of godliness: she claimed inspection of the Spirit; and she gave forth her doctrines as true prophecies.

Perhaps she was self-deceived, and used by this devil to deceive others: certainly it was a system of deep and dark delusion; whose darkness to penetrate Christ presents himself with the eyes of fire, whose wickedness to destroy He presents himself with the feet of fine brass; and to give them warning to repent He chooses this attribute of the omniscient Jehovah, and claims it as His own:

Revelation 2

²³ I am He that searches the heart and the reins, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Not according to your words, but according to your works; not according to your fair pretensions, but according to your real performances. About every system of falsehood there is a system of disguise and deception. Satan cannot do good, he can only do evil; and so far forth as we are under his dominion, we can only do evil. The overtures and beginnings of things by Him overruled always put on the appearance of good; but in the progress they turn about, and end in fierce unadulterated wickedness.

He will not lend his aid to keep on a good cause; if he get his hand into it, it is only to destroy and subvert it. Therefore Christ says, "I will give unto every one of you according to your works." There is a certainty in that test of the true prophets from false ones given by the Lord:

Matthew 7

²⁰ By their fruits you shall know them.

A preacher of lies can no more bring forth the fruits of holiness and love than a briar can bring forth grapes. Hence all the heresies in the primitive Church ended in, and indeed were accompanied by, the most gross and fearful depravity.

It is indeed from the flesh that heresies spring.⁶¹ Some lust in the heart desires liberty in the mind, and sets on the faculty of wresting truth, nor suffers it to rest until it has got the word of God brought over to speak a lie, and to consent to its sensuality, whereupon it begins and enacts wickedness by a law under the sanction of the name of God.

There is a heresy, and that a great one, upon two points at present in the Church:

- Either they are heretical who say that God loved and Christ died for only a part of men, or we who say that God loves and His Son died for all;

⁶¹ *Galatians* 5:20.

- Either they are heretical, who say that Christ came in flesh different conditioned in itself from ours, or we who say that He came in flesh of our flesh, conditioned in all respects as ours is, and owing its sanctification to the power of the Holy Ghost in it.

Now, let those who are unlearned, or unstable, look to see the fruits in the lives and in the flocks of those who hold the one and the other of those doctrines. For it cannot be, as I said, that a heresy can originate anywhere but in the carnal man, or promote anything but carnality of mind, and produce anything but fruits of flesh; such as:

Galatians 5

¹⁹ ...Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like.

Look well to it, all you people who are confused with the subtleties of ingenious and speculative men. Your Lord has given you a test which will never fail you. If a man hold the truth, he is bound to give proofs of it in a holy walk and conversation; because this is appointed by the Lord as one of the means by which others shall judge of it.

The truth may be held without these fruits: but in such a case it is but an opinion, it is not a principle; a speculation of the intellect, not a reality of our being. It is not the truth in the love of it, unless it yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

By this judgment which the great Head and Purifier of the Church threatens against the woman Jezebel and her followers, it is said that all the churches should know that He searches the heart and the reins. This indicates a universality in the manifestation of the judgment, which ill comports with the notion that these epistles were only for a time and season of the churches; but agrees well with the notion we have been working with, that they are intended for all times, and all conditions of the Christian churches.

Moreover it sanctions the notion which we have been unfolding in the last two lectures, that while the circumstances of those several churches had a real and an exact application to the local Church of which they are recorded, they have besides a typical and prophetic application to certain conditions under which the Church should in successive periods be placed. For this judgment of the woman Jezebel, who troubled the Church of Thyatira, has not reached the knowledge of all the churches; seeing there is no record left of it, nor of her on whom it fell, and hardly of the Church in which it occurred.

To interpret, therefore, the circumstances connected with this woman, literally of her, and obstinately to refuse any typical or historical use of them, is not only to make void, but, I think, to falsify the solemn declaration, that thereby “all the churches should know” Christ’s discernment through all veils of hypocrisy, and His punishment of all unrighteousness.

But understanding it figuratively of that mother of harlots, that adulteress wife of the beast, the head of the ten kings—as Jezebel was the wife of Ahab, the head of the Ten Tribes—it contains a very grand truth, which in the fullness of times shall be manifested. For the beast and his spouse the false prophetess and their children, being cast into the lake of fire, and tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb, shall indeed be an example and a terror to all the churches which shall exist during the millennial period of the Church; as well as a manifestation to all saints in the New Jerusalem, or out of it, of the knowledge and righteousness which is in the Judge of all the earth.

That judgment of the false prophetess and her adherents, shall be the wonder and the admiration of all heaven and of all the earth. Witness the astonishment of the tribes of the earth set forth in the 18th chapter, and the hallelujahs of the hosts of heaven which follow after.

As in the judgments contained in the Old Testament, the end of them all is ever said to be, for to declare the righteousness of Je-

hovah; so, under the New Testament, the judgment of the beast and the false prophet is to declare the righteousness of the Son of man during the millennial period of the earth, that we may be as much deterred from evil by this awful spectacle, as they are encouraged to good by the glorious reward of His saints in the New Jerusalem.

And to this refer also these last words of Isaiah the prophet:

Isaiah 66

²³ And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, says the Lord.

²⁴ And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

In one word, I think, and almost believe, that during the millennial period of the earth, there will be a manifested hell in the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are, as well as a manifested heaven in the city of the New Jerusalem, which is the abode of the saints and the tabernacle of God and of the Lamb.

These two conditions, of the faithful who overcame, and the faithless who yielded to the temptress; of those who gave ear to the voice of wisdom, and of those who listened to the wiles of the wanton woman,⁶² shall be the two decided and decisive cases to which the attention of the world shall be turned; the two great proofs of that future dispensation, which is a dispensation of works and judgment according to works, as this is a dispensation of justification by faith, or condemnation on account of unbelief.

I may deceive myself, but it seems to me that all this, and much more, is taught in the denunciation passed upon the Jezebel of the Church of Thyatira. She and her adherents are the persons on whom the subjects of the last great down-trampling and breaking into pieces are denounced of, just as the victorious of that Church

⁶² *Proverbs* 2:16-19, 5:3-11; 6:24-35; 7:5-27; 23:27-35, and everywhere.

are the persons in whom those who shall tread down and rule with an iron rod are spoken of.

No one hesitates to believe that the saints of Thyatira are not the only persons who shall rule the world with the rod of iron, and break it in pieces like a potter's vessel; and why should anyone think that Jezebel, her paramours, and her children, are the only ones who shall be cast into that fiery bed, broken in that direful tribulation, and slain with that overflowing death? They also represent a class, those who are seduced by the false prophetess and mother of harlots; and in them is depicted the manner of the retribution which shall come upon one form of iniquity, that of being a member of the seducing Church.

And, in one word, it is a great principle of interpretation, which more and more clearly appears, that wherever, in these epistles, two parties are set against each other, they are not only real actors in those churches, but made representatives of a set of actors which shall be in all times; and in their several treatment of Christ, teaches the several judgments which, to the end and in the end, shall come upon those classes in His Church.

And thus universal truth is taught upon particular instances, as, in the Old Testament, with Pharaoh and the Assyrian, and Babylon and Tyre, &c; and the method of prophecy from first to last appears to be one.

THOSE THAT ARE LEFT

There remains but one topic more to exhaust this second part of our subject, and conclude the message to the angel—which is, the instructions of Christ to the faithful in the Church, couched in these words:

Revelation 2

²⁴ But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, at many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

²⁵ But that which you have already, hold fast till I come.

Upon the authority of the best manuscripts, Guerbail makes no hesitation in throwing out the word *and* in the clause, “unto you and the rest in Thyatira;” which makes it, being literally translated, “but unto you, those that are left in Thyatira.” This removes out of the way the difficulty of discovering who are meant by *the rest*.

The angel is addressed always in the singular number, *you, your*; when *you* is used in the place under consideration, we understand him and his people; and who “the rest” could be, was a question which we had no means of resolving, till we found that the better reading was, “to you who are left,”—that is, from this seducer who had her paramour and her children in the Church; “to those that shall remain true to my word and service;” as we would say, “to the remnant.”

This bears as if she had been but too successful in her arts of deception and delusion: that she had carried away the greater number; that the Church was leavened with her abominations, and only some left in their steadfastness. This also agrees well with the historical application of the passage to Babylon, the mother of harlots, who succeeded in carrying away the whole Church, save those hundred and forty-four thousand who had the seal of the Father on their forehead, and followed the Lamb whithersoever He went.

The original Jezebel had corrupted all the prophets, or driven them out of sight, save only Elijah (“and I am left alone”), but the Lord had still reserved unto Him seven thousand knees who had not bowed to Baal. The mystical Jezebel caused all men, both small and great, both bond and free, to receive a mark upon their foreheads and their hands; but the Lord reserved to himself one hundred and forty and four thousand who obtained the victory over her mark and the number of her name.

And here, when the mystical Jezebel and her doings are set forth in the actual condition of a Church, the great multitude are stolen away, and the faithful are spoken of as “those that are left.”

THOSE WHO HAVE NOT THIS DOCTRINE

They are further described:

Revelation 2

²⁴ But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak;

The doctrine I understand to be, that of accommodating the Church's discipline to the heathen customs, and permitting, under the disguise of charity and good fellowship, spiritual fornication, which always paves the way to the natural or carnal crime. For in proportion as you have a pure Church, you have chaste women; and when the Church is apostate, and a pander to power and wealth, you will find women and wives seducers of young men.

The state of morals in France and Italy compared with Britain—the state of morals in England, compared with Scotland, fifty years ago—will testify to this. It is almost unknown in this country for a woman who has not herself been seduced to seduce a man; it is not so in Papal countries, where the Church is an abominable harlot. This wretched condition of the Church began in that Nicolaitane practice of homologating with the Pagan worship, as far as could be; first in the pride of knowledge and in the pleasure of worldly friendship, then in the fear of persecution, then in the desire of gain like Balaam, and now behold it is perfected into the most gorgeous system of deception.

But still through it all there is a faithful remnant whom the Lord comforts with words of strong assurance,⁶³ whom in the end he delivers with a high hand and an outstretched arm, and straightway brings along with Him to trample the abominable wickedness under foot.

THE DEPTHS OF SATAN

Those in Thyatira who refused this doctrine of the false prophetess are further characterized by these words:

⁶³ *Revelation* 13:9-10.

Revelation 2

²⁴ ...which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak.

This, I suppose, refers to some cant saying among her disciples, expressive of their self-confidence, and in contempt of the more humble and heedful brethren who rather chose to avoid the snares of Satan than to trust themselves among them.

The Apostle Paul, in his own actings, was very careful...

2 Corinthians 2

¹¹ Lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices.

And likewise was he jealous over them:

2 Corinthians 11

³ Lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

And he speaks of

¹³ ...false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

¹⁴ And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

¹⁵ Therefore it is no great thing if His ministers also be transformed into the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.

The depths of Satan, into which these infatuated persons were plunged, I conceive to be the intricacies and subtleties of delusion, the depths of error, the mazes of wandering the endless questions and strifes of words, which were so rife in that age of the Church, and always are when the truth as it is in Jesus is preached in simplicity.

But when, as in these our times, it is locked up in the concealments of an intricate theology, when the catechisms of system have supplanted the words of Christ, which are spirit and life, Satan is little careful to perplex what is already perplexed enough; the web is already woven, the net is already laid to his hand; his game is to wile people into it, to confine them with its niceties

and subtleties, and leave them there; to give the words a nominal and conventional signification, and take from them the spiritual force of truth, and so leave them to ring with their pleasant lullaby souls asleep in carnal and orthodox security.

But once let men arise to let daylight into this roost of darkness; once let men arise to give a basis of reality to these superstructures of the abstract intellect, and straightway he will raise such a gabble about words, such subtle refinements, such sophisms, as will bring back the endless questions of the apostles' times. This state of things I perceive to be fast arising in the Church. I see hundreds of armed dialecticians sallying forth in the panoply of theological armor, against single champions of the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

And what then is the man of God to do? Avoid their foolish questions and wire-drawn arguments; leave them to themselves, and those whom they befool: but stand you for the truth, and be instant to preach it in season and out of season. Resist their false doctrines, condemn them, warn the Church against them; and when you meet them personally withstand them, as Paul did Peter; but trouble yourself not at all with their logical refinements, their rhetorical flourishes, their cruel mockings, their contemptuous flings, against the truth: let these die out of mind as fast as possible.

Bring before the people the great things and the true things of God, the simple and the plain things of Jesus Christ, that He loved us, and took flesh to sanctify and quicken it, is working in us the same blessed effects, and coming with all His saints to reign upon the earth. Reiterate the truth in all places, and leave them if they can to beat it down, but they cannot. Peradventure God may give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.

“The depths of Satan” here spoken of, I conceive, however, to be something very different from those gambols which the natural intellect is now playing off in the sanctuary of the truth. Protestantism is not the place for the manifestation of Satan's deep plots and machinations against the truth. He appears among us

either as a heady high-minded scoffer, or as a swaggering bravo, contemning all mysteries, and with the sword of the intellect showing how he can strip them naked and bare. In his hatred of the truth he is the same, but in his practices different. It was his contempt, as a Protestant liberal, of his own depths as a Papal deceiver, which carried his great measure against the civil state of Britain. He said in the mouths of many of our divines,

“Oh, let us meet them on, equal terms, and we shall soon vanquish them.”

Thus to gain his ends will he not only bear to be scoffed at, but even stir up the scoffer. How constantly does he permit his servants to name his name with a laugh? being content to have them on any terms; and to quiet their fears of him by permitting them to make merriment at the mention of his name. He knows that a day of recompence is coming, in which he shall be able to exercise all his inclinations upon them.

Ah! he is dangerous game. Thus he permitted himself to be entertained by these followers of Jezebel. They talked familiarly of them, knowing the depths of Satan; they were lifted up with pride, and fell into his snare. The Lord preserve us from all such vain confidence! I do not stop to point out how this also coincides with the Papacy, to which Satan gave his seat and his power and great authority.

NO OTHER BURDEN

Revelation 2

²⁴ ...I will put upon you none other burden.

To those in Thyatira who were left faithful in the midst of these seductions of Satan and his minion, the Lord says that He will put upon them none other burden; to signify that His yoke, which is easy, and His burden, which is light, was not to be added to on any account whatever; that the work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labor of love, were to continue as the burden of His Church; and her only yoke to turn unto God from idols, and to wait for His Son from heaven.

Forms and ceremonies, rites and ordinances, restrictions and severities of every kind, as a part of His religion, the Lord and Master of the Church here does discountenance and set aside, unless expedient for the ends of godliness, and profitable to the good order of the Church.

Times and days may be set apart, and stated seasons of worship and service appointed, and, under the same rule of expediency, dresses and other symbols of office may likewise be permitted; but they are not, and never can, without offense to this ordinance of Christ, pass into the obligation of law, or be made terms of Christian communion: they must remain in the lower place of human inventions to serve good ends, and can never be permitted to occupy the place of divine ordinances to convey the benefits of salvation. This word of Christ's, "I will put upon you none other burden," is sufficient justification to any one who shall say,

"These ordinances of the Church I cannot receive nor obey, if they be imposed upon me as conditions to my salvation, or preliminaries to the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, or conditions to my abiding in the communion of the Church; because the Church has no such power bequeathed to her by her Head: yea, and is expressly forbidden to make any such additions to the necessary and indispensable obligations of a Christian: and if any Church should excommunicate any of her members on this account, she would be guilty of lording it over the heritage of God, and they would be innocent of any schism or breach in the body of Christ."

This is a great question, which for two centuries agitated the Protestant Church, and almost brought the Church of Scotland to her grave. Those ceremonies which the Church of England has retained she would have imposed upon us: this we resisted; and for this, as a Church, we stand excommunicated by her unto this day: our ordination not recognized.

Nevertheless, the Lord has justified our faithfulness, and rewarded our patience, and blessed us, as the mother of the people, beyond any Church in Christendom. Whence, indeed, has sprung pride; and, along with pride, vanity, and cruelty, and self-suffi-

ciency: but God is not without His witness in the bosom of that Church; yea, and that a witness which is now speaking to all Christendom.

On the other hand, while I thus stand up for Christian liberty, I am far from encouraging insubordination of the ruled to their rulers, of the Christian people to the Christian ministry. The power of the rulers in the Church, being derived from Christ, is to be guided and limited by His instructions, to which we must not add, from which we must not take away.

But to carry these ordinances of the Universal Bishop into effect, we must take order according to some method and form, which may seem to our wisdom and to the Holy Ghost most expedient thereto: and the Church must give heed to her overseers, and obedience to their decisions; and this they do in honor of that office which the Head of the Church has conferred upon certain of His members.

But if these office-bearers should require obedience to their precepts, however wise, upon the pain and peril of excommunication, it ought to be resisted, as an imposition upon the liberty which we have in Christ Jesus; for it is requiring of us to observe what Christ has not required to be observed, in order to eternal life.

The end of the matter is, that the holy Scripture is the test to which every decision and deliverance of the Church must be brought; and if any private Christian see in his conscience that it is not consistent therewith, or contradictory thereto, he is bound, by the ordinance of his God, to disobey the ordinance of the Church, in so far forth as he sees the inconsistency, but no further; and if for so doing he suffer the last penalty of excommunication, he suffers it not as a schismatic, but as a Christian, and the Spirit of glory and of his God rests on him: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on God's part he is glorified. Well is it said, therefore,

Revelation 2

²⁴ ...I will put upon you none other burden;

–and full well is it added:

HOLD FAST

Revelation 2

²⁵ Hold fast that which you have till I come.

I cannot suppose that these words refer to anything save those commandments and ordinances which Christ left in His Church, and of which we have the particulars in the Apostolical Epistles. Sometimes I have been inclined to suppose that the burden here spoken of is the same with that which was imposed by the Council of Jerusalem upon the churches, in these words:

Acts 15

²⁸ For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:

²⁹ That you abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if you keep yourselves, you shall do well.

And what seems to confirm this notion is, that the woman Jezebel taught her followers to set at nought two out of the four injunctions contained in this decree: she seduced the servants of the Lord to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

But if this interpretation of the burden mentioned in the text be admitted, then does it bring along with it the obligation of abstaining from blood, and from things strangled, as still enforced upon the Church; for Christ commands to hold fast that burden which we have until He come. If, however, the interpretation were otherwise made sure, it would be our duty to adopt it, whatever might be the consequence.

But, for two reasons, I cannot bring myself to receive it:

1. Because the scope of the epistle is, as we have said, of works in general; and therefore it were going against the largeness of the purpose of Christ in inditing it, to restrict its application to those four prohibitions of the Council of Jerusalem;

2. Because the decree of that council, in some part of it at least, can only be interpreted as temporary, seeing the reason assigned for it is temporary and local:

Acts 15

²¹ For Moses of old time has in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every sabbath day.

This shows that some part, at least, of the decision was an expedient for the sake of peace; a compromise and surrender of Christian liberty, for the sake of the weakness and prejudice of others. And the question is, Which part of the ordinance is for this temporary end? Fornication is not so, neither is abstinence from idol feasts; both of these are points of morality and religion, which depend not upon time and place, but are of a constant obligation.

It remains, therefore, that abstinence from blood, and from things strangled, are the temporary restrictions put upon the Church; whereof the former contravened the covenant made with Noah, and the latter the Levitical ordinance of uncleanness. And accordingly, when the occasion ceased for observing these expedient abridgments of Christian liberty, the observation likewise ceased, and the Church resumed her freedom; but not so with the other two ordinances, which are of continual force.

On these accounts, though startled at first with the apparent coincidence of matter, and even of word, between the apostolic precept and the injunction before us, I have seen it good to look upon this coincidence as only accidental, and to adopt the broad interpretation given above.

The burden, therefore, which the Church is commanded to hold fast till Christ come, is, in the first place, and above all, that reasonable service of presenting body, soul, and spirit, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God.

- It is not bodily service (which profits little);
- It is not ordinances and ceremonies, whether of Jewish or of Pagan origin;
- It is not imposition of lordly and arbitrary ministers, which is signified in that burden of Christ.

But:

- It is holiness unto the Lord; it is love to God and love to men;
- It is pure and heavenly morality;
- It is the resistance of the devil, the world, and the flesh;
- It is the experience of that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

It is not Sabbath-keeping, or holy-day-keeping, but it is the keeping of a continual Sabbath, and an unceasing holy-day. One day in seven is well appointed by the Church, and has been from the beginning kept, for the high ends of worship and rest and rejoicing; and so fasts, in their proper season, are well and wisely appointed: but let no one judge me in these respects; or yet judge himself, as if, in well and faithfully observing them, he had fulfilled the obligation of the Christian Sabbath; which is not one day in seven, but every day in the seven; for every day is the Lord's, and all time is alike holiness unto the Lord.

And so also a Christian keeps a continual fast; afflicting his soul for sin, and deprecating the holy indignation of God from the sinner; keeping his body under that he may not labor in vain, and ever submitting himself to the fiery trial with which it pleases the Lord to try him.

This burden, I say—which stands not in time and place, that it should be limited by them, but is the continual presentation of every member in holiness unto the Lord, through the operation in us of the Spirit of the risen Christ—this burden of good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them—this imitation of Christ in all His ways and in all His works—is the chief part of the burden referred to in the text, which He commands us to hold fast until He come.

TILL I COME

This expression,

Revelation 2

²⁵ ...till I come,

—marks a constancy and continuance and unchangeableness in the constitution of the Church, till the Lord shall come again in His glory and in His majesty; and puts to silence all claims of men to innovate, or alter in any essential matter the worship, doctrine, discipline, or government of the Christian Church.

Come in what name they may, till Christ appear they come un- sent of God, and can only be regarded as invaders of the rights of the Church, and intruders upon the prerogative of the Head of the Church. Ours it is to hold fast the Church as she was consti- tuted on the day of Pentecost, and not to suffer her to be changed by the presumption of any man whatsoever.

If any man, filled with the hope of the Lord's coming, shall therefore presume to set aside the ordinances of the Church as antiquated, and insist for something new, let him be anathema. Till Christ come, things must abide as they have been from the beginning, without any addition or alteration from the mind of man, or angel, or devil: and every form and ceremony, as has been said, is only a mean for carrying the mind of Christ into ef- fect; an expedient for the better execution of that which is old, not an addition of something new.

And while we thus keep the integrity of the Church against all innovators, we must also guard it against all destroyers of its original beauty.

And this leads us to ask, whether the Church be indeed held at present in that completeness in which we find her set forth at the day of Pentecost? for from that we may not deviate, either by ad- dition or subtraction. This now is a grave inquiry, to which I am led, and indeed obliged, by the commandment of the Lord now under consideration,

Revelation 2

²⁵ Hold fast that which you have till I come.

V. WHAT THE CHURCH IS TO HOLD FAST TILL CHRIST COME

THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST

MY IDEA of the Church is derived from its name, “The body of Christ;”⁶⁴ and of its endowment from the words following:

Ephesians 1

²³ The fullness of Him that fills all in all.

It is one as much as the Spirit is one:

Ephesians 4

⁴ There is one body, and one Spirit.

And as the body without the spirit is not the complete work of God, so neither is the spirit without the body. When Christ went unto the Father, He entered into the promise of the Holy Ghost, and, being seated on the Father’s throne, began to act the Father’s part, of governing the world. Since that time He has been known as the Spirit, and not as the visible Christ.

But a spirit is not that which God appointed this world to be governed by. He made man to be His image and His king, and man is an embodied spirit. And when man became enslaved to Satan, God, keeping in His own hand the sovereignty, which had reverted to himself through the disobedience of His vicegerent, did hold it, not in His character of a pure spirit, but did assume to himself, in the Word, the parts, affections, properties, and attributes of a man, because as a man He was to redeem all, and to govern all.

And, now that as a man He has redeemed all, and is governing all, it is inconsistent with the great idea of the man, and not the spirit-governor, that Christ should now rule from His invisible throne in the spirit without a body. This body is the Church, of which He, Christ, is not only the Spirit, but likewise the Head.

⁶⁴ 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:12.

And the Church is united to Him, not only by having Him inspiring her, but likewise by being united with Him who is on the throne of God, being His instruments, His members for demonstrating before the world as much of that power and authority which He has attained to, as is proper for this present state and condition of the world. This body, the Church, the Father gives to Him.

- It is the Father's gift of an inheritance in the saints unto His Son Christ.
- It is the Father's bringing a spiritual seed out of Him.
- It is the Father's forming a wife out of Him.
- It is the Father's producing from Him a race of sons of God, in room of those who heretofore mixed themselves with the daughters of men, and forfeited their high estate.
- It is the Father's deriving from Christ the royal family of kings and priests by whom He is to govern the worlds.

And the Church, thus constituted to be the body of Christ for ever, through whom unto eternity He may put forth the fullness of Godhead which is in Him, has at present upon the earth the very same function to discharge; being unto Christ for a body wherein to abide, and whereby to act out before the world that office of a gracious Lord and holy Christ to which He has been exalted by His resurrection from the dead.

I say, the selfsame office, the Church now and upon this earth, discharges, which she shall forever and over all creation discharge; being the members of one Christ, united by one Spirit, and constituting one household, and following one invariable rule and principle of government, though consisting of many persons, divers memberships; and perhaps also to occupy, as they now do, various places in the one creation of God.

Just as, to compare great things with small, our king, by his members, the ambassadors, governors, judges, lord-lieutenants, &c, does exercise one government, with one law and principle, with one will and one mind, over the vast extent of his dominion; so our invisible King, the Lord Jesus Christ, does at present put

forth, by means of His Church, that power and authority upon this earth which is proper now to be put forth. This is our idea of the Church; and we give it without hesitation as the true one set forth in the Scriptures.

WHAT POWER HAS CHRIST RECEIVED?

The next question which arises is:

“Into what power has Christ entered; and how much of that power is it His good pleasure to put forth upon this earth during this dispensation of His absence?”

With respect to the first part of the question, I answer in His own word:

Matthew 28

¹⁸ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Seated in God the Father’s throne, He holds God the Father’s scepter, and exercises God the Father’s dominion. He is now creation’s God, as He was heretofore creation’s surety and bondsman; He is now creation’s scepter-bearer, as He was heretofore creation’s burden-bearer. Formerly He showed himself the guttering, mortal man; now He shows himself the ruling, life-quicken-
ing God.

It is this accession of honor and of power, to which as Christ He passed, upon His leaving this world and going to the Father, that forms the ground of His consolation to His Church under the present dispensation of His absence. Therefore said He, it was expedient for them that He should go away, for otherwise the Comforter could not come; therefore said He, they should do greater works than He had done, because He went unto the Father.

And, in short, the key to the whole of that consolatory discourse contained in the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th chapters of *John*, is this, that by being absent from the Church in the world and present with the Father, He should enter into the glory and the power which must ever abide with, and ever proceed from, the secret of the Father’s dwelling-place; which to possess and to occupy, He

must enter there, where creature never before did enter, and never shall enter again, and where He entered because He was Creator as well as creature.

And this high reward of His faithfulness, and demonstration of His divinity, and repossession of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, having received unto himself, He would, to the extent this present world can bear, make manifest by means of those whom the Father had given Him out of the world to be one with Him, as He is one with the Father.

With this comfort He comforts His Church over His absence, and assures them that He would send unto them the promise of the Father, even power from the Holy Ghost, when the Holy Ghost should have come upon them.⁶⁵

That the Church was to be made sharers in some way of that accession of power and glory into which He was exalted, is the consolation with which He comforts them, and for the which He desires them to wait in Jerusalem until they should receive power from on high.

HOW MUCH POWER IS REVEALED?

And as to the other part of this inquiry, to wit, How much of this His new dignity and power it is proper for Him to render, through the Church, visible unto the world, we are willing to be guided by the fact that it was communicated on the day of Pentecost, and by the testimonies as to what this was contained in the holy Scriptures.

That gift of the Holy Ghost, which was then given, is the same unto which we are all baptized,⁶⁶ and with the hope of which He comforts His Church over His absence; which, therefore, is our comfort, and ought to be our possession. The question is, then,

“What was the gift of the Holy Ghost at that time communicated to the Church?”

⁶⁵ *Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8.*

⁶⁶ *Acts 2:38-39.*

—for this is what we are commanded to hold fast till He come. Was it the gift of perfect holiness in flesh? I answer, No: this we have in consequence of His life, and death, and resurrection; or, rather His life and death; for as to this, His resurrection did but seal what His life and death had purchased. That which was by His life and death accomplished is, the putting away of sin and death from mortal and corruptible flesh.

John 1

²⁹ Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.

Hebrews 9

²⁶ ...He...put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

So far, therefore, as perfect holiness is concerned, we have it in virtue of a work completed at the resurrection, not in virtue of the “promise of the Father,”⁶⁷ which He received after His resurrection.

In order to become members of His body, we must believe upon His work of putting away sin from all flesh by His life and death: by which faith we enter into a holy subsistence in the holy flesh of Christ offered for us on the cross; and are no more in the flesh, but in the Spirit; and live no more after the flesh, but after the Spirit. This regeneration, this renewal after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, this dismissal (or, as our version lamely translates it, *remission*) of sins we are baptized into, and every baptized person is answerable for the same.

But this is distinct from the gift of the Holy Ghost, into the promise of which we are also baptized; and not to be confused therewith, without confusing the work which Christ by the Spirit did in flesh with that promise of the Holy Ghost into which He entered when He went out of the world unto the Father.

There is a work which Christ did in the world; and there is, distinct from this, a glory and a power and a work, which it was put

⁶⁷ Acts 1:4.

upon Him to enjoy and to execute when He went out of the world.

- We obtain the former by eating His flesh and blood, through faith, and thereby become members of His holy flesh, to do in flesh the work of holiness which He also did.
- The other we are thereby qualified to become sharers in, by being made members of His body; and in it we share by receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, shed down upon the Church on the day of Pentecost, to enable the Church to put forth of that fullness which is in her Head, so far forth as it is convenient and proper that the same should be put forth in this mortal state, before this sinful world.

Perfect holiness is the inward law and condition of the Church, by which her union with her perfectly holy Head is preserved. Power in the Holy Ghost is her outward action, as the body of Christ, in the sight of the world; unto the manifestation of Christ's name by the Church, as He had manifested the Father's name; unto the proclamation of Christ's power, grace, and goodness unto the world, as He had proclaimed the Father's.

Christ by His union with the Father, did, in the days of His flesh, proclaim the Father's glorious name and superabounding grace; with which the Father being satisfied, does, for the time thence following, identify the name of Christ with His own, and constitute a Church in the world, which, by her union with Christ, shall be able to testify to the name and glory of Christ, who testifies to the name and glory of the Father. Christ having been, and being, the Father's true and faithful witness, does become the person witnessed of, and the Church are His witnesses; whom to witness, is to witness unto Him who witnessed unto the Father.

But in our witness we are able to go further than Christ went, for this reason: that in the days of His flesh the mortality of flesh, and sin in flesh, and the principalities and powers of darkness, therein holding their throne and revelry, were not yet conquered, condemned, and openly made a show of; the prison-house of the

grave was not yet opened, nor its captivity was not yet led captive.

The Captain of our salvation entered into a field wherein the legion of our enemies lay encamped in battle order; we enter into a field all strewn with the wrecks and spoils of their defeat. We are baptized into flesh redeemed, into a world disempowered, whose prince is judged and cast out. We come not to fight a battle, which is already fought, but to ride over the necks of a prostrate foe.

They idly speak who say that He had not so many enemies as we, that He had not flesh to contend with. Oh, what an error! It is there we have the advantage of Him, and enter into the fruits of His victory. He wrestled with sin in the flesh, and condemned it utterly, dispossessed it, and cast it out: we enter into the fruits of His warfare, of His toil and sweat and blood.

O you thoughtless and ignorant men (for ignorance is your only apology), why will you go about to take away from Christ the glory and the greatness of His work? I am ashamed of you: I grieve that such things should be spoken in the bosom of my mother's family. They cannot long be spoken without calling down judgment upon the house. Either the truth must be confessed, and the house saved, or it must be cast out, and the house destroyed.

But, to return. What portion of the power now possessed by Christ is proper to be put forth upon the earth during this season of Satan's presence therein, is still in question before us; though I hope, from what has been said, it is no longer in question how that measure and portion of it shall be put forth.

The body is the organ by which the spirit within a man does manifest itself to the world; and the body of Christ, which is the Church, is the organ by which He, acting from the invisible seat of the Father by the invisible Spirit, must manifest himself unto the world. There is no other medium of communication between Christ abiding with the Father, and the world, but the Church in the flesh: and herein the Church in the body has a manifest importance, and I would say pre-eminence of usefulness, over the

Church disembodied, in that she is the organ of communication between the invisible Christ and the visible world.

This being fixed and settled, we now come to the nice inquiry, How much of that power, which Christ has received, is it befitting to Him and the Father to put forth by the Church in this the day of His absence?

And, first, it may be asked, Why not the whole? The answer is, That if the whole were put forth, the devil would be cast out, and all wicked men with him, and sin, and death, and all obstruction, and contradiction, and darkness, and dishonor, into the lake that burns, there to consume for ever and ever; and there would be nothing to be done at His coming again.

There is an economy in the putting forth of that power which resides in the Father's throne; an economy which answers to the times and the seasons, which the Father has put in His own power. Therefore it is, that in the writings of the apostles the gift of the Holy Ghost is spoken of only as a firstfruits of that which is yet to be received; and the full harvest is made to consist in the redemption of the body: as it is written:

Romans 8

²³ And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

This passage instructs me, that the gift of the Spirit by the Church, now possessed, is the firstfruits of that complete power of the Spirit which she shall possess when the body shall be redeemed from the corruption of the grave; and the context further instructs me, that the whole creation is groaning, and travailing, and crying unto God, for a redemption which she shall receive at the same time from the bondage of corruption:

²² The whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now,

²³ And not only they...

¹⁹ The earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.

The Apostle Paul evidently saw the redemption of the bodies of the saints, and their manifestation as the sons of God, and with them the redemption of the whole creation from its present bondage, to be that complete harvest of the Spirit whereof the Church does now possess only the firstfruits—that is, the first ripe grains which could be formed into a sheaf, and presented in the temple as a wave offering unto the Lord.

A FIRSTFRUIT, OR EARNEST

Most strikingly confirmatory of this is what he declares concerning the same gift of the Spirit:

Ephesians 1

¹³ In whom also, after that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,

¹⁴ Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.

And likewise, in chapter 4 of the same Epistle, he says:

Ephesians 4

³⁰ Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption.

And the self-same language holds he twice over in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians:

2 Corinthians 1

²² Who has also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

2 Corinthians 5

⁵ Now He that has wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also has given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

In all these passages the gift of the Spirit which the Church had received, and was possessed of, is set forth as an earnest or pledge of what she is to receive and possess against that day, called *The day of redemption*, and *The redemption of the inheritance*. The inheritance is the earth and the inferior creation; not yet redeemed from the bondage of corruption, but to be redeemed, according to St. Paul,

- in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God;
- in the day of the redemption of the body;
- in the day of the resurrection of the saints,
- in the day of the casting out of the devil and his works,
- in the day of the destruction of death, and the victory over the grave.

The *earnest* (by which it is also named) is, like the firstfruits, only a part of that which is yet to be earned; and also, like them, of the same kind, but not in the same measure; a partial, not a complete thing—yea, but a small part of the whole, and yet sufficient surety that the whole shall, in the fullness of the times, be likewise ours. Wherefore, also, it is called the *seal*, being that mark which God affixes upon His people, and by which He determines that they are His.

Now if anyone has been accustomed to interpret these passages of the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost, he must, with all speed, disabuse himself of that error, which compromises a great point of personal holiness. For if the thing spoken of in these passages be regeneration and sanctification, then is that work of the Spirit only a partial and incomplete work, and we cannot look for anything beyond a firstfruits of holiness, an earnest of holiness; which is to sanctify the imperfections and shortcomings of a believer, and to fix him in very partial holiness, and to take away from him both the hope and the desire of being holy as God is holy, and perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.

No; we are baptized into perfect holiness, into the positive and absolute dismissal of all sin, into the burial of the flesh with its corruptions and lusts, the quickening of the spirit into all holiness.

Romans 8

² The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made [us] free from the law of sin and death.

And every shortcoming from this perfect righteousness is a stain upon our white raiment, which must be instantly confessed and grieved over, and washed white in the blood of the Lamb:

- It cannot be tolerated,
- It cannot be indulged,
- It cannot be sanctioned from Scripture;
- It ought not to exist within the Church;
- It is an offense to God, a disgrace to the body of Christ, and
- It cannot be justified by any means.

Those passages of Scripture, therefore, which speak of a gift of the Spirit which is only the firstfruits of something greater and better, cannot, must not, be referred to regeneration and sanctification, but to that power of government and authority entered into by Christ when He passed out of the world unto the Father; whereof it is expedient and economical that a part only should be possessed and exhibited by the Church during this our mortal estate.

It is, moreover, manifest that these passages have nothing to do with the cleansing of the conscience from dead works, which proceeds from the blood of Christ;⁶⁸ and the answer of a good conscience, which proceeds from baptism:⁶⁹ not only because these are complete works, and not firstfruits and earnest, but also because the work spoken of is connected with the redemption of the inheritance, with the deliverance of the creation, with which the work in the conscience has nothing to do.

The work of soul-cleansing, which regeneration is, is wholly spiritual, and not part or parcel of the work of redeeming the body and the inheritance, which is wholly natural or physical. The creation natural or physical was finished when the body of man was created out of the dust of the earth: the creation spiritual began when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul.

⁶⁸ *Hebrews* 9:13-14.

⁶⁹ *1 Peter* 3:15-22.

In the redemption, or regeneration, the thing is reversed. First the soul within is cleansed, whereby Christ proves himself to have been the Creator of the invisible spirit, Him who breathed it into man; and the spirit of man, thus redeemed and regenerated by its Creator, is left alone in the midst of an unredeemed and unregenerated world, to show its separateness therefrom, and superiority thereto, by triumphing over all creation's evil propensities, and enforcing all creation, with the body which commands it, to do homage unto Christ its King and Lord.

And to make it the more manifest that this period between the regeneration and the redemption of the body is the period for testifying the supremacy of spirit over nature, of soul over body and bodily dependencies, not only is the body and the world its servant, left under the law of corruption and death, and yet made obedient unto the law of holiness and life; but also the person of Christ, by whose power alone this supremacy of the regenerate soul is maintained, is taken out of the world, and the communication between Him and our souls is carried on, not through sense, but through faith, not by vision, but by the invisible Spirit.

So that, ever since the departure of Christ out of the world unto the Father, it has been a season and a time for making apparent, and putting beyond doubt, the truth, that Christ was the Father of the living soul; that He is the Redeemer of it; and that, through faith and union with Him, living souls can and will govern the corporeal world.

In one word, during the absence of Christ there have been regenerate souls and an unregenerate world, and these regenerate souls have performed the will of God in despite of unregenerate bodies and an unregenerate world. This, now, is the mystery of the regeneration of the soul, which, as we have said, is not part and parcel of the body and world to be regenerate, but is the opposite thereof.

And therefore I conclude, with a certainty which they only who understand doctrine can feel, that those passages, in which the gift of the Holy Ghost is set forth as an earnest of the redemption

of the world, cannot have any reference whatever to the regeneration of the soul, or cleansing of the conscience, or renewal of the spirit, which we are baptized into.

These thoughts may be judged more deep than pertinent to the subject in hand. They are indeed very deep, and I devoutly praise God for having been able to express what I have long brooded in my mind: but they are likewise very pertinent, and yield a complete solution of the question in hand.

For, seeing that the thing which is now proceeding, according to the economy of the divine purpose, is the manifestation of a renewed spirit's power to do God's will, despite of a rebel flesh and world; and to testify the power which Christ, by means of the reasonable soul, shall yet exercise over the world, to quicken the dust of corrupted bodies, to renew the decayed face of the earth, and to cast forth of the world's verge the recreant spirits of darkness, with their retinue of wicked men; and seeing that, while we have the completeness of the former, we have only the firstfruits of the latter; we ought now to find in the renewed spirits of men a power and faculty to exhibit in the body and upon the body, in the world and upon the world, such actings of Christ as shall not only foreshow, but really be, a firstfruits and earnest of that perfect and complete acting in which He is to go forth when He comes to redeem the body and to redeem the inheritance.

POWER OVER FIVE AREAS OF CREATION

If, now, you ask me to come to closer quarters, and tell you distinctly what these actings be, I accept the challenge most willingly, and proceed to show you them, first, in promise from the mouth of the Lord; and, secondly, in existence in the Church.

This power is contained in promise in many parts of Scripture: as in *Isaiah* 8:18, where Christ declares of himself and His children by regeneration, that they are for signs and for wonders; and in the prophecy of *Joel*, which has reference to that fullness of which we have received, and do enjoy, only the firstfruits; and twice by the Lord in these words:

Matthew 17

²⁰ If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Matthew 21

²¹ ...you shall say unto this mountain, Be removed, and be cast into the sea; it shall be done.

And again in that strong asseveration:

John 14

¹² Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father.

But it is most fully developed in the last verses of the *Gospel by Mark*, from which I prefer to set forth the endowment in promise. The last six verses of that chapter contain the substance of the Church's commission, given to her in the persons of the eleven apostles, commanding them to go and preach the gospel of the kingdom to every creature under heaven, with the assurance:

Mark 16

¹⁶ He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned.

Then adds He these words:

¹⁷ And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

¹⁸ They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

These words being spoken, it is said:

¹⁹ ...He was received up into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God;

²⁰ And that they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord confirming the word with signs following.

Now, then, it is to these signs that I would direct your attention, as containing the particulars of that gift of power which was su-

peradded to the work of complete regeneration sealed up to the believer in baptism. They consist of five particulars:

1. POWER OVER DEVILS

This is a firstfruits of that casting out of Satan and his angels into the bottomless pit, to be reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day, which shall be accomplished at the redemption of the body and the inheritance.

And because Satan is the author and continuer of the bondage from which Christ came to redeem, whose works Christ was manifested to destroy, the Church, in order to possess and show forth unto the world what Christ will yet do by that devil whose thrall the world is, has given to her power in the Spirit to cast out devils from the bodies of men. And thus does she rebuke the world of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged; and she shows that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto men.

When their children are able to cast the devils out, Christ's supremacy in the spiritual world, the completeness of His redemption, is continually declared by this power in the Church to cast out devils. And a testimony is continually kept up for the truth, against the continual lie of Satan and the world, that he is its prince, and that all its kingdoms are his.

“No,” says the Church; “Christ is the King, and in His name I cast Satan and his tribes out of the bodies of men.”

2. POWER OVER THE HUMAN SPIRIT

The second of those particulars embodied in the gift of the Holy Ghost is, that they should “speak with new tongues;” which had been prophesied of by *Isaiah*,⁷⁰ and was given on the day of Pentecost.

Now this is the demonstration that Christ is the Lord of human spirits, as the former is the demonstration of His being Lord over evil spirits. For to use my tongue is the prerogative of my soul; no other human person but myself can use it; if, therefore, it be used in such a manner as I cannot—for example, to speak a tongue

⁷⁰ *Isaiah* 28:11.

which I do not understand, and in that tongue to utter reasonable speech—then is it true that another holds the mastery over me.

Who that other is, must be determined by the thing which is spoken: for devils, we know, did use the tongues of men to utter things which they themselves knew not, and could not know; confessing Jesus to be the Christ, and the Holy One of God. And, therefore, in order to determine and try the spirit which spoke, certain tests were given, of which these two are the chief: whether their words bore testimony of the true flesh⁷¹ and to the real lordship of Christ.⁷² This being ascertained, then the spirit which possessed the man, and used His tongue, is known to be the Spirit of God; which is distributed through the body by Christ, the Head of the body.

Christ therefore is proved to be Lord of human reason, inhabiter of the souls of men, not by a figure, but in very truth, when forth from the souls of men He speaks the glorious things of God in words which they understand not, and of which they must receive the interpretation at another time, or from another person, certainly by another act of the Spirit of Christ.

The presence of Christ in the souls of His people; His power to actuate their will, and to use their tongue, and by it to express the forms of reasonable truth, while they themselves are all passive in His hands, as the trumpet in the hand of the priest; does clearly demonstrate Him to be the Lord of the souls of men, and able to use their tongues as hereafter He will do, in giving forth His word unto all the regions of creation.

It is a firstfruits of that power which shall be hereafter, inasmuch as, though it be uttered to all the nations of the earth, it is not by them obeyed; whereas, in the time to come, in the eternal age, through them, even through the members of His Church, He shall speak to all regions of the world, and it shall be done.

⁷¹ 1 John 4:2.

⁷² 1 Corinthians 12:3.

The former proves Him to be the Lord of evil spirits, to cast them out of men; this proves Him to be the Lord of human spirits, to fill them with the wisdom and the power of God; and these two together do leave mankind without excuse; for what does man want, but a Redeemer who is able to cast the devil out and to bring God into Him again?

There are many other things connected with the gift of tongues, into which we cannot enter in this place; but that which we have stated is, we believe, the substance of it considered as a sign.

3. POWER OVER THE ANIMAL CREATION

Now the third particular brings us at once out of the spiritual into the material world: "They shall take up serpents." It was said of the serpent:

Genesis 3

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman.

And between serpents and mankind there is a deadly enmity, insomuch that the poison of serpents will not only almost instantaneously destroy life, but reduce the body to corruption. And therefore in this place it is put forth as the representative of that enmity which is come between man and the lower creatures, which were made to reverence, to serve, and not to destroy him.

Now to this curse of rebelliousness the creatures were made subject not willingly; it is not their nature by creation, but it is the cruel sign of their stern bondage to the enemy of man. By receiving power from the Holy Ghost, therefore, to take up serpents, it is signified that Christ has redeemed the lower creatures also from their bondage; and restored man to that supremacy over the animals, and the animals to that innocent obedience of man, with, and for which, man and they were created.

The Church, therefore, by possessing this power to take up serpents, gives a manifest sign unto the world that a time is surely to come when:

Isaiah 11

⁶ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them:

⁷ And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox:

⁸ And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

The Church, by possessing this power, has in her hand the earnest and firstfruits of that creation right:

Psalm 8

⁶ You made him to have dominion over the works of your hands; You have put all things under his feet:

⁷ All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

⁸ The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas.

This power Christ has purchased for himself, and possesses in full right as Lord of all: which, however, it suits not the economy of the Father's times that He should take upon Him at present, but of which He gives to the Church an earnest, and by her gives to the world a sign, that He will in the fullness of the time take unto himself.

4. POWER OVER THE ELEMENTS

But beside the animal creation, which was originally subject unto man, and is now subject unto him again in the person of Christ Jesus, there is the inanimate or elemental creation also, which has escaped from its subserviency, and become enslaved unto evil.

The poisons which the earth produces, the noxious vapors exhaled from the waters, and the deadly infections which the air scatters abroad, the storms and tempests which devastate the face of the world—these, and all other violences, are the signs of that bondage into which sin has brought all things, and out of which Christ by His righteousness has redeemed all things. And when the fullness of the time is come for Him to appear again, He shall come as the Liberator of all nature from her thralldom.

If now, Christ have in hand power to redeem all nature out of the bonds of evil, and the Church have in the Holy Ghost a first-fruits thereof, she must possess the power of miracles, to arrest the evil course of things, and to turn them into that righteous course which they shall observe forever; power she ought to possess over the laws of the world, such as was possessed by our Lord when He stilled the raging winds and calmed the tempestuous deep.

And forasmuch as poisons are the most pregnant evidences of the evil condition of nature, Christ, by giving to him that believes power over the same to suspend their evil effects, does thereby give unto His Church the best firstfruits of that power which he now possesses, and she shall hereafter possess,—the power to press out from every plant, and from every element of nature, the various principles of death and destructiveness.

For which reason it is, that in the Scriptures all nature is represented as rejoicing in the prospect of the Lord's coming; as for example:

Psalm 96

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof;

¹² Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

¹³ Before the Lord: for He comes to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.

By the last two particulars are established the supremacy of man's body over all nature, and the ministry of all nature to its health and well-being, as parts of the redemption which Christ has wrought out for those that believe; and by the two former, the supremacy of man's soul over the devils, and its subjection to God through the Holy Spirit, are likewise shown to be of that redemption purchased by Christ.

5. POWER OVER THE HUMAN BODY

But there still remains one part of creation—to wit, man's body—over which, by these signs, the redemption of Christ should be shown to extend; and this we have as the last particular:

Mark 16

¹⁸ They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Sickness is sin apparent in the body, the presentiment of death, the forerunner of corruption. Disease of every kind is mortality begun.

Now, as Christ came to destroy death, and will yet redeem the body from the bondage of corruption, if the Church is to have a firstfruits or earnest of this power, it must be by receiving power over diseases, which are the firstfruits and earnest of death. And this being given to her, completes the circle of her power. For in creation there is no more than these five parts; the pure spirit, the embodied soul of man, the body of man, the animal creation, and the inanimate world: of all which sin has taken possession, and over all which Christ has obtained superiority, to reconstitute them in that way which shall for ever demonstrate the being and attributes of God.

This superiority, this ownership, He now inherits in sole right and possession; but, evermore willing to show forth His dutifulness to His Father, not less on heaven's throne than in the garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, He does wait upon the Father's will to determine the time when the day of complete redemption shall at length arrive; and the Father, in order to gratify the Son, and make known His surpassing goodness and the riches of His glory, does beget unto Him, out of sinful flesh, a body, the Church, unto whom He may communicate His fullness, and by whom He may express it unto all creation; ruling and governing, by these His kings and priests, those innumerable worlds which He has purchased with His blood (for the heavenly things, as well as the earthly things, were purified by His blood).

And meanwhile, until the day of the refreshing, until the restitution of all things comes, He does, by means of this Church,

which the Father has given to Him for a body, and which He has informed with His own Spirit, communicate a firstfruits and earnest of that power which He is hereafter by their means to express in its fullness, and to hold forever.

And this He does to the end that devils, and devil-possessed men, may know the certainty of that doom which abides them, and that the latter may cast in their lot with the righteous and be saved; while to the bodies of men and to all inferior creation, He does make sure that redemption from the grave and from the curse which they shall surely obtain.

This firstfruits of power, to cast the devils into hell, to raise the bodies of the dead, and to hold the superiority of all inferior creation, being possessed by the believing Church, does continually demonstrate and signify unto the world who, and of what kind, their Redeemer is; who, and of what kind, is that man, Jesus of Nazareth, whom God has constituted both Christ and Lord.

This firstfruits and earnest of the inheritance of power and prerogative, which under Him we are yet to hold, is likewise the Church's argument to men of their certain destruction, if they come not forth from the world; of their superlative dignity and honor, if they do come forth from it into the bosom of the Church.

- It is a sign of that which we preach Christ to be,—Lord of all.
- It is a sign of that which we preach Him as about to do,—to cast out devils, to raise the dead, and to liberate the creature.
- It is a sign of what we, the Church, are, in real uninterrupted union with Him, holding a real power under Him,—the arm of His strength, the temple of His presence, the tongue of His Spirit, the manifoldness of His wisdom, the kings and the priests of Christ for God.

This, now, is an exhibition of the length and breadth of that gift of the Holy Ghost which the Church has, in earnest of that fullness of Him that fills all in all; which is her prerogative; for which

in the fullness of time she waits; holding it now in faith, then to have it in possession.

NOT MERELY AN EVIDENCE OF GOD'S POWER

Our evidence-writers have never comprehended the depths of this subject: their books are mere rag-rolls, fragments, and tatters of the substantial doctrine: no Christian writings, but metaphysical or antiquarian researches. These miracles they make to stand merely in their power: and so, say they, they demonstrate God to be with the worker of them; and if so, then are they signs that he is sent by God, and ought with prostration of mind to be listened to.

Now, be this granted, and what to do has it with Christ? It were an argument for a heathen as good as for a Christian. It is merely an argument that the God of nature is with this man; there is no recognition of Christ as the doer of the work; there is no recognition of the work itself being part and parcel of Christ's redemption. Indeed, the substance or nature of the work is never once considered by these evidence-writers. But, besides the leanness and emptiness of their speculation, I deny both the premises and the conclusion.

First, the premises, that a mere miracle demonstrates God to be the worker. Miracles have been done by the power of Satan and Beelzebub; and more are promised to be done; and no man can tell what power beyond man's science the spirits of darkness possess. It is not the powerfulness, but the moral character of the miracle, that proves it to be divine. Is it in the way of evil or of good? in the way of redemption or of bondage? is it in furtherance or hindrance of Satan's kingdom? The miracle appeals to the moral part of man; to the conscience, and not to his power.

Next, I deny their conclusion. Men may do miracles in the name of Christ, and yet be wicked men: as our Lord himself declares, that many shall say in that day, Have we not in your name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works? of whom He shall profess that He never knew them. A man may possess the powers

of the world to come, and yet fall away into evil courses.⁷³ Wherefore I say, that the circumstance of a man's doing miracles, or having done miracles, does not seal up every word he speaks as truth, even though these miracles be done in the name of Christ, and by the power of God. The word He speaks appeals to the conscience of man; and God did never intend that man in hearing His word should be less than man, a being responsible, and conscious of moral truth.

But my present occupation is not to reprove the modern evidence-writers; whom I would not have noticed in this place, had it not been to show the true origin of that most erroneous opinion of these latter times, and of this Protestant section of the Church, that these gifts of the Holy Ghost were intended only for a season, until the canon of Scripture was completed, and the Book had found a place and an authority among men.

The whole of this idea is a tissue of error and contradiction, which it is not my present business to expose. Yet from this account, meager and false as it is, of the "signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost," has sprung the diabolical hatred with which the Christian *scavans*⁷⁴—for I cannot call them divines—are filled upon the very mention of the existence of these gifts in the Church. They are like men demented, given over, and toppling to their downfall.

The way in which the idea has been scouted and hooted at, by what are called divines (but if they would retain the name much longer, they must make it good by other means than scandalous abuse and mocking raillery), is to me the fearfulest sign of the Protestant Church, and especially of the evangelical set in the bosom of it. But to return from this digression.

⁷³ Hebrews 6:4-6.

⁷⁴ PP Editor's note: the word is of unknown meaning. Possibly related to "skavan" which means "to scratch or shave".

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

Having set out the largeness and the particularity of the gift or power which the Church has given to her, in earnest of her full inheritance, and that she may serve for a witness of that which she preaches concerning the present lordship and future action of Christ; we now come to take a view of the same thing, not as it lies in promise, but as it is in real existence and was in active exertion in the Church.

And to the intent that we may here, as always, have under our feet the firm continent of the Word of God, and not sail widely in the waste of fanciful speculations or scholastic inventions, we betake ourselves to the 12th chapter of the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, to see there the form and function of the Christian Church, in that state in which Jesus did constitute it, and in which he requires us to hold it fast till He come.

The apostle, speaking of the state of the Church at Corinth, and taking in hand to order it aright, and so to leave upon the record of Scripture the scheme of a rightly-constituted Church; and having already discoursed of the true foundation of Christ and Him crucified, and of holy discipline, and of separateness from idolatry and fornication, and of the right administration of the Lord's Supper, does in this chapter take up the subject of spiritual gifts, or gifts of the Spirit, in contradistinction from charity, which is the more excellent way, and the bond of perfectness, that spirit of complete holiness into which we are baptized.

And concerning these he first asserts three things in general, to point out the several parts which the several persons in the Godhead had therein.

And, first, he asserts that the diversities of gifts which were dispersed throughout the members of the Church, like the diversity of members in the body, did not prove that there were many spirits, but that there was one Spirit, the one life of the whole, and dividing unto every one according as He will; that no one member possessed the whole power of the Spirit, but only a part thereof, and craved as much the help and ministry of every other part as

they in their turn did crave of it; Christ alone having the seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God.

And therefore it is observed by the apostle, secondly, that there are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord; that is to say, in other words, various persons into whose hands the administration of these gifts was committed, and who were responsible for the use of them in behalf of the whole body and of the world without; according as it is written:

Romans 12

⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

⁷ Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teaches, on teaching;

⁸ Or he that exhorts, on exhortation; he that gives, let him do it with simplicity; he that rules, with diligence; he that shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

The third observation in general is, that as the substance of all the gifts is the one Spirit, and the administrator of them all the one Lord; so the in-worker of the gifts in all the persons is the one and the same God, whose Godhead the Son is filled with in His human nature to serve out to men, while the Holy Ghost carries on and supplies the service. So that verily these gifts, ministries, and operations are God working by means of men what His good pleasure is; even as the apostle declares:

1 Corinthians 14

²⁴ But if all prophecy, and there come in one that believes not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

²⁵ And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

These three observations the apostle makes, to prevent the diversity of the gifts and the ministries and the operations from leading to schism, instead of preserving unity, as their intention is; his object being the same as is expressed more fully in the 4th

chapter of the *Ephesians*, from the third to the seventeenth verse, where the unity stands in these particulars:

Ephesians 4

⁴ ...one body, one Spirit, one hope of your calling,

⁵ One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

⁶ One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all,

Here is presented a sevenfold and perfect unity. These three observations are of great price, as teaching us that the Church, under Christ its Head, and with the Spirit for its inspiration, is the one great instrument of God in which and by which to carry on all His operations; a temple for the Eternal God to dwell in; a sufficient body for expressing all His mind, and doing all His will.

This is a very great, and almost an inexpressible idea; but it is the only adequate idea of the Church, considered, not in relation to Christ, but considered in relation to the incomprehensible God. In relation to Christ, it is as the body to the Head; but in relation to God, it is as the whole body under its Head to the Will.

And herein lies the necessity that the Head of this body should himself be adequate to the comprehension of God, filling His bosom; otherwise there were no understanding how a finite thing could keep up communication and sympathy, proportion and measure, with what is infinite.

The whole mystery of redemption is God's obtaining for himself such a complete organ of expression and of action, in the finiteness of which the attributes of His own infinite being might be truly and fully expressed. To procure for Godhead such a fit organ, the Son and the Holy Ghost do, without departing or separating from the Godhead (which is impossible), take connection with the creature, and from a portion thereof do constitute that most seemly and adequate Shechinah of the Eternal God.

- This portion of the creation is the election;
- the Shechinah, or glorious habitation thus constructed, is the Church;
- the Head of it, or holder of it up, is Christ;

- the Life of it, or the holder of it together, is the Holy Ghost;
- the materials thus headed up and held together for a dwelling-place, and, so to speak, embodiment of God, are all of the fallen creation; of the creation after it has proved that in itself is neither strength nor aptitude; of the creation dissolved and dead; to prove that it needed both a Super-creation Head and Life, Holder-up and Holder-together.

Ah me! what a contemplation it is! But we must again betake ourselves to the details.

This being the true idea of the Church, God-ward considered, it must needs be that from the beginning of its being it should put forth the germ of its own perfection; like all the inferior works of God, that this, His chief work, should reveal its constant law, and begin to be in growth.

Now the Church began to be from the time that Christ was glorified and became the quickening Spirit. As the human race began to be from the time Adam was endowed with the power of generation and received command to multiply; so the Church began to be from the time that the Second Adam was perfected, and, by receiving from the Father the Holy Ghost, had power by regeneration to beget sons of God—that is, from the day of Pentecost—and therefore from this time it should begin to show forth the information and inworking of God within it.

THE GIFTS

How it did so, let us now show out, by pursuing this 12th chapter of the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*; and so discover what that is which we are commanded to hold fast till He come.

The gifts which the apostle now proceeds to enumerate as possessed by the Church, are in general called “the manifestation of the Spirit,”—that is, the way which the Spirit takes to manifest or show himself; to make himself evident to others, to anyone who may chance to enter the assembly, and hear and see the things which are said and done.

This answers to our first idea, that the Church is to Christ, while He acts in the Spirit, what the body is to the soul—an instrument by which it reveals both its presence and its manifold dispositions and energies:

Ephesians 3

¹⁰ To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

And these manifestations of the Spirit, says He:

1 Corinthians 12

⁷ ...[are] given to every one to profit withal.

Or for profitable use; not to be hid in a napkin, or buried in the earth, but to be turned to account and used for the common good: as it is written by Peter concerning the same subject:

1 Peter 4

¹⁰ As every man has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

¹¹ If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God gives: that God in all things may be glorified, through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Now to execute and fulfill this purpose the constant presence of charity is necessary; otherwise the precious talent rusts and corrodes its own possessor. In order that these gifts may be graces, the work of the regeneration is absolutely necessary—holiness and charity—to bring us into the same devotedness to God and man in which Christ was. and to keep us ever so. For want of this it is that many possessing these gifts fall into schism, and some into total apostasy. They are not the best thing, but they are something, and that no mean thing, if to exhibit God and Christ and the Spirit to the world, and to edify the Church, be no mean thing.

THE WORD OF WISDOM AND WORD OF KNOWLEDGE

Then comes the enumeration of these gifts waited upon by divers ministers, whereof the first two stand in word; the one the “word of wisdom,” the other the “word of knowledge.”

1 Corinthians 12

⁸ For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

The former refers to mysteries of doctrine which needed exposition; the latter to events, whether past, present, or to come. I gather from the second verse of the 13th chapter,

1 Corinthians 13

² Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge,

—that the word of wisdom has regard to mysteries; and from the eighth verse, that the word of knowledge has respect to events of this imperfect state and temporary dispensation, which shall be done away. The two occur in combination,⁷⁵ where the apostle, carrying his thoughts to the consummation of God’s purpose, bursts out into ecstasy over the wisdom of the method and the knowledge of the end:

Romans 11

³³ Oh the depths both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

The word of knowledge is, when applied to the past, learning; when applied to the present, knowledge; when applied to the future, foreknowledge: and it lays out the particulars of which wisdom discovers the divine unity, the wonderful arrangement, the relations of part to part, and their application to the well-being of the soul, and to the moral duties of life. The one tells the tale, the other adds the moral.

The Church of Scotland has made both these standing ordinances to this day; she has held these fast; requiring that in every flock there be one at least with the word of wisdom, endowed of the Spirit, whose name is the bishop, or pastor, or minister, and

⁷⁵ *Romans* 11:33.

his office to apply the truth wisely to the conscience of the people and the exigencies of life; another with the word of knowledge, whose name is the doctor, or teacher, and his business to lay out the history and grounds of truth and error, and to handle them doctrinally, but not to apply them.

Of these the latter is considered as the lower degree. I think this distinction is substantially correct, and that the division of office and of gift is a fine relict of the primitive churches: would that the rest had been as carefully preserved!

I have often admired the steadiness with which the Scottish people have ever insisted that these gifts of the preacher and the teacher should stand in “word,” as they are given in the passage before us, and not in written and studied compositions; insisting that it is of the essence of the minister’s office that he should receive both the matter and the word from the Holy Ghost. Therefore the apostle says, that he taught wisdom...

1 Corinthians 2

¹³ ...not in the words which man’s wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches.

For, according to the text, there is in the Church a gift “to speak wisdom,” and another gift “to speak knowledge;” and of the nine gifts, only these two have the character of “word.” We may therefore well believe that this is of their essence; that “the word” is a part of the gift, and that those who hold for a verbal inspiration of the matter of Scripture are correct.

These two gifts are, however, not the only ones which stood in utterance by the mouth, which belongs also “to prophesy.” But there is this difference, as I judge; that the prophet had not the word given to him, but only the matter, with the high gift of embodying it in the form known by the name prophecy, which we shall hereafter consider; whereas the other two had the matter brought to them in the form of word, and were only the mouth to give it utterance.

By these Christ showed forth His wisdom to unlock all mysteries, and His knowledge of all events; and His capacity of embodying them by the word of others, from whom He was separated personally by being altogether out of the world: showing to us the power of the Spirit to bring the word from the Father, and utter it in the world by means of men; and teaching how, in the age to come, He will use men for the conveyancers of His Word—or, rather, the Spirit for the conveyancer, and men for the utterers of it, in whatever region of the world their appointed station may be.

No doubt it was this gift which furnished and fitted the evangelists and the apostles for their work of inditing the Scriptures; the former having the word of knowledge, to recall and narrate events; the latter the word of wisdom, to decide questions which had arisen in the Church, and give full counsels for all cases that should arise.

FAITH

Next to these is faith:

1 Corinthians 12

⁹ To another faith, by the same Spirit.

This is not saving faith, or the “one faith,”⁷⁶ without which a man cannot be saved; which is not a particular gift conferred upon one and not upon another member of the body, but the common possession of them all; and is of that complete, and not partial, gift into which we are baptized, and by which we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Lord in the Eucharist.

Of what kind this faith is, we have described to us in the 13th chapter, by direct contrast with that charity which is not partial, but common; which is not accidental, but essential to a Christian. When I say *accidental*, I would not have it to be understood as if I regarded the possession of these spiritual gifts as matter of indifference to the Church whether she have them or not; for I believe them to be her talents to trade upon, her setting-up and outfit in

⁷⁶ *Ephesians* 4:5.

the present world, for probation of her faithfulness and adjudication of her future reward. The parable of the talents has these gifts, as I judge, in view. It is not natural gifts, but spiritual gifts of the kingdom, which are there treated of.

When therefore it so happens, as at this time among us Protestants, that the Church not only does not desire to possess, but does utterly abjure their being responsible for, these gifts, she does worse than the man with the one talent, and shall receive her reward, if she repent not, and give not heed to the witness which is now raised in her ears concerning her endowments.

The faith here spoken of, and which I call accidental and peculiar, not spiritual and catholic, because one Christian may have it and another may not have it, is the same spoken of in:

1 Corinthians 13

² And though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains...

And this, again, carries us, as by a direct quotation, to our Lord's declaration to His disciples, twice repeated—once upon the occasion of His healing the devil-possessed child,⁷⁷ the other of His cursing the barren fig-tree:

Matthew 21

²¹ If you have faith like a grain of mustard-seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

This is what divines call the faith of miracles, as distinguished from saving faith. And yet it is not the gift of miracles, which may be divided from it, and is divided from it in the text, and given to another. What, then, is it? I think it is that which has the same relation to the actions of the Spirit, that word has to His thoughts: it is the strong confidence in Christ's power, in the presence of which power it is done, and without which it cannot be done.

But, while this gift of faith is the substratum upon which the various actings of power that follow do rest, it has doubtless something in itself distinctive enough to form a gift, without any

⁷⁷ *Matthew 17:20.*

addition of healing, or miracles, or tongues; which appears to be, the power of relying upon the word which has been spoken out of the gift of wisdom and of knowledge.

To utter a word is not to believe: when a man has been the tongue of the Spirit, he has done his part; it is the part of another to fasten hold upon it, and to keep it laid up in his faith and to be established upon it, and to be the stay of the Church in adversities. As the man with the word of wisdom rises up in perplexities, and gives forth the resolution of God; so the man with faith rises up in adversities, and recalls the memory and reawakens the faith of things uttered by God.

These men of faith are the forlorn hope of the army, who never lose heart, but believe all things possible to God. Such men I know, who cannot utter a syllable without a stammering lip, but have tenfold the faith of others, who can speak like the oracles of God.

This gift of faith I look upon as being in the Church what indomitable resolution and never-failing confidence is in the natural character of some men: it sticks at nothing which God has said, but believes its very jots and tittles; it fears nothing which God in His providence sends, but ever says to the children of Israel, "Go forward."⁷⁸

By having such an organ of the Spirit in the body, Christ shows that His Church has capacity of believing all that He can say, and therefore is a fit instrument for executing all that He can desire. The order of God's providence is, first, word; then, faith in him who hears it; then, execution by the means of them who have believed. And while it stands lingering in the stage of faith, the Lord brings the most faith-trying occurrences, so that it should seem to some utterly impossible to accomplish the thing; and He ever says:

Isaiah 7

⁹ Except you believe, you cannot be established.

⁷⁸ *Exodus* 14:15.

Faith bears the fiery proof, and in due time receives the reward of accomplishment. To this intrepidity of faith, God calls some with a special calling.

HEALING

The next is:

1 Corinthians 12

⁹ ...to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.

Of this we have already spoken, when viewing this subject under the aspect of promise⁷⁹. It is the fifth of the signs of the Redeemer and the complete redemption:

Mark 16

¹⁸ ...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

And certain persons in the Church were entrusted with the dispensation thereof unto the whole body, and unto those that were without: for these gifts were not to be hoarded up within the Church, but to be traded with; they were for the confirmation of that word to every creature under heaven, to whom the word was preached, not by an appeal to a miracle—which is, in respect of truth, no more discernment than the appeal to arms is in respect of justice—but by a demonstration in the act of that thing which they preached in word.

The word preached is, that Christ has redeemed men from the power of death; and in sign thereof we do in His name heal all manner of diseases, and upon occasion raise the dead (as is recorded both of Peter and Paul), and the conclusion is, that the name of Christ is indeed able to effect those things preached.

The sign is part and parcel of the thing preached, and by being so, confirms it. It is not an appeal to blind power, but it is an appeal to Jesus to confirm the truth preached, by giving a sign of His possessing this power which we assign to Him, and a first-fruits of that action which we preach Him about to perform.

⁷⁹ See Chapter: “Digression to Discover what the Church is Charged to Hold Fast Till Christ Come,” Section: “Power Over Five Areas of Creation,” Sub: “5. Power Over the Human Body.”

It is not by the transmission of this through eighteen centuries of tradition, that the unlearned world are to be convinced—a process by which, I will venture to say, that none but a few anti-quiaries were ever convinced;—but it is by the abiding of them in, and the putting of them forth by, the Church, wherever and so long as she is established, until Christ come, that the world is to be taught that Jesus of Nazareth is the world’s gracious Healer, and wise Teacher, and merciful Redeemer, and righteous Governor.

It is not by putting a book into every man’s hand, of the genuineness and authenticity of which it takes no mean store of learning to be convinced, but it is by a continuous Church holding forth the word of the gospel of life to the nations, and attesting the truth of what they declare concerning Jesus, by calling His name over all distressed nature, and giving it redemption and joy.

This is what the Church was intended to be: God’s witnesses of Christ to every nation and every generation, until He should send Him to accomplish all which had been preached for a witness. But now, lo! the Bible Society is our Church, and the Bible is our God!

These gifts of healing bespeak Christ’s mercy unto and His power over all flesh. How oft is it said in the gospels:

Matthew 12

¹⁵ ...and He healed them all.

And Peter and Paul had a still more indiscriminate ministry; for to them were brought handkerchiefs from the sick, that they might touch them; and the infirm were laid by the way that the shadow of the apostle might overshadow some of them.

That dispensation of a redeeming providence which Judea had for three years and a half in the person of the Lord, the whole world was intended to have in the Church; and would have had, but for our unfaithfulness to our Master, our self-sufficiency in ourselves, and our unmercifulness to the world.

Forgetting for what end we were elected, even to show forth the power of Him who has called us,⁸⁰ we grew vain of our election, and rioted in the pride of it, and became hardhearted; and did such things and held such opinions, under the covert of that name “election,” as many are now doing who deny the universal love of God, and the real work of Christ to condemn sin in the flesh. We are acting over again the shameful history of the children of Israel, and are preparing for a more terrible tragedy than theirs.

WORKING OF MIRACLES

Next comes:

1 Corinthians 12

¹⁰ To another the working of miracles...

The passage in *Hebrews* which gives a brief enumeration of these works, divides them thus:

Hebrews 2

⁴ ...signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts (distributions) of the Holy Ghost.

Of these four, the third is that now under consideration. The first, “signs,” we have treated of in the foregoing exposition of the last verses of *Mark*,

Mark 16

¹⁷ These signs shall follow them that believe.

A sign is properly a token in which the thing signified can be recognized; and in those four particulars we showed is to be recognized the whole salvation of soul, body, and inheritance, which we preach. The “wonders” are almost constantly coupled with the signs, and in one place distinguished from them:

Acts 2

¹⁹ And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath.

And sometimes “miracles,” or powers, are added to both; as in recounting the proof of Christ’s mission in the same chapter, and

⁸⁰ 1 Peter 2:9.

Paul's justifying his own mission, *2 Corinthians* 12:12. It is hard to distinguish these things, and I know not whether it can be done. Our translators have not done it, and perhaps they are right.

If, however, I were to venture a distinction, it would be, that the wonder is something extraordinary exhibited to the sight—as the turning of the sun into darkness, and the moon into blood; the rending of the veil of the temple, and of the rocks, and the bringing on of darkness;—and the miracle, or power, is the doing of something mighty beyond all comparison; as the calming of the storm, or the laying of the deep, or the multiplying of loaves, or the changing of water into wine.

Although both of these are called signs in the original, as is also the healing of the lame man by Peter and John; but throughout all that discourse in the 11th chapter of *Matthew*, for reproof of the cities where His mighty works had been chiefly done, the word used is “powers,” or “miracles.”

Wonders I take to be remarkable occurrences which yet contradict no law of nature, as Elisha's bringing fire from heaven; but miracles are a strong resistance, suspension, and turning back of nature's fixed powers. Yet all of these, both the wonders and miracles, being interpreted aright, are signs of that kingdom of heaven which we preach as about to be revealed under the government of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Besides these three, there is a fourth classification in this passage of the *Hebrews*, which is entitled:

Hebrews 2

⁴ ...gifts [or distributions] of the Holy Ghost.

And the like addition do we find the apostle Paul making, when enumerating the works of God in and by him. The passage is in *Romans* 15:19, and somewhat obscured in our translation; literally it is,

“In power of signs and wonders, in power of the Spirit of God;”

—another form of power. Accordingly, we find that those same apostles who were required to wait for the day of Pentecost, in order to receive “power from on high,”⁸¹ had at that time, and during their ministry, possessed power to heal the sick, to cast out devils, and to trample upon all the power of the enemy:

Matthew 10

⁸ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils.

This they possessed, and yet did they not possess that power or gift of the Holy Ghost which they received on Pentecost. They then did such works as He did, but they were after Pentecost to do greater works than these, through the gift of the Holy Ghost, which He was to receive by going to the Father and to shed down upon them. To this new power, “the gift of the Holy Ghost,” the apostle’s fourth distribution in the 2nd of the *Hebrews*, and second in the 15th of the *Romans*, has reference.

Our inquiry at present, however, is into the gift of miracles, which was a manifestation of the Spirit given to a certain order in the Church. This order was instituted in the body on purpose to set forth Christ’s mighty power to withstand, to turn again, and to direct for the ends of grace and goodness those potent springs of nature, those powers of the heavens and the earth, which Satan has succeeded in distorting from their true and right intention to an evil use: where famine is, to make plenty; where blindness is, to give sight; and lameness strength, and death life: that men might know that cause and effect is only an appointment or permission of God while it pleases Him; and that the laws of the material world are not necessary, but under the control and in the hands of our merciful Redeemer.

If the Church had been still possessed of this memorial and foreshowing of that great revolution in nature which is to be effected at the coming of the Lord, there would not have been this universal feeling and outcry,

⁸¹ *Luke 24:49.*

2 Peter 3

⁴ All things have continued as they were since the beginning;

—this bondage of the will of man to the fatality of cause and effect, and all those speculations, which have so strengthened skepticism, concerning the possibility or impossibility of attesting a miracle, would have been prevented; and the present entire unbelief of a miracle being ever again, would, as ashamed, hide its face, instead of exposing itself in all public places.

This power of miracles must either be speedily revived in the Church, or there will be a universal dominion of the mechanical philosophy; and faith will be fairly expelled, to give place to the law of cause and effect acting and ruling in the world of mind, as it does in the world of sense.

What now is preaching become, but the skill of a man to apply causes which may produce a certain known effect upon a congregation?—so much of argument, so much of eloquence, so much of pathos, so much of doctrine, so much of morality; and all to bring the audience into a certain frame of mind, and so dismiss them well wrought upon by the preacher and well pleased with themselves.

The effectual check to all this would be, to dispute with the enemy in his fortress, to try conclusions with the law of cause and effect in astronomy, natural philosophy, chemistry, or any branch of natural science, where it holds itself supreme: to stop the sun, like Joshua: to make him travel back, like Isaiah; to walk upon the water, like our Lord; or to handle the viper, like the apostle Paul.

The very existence of a will the cause of itself, is begun not only to be doubted, but to be denied. It also is looked upon as a substance, under the common bondage of cause and effect; and God himself is looked upon merely as a Great First Cause.

I know nothing able to dethrone this monster from the throne of God, which it has usurped, but the reawakening of the Church to her long-forgotten privilege of working miracles.

- The miracle workers in the Church are Christ's hand, to show the strength that is in Him.
- The healers of diseases are His almoners, to show what pity and compassion are in Him.
- The faith-administrators are His lion-heart, to show how mighty and fearless He is.
- The utterers of wisdom and knowledge are His mind, to show how rich and capacious it is.

They do all contain, and exhibit and minister to the world, some portion of that fullness which is in Him, and which He alone is capable of holding in one subsistence; which when it enters into others, must prove the occupation and the honor and the ornament of many persons.

PROPHECY

We now pass into another region, distinguished both from the more excellent way of charity and from spiritual gifts, in these words of the 14th chapter:

1 Corinthians 14

¹ Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that you may prophesy.

And throughout the whole of that chapter He dwells upon this gift of prophecy, which is now before us, with a special delight, as the edification of the Church:

³ But he that prophesies speaks unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort.

And nothing seems he to have had so much at heart as that all should prophesy:

⁵ I would that you all spoke with tongues, but rather that you prophesied.

²⁴ But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believes not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

²⁵ And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

What is this gift of which the apostle makes such high account? It is evidently very different from what is commonly understood by prophesying, as the mere foretelling of future events, because it is...

1 Corinthians 14

³ ...unto men for edification and exhortation and comfort.

But if that vulgar idea of prognostication be meant to represent the true character of a prophet of the Old Testament, nothing is so insufficient. Is the office of Moses or Elias, of Isaiah or Jeremiah, described by saying that they foretold future events? I think not. Their office stands in this, that they were God's mouth to men, fitted and furnished for uttering His own mind in adequate expressions, and for standing in the breach between the Church and the world—between the world and its destruction.

Ah me! what a mischief has been done by these wild schismatics, who, in their sectarian zeal to repress the free inquiries of the Church into the prophets, have dared to propagate it among their weak adherents, that these books of the prophets are only for the curious speculators into the future! Night unto you, O you misleaders of the people! If you return not at the watchman's voice, the night and thick darkness abide you: any little twilight you now grope in will soon pass into the deepest, darkest midnight.

O my misguided brethren! I tell you the prophets are the utterers of the Word of God for the weal of man. None of their writings is of any private interpretation to single men or generations of men or particular ages; but to the Church Catholic and universal: for they spoke not after the will of men, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.⁸²

- They are very profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.
- They are most profitable for holiness, both personal, ecclesiastical, and national.
- They reveal God in all His fullness and variety of being.

⁸² 2 Peter 1:21.

- They speak in human ears the strains of heaven.

Oh! how very sublime, how very pathetic, how very moral, how very divine they are! It is the richest tissue of discourse that was ever woven. The poet, the orator, the merchant, the statesman, the divine, every form of spiritual workman, will find the instruments, and the measures, and the rules, and the chief performances of his are therein. How many-sided are the prophets! How they stretch athwart the middle space between heaven and earth, lying all abroad in the most varied beauty!

I am grieved, sore pained at my heart, that the affections of men should have departed away from such a feast of fat things. I cannot understand it. It did not use to be so. In my boyish days, when the firesides of the Scottish peasantry were my favorite haunts, and converse with the gray-headed elders of the Church my delight, their prayers were almost exclusively drawn from the Psalms and the prophets. Have I not heard them use those blessed passages with a savor and unction which indicated both intelligence and full feeling?

- Is the mind of man departed into the sere and yellow leaf?
- Is there to be no second spring?
- Are we ever to feed on the garbage of the magazines and the religious newspapers?

God forbid! That rich and copious vein of rendering God's messages in forms of thought and language worthy of Him, and powerful over the hearts and souls of men, which prophecy is in the hands of the Old Testament prophets, the apostle wishes all the Church to study to possess; and being attained, he counts it of an unspeakable price in the ecclesiastical economy; insomuch, he says, that if they were all thus to speak as from the heart of God to the heart of man, and there come into the assembly one that believes not, or one unlearned, he says he cannot fail to be convinced and judged of them all.

What a heart-searching, truth-telling thing must this prophecy, then, have been? Such a thing must prophesying have been—

clear, true, warm, and tender; fresh from the heart; redolent with the affections of God to sinful men; piercing and penetrating, yet not appalling, but cleansing and comforting, to the conscience. And this is what our preaching is intended to stand for? Wretched substitute!

It seems to me that this gift of prophesying, which the Church are by the apostle called upon to covet above all other gifts of the Spirit, is the same gift which was ministered by the Old Testament prophets—the faculty of showing to all men their true estate in the sight of God, and their nearness to His judgments, and the way of escape; the faculty of doing for persons what they did for kingdoms and cities; foretelling being a part, but only a part of it; yet that to give warning of which the spirit of the prophet is stirred up to put forth all the powers and energies of the persuasive Spirit of God, that the evil may be avoided and the good attained.

Such prophecies had gone before upon Timothy, and by them he is exhorted by the apostle to war a good warfare: and the gift is said to be given unto him by prophecy, as well as by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.⁸³

Joining this with the declaration quoted above, that prophecy was fitted to convince and judge any stranger who by accident might come in, and to lay open the secrets of his heart, so that he should be forced to fall down and worship, as perceiving that God's eye was in them, and that things were known to them which no one but God and his own conscience could know, what can I say of this gift of the Spirit less than that it was God telling, by His chosen servant, His own knowledge of the secrets of a man's heart, that he might confess his sin and find forgiveness of it?

One trembles to think that such a power should be given to men of looking into men: but if this power be with God, and He have given it to Christ, who possesses those seven eyes which are

⁸³ 1 *Timothy* 1:18; 4:14.

the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth; and if the Church be Christ's functionary, through which to express a manifestation of every attribute which He possesses; then is it to be expected that there should also be found in the Church an order of men to use Christ's eyes with Christ's heart, and speak forth to the discovered and detected sinner such strains as these:

Matthew 23

³⁷ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets, and stone them which are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not!

Jeremiah 9

¹ Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

Ezekiel 33

¹¹ As I live, says the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he should turn and live: Turn, turn; why will you die, O house of Israel?

This, I think, is the true idea of the gift of prophecy—that it was Christ speaking forth His love and His earnestness and His knowledge, to deliver each man from the roots of bitterness that are within him, and to warn him of the certain consequences which will ensue upon the evil course he is now following.

The word of wisdom has reference to truth, and the word of knowledge to faith, but prophecy has reference to persons. It is for building up and comforting the Church, for converting sinners from the error of their ways, and warning the world of the evil to come.

And that such a power is in the Spirit is as sure as that it is in Christ; and that He has promised it to His Church is not only proved from its place in this enumeration, but is also clear from the express promise that the Spirit will show us things to come; from the example of the prophecies which went before on Timothy, and of the prophet who bound himself with Paul's girdle, and

prophesied that the like would they do at Jerusalem to him who owned it. Our Lord showed many examples of the like personal prophesyings, over Peter, and Judas, and the two sons of Zebedee; and I have no doubt the primitive Church was all-rife with this gift of foreshowing to persons the future destinies which hung over them, and grounding thereon the same variety of all-inclusive discourse which the old prophets used towards cities and nations.

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

1 Corinthians 12

¹⁰ ...to another, discerning of spirits...

What this gift, or talent, committed to the keeping of the Church, is, we learn from the *First Epistle of John*, where he directs the Church how to put it to use:

1 John 4

¹ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

From this we learn that the spirits which were to be tried or proved spoke by the mouths of false prophets, and prompted them to utter things untrue and unholy.

An example of this kind we have in the 22nd chapter of the *First Book of Kings*, where, all the prophets of Ahab having prophesied that he should go up to Ramoth-gilead, Micaiah, the prophet of the Lord, explains the manner in which they had been deceived and had deceived him, in a passage which opens much insight into the spiritual world, teaching:

- how God uses the ministry of evil spirits in order to pervert from the way of truth those who have loved darkness rather than light; “sending them strong delusion that they should believe a lie;”⁸⁴ and

⁸⁴ 2 *Thessalonians* 2:11.

- how these spirits take possession of wicked prophets who have not served the Spirit of Truth faithfully, and possess them with a word of falsehood; and
- how many of these prophets, of lies may at once be under the influence of one of those unclean spirits.

When the Lord, in *Matthew 7* and *24*, and *2 Peter 2*, warn the Church of false prophets that should arise, they do not mean merely erroneous and deceiving men, but men possessed with a lying spirit. Indeed, I believe that in all cases the word *prophet* in the Scriptures, signifies a man under another agency speaking in the power of another spirit than his own:

- A true prophet speaking in the power of the Holy Spirit, and
- A lying prophet speaking in the power of an unclean spirit.

That this is the true meaning of the name *prophet* in the New Testament as in the Old, is further manifest from the language of the apostle:

1 Corinthians 14

³² The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

Now in the passage of *1 John*, under consideration, the Church is required to try those spirits with which the prophets spoke, whether they were of God or not: and there must, therefore, have been a gift given to the Church for this end, and persons to whom it was given to exercise it. The prophets tried men, but these men tried the prophets. The word “discernment” derives some illustration from:

²⁹ Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others discern:

³⁰ And if to another sitting by there be a revelation, let the first be silent:

³¹ For you can all prophecy one by one, that all may learn and all be comforted;

³² And the spirits of the prophets are in subjection to the prophets;

³³ For not of tumult is He the God, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

This passage shows us that the discerning of spirits was a faculty widely diffused in the Church, and required to be in continual exercise: and that the prophets, in the things which they uttered, were carefully and affectionately watched by the Church, and guarded from falling under the suggestions of the wicked spirits: and if, while one of them was speaking, there should have been any revelation to this effect, he was commanded to stop till he heard it, lest by any means he might mislead the brethren into error.

It is very beautiful to observe, how no gift had a completeness in itself, but wanted the neighborhood and help of another. The prophet needed the guardianship of the discerner of spirits, and the discerner of spirits the instruction of the prophet: the one brought the precious metal from the heavenly treasury, the other assayed it, lest it should have contracted any defilement or intermixture in the transmission.

The apostle John further gives, in the same passage, as a test of spirits, whether they confessed that “Jesus Christ is come in flesh” or not; and he repeats the same in his Second Epistle. Paul also, in the very chapter we are examining, gives us another test, whether they would say that “Jesus is the Lord.”

These two doctrines, of His flesh and of His lordship, are the two keys of prophecy, and the two tests of Divine truth, which no evil spirit will bear. It is very ominous, that these are the two very points for which we are now persecuted by many, who deny Christ to have had flesh with the law of flesh; and deny that His lordship is of this earth—alleging, that, when Satan shall have served himself of it, it is to be destroyed. I have no doubt whatever that these are doctrines of devils, and that they bespeak a revival of Antichrist in the bosom of the Church.

This capacity of discerning the spirits which speak in the prophets seems to have been very widely, and in a degree universally, spread abroad in the Church. For the same John, when writing concerning these antichrists, speaks thus to the whole Church:

1 John 2

²⁰ But you have an unction from the Holy One, and you know all things.

²¹ I have not written unto you because you know not the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

²⁶ These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.

²⁷ But the anointing which you have received of Him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in him.

And our Lord, speaking upon the same subject of “false prophets,” gives their “fruits” as a test by which all men should be able to prove them.⁸⁵

But while all do, no doubt, possess such a measure of discernment as to reject the falsehood and feed upon the truth, those to whom this gift was specially granted had the higher faculty of being able to expose the sophistry, and the hypocrisy, and subtlety of the devil, with which it comes arrayed: and to these persons the Church would always be beholden in a time of trial; and, having reliance upon them, they would minister that caution, consideration, and admonition against the evil, which would be effectual to the preservation of the Church from heresies and offenses which must needs arise.

Moreover, I have little doubt that this gift of detecting false spirits in the speech of men was also accompanied with the power of casting them out, in all such cases as were consistent with the moral responsibility of the man possessed. The prophet, I believe, might be taken at unawares, and, himself deceived, become a deceiver of others: in this case, being undeceived by the faithful Discerner of spirits, he would make entreaty to be delivered, and, having faith in the presence and power of Christ in that man, he would be delivered without further delay.

⁸⁵ *Matthew* 7:15-20.

But in such a case as that referred to by John—of which those of Simon Magus, and Hymeneus, and Philetus, and Hermogenes are examples—where the wickedness of their own minds, their unfaithfulness to the Spirit of God, their timeserving, worldly, and ambitious dispositions of mind, were the occasions of their being delivered up to such possessions, it is clear that, until they repented and confessed their sin, and sought the unity of the Church again, they could and would receive no such deliverance from the hand of the Discerner of spirits.

This, surely, was a very precious gift to the Church: and if, as all Scripture concurs to predict, “the last times,” which immediately precede the coming of the Lord, shall be full of...

Matthew 24

²⁴ ...false Christs and false prophets, who shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect,

—we have need to stir up this gift which is in the Church. When we were weak and sickly, and gave him little trouble, Satan suffered us to go on declining, and took himself up with other matters; having administered to us the soporific of a lifeless system of orthodox terms, he went his way about other business: but, now that the Church is shaking herself from his bonds, and beginning to seek for her long-lost strength, and is putting it forth in word and deed, and lifting up the banner of truth, “Christ come in Flesh and to come in Lordship;” behold, he will send his Philistines upon us—spirits from the deep; and we will need the discernment of spirits to withstand him, nor shall we be without it.

The Church is still the Church; her life is still in her, though sorely weakened; now she is beginning to breathe a purer air, and her faculties are returning; her weakened mind is beginning to understand doctrine, her miserable heart is beginning to conceive hope, and her closed lips to be opened with strong and fervent desires after her ancient strength and glory. Let her enemies beware; let the intruders into the fold make ready to depart; let

those who have lorded it over her prepare themselves for a day of recompence, because it is at hand, when she shall come forth...

Song of Solomon 6

¹⁰ ...fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

Moreover, this discernment of spirits is an excellent gift and kind ministry of Christ unto His Church, whereby she is able to hold forth the truth before the world,—that her Head has judged Beelzebub, the prince of the devils; has judged the prince of this world, the spirit that now rules in the children of disobedience: and not only so, but that He has given to men the dominion over spirits, who through our wickedness have obtained dominion over us; and that His Church shall certainly trample Satan under foot, and judge angels, and triumph over all the powers of the enemy.

But this brings us upon the vein which we have already opened when treating of the same endowment,⁸⁶ as it was laid out in the promise of the Lord, whereof the first particular is, “You shall cast out devils.” Referring back to what was there said concerning the importance and the bearing of this sign, we now proceed to the eighth of these forms of the manifested Spirit.

DIVERSE TONGUES

1 Corinthians 12

¹⁰ ...to another divers kinds of tongues.

This also having handled formerly, in the sense of a sign, and shown the thing which it signified, we shall add here what light is afforded us as to the manner of its use and occupation. It was first imparted on the day of Pentecost, when the disciples...

Acts 2

⁴ ...were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁸⁶ See Chapter V: “What the Church is to Hold Fast till Christ Come,” Section: “Power Over Five Areas of Creation,” Sub: “1. Power Over Devils.”

Many, indeed almost all, have the notion that the apostles became all at once learned and masters of foreign languages, so as to be able to express in the various tongues of men the knowledge which they possessed already. This is altogether an erroneous notion, as will appear; and the true one is contained in the words just quoted.

They spoke according as the Spirit gave them to utter, not according to their own previous knowledge; and they spoke it in other tongues than that which was native to them. It was one acting of the Spirit to give them the matter and the word. It came to them clothed in word: not in the form of idea first, to be put by their volition and skill of language into the form of word; but at once, without their knowledge of the matter or of the word, it came to them. The Spirit gave them to utter what they did utter; what it was, they themselves might be ignorant of, or not, as it happened. It was one person's gift to speak the language, it was another's to interpret what was spoken:

1 Corinthians 12

¹⁰ ...to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues.

³⁰ ...do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

1 Corinthians 14

¹³ Wherefore, let him that speaks in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.

¹⁴ If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.

¹⁹ Yet in the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.

These passages show that there was no necessary connection between speaking with a tongue and understanding what was spoken; but, on the contrary, that the person so speaking in general understood not what he said; and if he did, the interpretation was a matter of as special revelation as was the utterance itself; both speaker and interpreter being alike ignorant of the meaning of any word which had been spoken, so as to be able to translate

it into their mother tongue, or to know it grammatically, or in any way whatever to make use of it, until the Spirit moved again—or, rather, until the person possessed of the Spirit in this form put it forth into use.

This idea, which is beyond a question the true one represented in these two chapters, is, I think, implied in the words quoted above from the *Acts*, where the use of the gift is first described,

Acts 2

⁴ They spoke with other tongues, just as the Spirit gave to them to emit the voice.

The word translated “utterance” is remarkable, signifying simply to “emit a voice,” to “sound forth,” and by the ancients was used of prophets, whom they believed to speak by another power than their own. It is only three times used in the New Testament:

1. The verse already quoted;⁸⁷
2. *Acts* 26:14 - “But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and uttered [or sounded forth] to them.”;
3. *Acts* 26:26, when Paul, being charged with being mad by Festus, probably from the violence of his voice or earnestness of his manner, replies, “I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth [give forth] words of truth and soberness.

It was the Spirit which gave the disciples to send forth those sounds in which every nation there assembled heard their native tongue, and in it the wonderful works of God. It was Christ using His Church as His organ for declaring to all men in that assembly what God had done for him, and for them whose substitute He was. And no doubt this is one reason of the diversity of tongues in the Church, because there is a diversity of tongues in the world to which the Church is called to preach the gospel.

But this is only an accidental thing; for the whole world was once of one tongue, and might be so again. Still, however, even in that case the Spirit would in the same way bring the thought em-

⁸⁷ *Acts* 2:4.

bodied in word, and force it forth in that embodied form. In such a case, however, it would be prophecy, as carrying its own interpretation; and accordingly the apostle puts speaking with tongues, when coupled with interpretation, upon the same level with prophecy:

1 Corinthians 14

⁵ ...for greater is he that prophesies than he that speaks with tongues, except he interpret, that the Church may receive edifying.

I believe the words were sometimes brought to the prophet's mind, as much as to the mind of him who spoke with tongues; and that both did yield themselves in faith to the action of the Spirit, and serve Him with their tongue.

It is also manifest, with respect to him that spoke with tongues, that, though he understood not what he said, it was not on that account without edification to him: he tasted the sweetness and had a firstfruits of the profitableness of that truth which the Spirit was passing through his tongue to the understanding of another man. This is very mysterious, but not the less true on that account.

² He that speaks in an unknown tongue, speaks not unto men, but unto God; for no man understands him, howbeit in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

³ But he that prophesies speaks unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

⁴ He that speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself; but he that prophesies edifies the Church.

This edification, which he derived from it to himself, joined to the wonderfulness of it, led some who possessed it to use it rashly and indiscreetly in the midst of the Church, where it could not profit. To correct the selfishness from which this proceeded, and the confusion to which it gave rise, the apostle addresses himself with great zeal.

It has been a subject of great thought with me to understand these things, which are the occasion of so much scoffing and blas-

phemy to many of my poor misguided countrymen; and I think God has rewarded my study, of which I will now enumerate the results under their several heads.

First, This gift of tongues in the Church does show that the work of Christ in the flesh is for all men, and that He wishes it to be published to all men, and that His Church may not sleep over her vocation, nor be slack in the performance of it, nor sink down into local residences, good quarters, and comfortable settlements, but preserve her missionary spirit, and be a witness to every generation of every speech of men, she is endowed with these diversities of tongues, and goaded on to go forth to the nations, to seek ears for those words which are ever coming with such sweetness over her heart. It is like an ambassador's commission; it is the Spirit saying to the Church, Send me this man forth.

Paul spoke more abundantly with tongues than they all did,⁸⁸ and Paul was the greatest missionary of them all. And what an assurance to a man's heart, and confirmation to his faith, to have his mission thus ascertained to him, and sealed by the Holy Ghost! Methinks it would be more effectual than a salary of a thousand pounds by the year from the most notable of our missionary societies.

I feel assured that these societies have so shamefully and shockingly come short of the mark in their faith and feeling, and performance also, that, if the world is to receive warning before the great and terrible day of the Lord, it must be by the Church seeking again for this long-lost endowment; seeking for her trumpet with its many notes, through which to speak to the nations.

Secondly, This gift of tongues does put beyond all doubt the unity of Christ and His members, inasmuch as it shows Him in His people doing whatever their own soul within them can do.

Speech is the means by which an embodied spirit does manifest its existence; distinguishing man, a living soul, from every other living thing upon the earth. Speech is the manifestation of reason;

⁸⁸ 1 Corinthians 14:18.

and by our capacity of uttering, and understanding the words uttered, is proved the commonness, the oneness of that reason, in which many persons have their being.

Now when Christ does occupy the place of my reasonable spirit, and with my tongue does express whatever I am capable of expressing, He is proved to be in me as truly as I am in myself. If my body is known to be the habitation of my soul by its obeying all the desires of the soul, and expressing them in form of word; then, by the same method of conviction is Christ proved to be in me, when He does through the organs of my body express His own mind to those whom I can by no means reach by any expression of my own.

This same truth, of an indwelling Christ, is proved by any other of the gifts to the experience of Him who has them; but by the gift of tongues it is proved to others besides ourselves, even to all who hear in their own language the testimony of God and of Christ. It is seen that God is in me of a truth, when that power within me does testify to no other person but to Christ, in His work of humiliation and exaltation, in His flesh and in His lordship.

Now, if it be considered what a point of doctrine the union of Christ with believers is, the importance of the gift of tongues will the more appear. By the truth, that the Spirit of a man out of the world dwells in many men in the world at one and the same time, and continues this inhabitation from age to age, what less is proved but that this person is also God? For who but God can thus connect that which is not in the world with that which is in the world; who but God can keep up the communication and the intercourse between the Father's throne and the world?

But, then, Christ's soul being a limited substance, with which the Godhead continually acts, another question arises, How can this limited substance, which is now out of the world, be yet in the world, in the souls of many men, in all ages of the world? This can only be by means of another Being, proceeding from Christ to

the bounds of all space and time, and able to unite them into oneness with Him.

But in order that this may be, he must be of one substance with Christ; and also he must be a person, in order to comprehend a person, and inform many persons with the same spirit. And thus is the Divinity and the Personality of the Comforter made to appear through this great truth of Christ the inhabiter of His people; which, again, is proved by His using their organs in a way in which they themselves are not able to do.

Moreover, this power of Christ in the Spirit to speak all the diversities of speech, shows Him to be the fountain-head of speech, the word, by whose endowment man is a word-speaking creature: while by His power to enter into all the forms of reason, and deliver God in such a way as all diversities of reason shall apprehend, He is proved to be the one Reason, of whose fullness we have all received, who lights every man that comes into the world.

What does this inhabitation of my reason by another than myself, at His will, and using it in a way which unequivocally proves that He is another than myself; what does this prove less than that I am but the tenant of that other's domain, who thus masterfully can occupy His own, and for the while suspend my vicegerency?

Thirdly, But there is something deeper still, than this oneness of reason and lordship of reason resident in Christ, proved by these gifts of tongues—namely, that a person is something more than that community of reason which he does occupy as the tenant of him whose name is *The Logos*, or *The Reason*. For it clearly appears, from *1 Corinthians* 14, that when the man's reason is wholly without fruit, when he understands nothing that is spoken, he does yet receive great edification in his own spirit—"he edifies himself" (verse 4),—and holds, independent of reason, a communication with God—"he speaks unto God" (verse 3).

Does not this prove that all forms of the reason within, which speech expresses outwardly, may be inactive—as if it were dead,

“fruitless” and barren—and yet the spirit itself be receiving great edification from God, through means which are wholly independent of intelligence? Indeed, to deny this, is to deny the possibility of direct communication between God and the soul otherwise than by speech or books which address us through the reason; it is to set aside the subject of spiritual gifts altogether: and methinks it takes away that personality from a man, by means of which it is that he informs, awakens, and occupies the gift of reason.

The gift of tongues brings all speculation upon this subject to an end, and presents us with the fact, the experiment which decides the matter, by showing us the reason void, and the spirit yet filled with edification. Nay, so clearly were the apostle, and those to whom he wrote, conscious to this thing, that he takes a distinction between praying in the spirit and praying in the understanding, praising in the spirit and praising in the understanding; holding man to be capable of worshiping and serving God then when his understanding is wholly without activity.⁸⁹

Nor could there be any mysticism or self-deception in this; for while my spirit was emptying itself of all its prayer and praise to God, my understanding not comprehending a word, if any should think it were but a farce and profanation, another person, understanding the language, will contradict him, and let him know that it is sound sense and pure religion which I am expressing.

And yet the words are not necessary for God’s ear; and the apostle recommends, yea, and strongly urges it, that, when no man able to understand the language was present, or no one who had the gift of interpretation, it were better to keep silence, and enjoy the communion with God through the spirit only:

1 Corinthians 14

²⁸ But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the Church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

⁸⁹ See *1 Corinthians* 14:14-17.

What a deep subject of meditation were a man thus employed in secret converse with and enjoyment of God, although his reason be utterly dead! He is not able to communicate thereof to another person: for the world he is as one dead: for all that he holds in common with men he is as one dead: he is in the state of a separate spirit, and he is enjoying the same inward delight with God which I suppose the separate spirits to enjoy. And I might ask, Is this not the essence of all spiritual religion,—the enjoyment and communion of the spirit with God in that capacity which death nowise affects? And is not the use of reason altogether for the impartation of this to others, for the edification of the Church?

But conclusion rises upon conclusion. It is a great subject this of the gift of tongues. I wish some one would retrieve it from the ignorance and folly and mockery of those revilers who have lately so insulted this mystery of our faith, and laughed to scorn this endowment of the Church, understanding no more by it than a shorthand way of acquiring languages.

THE INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

Upon the ninth, and last of these gifts, “the interpretation of tongues,” little need be added, as it is so intimately connected with the former.

It did not consist in their knowledge of the strange words, or the structure of the foreign languages. It was nothing akin to translation; the Spirit did not become a schoolmaster at all; but brought to the man’s soul with the certainty of truth, that this which He was giving him to utter was the interpretation of the thing which the other had just spoken.

This conviction might be brought to the spirit of the speaker himself, and then he was his own interpreter; but it was more frequent to bestow that gift upon another. This provision of an order who should interpret, as well as an order who should speak with tongues, shows that the gift of tongues had a higher origin than from the variety of languages among men.

- If it had been merely for preaching the truth to people of other languages, an order of interpreters would never have been required at all.
- If it had only been given for conveying the truth to foreign nations, then why have so many in each Church, like the Church of Corinth?
- If it be said, this was to stir them to go forth to those whose tongues they had received; while I allow that this is so far forth good and true, it is by no means the whole truth; for why then, have an order of interpreters there also?

This shows that the gift was good for that Church in itself; that it was resident in the churches for home use, as well as for service abroad; and that God saw such use in it, as to provide another ministry for the purpose of making it available to the uses for which it was given.

If the circumstance of the language being foreign would have prompted them to go forth to the heathen, the interpretation being at hand would prompt them to remain with the Church; and both being standing orders in the Church, we conclude that this gift of speaking with another tongue, and the other gift of interpreting what was spoken, are, being taken together, a constant accomplishment of the Church, necessary to her completeness wherever she is, and to be continued with her, even though the whole world had been converted to the faith, and the office of the missionary were done away with for ever.

Let us consider this twofold ordinance as one, and see what it yields. If there should be in our Church an order of men, of whom the Spirit so manifestly took possession as to make them utter the mysteries of godliness in an unknown tongue, and another order of men to whom the Spirit divided the power of interpreting the same, the first impression that would be made by it is, that verily God was in us of a truth, as truly as He was in the Shechinah of the holy place; and the next, that He was speaking forth oracles for our obedience.

The unknown tongue, as it began its strange sounds, would be equal to a voice from the glory,

“Thus says the Lord of hosts,”

–or,

“This is my Son, Hear Him;”

–and every ear would say,

“Oh that I knew the voice;”

–and when the man with the gift of interpretation gave it out in the vernacular tongue, we would be filled with an awe, that it was no other than God who had spoken it. I think it is altogether equal to the speaking with the trumpet from the thick darkness of the Mount, or with a voice as thunder from the open vault of heaven. The using of man’s organs is, indeed, a mark of a new dispensation, foretold as to come to pass after Christ ascended up on high, when He would receive gifts and bestow them upon men, that the Lord God might dwell, might have a habitation, in them.

Formerly the sounds were syllabled we know not how, because God had not yet prepared for himself a tent of flesh; which He accomplished to do first in Jesus of Nazareth, and is now perfecting in His Church, who are His temple, in whom He abides as in the holy place, and from whom He speaks forth His oracles in strange tongues. The strange tongue takes away all source of ambiguity, proving that the man himself has nothing to do with it, and leaves the work and the authority of the word wholly in the hand of God. And therefore tongues are called a sign to the unbeliever:

1 Corinthians 14

²² Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.

Just as the voice given at Bethabara over the baptized Christ was spoken as a ground of faith to the unbelieving Jew, and the voice given before His passion was a confirmation to the faith of the inquiring Greek, and of all who heard it: so these voices, spo-

ken forth from the breasts of men, by a power not human, but divine, are intended to convince the unbelievers that God really dwells in the Church; has chosen the Church for His habitation; and that, if they would find Him, they must seek Him there, for nowhere else is He to be found.

The prophet Isaiah, to whom it was given to forewarn men of this particular gift of tongues, does so speak of it as a fresh evidence which God would give to men for a ground of believing, and which, alas! they would also reject. I take the quotation as the apostle has sanctioned it, the Holy Spirit's version of His own words:

1 Corinthians 14

²¹ With men of other tongues, and other lips, will I speak unto this people: and yet for all that they will not hear me, says the Lord.

I cannot but look upon this gift of tongues as sealing up the sum of God's dealings with men for their obedience of faith. It is the very power of God, which to blaspheme is to blaspheme the Holy Ghost. And witness what power it had on the day of Pentecost, when three thousand were added to the Church. This is the "greater thing" which was to be done by him that believes.

No one could say that Jesus was the Christ, that God was in Him, but by the Spirit leading Him into the truth of what He spoke, or convincing Him of the Divine nature of the works which he did. God did not manifest himself in Christ in this unequivocal way; for Christ's life was not a witness to himself, but to the Father. Christ came to do the Father's will in our condition, that we in the like case might be assured of power and ability through Him to do the same. He was the prototype of a perfect and holy man under the conditions of the Fall, that we, under those conditions, might know there was power and will in God that we should all be perfect and holy.

This being accomplished, and Christ ascended up on high, God sets on foot another work, which is to testify that honor to which man had become advanced in the person of the Son of man, and

in all other persons who by faith should be united to Him. As God had shown how far man had fallen in Adam, by the state of the world under sin and suffering and death; so, by the Church would He show how far man had risen in Christ, that all men believing in Him might be brought to that exceeding exaltation. Therefore in the Church He shows not man's identity with the fallen Adam, but man's identity with the risen Adam.

In the incarnation, Christ's identity with the fallen man was shown, yet without sin: in the Church, Christ's identity with God is shown, the power and glory of God in Him are exhibited, that all men might believe in His name. This gift of tongues is the crowning act of all. None of the old prophets had it, Christ had it not; it belongs to the dispensation of the Holy Ghost proceeding from the risen Christ: it is the proclamation that man is enthroned in heaven, that man is the dwelling-place of God, that all creation, if they would know God, must give ear to man's tongue, and know the compass of reason.

It is not we that speak, but Christ that speaks. It is not in us as men that God speaks; but in us as members of Christ, as the Church and body of Christ, that God speaks. The honor is not to us, but to Christ; not to the Godhead of Christ, which is ever the same, but to the manhood of Christ, which has been raised from the state of death to the state of being God's temple, God's most holy place, God's Shechinah, God's oracle, for ever and ever.

1 Corinthians 14

²¹ And yet for all that will they not hear me, says the Lord.

It is most true, O God: they will not hear even this, because total ignorance has benighted them: nor are they capable of apprehending truth; the vanity of their minds has carried them away:

Isaiah 29

⁹ ...they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink:

¹⁰ For you have poured out upon them the spirit of deep sleep, and have closed their eyes; their prophets and the rulers the seers has he covered.

Then, O Lord, if you have given them up, and they may not be convinced, let this strengthen your children, and against the rest let it turn for a testimony—a testimony to your truth, a testimony to their falsehood and hypocrisy.

Jeremiah 9

¹ Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the children of the daughter of my people!

ARE THE GIFTS WITHDRAWN?

Having thus opened at large the endowment of the Church, the body of Christ, and shown of what it is the firstfruits and the earnest, it may be expected that I should enter into controversy with those who say they have been withdrawn, and are not to be restored again; that they were only intended to abide for a season, until the evidence of the Christian religion should have been securely established, and the canon of Scripture completed.

But, before I can think this worth the while, I must first see where they get the grounds of their hypothesis, that they were intended only to continue for that brief season; in the meantime I pronounce it to be of their own invention, and not at all of the word of God.

I have shown the great purpose and end of this endowment of spiritual gifts; that purpose and end is not temporary, but perpetual, till Christ's coming again; when that which is perfect shall come, and that which is in part shall be done away.

If they ask for an explanation of the fact that these powers have ceased in the Church, I answer, that they have decayed just as faith and holiness have decayed; but that they have ceased is not a matter so clear. Till the time of the Reformation, this opinion was never mooted in the Church; and to this day the Roman Catholics, and every other portion of the Church but ourselves, maintain the very contrary.

Moreover, it is only of later days that any one has dared to assert that the gifts of prophecy and healing are no longer to be

looked for. Read the lives of the Reformers, of the Puritans, of the Covenanters, written by sound and zealous Protestants; read the histories of the Church written more than fifty years ago—our Petrie, for example—and show me whether these writers hold it blasphemy to say that a man may be, and has been, gifted with both these gifts, especially that of prophecy. Who has not heard of the prophecies of Hus, and of Wishart?

Among the Protestants of the elder day, who had in them a good measure of faith, even beyond what their creed expressed, I find no such hard skepticism and mocking scorn as has been sounded abroad within these months past, to the shame of those who have uttered it, if they be capable of the sense of shame.

But if I am called upon to declare why Protestants have not enjoyed the manifestation of these gifts, I not only refer to the general tenor of their creed upon the subject, which has leaned to the side of their being ceased; but, which is of much more importance than a written creed, I refer to the spirit of their doctrine and their preaching and their practice.

And I would say, that this gift has ceased to be visible in the Church, because of:

- Her great ignorance concerning that work of Christ at His second coming, of which it is the continual sign;
- Her most culpable ignorance of Christ's crowned glory, of which it is the continual demonstration;
- Her indifference to the world without, for preaching to which the gift of the Holy Ghost is the continual furnishing and outfit of the Church.

Since the Reformation, little else has been preached besides the baptismal and eucharistical gift, the work of Christ's death unto the justification and sanctification of the believer. The dignity and office of the Church, as the fullness of the Lord of all, has not been fully preached, or firmly held, and is now almost altogether lost sight of.

Church government, bickerings about the proper form of polity, and the standing of the civil magistrate to the Church and in the Church, have been almost the only things concerning the Church which have come into question among Protestants; and there has been no holding of her up to the heathen as the holy place of God, but, on the contrary, the presentation of a Book in the stead thereof.

Not but the Reformation was the beginning of a great and a good work; but that, so far from having made progress towards completion, it has gone a great way backward, and in our hands is a poor shred of what it was in the hands of Luther, and Hooker, and the like.

But things are taking a turn. Let the Church know that things are taking a mighty turn. There is a shining forth of truth in these subjects beyond former days. The power and glory of a risen Lord, as well as the holiness of a Lord in flesh, is beginning to be understood and discoursed of. And the enemy would spread a curtain of thin sophistry between the Church and the bright dawn. He might as well hide the morning by drawing before our eyes the spider's cobweb, or the frost-work of the night, which the rising sun quickly dissipates.

And so, I trust, may these poor men, who write their unsober and uncharitable revilings in their several parcels of periodical abuse, be themselves, like the frost-work of the morning, absorbed into the glorious light which the rising morn is shedding around them.

But be this as it may, now that the inward work of apprehending the glory of Christ is begun, and proceeding apace, we may surely expect that the outward means of convincing the world that it is no cunningly-contrived fable, will be afforded to the Church; and that she will have her full dignity restored to her of testifying not only to a holy Lord in flesh crucified for all men, but of a risen Lord in power and glory, crowned for His Church, and in His Church putting forth unto the world a firstfruits of

that power and government over all creation which in her He shall ever exercise over all creation.

These gifts have ceased, I would say, just as the verdure and leaves and flowers and fruits, of the spring and summer and autumn, cease in winter, because, by the chill and wintry blasts which have blown over the Church, her power to put forth her glorious beauty has been prevented.

But because the winter is without a green leaf or beautiful flower, do men thereof argue that there shall be flowers and fruits no more? Trusting to the word of God, who has created everything to produce and bring forth its kind, man puts out His hand in winter, and makes preparations for the coming year.

So, if the Church be still in existence, and that no one denies, and if it be the law and end of her being to embody a firstfruits and earnest of the power which Christ is to put forth in the redemption of all nature, then what though she has been brought so low, her life is still in her, and that life will, under a more genial day, put forth its native powers.

Will God be baffled in His own most perfect work, in that work which He has wrought for the honor of His Son? I think not. The Church is in the condition of a man faint, and sick, and apparently dead, who puts forth neither manly voice nor vigorous action, and is even incapable of thought, and almost beyond feeling. But let that man revive again, (and we know the Church never dies,) and he will both hear and see and feel and act the man.

So, if the Church revives, she must act as the Church; which is not in the way of holiness merely, but in the way of power, for the manifestation of the completeness of Christ's work in flesh, and the firstfruits of the same work in glory. The Church is like a man who has been fed upon sloughs without fruits and husks without kernels, refuse which the swine should eat; and she is grown lean and weak and helpless. And, moreover, she has grown degraded in her ideas—she has forgotten the nobility of her birth and the grandeur of her destination.

But what then? give her proper meat, give her nourishing drink, feed her with marrow and with fatness, and she will put forth her might again, and rejoice in her high places. The question is, whether that be the endowment of the Church which we have laid down above? If so, then rest assured that when she revives again she will embody the law according to which she was made, and show forth the beauty and put forth the power with which she was endowed in the day of her birth.

If there be a revival, she will put forth unanimously and altogether more knowledge, more love, more power, more holiness, more complete testimony to the power of Him whose members she is, of that Spirit which abides in her, of that God which works all the gifts in all the members.

They called Methodism and Evangelicalism a revival: I always have maintained, that, though better than downright Pelagianism, they were far behind the Reformation; which itself was only the beginning of a glorious work, strangled in its cradle.

But now I see a revival worthy of the name—a revival of doctrine, of discipline, of holiness. Christians are beginning to speak their native language of faith and truth, and to endure their prerogative of being partakers of the Lord's sufferings. And if this revival proceed, it cannot but show itself in all those essential functions for which the Church was constituted; of which one is, to enjoy and hold forth a firstfruits of that power which Christ is to act out in the day of His appearing.

I feel it of the greatest importance that those who are seeking to deter men from these great truths should be resisted, and that their mouths should be stopped. I feel it of still more importance that those who are inquiring and searching into these things should proceed with faith and prayer, under the guidance of God's holy Word.

And therefore with all patience, as one who is working for a master the work that his master has set him to do, have I endeavoured to exhibit at large the Church's endowment of her great Head, consisting of two parts: the first, the inheritance of His

complete work wrought in the flesh; the second, the firstfruits of the work which He is to work when He comes again.

The former consists in perfect holiness, through the renewal of the soul; which is strengthened to subdue the innate propensities of the flesh to evil, to crucify the world, and to overcome the evil one. This we have served out to us in the two sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; in the one of which we receive cleanness of conscience, and in the other participation of Christ's sanctified flesh and purchased inheritance.

But none of these go further than to possess us of what He purchased in the flesh:

Luke 22

¹⁹ This is my body which is given for you...

Matthew 26

²⁸ This is my blood...shed...for the remission of sins.

His body, given for the life of the world; His blood, shed for the putting away of all sin. The Church has perfect holiness ministered to her in these two ordinances. Christ does thereby dispense that gift of the Spirit which was dispensed to Him by the Father in the days of His flesh, and by the faithful use of which He "sanctified himself."⁹⁰

And we, having in these most comfortable ordinances, that blessed fellowship of holiness, should sanctify ourselves, that we may be holy as He is holy. This is the work of the Spirit uniting us unto Christ; taking out of us our unholiness and grafting us into Christ. There is a power in the Spirit to wash the Ethiopian white. It is not in man, but it is in God, to do so; and the element with which to do it, He has in the blood of Christ, which cleanses away all sins.

Every man baptized into the Church is answerable for a life of spotless, stainless holiness. What though no man has yielded it? So much the more is the sinfulness of our nature proved, and the Divinity of Christ shown, who did present mortal flesh sinless:

⁹⁰ *John 17:19.*

and let Him be glorified, and every man be a liar. But the truth of God stands not the less sure.

Romans 3

⁴ Let God be true, and every man a liar.

Out of this claim which God has, and this power which we receive after baptism, for a perfect holiness come our confessions in the Church, which are confessions not only of the natural guilt and strength of sin, but of the deeper and deeper guilt which it has contracted in our eyes by warring against the Spirit of God, and striking at the life of Christ in the soul of the believer. Not only a creation-defiling, but a Redeemer-slaying thing is sin; not only aiming at the work of God, but at the person of God manifest in flesh.

This standard of perfection is what we measure ourselves by, and not each man's notion of what he can attain to. Man, though fallen into a state of weakness, is still kept responsible for the law of perfect holiness, as at the beginning; and he is brought to depend upon God the Redeemer, the incarnate God, the God proceeding forth into flesh to uphold it; and so believing in a God creating, a God incarnate, and a God proceeding forth upon flesh, in order to attain unto holiness, we attain thereunto, and are stable therein; and so are brought into the great truth of God, that no holiness can be otherwise effected save by the faith of God in Trinity acting according to their offices.

The sin which occurs in the Church is through lack of faith in the Godhead thus manifested; and that sin continually occurring, through the defect of our faith, is the occasion for a continual High Priest over the house of God, whose work of intercession may continually go on. Of this there is no doubt, that every member of Christ is bound and obliged to perfect holiness, and has the means of fulfilling it: and however far he comes short thereof, he must take the guilt to himself, and not look upon it as an ordinance or appointment of God, as a necessary imperfection in the work of Christ, and a native impotency in the Holy Ghost.

Now this is the more excellent way of charity or love, which the apostle commends above all spiritual gifts: it is the knowledge of Christ, and the being known of Him: the doing the will of the Father; for the lack of which He shall not admit into the kingdom many who in that day shall come with their spiritual gifts in their hand, saying:

Matthew 7

²² Have we not prophesied in your name, and in your name cast out devils, and in your name done many wonderful works?

This we never for a moment gainsay or undervalue, while we insist that, besides this, there is yet another thing resident in the Church; another work which she has to do besides the work of holiness in the flesh.

We hold the highest doctrine here, both as to the importance of this personal holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord; and of its measure, even perfectness, whereof love is the bond. Let no one say, then, that we undervalue the sacramental ministration of a cleansed soul and a holy body, when we insist from the premises laid down above, that there is another office to which the Church is called besides this, and another endowment with which she is gifted by her Lord and Husband; the dowry, not of holiness only, but also of power.

And for this she waited until He himself should, from the throne of God, shed it down abundantly upon His Church. Into both of these is the Church baptized, as Peter said:

Acts 2

³⁸ Repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The remission, or putting away, of sin, is that into which we are baptized, as a thing done for the world by Christ's sacrifice of himself. The gift of the Holy Ghost is that which to faith follows thereon—though, to convince Peter of God's equal goodness to the Gentiles, it was poured out upon Cornelius and his company before their baptism.

The Samaritan Church had the gift of baptism without the gift of the Holy Ghost, which they received by the hands of the apostles; and thereby we perceive that the Church may exist without the gift. But whether it is right in the sight of God that she should so exist, let any one judge, after perusing the things written above.

We have shut ourselves out by unbelief from the enjoyment of one great part of our dowry; whereby not only are we straitened, but the glory of our Lord and Husband is obscured, the world is deprived of its witness and testimony, and the gracious ends of God, so far as we can, defeated; and guilt is upon our head, as baptized men, for not using that which we are baptized into, for the possession and for the use of which we are responsible.

It is now three years since I drew the attention of the Church to this subject, and more than two since I published my views of it in the second of my homilies upon Baptism. Circumstances have occurred since to fix the attention of the Church upon it; and, lest men may be beguiled the one way or the other, we have felt it to be our duty to lay down the doctrine, according as we find it in the Holy Scriptures.

After this large exposition of the endowments with which Christ set forth His Church, and which are no longer found in her, we might now take upon us to reprove her unfaithfulness in not having kept these also till He come. But this is a matter of such vast importance, that we prefer rather to occupy ourselves with the instruction of her ignorance than the reproof of her faithlessness.

And because there are many who boldly maintain that these gifts of the Holy Ghost were only imparted for a season, to serve a temporary end; and that it were folly, and little less than blasphemy, to expect their return; we deem it good, before dismissing this topic, to lay out from Scripture the broad ground upon which we maintain God's intention to have been that these gifts should remain as permanent as faith and holiness and charity.

PSALM 68:18-19

Psalm 68

¹⁸ You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive: You have received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

¹⁹ Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.

This promise is by the Holy Ghost explained and applied in:

Ephesians 4

⁷ But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

⁸ Wherefore He said, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

¹¹ And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

The promise is, that Christ, having ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, should receive gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also; that the Lord God might dwell among them. And the interpretation is, that these gifts, which He received of the Father upon His ascension, He did bestow upon men, in the form of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers...

¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;

¹³ Till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

What Christ received when He ascended up on high we know to be the promise of the Holy Ghost, from *Acts 2:33*, and various other parts of Scripture. And this gift of the Holy Ghost He gave to certain office-bearers in His Church, and thereby endowed them for edifying the body, until it shall be complete.

Is that body, then, yet complete? No; nor will it be till He come again. How, then, should it be that the builders of this body should not still continue, for otherwise how were it to be built

up? And if both the builders and the work of building continue, then also the power by which they are constituted builders and fitted for their work. Here is an argument, to me irrefutable, for the continuance of the gift of the Holy Ghost in the Church till the number of the elect be accomplished and Christ shall come.

And, instead of arguing against the continuance, it would be well for the builders and master-builders in the house of God to consider by what right they hold their office, and by what means they are fitted for it, if so be that the gift of the Holy Ghost, received by Christ upon His ascension, have ceased from the Church. And those among us who know and believe better, ought to be much exercised with shame and sorrow that we possess so little of the seal of our vocation, earnest in prayer and supplication, with faith, that we may speedily be furnished with what we lack.

It is manifest to me that this is the doctrine of the Church, which requires of every candidate for an office to declare at the outset that He has the call of the Holy Ghost—or, in other words, the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the call to the office stands in the gift; and all which the presbytery does, is to make trial of these gifts, and ascertain whether it be really so, or only feigned to be so.

ISAIAH 8:18

Isaiah 8

¹⁸ Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwells in mount Zion.

This promise is interpreted by the Holy Ghost:

Hebrews 2

¹³ And again, I will put my trust in Him. And again, Behold I and the children which God has given me.

It contains an evidence of the same decisive kind, that these gifts were intended for a continuance, and not for a time. The promise is part of the prophecy concerning Immanuel (verse 8),

who is foretold to become a stumbling-block and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel (verse 14); and it is immediately added, in contrast with them, concerning his disciples:

Isaiah 8

¹⁶ Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples;

¹⁷ And I will wait upon the Lord that hides His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him.

¹⁸ Behold, I and the children that the Lord has given me are for signs and wonders in the land of Israel, from the Lord of Hosts which dwells in Mount Zion.

These words the Apostle Paul has referred to the Church, begotten to Christ by regeneration of the Holy Ghost. Of Christ, then, and of His children, it is said, that they are for signs and for wonders: and so it was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, in the baptism by the Holy Ghost both of Jews and Gentiles on becoming children of Christ by faith: they were set for signs and for wonders.

The prophet being concerned with Israel only, and showing forth the causes of that misery into which they are come, does, after the rejection of Christ, state the rejection of His children also, who were set for signs and wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts.

The apostle takes the language and applies it in general, without reference to the Jews in particular; and it is manifest from the context that the prophecy applies to all His disciples, among whom the law was bound up and the testimony sealed to the whole Church, which is the dwelling-place of the word of God, the oracle at which for not inquiring the world is destroyed.

Now in respect of the time during which he and his children were to be for signs and wonders, it is so long as God hides His face from the house of Jacob; so long as Christ waits and looks to God for the fulfillment of His promise, that by Him Israel should be gathered.

Here, then, in this brief description of the condition of Christ's disciples and children, we have it asserted that they are for signs

and wonders upon the earth during the time of His sitting in expectation at the right hand of God. It is as much the oracle of God that His Church should be for signs and wonders as that the law should be bound up and the testimony sealed among us. It is not more their prerogative to be holy according to the law of God, and to speak according to His testimony, than it is that they should be for signs and wonders.

Now let no one explain away this expression, “for signs and wonders,” into a mere spiritual and invisible thing. In the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament these words, “signs and wonders,” express always, without an exception, miraculous works, whether performed by the power of God or by the power of the evil one; and in the case before us they are such manifest tokens of God’s presence with the disciples of Christ as shall make it a crime worthy of destruction for any people to blind themselves thereto.

I hold, therefore, beyond a question, that the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of Isaiah, did as surely predict for us an inheritance of miraculous powers, as Moses did predict to the children of Israel the inheritance of the promised land; and that as, when they turn unto the Lord with repentance of their sins and observance of His holy law, they shall possess their inheritance of Canaan, so surely shall we possess our inheritance of signs and wonders when we shall believe in the power of our risen Lord, and the privilege of the Church to enjoy a firstfruits thereof.

ISAIAH 28:11

Isaiah 28

¹¹ For with stammering lips and another tongue will He speak to this people.

This promise is explained and applied by the Holy Ghost in:

1 Corinthians 14

¹¹ Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaks a barbarian, and he that speaks shall be a barbarian unto me.

It is a demonstration that the gift of tongues, like signs and wonders, is a new method by which God would convince the world, and yet by which the world will not be convinced, whereby their guilt is exceedingly aggravated.

Isaiah 28

¹² To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith you may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

Christ literally fulfilled this verse, saying:

Matthew 11

²⁸ Come unto me, all you that are weary, and I will give you rest.

In connection with preaching of the rest unto the weary, is connected this dispensation of the Holy Ghost speaking unto men by other tongues, for not hearing of which the Lord comes in judgment upon them.⁹¹ It is a part of the endeavor of God to convert men; it is a part of the probation which He takes of their wickedness.

Or, in other words, the preaching of peace and rest and refreshment to the weary is not the whole witness of Jesus Christ in the sight of the nations, but needs to have added thereto the gift of tongues, which, as we have shown, is the greatest manifestation of God that can be made outwardly. If so, why do we still not have it? Christ is defrauded of part of His testimony, the world is defrauded of part of her entreaty, and the Church has all the blame.

JOEL 2:28-32

Joel 2

²⁸ And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

²⁹ And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

⁹¹ *Isaiah 28:13-21.*

³⁰ And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.

³² And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.

This promise, is interpreted and applied by the Holy Ghost in:

Acts 2

¹⁷ And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

This is another unquestionable evidence of the perpetuity of these gifts in the Church. Though the passage in Joel, as being introduced by the word “afterward,” and forming the conclusion of a chapter concerning the rejection, penitence, and restoration of Israel, might seem to be consequent thereon, we know, by Peter’s application of it to the day of Pentecost, that it is not; as, indeed, is likewise evident from two internal marks—the one, that it takes place before the great and terrible day of the Lord; the other, that it is for a deliverance from that fearful destruction of nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat which the context immediately proceeds to describe.

The word translated “afterward” in our version, and in that of the Septuagint “after these things,” has not so much definiteness in the Hebrew, being simply “after;” and by the Apostle Peter it is rendered “in the latter days.” The way which I would take to understand such an expression as “after,” introducing a new scene or act in the prophets, would be to consider what was the main subject of the preceding act, not what was the last-mentioned particular.

Now, though the last-mentioned particular be Israel’s blessedness, the main subject is Israel’s long rejection of God, and desolation at the hand of her enemies; concluding, as usual, with an

assurance of restoration. This, then, is the action of God from which I should understand the outpouring of the Spirit as about to proceed; and the more, when I find that in the parallel passage of Isaiah it is expressly declared that the desolation shall continue until the Spirit be poured out from on high, and that this shall be the means of the refreshment and restoration.⁹²

The Jews seem to have been of opinion that the outpouring of the Spirit is the beginning of a new subject, by making the second chapter to end and the third chapter to begin there. I am the more convinced of this by the study of *Joel*, which evidently consists of two parts—the former, including the first and second chapters, being the oppression of the Jews under the four monarchies, and the last direful confederacy against them, from which they are recovered with infinite and everlasting mercies.

This general view of their sins and sufferings, of their repentance and restoration, having been given, the prophet has opened to him the last great act more fully in the other vision; which begins with the outpouring of the Spirit before the great and terrible day of the Lord; then describes the judgment of the nations in that fearful time; and concludes with the everlasting glory of His people.

Let us now consider the substance of the prophecy:

Joel 2

²⁸ I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

²⁹ And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.

This is the enlargement of that gift, which heretofore had rested on a few prophets and seers in Israel, to the whole body of the people indiscriminately, without respect of sex, age, or occupation.

⁹² *Isaiah* 32:14-15.

Now we have the apostle's authority for believing that this gift of God began to be given on the day of Pentecost; and have we any means of ascertaining how long it was intended to abide? This we have, clear and determinate; for the apostle, in the same place, after concluding his discourse, calls upon the heart-stricken people to come and be baptized. Says he:

Acts 2

³⁹ For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

The words "as many as the Lord our God shall call" are taken from the last words of the promise in *Joel*, "the remnant whom the Lord shall call;" and Peter's incorporation of them called on, with "them and their children," does show that he embraced the whole of those five verses of *Joel* as one promise, then begun to be accomplished.

This being made sure, we have in the two verses intervening, also quoted by him, a certain mark as to the term of the continuance of the prophecy:

Joel 2 [Acts 2:19-20]

³⁰ And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.

These words are proper only to one event in this world's history:

Matthew 24

²⁹ ...then shall appear...the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And until this time, therefore, that promise holds good; until Christ come, the Spirit, heretofore confined to the prophets and seers, is indiscriminately bestowed upon all whom the Lord our God shall call by His gospel—upon all to whom salvation and deliverance are preached.

The Church which the Lord called in Jerusalem, and which in its experiences was the pattern of the mother Church, received the Spirit indiscriminately, man, woman, and child; and when the type of the great day of the Lord came, in the destruction of Jerusalem, they also received deliverance and preservation from the sword and from the famine and from the pestilence, being in a wonderful manner suffered to escape from the doomed city.

When the Gentiles were first called in the house of Cornelius, they received the outpouring of the Spirit indiscriminately; and in the churches planted among the Gentiles, these gifts were as various and abundant as among the Jews.

And to the “remnant [of the Gentiles] whom the Lord shall call,”⁹³ the same promise of salvation and deliverance is preached. And there is no difference between Jew and Gentile in Christ; we are brought into the inheritance of all their blessings. Wherefore this promise of Joel concerning the outpouring of the Spirit, to give the gift of prophecy and of vision and of dreams, should be limited to the fathers and founders of the Church, when Joel himself assigns it as the prerogative of all flesh that are called until Christ come, I can by no means discover.

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Our next argument to prove the intention of God in respect to the duration of these gifts, is drawn from the words of our Lord scattered throughout the Gospels, and especially in His instructions to those who should preach His gospel. When He sent out the seventy—or rather when they returned from their first mission—He said unto them:

Luke 10

¹⁹ Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents or scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

And this, observe, not to the twelve apostles, but to the seventy. Again, twice over He says unto His disciples:

⁹³ *Joel 2:32.*

Matthew 17

²⁰ If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Matthew 21

²¹ If you have faith, and doubt not, you shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if you shall say unto this mountain, Be removed, and be cast into the sea; it shall be done.

Now this, which He said unto the twelve and the seventy and His disciples in general, He extends to every one who has faith in Him, saying:

John 14

¹² He that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father.

In the same discourse He promises to them the Comforter, of whom He asserts that it shall show them things to come. This Comforter came not till the day of Pentecost; and in what form He came, of tongues and miracles and prophecy, is known to all. Then the Church received the Holy Ghost.

Also in the same way of miraculous powers did the Samaritan Church receive the Holy Ghost,⁹⁴ and in the same way of speaking with tongues did Cornelius and his company receive the Holy Ghost.⁹⁵ And seeing that in these three capital instances the Holy Ghost came with His illumination, and His teaching, and His power of magnifying God, in this form of tongues and prophecy and miracles, what is the authority for severing Him from His chosen form, and saying that He shall not so be manifested any more; although Christ declared that to believers He would bring the power of doing greater works than He had done?

Let us now look more particularly to the instructions given by our Lord concerning the preaching of the gospel. In *Matthew* they are thus delivered:

⁹⁴ *Acts* 5.

⁹⁵ *Acts* 10:45.

Matthew 28

¹⁸ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

¹⁹ Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;

²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Behold what reasons the Lord assigns for their going to preach. It is His omnipotency in heaven and in earth; it is the power that is given to Him: power not only in heaven, the region of the spiritual; but also in earth, the region of the visible. As the head Commissioner, therefore, of the preachers, He would be known as the possessor of power; and in this character He promises to be with them until the end of the age, and the time of His re-appearing.

Now of what kind this power is, in the demonstration of which He would have His gospel preached, is declared in the parallel passage, upon which we have largely commented above:

- power over devils,
- power over serpents,
- power over poisons,
- power over diseases, and
- power to speak with tongues.

When this power was received by the first preachers, and of what kind it was, is again distinctly declared in the parallel passage of the Gospel:

Luke 24

⁴⁸ And you are witnesses of these things.

⁴⁹ And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high.

The corresponding passage in the *Acts of the Apostles* seals up this matter, and shows that the gift of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost is that presence of the all-powerful Jesus in which the gospel should be preached:

Acts 1

⁴ Jesus, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, says he, you have heard of me.

⁵ For John truly baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

⁷ And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in His own power.

⁸ But you shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and you shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Now how much of the success of their preaching stood in this very thing, let the prayer of the brethren, when all the powers of earth were set against them, testify. What it was that gave them boldness to preach in that perilous city of Jerusalem, and in that day of confederacy against Christ, let these words of the only recorded prayer of the Church testify:

Acts 4

²⁹ And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto your servants, that with all boldness they may speak your word,

³⁰ By stretching forth your hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of your holy child Jesus.

³¹ And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Moreover, how much the apostle Paul rests the authority of his office as an apostle upon the demonstration which the Holy Ghost gave to his words, by communicating gifts of the Spirit, let these words to the Corinthians prove:

1 Corinthians 2

⁴ And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power:

⁵ That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

And these words to the Galatians:

Galatians 3

² This only would I learn of you, Received you the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

And also let it be observed how Peter justified himself to the rest of the apostles, for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, by the same argument:

Acts 11

¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

¹⁶ Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

¹⁷ Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could withstand God?

But now how changed is the Church! Because in a certain corner of the vineyard of Scotland a certain minister's preaching is said to have been attested by the gift of tongues, without inquiring, or caring to inquire, whether it really be so or no; and if it be so, hailing him as the beloved and honored of the Lord; have we not rushed upon him with open mouth, and raged against him with heathenish violence, and are even now seeking to cast him out of the Church? I wash my hands of such cruelty and infidelity: I lift up my solemn, though it should be solitary, protest against it, as a minister of the Church of Scotland, and pray and wait for better times.

If so be that this is the gift of tongues—and why should I, with such witness, doubt it?—then hail to you, you honored minister of Christ! The Lord gave me to declare the Church's right to these gifts years ago; but to you and to your words has He given the higher sanction of the very gifts: for these verily are, by the Lord Jesus and His apostles, looked upon as the highest outward testimonies of God to the truth.

Before leaving this testimony, derived from the very lips of Christ himself, I would put forth one or two of a less direct kind, and yet, perhaps, on that account only the more forcible. In the

sermon on the mount, when referring to the day of judgment, when He shall sit to determine who must enter into the kingdom of heaven, He says:

Matthew 7

²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? and in your name have cast out devils? and in your name done many wonderful works?

²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.

Now I would ask, if to work miracles, and to prophesy, and to cast out devils, were only intended to be local and partial, and not universal and continual in the Church, why should our Lord pitch upon these as insufficient testimonials of one who does the will of His Father, of one whom Jesus knows?

But taking it to be intended of God that these should remain in His Church as gifts, for the use of which their possessors were responsible; that with them they should both edify themselves and edify the Church; it then becomes a most appropriate point of instruction and warning, to make us know that gifts are not graces, but signs of the grace of God to us; intended to beget gratitude and love to Him, and to the Lord Jesus who procured them for us by ascending up on high. Then it becomes exactly parallel with that beautiful contrast of spiritual gifts with love which Paul makes in *1 Corinthians* 13.

SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT

Another of those cross lights cast upon this subject is to be found in that continual prediction of signs and wonders to be wrought by Satan and his false prophets on the eve of the coming of the Lord:

Matthew 24

²⁴ For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect.

Now, if it had been God's purpose that signs and wonders were to be in the Church only for a short season, during the lives of the

apostles, or some few years after them, and never again to be needed or expected, what could Satan look for from a Church thus dead to the desire or expectation of signs and wonders, but to be treated as an impostor?

Either the Church must change her present opinion, and begin to think that signs and wonders may again be looked for from God, or else Satan will bring rejection upon himself when he shall thus offer his credentials: just as,

- unless an expectation of Christ shall be again awakened in the Church, false Christs will present themselves in vain;
- unless a spirit of prophecy be given to the Church, false prophets will present themselves in vain;
- unless signs and wonders be given to the Church, false signs and wonders will be looked for in vain.

Now, believing the words of the Lord, that false Christs, false prophets, and false miracles of great subtlety, shall be presented by Satan to the Church before the great day of the Lord, I most certainly believe that beforehand there will be given by God both the hope and the desire of Christ's appearing, the gift of prophecy, and the power of miracles; unto which condition of things Satan will present all his power of delusion, and will certainly delude many, nay, all but the elect.

Therefore, while I argue so patiently and so zealously for the truth of God's intention in this matter, I am far from any exaggeration of the peculiar safety of such gifted persons, and of such a gifted condition of the Church; but do, on the other hand, clearly perceive that they will straightway become the object of Satan's spiritual temptations, as the Church that now is is the object of his worldly temptations; and all persons will fall before him, save those who are rooted and grounded and built up in love.

And I foresee, moreover, that the scandal of these spiritual defections and transgressions will be so great in the sight of the world, so nearly allied to folly and to frenzy, that it will be with the loss of all worldly reputation that any man will dare to pro-

fess his faith in a Lord instantly about to appear, or in a Church possessing miraculous powers, or in a ministry gifted with the gift of prophecy.

THE EPISTLES

The notices which are found in the Apostolical Epistles concerning these gifts, affords another, and perhaps the strongest, proof of all, that they were as much given for continuance as those fruits of the Spirit which are in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.

In the 12th chapter of the *Romans*, the gift of prophesying is mentioned in the same connection with the ministry, teaching, exhortation, ruling, and so forth.

In the 4th of the *First Epistle of Peter*, “speaking as the oracles of God” is mentioned along with “ministering to the necessities of others.”

In the 6th chapter of the *Hebrews*, “being made partakers of the Holy Ghost,” is mentioned along with being “enlightened, and tasting the good word of God.”

In the *First of Timothy*, “the prophecies that went before” are referred to as a ground of His confidence in the warfare, and an assurance of His gift, along with the charge of the apostle, and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

But the most striking example of this is to be found in the 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, where spiritual gifts are made the marks of the several members in the body of Christ. After considering the diversities of these gifts, He gives as the reason of this diversity, that they might make up one body together, and would be incomplete without one another. They are likened in the Church to the offices which the eye and the ear and the hand and the foot have to sustain in the human body.

Now, this is strange language to use, if so be that these gifts were intended only for a season. Why identify them with the memberships of the body in that case? why connect that which is

temporary, as the sign, yea, and the cause, of that which is perpetual? For that the body should have many memberships is a perpetual ordinance in the Church, at least until Christ come: and therefore I believe that these gifts, in the variety of which the various memberships stand, were likewise so intended to continue.

Moreover, the apostle does set these gifts into contrast with love—which also he enlarges upon, describing its excellent qualities—and then, without a hint of any difference with respect to their continuance in the Church, he proceeds to treat of spiritual gifts again. Now, methinks, when he was putting forth the super-excellence of love over all spiritual gifts, if so be that the spiritual gifts were intended only for a short season in the Church, he would have seized hold on this at once. He does, indeed, say that prophecies shall fail, and that tongues shall cease, and that knowledge shall vanish away; but when? Let the apostle himself say:

1 Corinthians 13

¹⁰ When that which is perfect is come...

¹² ...then we shall know even as we are known.

And no one, I believe, will say that this time is yet come, nor is to come until the coming of Christ. We have argued above, that these gifts are but a firstfruits or earnest of that perfect thing which is to be enjoyed in the day of the redemption of the inheritance. Then, indeed, the present partial ministrations shall give way to that complete and perfect man which we shall be when the body is redeemed from the grave, and we shall be like Him who is our life.

DOES LOVE SUPERSEDE THE GIFTS?

Before leaving these three chapters, which contain the fullest account of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, we think it good to remove one objection to their continuance in the Church, which may be grounded upon:

1 Corinthians 13

¹³ And now abides faith, hope, charity...but the greatest of these is charity.

What, it may be said, is the intention of the apostle in separating from all other gifts, faith, hope, and charity, and saying that they remain? Is it not as much as to say, that they only remain? To answer this question aright will require an examination of the context.

The apostle, having in the 12th chapter given to spiritual gifts their place, as distinguishing the members of Christ from one another, and together constituting the completeness of the body, does proceed in the 13th chapter to explain that common principle of regenerate life which unites the members into one body with Christ their head. To this principle, which constitutes the community of Christ, he gives the name of love: as it is written:

1 John 4

¹⁶ God is love; and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him.

Without this root and ground of love, he declares that every gift would be as much abused as if the hand were to lift itself against the heart, or the tongue to tell lies of the wants of the other members. In the body there is the unity of one life, of one mind, and one will. This answers to love in the body of Christ, which is the bond of perfectness.

Besides this, there are in the body various members which, besides a common life, a common sympathy of pleasure and of pain, have various uses and occupations; in which diligently ministering, the whole body grows up fitly proportioned, and properly adapted for the functions of a perfect man. This answers to the diversities of gifts and ministries and in-workings of God in the Church.

But if the members of the body will not do their several parts—the limbs refusing to bear, or the hands to work, or the eyes to explore—then the child grows up weak and ill-proportioned, and the man falls into disease and helplessness. The edification of the body, the building of it up in stature and strength, comes, as is well known to the physiologist, and indeed to every person less

or more, from the labor of each member in his several place at his several occupation.

This is so beautifully applied to the Church in chapter 4 of the *Ephesians*, that I cannot help quoting three verses out of a passage to which I have referred already, and do again refer all who would understand the proper constitution of the Church:

Ephesians 4

¹⁴ That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

¹⁵ But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

¹⁶ From whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love.

Now, so much of the Church's edification standing in each member fulfilling his separate office in love to the whole, the apostle in *1 Corinthians* 13 sets forth the actings of this love, among which faith and hope occur:

1 Corinthians 13

⁷ [Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

This done, he proceeds at the eighth verse to set forth the supremacy of love by another consideration altogether—that it never fails, which is more than can be said of the gifts peculiar to the members; whereof he mentions three by name, prophecies, tongues, and knowledge, as being to last only till the perfect thing be come of which these gifts of the Holy Ghost were the first-fruits and earnest; whereas love, being the bond of our union with Christ and with God, must continue evermore unabated in its strength.

Now this love includes both faith and hope, and all other fruits of the Spirit; and itself is a fruit of the Spirit, often enumerated as one among the rest. To express its pre-eminence here also, its pre-

eminence as it were among its own children, he chooses out the three principal graces—faith, hope, and love—and asserts that here also love is the greatest and the best.

While I believe this to be the thing substantially contained in the thirteenth verse, I have attended also to the peculiarity of the language, “Now abides faith, hope, charity;” and I have this to observe upon it: the word, “now,” cannot be used adverbially, as signifying “at that time,” but conjunctively, as introducing the conclusion of his eulogy of charity; for he had stated that all the gifts were in the Church at that time, and in the next verse he tells them to covet earnestly those gifts.

But, allowing this, what is the meaning of this word “abides”? The same, I think, with the “never fails” of verse 8. He would express, as the conclusion of what he had said, that love was to remain forever.

But along with this he would also express another truth,—that, among the other permanent graces of the Spirit which compose the renewed image of God, love stood pre-eminent; he would contemplate it, not as a mother principle of godliness, but as one among its own children; and of these children he takes not patience, or joy, or chastity, but faith and hope, which have a pre-eminence given to them in many parts of Scripture—as *Romans* 5:1-2; *1 Timothy* 1:5; *Hebrews* 11:1—in order to give love its eternal prerogative of being the first, the greatest, and the best, the fountainhead of God’s manifestations of himself, and which He would have to be the fountainhead of all His creatures’ manifestations of themselves.

I believe it to be a common error, that faith and hope will cease through eternity any more than love. Faith is the very condition of a creature towards the Creator. The Creator never ceases to do good to His creature; His goodness is never all paid off; He never by an act discontinues His future acting, and being so that He is ever loving to be gracious, His creatures must ever be trusting in Him for the supply of that grace.

The Holy Spirit's action in the creature is what it was shown to be in Christ,—perfect faith upon the perfect goodness of the invisible and incomprehensible God. Faith, therefore, is an essential attribute of the creature possessed by the Holy Ghost: and so is hope, for even now that Christ is upon the throne of the Father, He is hoping, waiting, or expecting, until His enemies be made His footstool; and so it must be to every creature who is constituted under the conditions of time. The acting of the Holy Spirit's confidence towards God with respect to things future, is hope.

Moreover, they are constituent parts of love; and if love is to abide, they must abide also. This last verse, therefore, is merely an assertion of the eternal duration of love, and its supremacy among the other graces, which likewise eternally endure, in contradistinction from those gifts which are to continue only until the perfection of our being in the redemption of the body and the restoration of our inheritance.

Indeed, throughout the whole discourse there is not a hint of any kind to lead us even to suspect that the apostle had any notion that these gifts were to be discontinued after a few years, or at most after one or two centuries. There is not a hint for suspecting that he had any such notion as that commonly entertained, that these miraculous endowments were merely to obtain credence for the doctrine which the apostles promulgated; and this done, that they were to cease. I will examine this notion more particularly hereafter: I only speak now as to its origin; and this I maintain, that, originate where it may, it has no origin, ground, nor semblance of authority in the Holy Scriptures.

Throughout these three chapters, which have no other object than to treat of the spiritual gifts, as contradistinguished from the fruits of the Spirit; of the outward manifestations of the Spirit, as distinguished from his inward regeneration; there is not—I say it again—a hint that both equally are not conditions of the Church, permanent as her permanency under this present dispensation, until the perfection come.

They stand together in the apostle's mind, as co-requisites to the being and well-being of the Church; the one requisite to the community of her members, the other requisite to their mutual dependence upon one another, and their common contribution to the edification of the whole. Nothing but that same blindness which has made men reading the Bible never to perceive a second coming of the Lord, could have made them never to perceive that these gifts were intended to remain.

BAPTISM AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The last consideration by which I am myself persuaded, and would persuade others, of the truth of these things, is an awful one indeed, which it almost overwhelms me to state, but which, after three years constant meditation of it, I think I may not any longer hide.

It is three years since I publicly expressed my sober conviction that every baptized person is responsible to God for the possession of some of those gifts included generally under the appellation of spirituals in the 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*: and, before showing more at large the grounds of this conviction, which three years of free and open discussion with my brethren has rather confirmed than weakened, I will extract from my published writings the paragraph wherein it is contained. In the second homily on Baptism⁹⁶ will be found this paragraph:

The other part of the dispensation of the grace of God under which the baptized are brought, is expressed in these words:

Acts 2

³⁸ ...and you shall receive the Holy Ghost.

By which, they say, we ought to understand, not the outward gift of power which has ceased, but the inward gift of sanctification and fruitfulness, which we all believe to be co-essential in the salvation of a sinner with the work of Christ itself.

But for my own part I am inclined to understand both; for I cannot find by what writ of God any part of the spiritual gift was

⁹⁶ See *Homilies on Baptism*, Homily II: "The Sealing Virtue of Baptism".

irrevocably removed from the Church. I see, indeed, that she has lost the power which heretofore made her terrible as an army with banners; so also has she lost the bright and glorious raiment which made her fair as the moon and clear as the sun.

But why she may not hope, yea, assuredly believe, to have the former, when the Lord shall see it good, as well as the latter, is what I cannot see, the one being truly as supernatural a work of God as is the other. For that the works which the first disciples were enabled to work was a true fruit of the Holy Spirit is not only manifest from their being constantly named by His name—as in:

Acts 10

⁴³ Because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost: for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

This being the visible sign of the invisible grace. But it is put beyond all doubt by the apostle's enumeration of the diversity of the Spirit's operations; as it is written:

1 Corinthians 12

⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

⁸ For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

⁹ To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

¹⁰ To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

¹¹ But all these works that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Now, it is not for man, without some far more cogent reason than the mere fact of their being withdrawn, to preclude and prevent you from expecting the whole gift with which at any time it has pleased God to endow His Church. It is not for any man, by an arbitrary distinction, for which I can find no warrant in Scripture, to name the one part ordinary and the other part extraordinary; and, upon the strength of this arbitrary division, to say the former was never intended to be continued, but the latter only.

The better way of expressing the truth is to say, that in the first ages, the faith of the Church being great, her possession of the

earnest of the Spirit was great: her expectation and her prayer being great, her answer and her receipt was great. But as she abused the day-spring which arose upon her from on high, and employed the glory of the morning in idle and unprofitable and wicked works; not valuing the gift of pure and holy light, of warm and vigorous life; the Lord from time to time withdrew His talents, and sentenced her to that poverty under which we now behold her;—and of which I will say, that while I bow with resignation to the will of God, I will never cease to use the withdrawal of these gifts as an argument of our being under the judgment and wrath of God; while I regard that account of the matter with which we content ourselves—that the extraordinary have been withdrawn from us, but the ordinary remain—as a poor shift to remove the blame off from our shoulders, and as making an unworthy use of the Divine purpose and intention.

That it was a part of the Divine purpose to bring the Gentile Church under this deprivation of the Holy Ghost, as He formerly did bring the Jewish Church under blindness and deafness to the voice of their prophets, there can be no doubt: but, in like manner as they are continually rebuked, and were at length cast out from being the Lord's people, for this very cause; so do we underlie a present rebuke. And it ought to be the continual argument of the preachers of the truth, and to form the grounds of continual admonition and warning of judgment speedily about to come.

And therefore I present it to you, my Christian brethren, as the ground of deepest humility in the sight of God, and most sorrowful repentance and painful intercession, like unto Daniel's, that we have been brought into this state of impotency, which argues a like state of unholiness. For these two, holiness in the inward parts and power in the outward, go together in the dispensations of the Spirit unto His Church.

And being thus convinced in my mind, and moved in my spirit, I do not hesitate to affirm, that all we who have been baptized were baptized unto the fullness of the spiritual gifts, according as it might please God to divide unto every man, whether the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, the gift of healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, or the interpretation of tongues; each one of these being the outward sign of a particular inward operation of the

Spirit upon the soul, and qualifying the soul for profiting the Church with that inward gift which is given to it.

These are the signs of the Spirit's presence. And observe what is the fruit of His presence:

Galatians 5

²² The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance...

Ephesians 5

⁹ The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.

Romans 8

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death,

⁹ But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

¹⁰ Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

¹¹ And if Christ be in you, the body is dead indeed because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

¹² But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you.

¹³ Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

¹⁴ For if you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

¹⁵ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

¹⁶ For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

¹⁷ The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.

¹⁸ For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

The judgment given in this passage has been confirmed to me by a more careful consideration of the passage in the 2nd of the

Acts, in connection with other passages of Scripture. The people whom Peter addressed were in the midst of astonishment at what they heard and saw; ignorant men speaking the marvelous works of God, unlearned men speaking all the tongues of the known world. Peter rose up to explain to them what it was; and told them that it was the fulfillment of the promise of *Joel*, that the Spirit which had resided in the prophets was to reside in all flesh, man, woman, and child indiscriminately; that the office which had been fulfilled by a series of prophets, ending with Jesus of Nazareth, was now to be fulfilled by a body of people, of whom Jesus of Nazareth, now both Christ and Lord, is both the Head and soul.

And when Peter perceived that his discourse had taken hold upon the people, and they asked what they should do, he answered them⁹⁷:

Come and be baptized into the faith of Christ, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive this gift of the Holy Ghost which we have received: for the promise in *Joel* is not to a few, but to all flesh, even “to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

And upon being baptized, he expressly declares that they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now, was Peter deceiving the people? Was he then preaching baptism to them with another and a better promise annexed to it than he would have done to others? Surely no: for he says the promise was not only to them and to their children, but likewise to all that were afar off, to every one whom God should call with the gospel call.

Now, what can we make of it then, but to allow that baptism, as preached by the apostles, that Christian baptism, has the fulfillment of *Joel*'s prophecy connected with it; and that the baptized are responsible for the possession and exercise of the same? But because this is a conclusion of great moment, it ought to be confirmed with all concurrent testimony of the Scriptures. And, first, I refer to the connection, invariably preserved in our Lord's in-

⁹⁷ *Acts* 2:38-39.

structions to His apostles and disciples, between the preaching of the gospel and the possession of power; and particularly to the 24th of *Luke*, where, in virtue of Christ's suffering and rising from the dead,

Luke 24

⁴⁷ Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

But with respect to the promise of the Father, and power from on high, He tells them to tarry for it. Here, then, is a space of time, the time between Christ's resurrection and the day of Pentecost, during which repentance and remission of sins might be preached; but the power from on high and the promise of the Father might not be preached, otherwise than as about to be: that is, John's baptism, which is unto repentance and remission, but not Christ's baptism, which is unto the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Christ himself received these two baptisms immediately, the one upon the other; not so the apostles, and others who were baptized by John, and who baptized into the baptism of John. They remained without the baptism of the Holy Ghost till the day of Pentecost, and on the day of Pentecost they received it.

There was no remission of sins by the law, but, on the other hand, an imputation of sins, which could not be remitted but by the blood of Christ shed for the remission of sins that were under the first testament. John came to hold up Christ as the Lamb of God, by whom not only these, but all other sins, were taken away. And he likewise held Him up in another light, as He who should baptize with the Holy Ghost.

By His death, and resurrection, and ascension unto the Father, He both took away sin from all flesh, and showed it to be taken away: for sin cannot enter into the presence of God. By sending down the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, He showed himself to be the baptizer with the Holy Ghost. From that time forth these two unspeakable gifts,—the gift of holiness, and the gift of power: remission or putting away of sins, and endowment with the Holy Ghost—became joined together as the privilege of Christian bap-

tism; and on the day of Pentecost Peter joined them together: and what God then joined, let no man part asunder.

A curious confirmation of this truth occurs in the case of the Samaritan Church, narrated in the 8th of the *Acts*, where, Philip having baptized them into the faith of Jesus, the apostles, hearing thereof, sent down Peter and John, who were not satisfied until they had prayed for them, and laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. This shows two things: first, that the gift of the Holy Ghost is a distinct thing from the remission of sins and regeneration, wrought in baptism; and that the latter can exist without the former, which is the only comfort to the Church laboring under the absence and loss of these gifts.

But whereas the apostles, hearing of this, immediately took order to communicate that which was lacking, and did communicate it by the laying on of their hands, it is proved, secondly, that this state of destitution is not the right one before God, but ought with all speed to be supplied with what it lacks.

And now, lest any one from that instance might have argued that these gifts, over and above regeneration and holiness, were not without the laying on of the apostles' hands to be obtained, the Holy Ghost has given us another instance, in the 10th and 11th chapters of the *Acts*, wherein the same apostle Peter, though honored to declare the truth by preaching, was set aside in this matter of the Holy Ghost, which Christ ministered directly, without either the outward sign of baptism or of the laying on of hands.

And now, as the former instance was our consolation under our present bereavement, so this is our encouragement to expect these gifts, though we have no hand of an apostle to be laid upon us. When the Church shall have rightly apprehended and fully believed the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, as we are now endeavoring to lay it down, she shall not have long to wait until she receive the thing which we declare.

How very remarkable is Peter's comment, or rather reflection, at the time this took place:

Acts 11

¹⁶ Then remembered I, [says he,] the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost;

—making it to me most manifest that baptism with the Holy Ghost is indeed neither less nor more than these spiritual gifts.

Not but that the work of putting away sin and regeneration into holiness is likewise wrought by the Holy Ghost, or rather by the Spirit of Christ, bringing forth of His holy manhood the life of a holy manhood into us; but that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is something distinct from and more than this, even a gift from God to His newborn child, a talent for His newly hired servant, upon which he is to trade, with which he is to profit the body of the Church, and in doing so to edify himself and earn a glorious reward.

Now, there is one other instance in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and that in some respects more remarkable than the two preceding, recorded in the 19th chapter of the *Acts*; where Paul, having found at Ephesus certain disciples, asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost since they believed; and they said unto him:

Acts 19

² We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

Literally,

“But we have not even heard if the Holy Ghost is.”

That is, they had not been visited by any one of the disciples who were baptized with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost—yet had they received the baptism of repentance, or change of heart, or putting away of sin, or regeneration; which regeneration Christ preached to Nicodemus as a thing then upon the earth, which was to be seen and heard everywhere. Then were these men baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul laid his hands on them they received the Holy Ghost.

Here, then, Christian baptism is by Paul, as by Peter, connected with, and made especially to stand in, the gift of the Holy Ghost. Paul's own case is, perhaps, the most remarkable of all, where without any notice of baptism (but it may be that he had been baptized in John's baptism), without any hand of an apostle, but of a common disciple, Ananias, he received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

These formal instances are confirmed by many incidental and casual mention of these things in the Apostolical Epistles, of which I will only notice one, the 6th chapter of the *Hebrews*; where the foundation and first principles of Christ are enumerated to be:

- repentance from dead works,
- faith upon God,
- the doctrine of baptism,
- the laying on of hands,
- the resurrection from the dead, and
- the eternal judgment.

And those who had partaken of this initiation are described in the following verse in these words:

“The enlightened, who have tasted of the heavenly gift,” (in opposition to the earthly things preached to Nicodemus,) “become partakers of the Holy Ghost, having tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the coming age.”

Now tell me, if these miraculous powers and heavenly gifts had been only for a season conferred, how our apostle would have thus used them, and them chiefly, when warning the Church concerning apostasy. It is not to be supposed that he would mix up the things of a day with lessons intended to endure as long as the Church endures.

OUR PRESENT STATE

I think these observations ought to be sufficient to convince every one who trembles at God's Word, and trembles not at the precepts of man, that the subject which we are handling is one of

great and grave concernment to the Church, and to every believer. Let ignorant and wicked men scoff how they please, that it is not good for any Christian to put away the subject from him, as one of small moment to his soul; for if the soul's well-being stands in her being able to give a good account of her stewardship, and this gift of the Holy Ghost be indeed a stewardship of the regenerate soul, the case of those must be very perilous indeed who refuse to hear any word concerning the same.

Nay, but what is the condition of us all baptized persons? Are we not verily in the case of that servant who hid his talent in the earth? I think we are. Then let us take thought, and consider; let us give heed to the word preached unto us; and being convinced that these gifts are by Christian baptism sealed to the Church, let us seek for them, let us pray for their revival, let us stir them up in one another, let us contend for them earnestly, and not yield them into the hands of the mockers and the revilers.

Oh no! it is no light matter, to be lightly dealt with. I have felt bound in spirit till I should find an opportunity of setting forth these things to the Church; and having now found it, in the regular course of these lectures, I rejoice; and shall now retire, with the impressions made upon my mind, to wait upon the Lord, till he shall awaken in the Church committed to my charge these precious things, of which we have long lost the use, and even the knowledge.

By means of the preceding digression we have come to distinct conclusions concerning the Church, as it was constituted and left by Christ to continue till He should come again. We have ascertained, that to the constitution of the Church two things must co-exist:

1. The holiness of the regenerate man, expressing itself in one faith, one hope, one love, one spirit;
2. The peculiar and proper gift of the Holy Ghost unto every member, to place him in his proper office in the body, and to enable him, by his diligent use thereof, to contribute his part unto the edification of the whole.

There is no doubt, that of this charge or burden, which we received in trust from the Lord, and were commanded to hold fast till He come, a very poor and pitiful fragment is that which remains; and the sorest affliction of all is, that there is no shame nor contrition in the heart of the Church for her miserable neglect of the gift that is in her, for her sad dereliction of the high and honorable office whereto she was called.

Instead of mourning in sackcloth and in ashes over the ruins of the temple of the Holy Ghost, which she is become; instead of setting herself, like Nehemiah, stoutly to the work of repairing the wall of the city, and setting up the gates with their locks and bars: we are more like Sanballat and the Horonites, who resisted the work of re-edifying Jerusalem, and by their interference delayed its accomplishment.

If we speak of perfect holiness in the flesh, they make an outcry for imperfection and indwelling sin; as if God had not sought, or seeking had not prevailed, to sanctify our nature, as it is found by us all under the fallen condition of sin and death.

If we speak of presenting body, soul, and spirit an acceptable offering unto God, and proving what is the perfect will of God, they raise an outcry about original sin and abiding corruption: as if God's glory stood in being defeated and overcome, as if Christ's work stood in being holy himself but not suffering any of His members to be likewise holy.

If we take liberty to speak of baptism as the slaying and burying of the flesh, and the quickening of the Spirit to prevail over it, in all ways and at all times, so as that we should ever be in the Spirit and never in the flesh; they admit that this is what shall be at the resurrection of the just: but that it is what should be now, and what every baptized man is bound and enabled to be, they much object: and by their much objecting keep the Church in this twilight ignorance, in this mixture of worldliness, in this satisfaction with unholiness, in which she is everywhere found.

The idea of perfection in the flesh and in the world is held to be a false idea; the hope of it a fallacious hope; the desire of it, deceit

and disappointment to all. I lift up my voice against this, as the sanctification of wickedness, as the inlet of all immorality, as the denial of God's supremacy over man, as the rejection of the work of Christ in flesh, and the defiance of the Holy Ghost's power to cleanse the conscience from dead works, and give it a continual good answer towards God.

Nor is it any matter to me how much this doctrine may be, and has been, abused, both by the Papists and the Methodists, to attribute merit unto the creature, and puff him up with vain conceit: it is not liable to such abuse in the hands of those who understand that it is not they, but Christ in them, who makes them to cease from sin; and that the glory of all such righteousness as we are enabled to work is due to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in whose name and into whose power we were baptized.

I call upon every baptized person, upon every member of the Church of Christ; I do most solemnly call, to...

2 Corinthians 7

¹ ...perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord,

1 Peter 1

¹⁶ ...[to] be holy as He is holy,

Matthew 5

⁴⁸ ...[and] perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect.

I call upon every man who is born of God to cease from sin, and to know the meaning of such language as this:

Romans 8

² The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

1 John 3

⁶ Whosoever abides in Him sins not.

⁹ Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

They talk of the peculiar gifts of the Holy Ghost as having been withdrawn from the Church; but they might as well talk of the common gift of love and holiness having been withdrawn, for the

one seems to me almost as much gone out of sight as does the other.

Nay; but if, as we must all allow, the peculiar gifts of the Spirit have in a great degree ceased to be visible, it is because the unfaithful servants did not trade with them for the Master's interest, which is the Church's commonweal; and so, from defect of that love and holiness, which is the bond of the body, the common possession of all, it has come to pass that we are so cut short in our peculiar property.

Therefore it is, because we have been of a selfish and churlish spirit, that we have hidden our talent in a napkin, or in the earth. But it is our doing and not His. He is not yet come to reckon with us, and to say of the unfaithful and wicked,

Matthew 25

²⁸ Take his talent from him.

The talent is still there, you sluggard! Go, dig it up out of the ground, where you have concealed it; go, trade with it, and lay it out; that your Lord may receive His own with usury.

Oh! I warn all, with whom my word has any weight, to abjure the unscriptural, the false opinion, in the arms of which the multitude lie locked, that God has withdrawn any gift from His Church. The time of reckoning is not yet come, blessed be His name! The Merchantman is not yet returned from the far country: make haste, consider the gift He bequeathed to you, examine the state of your accounts, and make ready; for the reckoning is at hand.

I warn you, brethren, beware of false doctrine, where false doctrine must be attended with such fatal consequence. The command of our text is steadfast and uncompromising,

Revelation 2

²⁵ That which you have hold fast till I come;

—and in the next Epistle,

Revelation 3

² ...strengthen the things which remain.

I call upon you to follow after charity, and to desire spiritual gifts, but rather that you may prophesy. I call upon you to covet earnestly the best gifts. I would that you all spoke with tongues, I would that you did all prophesy, I would that you were zealous of spiritual gifts, and that you sought to excel to the edifying of the Church; and in thus wishing, I use the language of the apostle of the Gentiles, who breathed these desires of his heart over the Corinthian Church. I earnestly beseech you to consider your baptismal obligation; I earnestly beseech you to render an account of that gift of the Holy Ghost, into the promise of which you were baptized.

Re-examine that tradition of men, that God intended miracles, or gifts of the Holy Ghost, to continue only for a time. It is as great a falsehood as that he intended Adam to stand in innocency only for a time; and Adam might as well justify his fall by turning upon God and saying:

“You did no otherwise intend but that I should fall!”

As we justify our loss of the Church’s primitive glory by saying:

“God intended that it should only last for a while, and then be lost forever!”

The Jews might as well be proud and hard-hearted under their present dispensation and degradation, and say:

“For God intended, and had written it in the Prophets!”

And Rome, that mother of harlots, might as well justify her apostasy by saying,

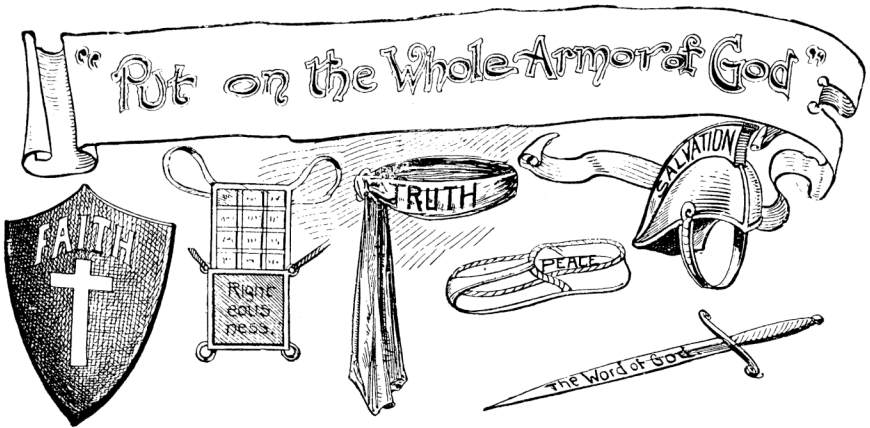
“God intended it; for is it not all written in the Apocalypse?”

Even as we, cold, lukewarm Protestants, having a name only to live, may pretend to justify our present nakedness, and blindness, and meanness, and evil hearts of unbelief, and spiritual voidness, and pride of ignorance, and boasting in our shame, by saying:

“God intended it; is it not written in the account of the Church of Sardis and the Church of Thyatira?”

I seek strong words and mighty words. I would bring my blow as with a forge-hammer to break the rock in pieces. I will keep no terms, I will make no truce with the spirit that is now reigning in the Church. If they will set themselves against the Church of God, I will set myself against them, and fight it out unto the last; but not with their weapons of falsehood, of ridicule, of contempt, of railing, and of revenge, but:

- with the weapons of the truth,
- with the shield of faith, which is able to quench their fiery darts;
- with the sword of the Spirit, which is quick and powerful; and
- with feet shod for strength and keeping ground with the preparation of the gospel of peace.



VI. THE PROMISE

Revelation 2

²⁶ And he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father.

²⁷ And I will give him the morning star.

²⁸ He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches.

THIS Epistle might, we have said, be well entitled “Of Works;” and as such we have treated it, introducing into this lecture whatever we had to say concerning the works of the Church. That digression into which we entered, for showing out of the Holy Scriptures what were the works proper to the Christian Church in the primitive time, would have been proper in no epistle but this to the Church of Thyatira.

1. Our matter concerning Church government properly arranged itself under the first epistle, where Christ presents himself as the head Bishop walking among the churches;
2. Our matter concerning suffering under persecution arranged itself under the second epistle, unto Smyrna, where Christ presents himself as the vanquisher of death;
3. Our matter concerning the false prophets and doctrines, under the epistle to Pergamos, where Christ presents himself as the pruner of the exuberances, and the cutter-off of the fruitless branches of His vine;
4. So our matter concerning works, as distinguished from love, the inward principle, does properly arrange itself under this epistle to Thyatira, where Christ is presented as the workman of His Church, with His feet like unto fine brass.

Now, in confirmation of this arrangement of our matter, it is remarkable, that to the words “he that overcomes,” which are common to all the epistles, there should be added these words, “and keeps my works unto the end,” which are found in none other,

nor any other answering to them. It is a peculiarity of this epistle to put in two conditions necessary to the possession of the promise, of which the first is, that we “shall overcome;” and the second, that “we shall keep Christ’s works unto the end.” This new condition, therefore, is well worthy of our attention.

It consists of two parts: the first being the subject, *my works*; the second being the action, *keeping them unto the end*. Now I think there is a special emphasis to be put upon the word *my*, in the subject: “my works,” to distinguish them from the works of Jezebel, the mother of lies and of the abominations of the earth, which were leading astray many from the right way of good works.

To put the Church upon her guard against a multitude of false works—such as penances and pilgrimages, and lying signs and wonders, and bodily inflictions, and the various formularies of the religious orders, and the keeping of saints’ days, and the observing of times and seasons, and that multitude of impositions which were invented by the sorceress—Christ, in writing of works, and presenting the proper and particular reward of works, does entitle them “my works,” to signify that those divine, moral, and spiritual workings which He went about continually performing, should inherit the reward.

FALSE WORKS

These words, “my works,” stand in contrast with the words “their works,” of which in this book they are called upon to repent. If, now, we would know what these works of their wickedness were, we have them enumerated:

Revelation 9

²⁰ And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

²¹ Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

And again, when the mother of harlots, Babylon the great—the same with the Jezebel in this epistle—comes to receive her judgment, it is in these words:

Revelation 18

⁶ Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup which she has filled, fill to her double.

Also, when the Church, having painfully endured unto the end, is about to be rewarded, it is in these words:

Revelation 14

¹³ Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

In the general judgment, when the dead are raised and the books opened, the general assize is held upon their works:

Revelation 20

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Seeing, then, the Church was to be assailed with temptations of Satan in the shape of good works, and seeing that the judgment would be decided by works, it was both a wise and a gracious thing on the part of our Lord to set forth in this conspicuous way the necessity of discriminating well between His works and the works of the adulteress. What His works are, we have set forth at large in the digression; and now it behooves us to set forth in contrast with them what her works are. They are enumerated, in the verses above cited from the 9th chapter.

1. WORSHIP OF DEMONS

First, the worship of devils or demons:

Revelation 9

²⁰ ...yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils...

This had likewise been foretold in:

1 Timothy 4

¹ Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

These demons, whom they worshiped, are the spirits of departed men exalted into the degree of gods, as in the ancient idolatry, referred to by the apostle:

1 Corinthians 10

²⁰ But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that you should have fellowship with devils.

²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: you cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

The objects of their worship were the spirits of departed men, as Jupiter, Bacchus, Hercules, &c.; so in the Papal Church, the objects of their worship are demons, or the spirits of departed men, as St. Augustine, St. Paul, St. Peter, and the rest of their saints.

Now Christ's work was to worship and glorify the Father:

John 17

⁴ I have glorified You on the earth, I have finished the work which You gave me to do.

But the work of these Romanists is to glorify the name of St. Francis, St. Benedict, St. Augustine, and the heads of their several orders. Their works they do, their canons they keep, their appointed service they perform. It is not Christ but St. Dominic; it is not the commandments of Christ, but the traditions of St. Dominic.

And as it is with the monks, that the eternal laws of divine morality should give way and be entirely forgotten before the discipline of their human master, so with the people, who addict themselves to their tutelary saints, and bestow upon them the worship which is due unto God only. It is as complete a system of

demon worship, this Papacy, as ever was the paganism of Greece and Rome, as is the polytheism of China or Hindustan.

2. WORSHIP OF IDOLS

Secondly, their works consist in the worship of...

Revelation 9

²⁰ ...idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.

And how true this is of that sorceress in the Church, pass over and behold. Go into their churches, whose doors are ever open for such market making; nay, stand at the corners of their streets, beside some image of the Virgin or the saints; or be in attendance at the village festival given in honor of their tutelary god; and you will see what worship there is of idols of every material.

They say it is not the wooden thing, of the stock and stone: I say it is, in almost every case, even with the priests themselves, unless they be infidels at heart; or else what is the meaning of crying up this image, and that relic, by recounting the false miracles which they have wrought? or what is the meaning of persuading the people, as you find it in all Roman Catholic countries, that this image of the Virgin is good for the cure of this disease, and that image for another?

It is as complete a system of stock and stone worship as ever was established at Babylon. But is not the word of God against an idol, use it and understand it how you may? Against this the Second Commandment is directed; and let a man use an idol in worship as he pleases, he breaks the commandment of God.

3. MURDERS

Revelation 9

²¹ Neither repented they of their murders...

The third of their works is their “murders,” that is, their martyrdoms of the saints of God:

Revelation 18

²⁴ In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

These murders now proceed in secret, in the prisons of the inquisition, in the dungeons of the priest-ridden tyrants; but that they are at this hour proceeding, and will proceed until her judgment is consummated, I well believe.

4. SORCERIES

Revelation 9

²¹ Neither repented they...of their sorceries...

The fourth is their “sorceries.”

- Those works which they have power to do through the help of the devil and his angels;
- Those cunning devices which, taught of the devil, they are skillful to palm upon the people as works of Christ in His Church;
- Those curses and maledictions which are practiced daily upon the over-credulous people;
- Their dealings with purgatory, their masses for the dead, their damnable traffic with the spiritual world, whereby they make merchandise of the souls of men.

These, all these, constitute their sorceries.

5. FORNICATION

Revelation 9

²¹ Neither repented they of...their fornication...

And then comes their “fornication,” which is their giving themselves up to the kings of the earth, and bringing the Church into bondage of the elements of the world.

Instead of keeping her spiritual separateness for Christ, her only husband, she gives herself to the kings of the earth, who serve themselves of her, and are by her brought into bondage. Her pandering to tyranny, her making common cause with oppression, her building of her house with blood of widows and of orphans, pillaged by ruthless kings: this is her fornication:

Revelation 18

³ And all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornications, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her.

6. THEFTS

Revelation 9

²¹ Neither repented they of...their thefts.

And lastly, there is her “thefts;” her deception, her cunning inventions to pillage men of their substance. Wretched strumpet! her purple and her scarlet raiment are all stolen and filched from the terrors of the people; her gold, and her precious stones, and her pearls are the plunder of a deluded world.

Abandoned Church! your cathedral, your shrine, your splendors, are your disgrace, the hires of your lewdness, which you carry and expose before you, you vile and wretched woman! But you shall be stripped bare and naked: they shall...

Revelation 17

¹⁶ ...hate [you], and shall make [you] desolate and naked, and shall eat [your] flesh, and burn [you] with fire.

You shall be brought to depend upon day’s wages. In the kingdom of your firstborn son you are already so dishonored. They pay you; you have nothing of your own; you are a hanger-on of these deputies of the people. They pay you: you will soon become a beggar, and have to ask alms; and they will beat you from door to door, until you expire in the streets, like an abandoned shameless strumpet as you are. I hail the day; it is near for to come.

The evil character of these works consists in this, that they should be done in the name of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ; that they should assume the character of religion, and be undertaken for the kingdom of heaven’s sake.

That wickedness should reign in the world, the law teaches us to expect; but that it should clothe itself with the raiment of Christian faith, hope, and charity, and so bring the holy and the unholy into confusion, is what vexes and grieves the Lord at His heart. This brought on the deluge, the admixture of the sons of

God with the daughters of men; it brought on the downfall of Jerusalem; and it is fast breaking up a Christian Church.

The Lord, foreseeing what a system of sanctified wickedness was to be propagated in His name, is at pains in this epistle to limit the Church to the observance of His own commandments, to the keeping of His own works, in opposition to all innovations and inventions of men.

There is a chapter in *Isaiah* so intimately connected with all that is said of Jezebel and her works, and of Babylon the mother of harlots, and of the bed into which she and her paramour shall be cast, that I cannot pass on without noticing it, however briefly. It is the 57th of that prophet, beginning with a lamentation over the perishing of the righteous man, and removal of the merciful man from the evil to come: of whom it is said, that he enters into peace,

Isaiah 57

² ...and they rest in their beds, walking in his uprightness.

This description of Christ and of His disciples, of their experience of evil on the earth, and their transition from greater evil into the peace and joy of their Lord, being given, the prophet addresses another company, whom he denominates “sons of the sorceress, seed of the adulterer and the whore” (verse 3), whose doings are enumerated; their swelling words of vanity and blasphemy, their false accusations of the righteous; for which they are entitled “children of transgression, seed of falsehood” (verse 4).

Then comes a reproof of their idolatry (verses 5-6), Druidical, “among the oaks;” and of bloody Moloch, and other superstitions; mocking God and vexing Him, as if He could receive comfort in these things.

Then comes her fornication (verses 7-9), written in language parallel with that used of Jezebel and her children; wherein the bed, which we found it hard to interpret, is more than once mentioned, and connected with hell in a way which confirms the conjecture which we threw out above.

Isaiah 57

⁹ And you went to the king with ointment, and increased your perfumes, and sent your messengers far off, and debased yourself even unto hell.

I am confirmed the more in my opinion that the bed to which Jezebel is doomed signifies hell, not only by the parallelism with this passage, but also by the contrast with the first two verses, where the reward of the righteous in heaven is called “resting in their beds.”

Observe, finally, in order to be satisfied that our Lord in inditing this epistle had respect to the passage in *Isaiah*, how the threatening and the promise in both correspond with one another:

¹² I will declare your righteousness, and your works; for they shall not profit you.

¹³ When you cry, let your companies deliver you; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take them; but he that puts his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain.

The sorceress and her children have a righteousness and works, but they profit her not; she has companies, but they deliver her not; she is carried away by the wind, like the dust of the summer threshing-floor.

But the righteous possess the land, and inherit the temple of God: even as in the promise to the Church of Thyatira, they trample the nations under foot, and receive the inheritance which Christ received from His Father, as it is written in the 2nd *Psalms*.

And they likewise receive the morning star; which, as we shall see, is the returning cloud of the glorious God, the Shechinah coming up from the east to glorify the temple of Mount Zion:

Ezekiel 43

² And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and His voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory.

So that I feel an assurance that there is a designed and well-continued parallelism between this part of our epistle and the 57th chapter of *Isaiah*.

KEEPING CHRIST'S WORKS UNTO THE END

So much for the works of the sorceress, as distinguished from the works of Christ. And now let us proceed to the second part of this condition of the promise, which is, that we "keep Christ's works unto the end."

The works of Christ were twofold,—works of holiness, and works of power; or, if we would include them under one class, works of goodness. To do the like, and even greater, He promised as the endowment of every one who believes upon Him. I find Christ's works, in the language of the New Testament, to include His works miraculous as well as His works moral; nor can I understand by what authority we exclude them.

If I err not, when Christ appealed to His works in such expressions as these, "The works which I do," He commonly means His works of healing, casting out of devils, and the like, which are promised to follow him that believes. These also were moral works—they were good works; and by this, their moral character, rather than by their power, were they a test and proof of His heavenly mission:

John 5

³⁶ The works which my Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father has sent me.

I nothing doubt that these works of the Spirit, which Christ wrought in the sight of men, we were commanded to keep; and for not having kept are much to be blamed. Hear how the abstract of His life and doings is given by Peter to Cornelius and his company:

Acts 10

³⁸ God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

³⁹ And we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem.

While this I maintain, I know that the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith, are not to be left undone; that the doing of the commandments of Christ is the only true test of loving Him; that the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned;⁹⁸ that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance:⁹⁹ all which I most willingly include among the works of Christ which we were commanded to keep unto the end.

But the former are not to be neglected; and because they have been neglected, I am the more instant in seeking to reclaim and recover them. The more also in this place do I insist upon them, because they stand in opposition to the works of the sorceress, which by no means excludes this department, but has made them chief in building up her Babel of iniquity.

Whereon rest the claims of her saints, but upon the miracles which they and their relics have done? Whereon rest the pretensions of their idols, but upon the cures which they have wrought? Whereon rests the authority of these doctrines of devils which they teach, but on the signs and wonders which they assert do follow the preachers of them?

And forasmuch as upon this, as its foundation, Jezebel and her false prophets rest their house of wickedness, our Lord Jesus Christ did wish and intend, and in this passage I think does command, that His true body should put to shame all these lying wonders; as Moses and Aaron did Jannes and Jambres, as Peter did Simon Magus, and Paul did Elymas the sorcerer.

But, instead of this, we have given up the weapon of the Lord, wherewith to uproot that foundation; have forgotten and denied this manner of testimony altogether; and left the field open for

⁹⁸ *1 Timothy* 1:5.

⁹⁹ *Galatians* 5:22-23.

their deceptions, and exposed ourselves to the invasion of infidelity.

But the appeal will soon, even among ourselves, have to be made to God again. There is a pitch of hypocrisy and dishonesty and subtlety to which the minds of men may at length arrive, when a book like the Bible, which addresses itself to honest, downright, plain, simple men, has no effect whatever.

I have no doubt that the Protestant Church, especially what is called the Religious World, are come into this condition. Oft have I declared it, and I now with sorrow publish the declaration, that those they call Evangelical, and Protestants in general, are no longer able to be convinced out of the Scriptures. Creeds, and confessions, and catechisms, have still some hold of them; the magazines and religious newspapers still more; the writings and sayings of their favorite ministers still more; but as to the Bible, save for furnishing a few offensive and defensive texts, it might as well be closed and sealed up.

And I for one feel, that of all things the most difficult is to make any way in convincing men out of the Scriptures; which are so honest-hearted and outspoken, that a man with partialities and hypocrisies cannot gather their meaning upon any subject; and so I feel assured, that God will, as in the days of Elias, dispute with the false prophets by appeals unto the senses of this perverse and crooked generation.

I believe, that against the Romanists, who have Satan's works; and against the disciples of that Jezebel of our time, Joanna Southcote, who also have Satan's works; and against the worldly and intellectual of all denominations, who scorn to hear of miraculous works at all; God will contend for His faithful Church, for the true disciples of His Son, by enabling them first to receive the faith, and secondly, to regain the power, of working the works which Christ also wrought, and greater works than these: and in keeping these words to the end will consist no mean part of the trial and of the victory of His people.

If infidelity be the ruling passion of the times, then the belief in the supernatural, and the claim to the supernatural, must be the ruling scandal of the times. It is, in truth, casting down the gauntlet against their ingenious argumentations and disquisitions, both for and against the Christian religion. It is shifting away into the background all their learning and scholarship and pride of controversy, for a poor artisan and a silly maid to come forward and do the works which Christ did, and greater works than these.

Ah me! how the young and the old, the honored champions of the faith and the stripling soldier just entering into the fight, and all the infidels against whom they contend—how both will join in contempt and persecution of the little flock unto whom it shall please the Lord to reveal himself, as heretofore He was wont in the Church of Corinth!

I see, while I write these things, the storm of war gathering around them: I see their hope all but gone: I see them like to be swallowed up of their enemy: and then I see them escaped, like a bird out of the fowler's snare; caught away from the evil to come; resting in their beds, and coming with a two-edged sword to execute vengeance on the heathen;

Psalm 149

⁷ To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;

⁸ To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

⁹ To execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all His saints.

POWER OVER THE NATIONS

We now come to the promise itself, which consists of two parts: First, power over the nations; Secondly, the morning star. With respect to the former, of what kind, and for what ends, is declared:

Revelation 2

²⁶ And he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

²⁷ And he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father.

It is power to judge, and to make war, and to cast down, and to destroy for ever; in what manner is described in the last half of the 19th chapter, where the saints come out of heaven along with Christ, to “smite the nations, and to rule them with a rod of iron.”

The words, “even as I received of my Father,” refer us to the 2nd *Psalm*, where the Son comes in the plenitude of His power to execute the judgment written against the nations of the earth; wherein He promises that every faithful and true disciple shall take with Him a part.

The power, therefore, promised in the text, is, I think, not to be regarded as the power of peaceful government, which during the thousand years these same faithful servants of the Lord shall exercise, but the power of destroying from the earth those who have so long destroyed its peace, and are now confederate against the Lord and His Anointed.

Power it is to execute the judgment which is written; power it is to vindicate the cause of God and of godliness, power it is to wrest the earth, and the dwellers there, out of the hand of the usurper, into the hands of its Redeemer and Lord, Christ Jesus. Power of battle, power of victory, power of treading under foot, power of casting out, power of binding, power of destroying every wicked thing from the face of the earth.

That the nations and kingdoms of this earth are to grow worse and worse, as did the antediluvians, until the Lord shall be weary of forbearing, when He shall bring upon them swift judgment, as He brought in the days of Noah and of Lot, all Scripture consents, and in every form and by every means does direct the eye of the Church unto that great and terrible day of the Lord, when her enemies shall be destroyed from the face of the earth.

This day is called in Scripture by various names, as “the day of the Lord,”¹⁰⁰ “the day of perdition of ungodly men,”¹⁰¹ “the day of wrath,”¹⁰² “the day of judgment.”¹⁰³ In the Old Testament the Jews have a great hand in this destruction of nations:

Zechariah 12

⁶ In that day will I make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left...

Micah 5

⁸ And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treads down, and tears in pieces, and none can deliver.

Psalm 68

²³ That your foot maybe dipped in the blood of your enemies, and the tongue of your dogs be red through the same.

Zechariah 12

³ And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

And in all parts of the Old Testament it is written that God will use the tribes of Israel in that day as His battle-axe and weapons of war.¹⁰⁴

Not so the mystery of the saints under the New Testament, who are baptized into the spiritual out of the carnal. Theirs indeed, also, is the promise of power to judge and to make war, as in the text before us; but not with an arm of flesh, nor with a carnal

¹⁰⁰ *Isaiah* 13:6, 34:8; *Jeremiah* 46:10; *Joel* 1:15, 3:14; *Zephaniah* 2:2; *Zechariah* 14:1; *1 Corinthians* 5:5; *1 Thessalonians* 5:2; *2 Peter* 3:10.

¹⁰¹ *2 Peter* 3:7.

¹⁰² *Job* 21:30; *Zephaniah* 1:15; *Romans* 2:5.

¹⁰³ *Matthew* 10:15, 12:36; *2 Peter* 2:9, 3:7; *1 John* 4:17.

¹⁰⁴ *Jeremiah* 51:20.

weapon. How then? To answer this question it is necessary first to have explained the second part of the promise.

THE MORNING STAR

Revelation 2

²⁸ I will give him the morning star.

This being interpreted, will explain to us the manner in which Christ and His saints are to “rule the nations with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

But, lest any one should suppose that the gift of the morning star, from being mentioned after the destruction of the nations, should be understood of something posterior thereto, we observe that the twenty seventh verse is to be taken in a parenthesis, explanatory of the nature of the power which the saints are to exercise, and as a note of reference to the 2nd *Psalm* for further information. The promise is simply in these words:

“I will give him power over the nations, and I will give him the morning star.”

The rest is but, as it were, a note of explanation. Let us then examine what is meant by giving the morning star; and thus we shall be able to explain what part the saints gathered and to be gathered into glory shall take in the destruction of the nations. What this morning star is, Christ himself declares in this book:

Revelation 22

¹⁶ I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.

Every reference to David bespeaks Christ the King, Christ the Man of War, Christ the subduer of all His enemies round about; but not Christ the Builder of the temple, or the Prince of peace, which to typify was reserved for Solomon, as we have set forth in the beginning of this lecture.

When Christ comes to claim the earth, and to wrench open the clasps of the book of the inheritance, His recognizances are these:

Revelation 5

⁵ The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David.

And when He offers himself to the Church in Philadelphia, it is in the character of Him who has the key of David, who opens and no man shuts, who shuts and no man opens: might and strength—masterful might, indomitable strength—are therefore what is manifestly intended when Christ chooses to take to himself the symbols of David.

Now in the text referred to He calls himself “the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.” These two names are not in the original connected with the copulative conjunction “and,” but stand in opposition the one to the other, and therefore, in strictness of interpretation, ought to be taken as explanatory the one of the other.

If then the symbols of David are proper to Him as the Avenger of Israel’s wrongs upon her enemies, as the Captor of Jerusalem and Mount Zion, as the Ransomer with the sword of the promised inheritance; then the Morning Star should signify something of the same kind, should represent Christ as a subverter of the wicked, and an establishes of the righteous upon the earth for ever and ever.

But the text before us will guide us no further; and, if we would come to more close definition, we must rest upon some other text of Scripture. Balaam’s famous prophecy is the key to the whole subject, when he undertakes, before departing unto Balak, to advertise him:

Numbers 24

¹⁴ ...what this people shall do to your people in the latter days.

It is as follows:

¹⁶ He has said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High; which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open:

¹⁷ I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh.

Here the vision is declared to be of the Almighty, whom Balaam should see, but not now—in the latter day, when Job, another kind of man, declared that he should see Him on the earth. Then Balaam proceeds to describe His glorious coming:

Numbers 24

¹⁷ There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

¹⁸ And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies, and Israel shall do valiantly.

The ancient Jewish interpreters, as well as the Christian Fathers, saw Messiah rather than David in this prophecy, though doubtless David gave it partial accomplishment in the type, as Christ will give it complete accomplishment in the antitype. And by the words, “destroying all the children of Sheth,” they understand ruling over all the children of men.

But I rather incline to understand by it the same mystery which is expressed in our text by smiting the nations with a rod of iron, and breaking them in pieces like a potter’s vessel; and this work of destruction accomplished, then comes in the prophecy of Balaam, the blessed dominion:

¹⁹ Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remains of the city.

Much more is contained in Balaam’s prophecy; but it is sufficient for our present purpose to have clearly ascertained that the star symbolizes power putting itself forth in destruction. If anything were wanting to convince us of this, it is given to us in Balaam’s own exclamation:

²³ Alas! who shall live when God does this?

By this prophecy, therefore, we are confirmed in our conclusion, that the symbol of the star, like the symbol of David, implies destruction and desolation unto the earth and its people.

THE COUNTERFEIT

So much were the Jews built up in the faith of this prophecy, that the impostor who arose in the time of Adrian and drew the whole remnant of the Jewish people into miserable revolt, had nothing else to build upon than the name and title which he assumed to himself, but Earcochebas, or the son of a star, in allusion to this prophecy.

It is, however, a symbol of but rare occurrence in the prophets; once, indeed, it is used by the prophet in *Isaiah* 14:12, of the personal Antichrist—the antitype of the Assyrian, who fell with such miserable ruin from his high estate by the destruction of his veteran army under the walls of Jerusalem:

Isaiah 14

¹² How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer [day-star] son of the morning! how are you cast down to the ground, which weakened the nations!

¹³ For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.

¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.

¹⁵ Yet you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

This most remarkable passage bespeaks one yet to arise in the latter days:

2 Thessalonians 2

⁴ Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

When this wicked one shall be revealed he shall claim to himself the high honors which belong to Christ,—the day-star, the true Lucifer or son of the morning,—whose actions, therefore, in this character, may be gathered from the pretensions of the false Lucifer, day-star, or son of the morning.

These are first, to weaken the nations with his perpetual stroke, and to make the world a wilderness; which accordingly Christ effects when He becomes the refuge of Jacob, as it is written:

Psalm 46

⁸ Come, behold the work of the Lord, what desolations He has made in the earth.

The second assumption of the personal antichrist, the Assyrian of the latter days, is, ascension into heaven, and exaltation of his throne above the stars of God; that is, the fixed dynasties of heaven. This Christ has received when He was taken up on high—principalities, and powers, and dominions being made subject to Him.

The third assumption upon the divine prerogative of Christ which the last antichrist makes, is to...

Isaiah 14

¹³ ...sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.

That is, to possess Mount Zion...

Psalm 48

² Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

Which also Christ received in the day of His resurrection, as it is written:

Psalm 2

⁶ Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.

And the last of the blasphemous claims of the god-like deceiver is, that he would be like the Most High who reigns in heaven, above the clouds; which dignity belongs only to Christ, who is seated at the right hand of God. These glorious attributes, therefore, belong to Christ in His character of the Bright and Morning Star,

- to smite the nations,
- to rule over the principalities of heaven,
- to dwell in Mount Zion, thence giving law to the world, and

- to be the very likeness of God.

The most ambitious and glorious of mankind, who, through the instigation of Satan, is to crown himself with these the honors of Messiah's kingdom, we are told shall be consumed by the breath of Messiah's mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of His coming.

He shall think that he has obtained the dominion, and already holds the world in hand, when:

Daniel 11

⁴⁴ Tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.

⁴⁵ And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

Then shall stand up against him the true Messiah:

Daniel 12

¹ And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of your people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

² And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

³ And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.

But above all these stars He shall shine most conspicuous who is the Bright and the Morning Star. At the time that the last head of Edom shall arise and think himself the firstborn of men, our Jacob, the supplanter, shall come, with the generation of those that seek His face, and cast him out from the mount of the congregation, and call upon the gates of the temple to be lifted up, the doors to be unbarred, that the King of glory and the Lord of the

hosts of the righteous may enter into them, as it is written in the 24th *Psalm*.

THE STAR AT CHRIST'S BIRTH

Besides these notices concerning the meaning of the Morning Star, which are to be extracted from the Old Testament, there are two in the New Testament, to which we would now attend. The first is the appearance of the star at the time of His birth, which brought the wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying:

Matthew 2

² Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.

Who or what these wise men were, is left to conjecture: and certainly the best conjecture appears to me, that they were of the tribes of Israel scattered abroad. For what other people so interested in Messiah, or to whom else, had the Lord promised to manifest himself? The distance from which they came, supposing the star to have appeared on His birth, being a journey of two years or thereabouts, argues that they must have come from beyond the bounds of the then civilized world, out of which the Ten Tribes of Israel were cast. Whosoever they were, they must either have known from the prophecy of Balaam that the star did betoken the King of the Jews, or it must have been revealed to them by the Lord.

Herod's perplexity upon hearing their mission I attribute very much to the language in which Balaam prophesied of Him, who was at once the "Star out of Jacob, and the Scepter of Israel;" a King of the Jews symbolized by a star. He knew that for him and for the kings of the earth there was no hope when this Star and Scepter should appear; and therefore he both dissembled with the wise men and took measures to destroy the Infant's life.

Thus did God, at the birth of Christ, concern himself to prove Him not only offspring of David, in being born in Bethlehem, David's city, but also Star of Jacob, by bringing up the star out of the East, till it rested over where the young child was. And these representatives of the Ten Tribes, if I am right, paid homage to

Him, and presented Him such tribute as should be offered to a king, as king Solomon was wont to receive.

Also in the consternation of king Herod and his court, God gave a sign of that consternation which shall yet blaze forth upon kings against the appearance of the Star of Jacob; and withal, Christ being thus crowned and proclaimed King of the Jews by a star in heaven, a bright messenger of God, and dying with that good confession upon His lips before Pontius Pilate, and that superscription written over His cross, does evince that the symbol of the star has relation to Him not only as a King in general, but as the King of the Jews in particular; and that the mighty acts which He is to do as the Star of Jacob shall be done in revenge of His people's wrongs, in vindication of His people's rights.

THE DAY STAR ARISING

The other passage in the New Testament to which I refer for the exposition of this symbol is in *2 Peter* 1, where the apostle, as we have explained already in these lectures, produces the transfiguration upon Mount Tabor as a proof that all the prophets had spoken, concerning the coming glory of Christ, would certainly be accomplished. The voice which came from the excellent glory of the Father upon the glorified Son of man, the apostle regards as a new confirmation of all the prophets; and therefore he the more earnestly entreats them to give heed to the prophets, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise on their hearts.

Here again the day-star is mentioned in connection with the dawning of a future day, until which, the only light the Church possesses is the light of all the prophets concerning Christ's appearing, confirmed as it was by the foreshowing of that appearance on the holy mount. The thing, therefore, which was shown on the holy mount is beyond a question that to which He directs the hope of the Church as the consummation of all the prophets, as the dawning of the day, and the rising of the day-star on the heart.

The only subject of discourse before the apostles is the coming again of Jesus in power and majesty.¹⁰⁵ This, he says, they had a real manifestation of on the mount: therefore the prophets are more to be believed, and we Christians ought to give the more heed to them, till that glorious hope and appearing of the Lord Jesus be manifested to the heart-felt glory of His people.

The world till then is represented as in darkness, the prophets as our lamp in the night, the coming of the Lord as the rising of the day-star in the dawn of the morning, and the hearts of His people, downcast till then, transported with joy and filled with gladness when that blessed dawn does appear. And thus have we all the matter which I know of in the Scriptures for the interpretation of the promise in the text, "I will give Him the Morning Star." Let us now endeavor to gather the interpretation.

The promise must contain in it these things: a share in the glorious advent of Christ, and a share in the action of smiting the nations and planting His people, which He is then to perform; a share of His royal name, the Star of Jacob, the Scepter of Israel, the King of the Jews; a share of the honor and majesty which was put upon Him when the Father welcomed Him as His Son into the cloud of His excellent glory, into which He took not Christ only, but likewise those two, Moses and Elias, partakers of His brightness, but likewise His apostles Peter, James, and John, who felt it good to be there. But now the question arises,

"How is it possible that we, who are laid in the grave, can be partakers of that manifestation of glory and action of mighty power?"

The answer is, By the first resurrection, and not otherwise, which shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. But what connection, has the first resurrection with the Morning Star? This connection it holds not so much with the star, which indicates dignity and power, but with the morning, with which the resurrection of the saints is in all Scripture

¹⁰⁵ 2 Peter 1:16.

contemporaneous. If we shall be able to show that in the Scriptures the action of the morning is the resurrection of the saints, then the interpretation will be complete; and the promise will amount to this:

“To him that overcomes I will give power over the nations, by raising him from the grave into the dignity of my name, the Star of Jacob, and to perform with me the action of delivering Israel out of the hand of his enemies, which, like the dawn, shall bring in the glorious day of the world’s redemption.”

Let us then bring our proofs from Scripture that the action of the morning is the resurrection of the saints to power and glory. Among the many testimonies to this effect, we must select a few of the most distinct. The first is *Psalm 49*, where, after introducing the subject with wonderful language bespeaking its high importance, the Psalmist sets forth the folly of worldly men in living here as if there were no hereafter, and keeping to themselves wealth as if it could redeem their life, and setting their affections upon their houses and lands as if they should inherit them for ever. Then he thus expressed their eternal disappointment and disgrace:

Psalm 49

¹⁴ Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.

¹⁵ But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for He shall receive me.

Here “the morning” is fixed upon as the time when upright men shall have the dominion over the wicked, by being redeemed from the hand of hell, and received unto Him who has the dominion to bestow,—that is, unto Christ, who has received it from His Father. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the day of the resurrection of the righteous, when they have dominion and inherit the earth, is denominated the morning, whose light it is said, the wicked shall never see:

Psalm 49

¹⁹ He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

The 110th *Psalm* is another whose testimony is to the same effect, where the powerful act of Christ to subdue His enemies is described as being helped by His people; of whom it is said:

Psalm 110

³ Your people shall be willing in the day of your power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: You have the dew of your youth.

Here the day of His power, and the womb of the morning, and the willingness of His people, and the beauties of their holiness, and the destruction of the enemies of the King, are all at one and the same time.

The 46th *Psalm*, which sets forth the distress and the deliverance of the Church, declares that her help shall come in the morning, for then the nations shall be removed.

Psalm 46

⁵ God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her when the morning appears [marginal reading].

⁶ The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered His voice, the earth melted.

For illustrations of the same truth, I refer to:

Psalm 30

⁵ For His anger endures but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

Psalm 59

¹⁴ And at evening let them return; and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

¹⁵ Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.

¹⁶ But I will sing of your power; yea, I will sing aloud of your mercy in the morning: for You have been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble.

And I may observe that the most learned critic of the last age gives it as his judgment, that in the Psalms the morning always refers to the first resurrection. It is the time when God awakes,¹⁰⁶ when Christ arises out of His place,¹⁰⁷ when the Church awakes, and beholds His face in righteousness, and is satisfied with His likeness.¹⁰⁸

It was also in the morning watch that the Lord looked upon the host of the Egyptians and fought against them;¹⁰⁹ and it was early in the morning that the angel of the Lord smote the camp of the Assyrians;¹¹⁰ and it was very early in the morning that Jesus arose, the firstfruits of them that slept.

There is another mark by which the first resurrection is connected with the morning, namely, the dew; as in the 110th *Psalm*, and in:

Isaiah 26

¹⁹ Your dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust; for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

The dew is deposited in greatest plenty about the breaking of the dawn, and refreshes with its numerous drops the leaves, and plants, and blades of grass on which it rests; so shall the saints of God, coming forth from their invisible abodes out of the womb of the morning, refresh the world with their benignant influence; and therefore are they likened to the dew, for all nature is so constituted of God as to bear witness of that day of regeneration which then shall dawn.

And as the morning star looking forth from its lonely house in the heavens, when all the rest are faded and gone, and ere yet the streak of dawn has appeared, may fitly be regarded as the ruler of that hour when the dew refreshes the earth; so Christ, who shall

¹⁰⁶ *Psalm* 59:5; *Isaiah* 51:9.

¹⁰⁷ *Isaiah* 26:21; *Micah* 1:3.

¹⁰⁸ *Psalm* 17:15.

¹⁰⁹ *Exodus* 14:24.

¹¹⁰ *2 Kings* 19:35.

come like a thief and steal upon the world, locked in the arms of sleep, and gather His own from the four winds of heaven, with whose hosts He shall put to flight the rulers of the darkness of this world, and bring in the times of refreshing, is aptly compared to the morning star, which scatters the darkness of night, and ushers in the dawn of the morning.

THE SHECHINAH

There is still another point which we would endeavor to make good, and so complete this interpretation;—that as the New Jerusalem, when it shall come down from heaven, is the sun of this world, in the light of which the nations walk, for the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof; so the re-appearance of the glorious cloud wherein God has ever dwelt, in light inaccessible and full of glory, is the star of the morning, and the sign of the Son of man's appearing.

When it is said, in the prophet *Daniel*, that the Son of man shall come with the clouds of heaven,¹¹¹ and repeated by himself in the 24th of *Matthew* and other parts of Scripture, I do not understand those watery clouds which gather in the lower parts of the air to be signified, but that cloud of darkness and of brightness—pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night—wherein Jehovah, in times past, appeared for the deliverance of His people, and guided them through the wilderness, riding upon the heavens; which afterwards dwelt in the innermost recesses of the tabernacle; which filled the temple on the day of its dedication, nor forsook it until God had taken testimony, by the mouth of Ezekiel, to all the idolatries with which they had polluted His house, and given assurance, by the mouth of the same prophet, that it should not always be separated from men, but should come again and fill the temple with its glory.¹¹²

That cloud, the ancient dwelling-place of power and glory, and not these watery vapors, is the fit chariot of the Lord, which, on the mount of transfiguration, is called the excellent glory surpass-

¹¹¹ *Daniel* 7:13.

¹¹² *Ezekiel* 43:2; *Haggai* 2:7, 9.

ing the brightness of the sun, whence the Father spoke unto the Son of man; in which also the Son of man, clothed in the Father's glory, appeared unto Saul of Tarsus as he journeyed to Damascus, wherein, also, He appeared, as I believe, to the martyr Stephen.

That was no ordinary cloud which received Him out of the disciples' sight, when He ascended from the Mount of Olives. It was the old symbol of Jehovah's habitation, receiving into its bosom the Word made flesh, when the Word had ever dwelt before:

John 17

⁵ And now, Father, glorify me with that glory which I had with You before the world was.

And in the like manner in which He had been taken into heaven did the two shining ones say that He should descend from heaven again, or, as He himself says it, with the Father's glory as well as with His own. He was in His own glory when He stood transfigured on the mount; but He was in the Father's glory also when the glorious cloud had enwrapped Him.

When, therefore, in the Gospels it is said that He shall come in a cloud with power and great glory;¹¹³ and when it is said in the *Revelation* that He comes sitting on a cloud, that cloud, and no other, is, I believe, signified in which He dwelt of old, when He was the Angel of the Covenant. And He is the Angel of the Covenant still, for the covenant is not yet accomplished. The Jews are all scattered, and Zion sits like a widow forlorn. When, therefore, He shall come to perfect His work with the tribes of Israel, He shall come riding on the cloud as in the days of old, even thus as it is written in the 18th and 68th *Psalms*.

But this is only His sign: yet it is a sign at the sight of which the nations well may mourn; for it is the dwelling-place of power, as well as of glory, and as heretofore upon the nations of Canaan it shed baleful beams, fiery lightning, hailstones, and coals of fire, so hereafter shall it empty itself of the wrath of God upon these na-

¹¹³ *Luke* 21:27.

tions, and that wicked ruler of them, who are gathered to dispute their entrance into the promised inheritance.

Peter, in the passage already referred to, calls that the most excellent glory which the three Evangelists denote merely by the name of a cloud; and in all those passages where Christ is said to come with a cloud, or with the clouds, it is always added “with power and glory.”¹¹⁴

Now these watery vapors of the sky, though the sun may paint them in glorious hues, have in themselves neither power nor glory, neither are they capable of sustaining that glory of God in which Christ is to come invested; and into which He is to gather His glorified saints, both dead and living, both raised and changed, who together ascend into the air to meet Him in those clouds of glory, and to be ever with the Lord in the presence of his God.

The present glory of Christ stands in this, that He is admitted into that glorious presence of God where creature never dwelt before. Since sin entered into flesh, God has shrouded himself up in a cloud upon the skirts of which Moses might look, but not upon His face as yet; for into that presence flesh and blood shall not enter.

God was present with His people under the former dispensation; but all the while He dwelt in a cloud, which took up its secret abode within the veil of the most holy place. The high priest might once a year go into that presence-chamber and look upon that cloudy pavilion; but within the foldings of that cloud man never entered till the Son of man, our High Priest, passed into its heavenly places.

All which Moses and the elders, and Israel, and Daniel, and Ezekiel saw, was the glory of the Son of man; and though the skirts of it were cast around Moses, and around the company on the glorious holy mount, who felt it good to be there, still to them, as to Moses, it was not permitted to see God’s face and live,

¹¹⁴ *Matthew 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27.*

but only as it were the train which attended upon Him from behind.

But in that light has our High Priest, the Son of man, dwelt since His ascension into glory, and therein shall we be ushered when we shall be fashioned after the likeness of His glorious body; and thence shall we render Him all those acts of power, and bring those executions of judgment which are written in all the Scriptures, and nowhere more distinctly than in the passage before us.

But this veil of the cloud only remains upon the glory while the world is in a sinful state, and shall be wholly taken away when the world is purified. And being taken away, what comes forth disclosed? The new Jerusalem, the city of God, the abode of the Lamb and His saints, the head and metropolis of creation, which has the glory of God, because it has the Lamb and His bride. As the cloud, I think it is the sign of the Son of man in the heavens; as the new Jerusalem, it is His presence on the earth.

The identity of the Shechinah, or glorious cloud wherein Jehovah dwelt in the Jewish Church, with the sign of the Son of man, is, I think, clearly stated in that discourse of our Lord, constructed on very purpose to answer this question among others:

Matthew 24

³ What is the sign of your coming?

³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

The two parts of this statement I regard as identical with, and intended to explain, each other; the former describing the thing seen by the name of “the sign of his coming,” after which the disciples were inquiring, the latter identifying it with the vision of *Daniel 7* where the Son of man is represented as coming with the clouds of heaven. And both together attributing the distress and mourning and tribulation of the families of the earth to that powerful and glorious appearance.

That the thing described in this verse is something prior to Christ's open manifestation in the glory of the new Jerusalem, is clear from the following verse, which describes the gathering of the saints, of whom the new Jerusalem is altogether composed.

Matthew 24

³¹ And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The former verse is the appearance of the morning star; this is the giving of the morning star to all those who have overcome. And not till after every one of the elect has been thus brought into the presence of His glory, does He begin to act those direful judgments upon the wicked nations, and upon the polluted elements of nature, which will make the earth to be a fit habitation for Him and His people.

This is the ruling of the nations with a rod of iron, and the breaking of them to pieces as a potter's vessel, of which act of power and holiness we are promised the share. And, this done, the new Jerusalem, the city and tent of God, comes down from heaven, and rests upon the earth for ever.

There is a common source of error in thinking that the 30th verse quoted above contains two things, both the sign of Christ's coming and His coming itself. Inasmuch as He is in the sign, He himself is come when the sign is come; and the sight of the sign is the sight of His coming: and therefore it is said that "all the tribes of the earth shall mourn when they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds with power and great glory."

It is not His very personal presentation of himself upon the earth, the standing of His feet upon the Mount of Olives, the showing of His wounded body to those who pierced it; but it is His appearance in the clouds which strikes terror and brings mourning upon the judged and afflicted nations, because from the fiery cloud will He and His people execute the judgments written against the nations.

The question which the disciples put was, “What is the *sign* of your coming?” and this question Jesus addresses himself to resolve: and these verses are the resolution of this question, and not of another, “What is your coming?” which, He tells in the next two verses, is a thing then very close at hand, but not yet verily present.

Matthew 24

³² Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh:

³³ So likewise you, when you shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

THE UNFOLDING EVENTS

The action which intervenes between the appearance of the sign in the heavens, and the resting of Christ and His saints, and the new Jerusalem, the Father’s house upon the earth, is no other than the action of judging the Church and the nations which is described in *Matthew 25*. This is done from the cloud in which He comes, and into which His people have been taken; and is the act of power over the nations promised to him that overcomes in the text before us.

Taking the guidance of this passage, let us refer to the 7th chapter of *Daniel*, and see what light it casts upon this subject. There, after the period of the fourth beast is consummated, the Ancient of Days plants His throne, and proceeds to judge it; and after a season and a time to judge the remnants also of the three which preceded it. And the world being thus cleared and cleansed from bestial tyranny, and without any ruler of any kind, behold who comes to take the government upon His shoulders:

Daniel 7

¹³ I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him.

¹⁴ And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Here are two acts:

1. The judgment of the nations by the Ancient of Days;
2. The investiture of the Son of man in their dominion for ever.

Now our Lord teaches:

John 5

²² The Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son:

²³ That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.

And in the 25th chapter of *Matthew* He presents himself as sitting upon the throne of His glory, and gathering “all the nations” before Him for judgment. That office, therefore, which Daniel saw performed by the Ancient of Days, we are taught elsewhere is to be performed by His representative and delegate,—the Son, without whom He does nothing. Still, however, it is the Father’s office put upon the Son of man, because as the Son of man He had fulfilled all righteousness, kept the law, and made it honorable, and therefore may well be entrusted with its execution.

Clothed in the Father’s glory as well as in His own glory is He to come,¹¹⁵ and in the glory of the holy angels. That office, therefore, which the old prophets saw as the property of the Father, must be put upon Him in order that He may come in His Father’s glory. He comes in His Father’s glory by doing the action which is proper to God; of which one of the most important is judgment. This He expressly declares, in the 2nd *Psalm*, that He had received from the Father; and in the passage before us, that He will share with all those who overcome.

Returning, now, to the prophecy of *Daniel*, we know that the first action of judging the four beasts, and all the earth which they overruled unto wickedness, pertains to the Son of man, as well as the second action of being installed in the dominion and government of them for ever and ever. But it may be asked,

¹¹⁵ *Luke* 9:26.

“Are you sure that this judgment of the nations may not be over before the Son of man appears in the clouds of heaven?”

I answer, that though to a cursory reader it might so appear both from the narrative of *Daniel* and *Matthew*, a more careful study and deep consideration of the matter clearly shows it to be otherwise. For the judgment of the nations is expressly declared¹¹⁶ to be at His coming in His glory; also the consternation and mourning of all the families of the earth¹¹⁷ is declared to be the effect of their seeing Him come; and in that judgment His saints are to take a part, having been co-partners of His sufferings, they are also to be co-partners of His glory.

But His saints are not gathered to Him until He come in the clouds with power and great glory; they are caught up to Him into the clouds to meet Him in the air, and to be ever with the Lord.

The Ancient of Days planting His throne of judgment against the fourth beast, and consuming them unto the end, is the symbolical representation of the King of kings, with His heavenly hosts, coming against the beast and the false prophet, and the kings of the earth, as the same is set forth in the 19th chapter of *Revelation*, and His receiving the kingdom, and holding it forever, is the same with the following event described in the 20th chapter; while the other event, occurring at the end of and during the thousand years, is without prejudice to the kingdom of the saints, which is for ever and ever.¹¹⁸

Seeing, then, that Christ does in manifest glory accomplish the judgment of the fourth beast with His predecessors in the throne of iniquity, and that His appearance to this effect is to be in the cloud of glory, (for at the sign of the cloud it is that the nations are to shake with consternation, and wail with sorrow), it seems to be put beyond a question that the morning star for which the

¹¹⁶ *Matthew* 25:31.

¹¹⁷ *Matthew* 24:30.

¹¹⁸ *Revelation* 11:15, 22:5.

same act of righteous vengeance is reserved must be the same with the cloud of glory, and with the sign of the Son of man.

In *Daniel* it is set forth under the symbol of a fiery throne; now the cherubim, where the cloud of glory ever rested, are, both in *Ezekiel* and in the *Apocalypse*, set forth as the throne of God. Also in the Psalms He is described as coming riding upon the cherubim.¹¹⁹

The cloud was also a pillar of fire, and from it came forth the fire of vengeance which consumed the transgressors in the days of old; and I believe that from it, even from the presence of the Lord, from these seven lamps of fire, which are His seven Spirits, will come forth that fire of purification which, while it refines the gold and silver and precious stones, shall consume the chaff and wood and stubble, and bear them afar upon the bosom of its liquid stream into the lake that burns for ever and ever.

The Son of man, clothed with the Father's holiness and faithfulness, covered with that glorious panoply in which Jehovah dwelt from of old, shall perform that action of the Ancient of Days, and having finished it shall receive the dominion for ever and ever.

This explanation of the twofoldness of Daniel's act of judgment and dominion applies equally to all other delineations of the same mystery contained in the Old Testament. For example, in the 110th *Psalms* the Father says unto David's Lord:

Psalm 110

¹ Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

But straightway we find David's Lord himself "striking through kings in the day of his wrath" (verse 5); serving the Father in the great act of subjecting His enemies. God retains His right of judging His enemies, with all His other rights in creation; and by giving them to the Son of man He proves that in Him are vested the rights of God as well as of man.

Christ redeems the earth, and wins it for a possession to himself and the chosen ones of God, in His character of Man. In His

¹¹⁹ *Psalms* 18.

character of God, He comes to judge the sons of wickedness and the spirits of darkness, who are responsible not to man but to God; and we also, in our character, not of sons of man, but of sons of God, have this Divine office bestowed upon us by Him.

For man to judge man is not permitted, save as the delegate of God; wherefore judges are called gods:¹²⁰ and we, being in very truth the sons of God, have this honor bestowed upon us by Christ, unto whom all judgment belongs as God, and unto whom it is given as man:

- Because by becoming man He brought unto mankind forgiveness, for the rejection of which He will judge them;
- Because “they have not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God”;¹²¹
- Because as man He showed God’s love to them, whereby His judgment is proved to be not in the absence but in the presence of love for the ends of holiness,—not for lack of grace in God to forgive, but for lack of faith in man to receive God’s grace and rest upon His goodness;
- Because as man He has become acquainted with man’s infirm conditions, and, putting strength into them all, has kept the law, and shown how it may be fulfilled by infirm mortality, through faith in God, which enabled the Son of man to overcome.

A judgment of fallen men, because they attain not to the law of holiness, is equitable only in the presumption that fallen manhood can keep that law; which was proved to be a true presumption by Christ in our fallen manhood, keeping it without spot and blameless, through faith upon God.

This demonstration of the capacity of our mortal and corruptible nature, brings us all in guilty of the judgment to come; and the gospel is the message of God’s grace to the guilty;—the guilty, not according to the measure or similitude of Adam’s transgres-

¹²⁰ *Psalm* 82:6.

¹²¹ *John* 3:18.

sion, but according to the measure of them who have rejected redemption.

The gospel of redemption through the blood of Christ was preached in the world from the instant of the Fall, as the means unto perfect holiness through faith; and in the condition of having rejected this redemption, not merely in the condition of having sinned with Adam, does the electing love of the Father apprehend every one who has been, or is to be saved.

Election is another mystery of love than redemption; another and a higher love to those who have rejected the other; which when it comes does enable us to believe in and rest upon the Redeemer, and is therefore redemption applied and made constant, but not until we had first proved our entire worthlessness of, and deadness to, the blessing. Christ, therefore, judges all as the Redeemer of all; declared to be such by His resurrection from death, the captivity of all.

Acts 17

³¹ Because God has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he has ordained; whereof he has given assurance unto all men, in that he has raised him from the dead.

The human nature is necessary, that men may be tried by their peers; the Divine nature is necessary, that the judges may not usurp the prerogative of God: the one, that we may be in full sympathy with the criminal at the bar; the other, that we may be in full sympathy with the God of grace, to whom he is responsible for grace rejected. And these two concur in Christ and His members, who are partakers with Him of the Divine nature, though not of Godhead.

The Divine nature in Him and in us is that which is born of the Spirit, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.¹²² This is the seed of God in us and in Him, which is altogether holy and cannot sin, because it is born of God.

¹²² *John* 1:13.

This judges all things in the natural man, but is itself judged of no one.

By this we are competent to be judges for God of all iniquity; and therefore it is written that the saints shall judge the world, and that they shall also judge angels; and in the text, that they shall receive the morning star of the resurrection, and act with Christ the tragic but righteous act of ruling the nations with a rod of iron, and breaking them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

It is from this same presence in us of the Divine nature of the sons of God, first in flesh made manifest by the generation of Jesus Christ, a holy thing in flesh, that we receive the resurrection from the dead unto that light and glory which is inaccessible to the wicked, who shall never see light: as it is written:

Romans 8

¹¹ But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you.

Resurrection is regeneration manifested to the sense: regeneration is resurrection manifested unto faith, yet still liable to all the trials and tribulations of faith, which holding fast patiently, we shall at length attain unto the resurrection from among the dead, and apprehend that for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus.

And the space between regeneration and resurrection in the believer is a continual act of self-judgment and condemnation, that we may not be judged with the wicked; a crucifixion and continual mortification of ourselves, that we may be shown worthy to sit in judgment upon others.

It was Roman justice in Brutus first to condemn and execute his own son: it is Christian justice first to condemn ourselves, and do execution upon ourselves. This shows that there is no partiality, that it is not for lack of love: for what man ever yet hated himself? but altogether out of an irreversible law and pure desire of holiness.

The Christian, moreover, who has borne reproach from the world that he is to judge and been by it mistreated in all ways, and persecuted and put to death, and has borne all “as the lamb which is led to the slaughter, and as the sheep which is dumb before the shearer,”¹²³ may well be acquitted of all malice or revenge, when he has given the proof of a life’s suffering, and a martyr’s death, that he was moved not by malice but by love, and ensued blessing, not revenge.

But if, as those misguided advocates of a partial redemption affirm, it be so, that Christ loved and died for none but the elect, and that His life’s labors and death’s pains were only for them yielded up, there is no proof of any kind whatever that the judgment is of love, and not of malice; of holiness, and not of revenge. And if, as the same zealous deniers of the truth maintain, His flesh was without the law of flesh, and was accessible only to physical infirmities, and not to temptations to sin, then is He utterly incompetent, from lack of fellow-feeling, to sit in judgment upon those who are in this way tempted.

Ah me! what a nerveless, jointless, helpless thing is this Reformation theology becoming in the hands of our doctors; how profitless to poor souls; how inglorious to God and to Christ! Though once, like the brazen serpent, it healed the Church, it has become, in the hands of an idolatrous generation like Nehushtan,¹²⁴ a parcel of sounds, and must speedily be broken to pieces and ground to powder, like the golden calf, the god of the Egyptians.

The calf the god of the lustful flesh, and the serpent the god of the cunning mind; the one the idol of the Papists, the other the idol of the Protestants; will I think, come to the same end, and much about the same time, and the word of the Lord alone be exalted in that day. But let us have done with all such gainsayers of the truth, and contemplate the truth itself.

¹²³ Acts 8:32, Isaiah 53:7.

¹²⁴ “Nehushtan” - 2 Kings 18:4, “a piece of brass.”

The glorious truth is, that when the time shall come for Christ to arise out of His place and shake terribly the earth; to issue from within the veil where He has been so long hidden in the secret place of the Father, and take to Him his great power and reign, He shall not do an act or strike a blow, till He have gathered to Him all His saints from the one quarter under heaven to the other.

He will not take upon Him one glorious prerogative conferred upon Him by the Father until He have called to His side from the caverns of the grave His own people, who have not loved their lives unto the death for His sake.

He shall feel that it is not good for Him to be alone; and His Father and His God shall bring to Him that wife whom, during His long sleep, He has been building up for Him. He himself acting for the Father, as the Son of God, shall quicken the bodies of His many members, who shall ascend into the presence of His glory and stand before the Son of man.

Coming as the angel of destruction, He can do nothing until the righteous witnesses have been removed out of Sodom, and He shall say unto them,

“Come, my people, enter into your chambers of salvation.”¹²⁵

And high aloft into the air, borne in chariots of fire, as heretofore Elijah was, shall we enter that Shechinah glory, that cloud of the most excellent majesty of God where Christ abides; and He shall present us unto himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Thus having entered into the bride-chamber, we shall be reunited to the bride in a marriage union never to be broken; we shall receive the benediction of the Father, and be instated together in that kingdom and dominion which has no end.

And now shall the mighty action of subduing the earth proceed apace; now shall the judgment written begin to be executed by Christ and His saints. What Enoch foretold, and every prophet

¹²⁵ *Isaiah* 26:20.

since Enoch's time, shall begin to be accomplished; nor shall blow cease after blow till the whole fabric of the nations shall be shivered to pieces.

Every island shall flee away, and the mountains shall not be found. The kings, and the captains, and the mighty men shall be consumed for ever from the presence of the Lord; nor shall it cease until everything that offends shall be cast out into the lake that burns, and the earth made meet for the habitation of God and the Lamb, and their tabernacle, which is all the saints, into the new Jerusalem confederate.

The order is—Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's at His coming; then the pulling down of all rule and authority and power, and then the giving up of the kingdom to the Father. Christ himself first ascends into the glorious light of God: thence He sends the Spirit to quicken all whom the Father has destined to the same honor and glory, those sighing and longing for the sight of their Father and the habitation of their native city, He summons up to the holy presence of God at His coming; and these Christ and the Church, the whole mystical Church, dwell wrapt up in the skirts of the cloud of the Father's glory. To them, and them alone, as yet will it unfold its most holy womb.

But the purpose is to fill the whole earth with its glory. The cloud shall yet expand itself from within the veil over the temple, and the court of Israel, and the court also of the Gentiles. It is now in the most holy place, embracing our High Priest within the veil: at His coming it shall spread over the holy place and enwrap the priests of God who minister there.

And now it shall begin to shoot forth its fires and consume all the evil-doers about the door of the congregation, and all those who offer strange incense upon the altar, and Korah and his company, and every other wicked thing. This putting down of all rule, and authority, and power adverse to Christ, shall be done as manifestly from the dwelling-place of Christ and His Church, as heretofore the acts of judgment were done from the cloud of the presence of God.

And this being done, the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God, and His tabernacle shall come down among them and abide with them for ever. Then the skirts of the cloud shall raise themselves, and in the sight of the wondering nations the glorious city shall be revealed descending from heaven, having the glory of God and the Lamb, and in it shall God abide with men for ever.



VII. CONCLUSION

MANY reflections have suggested themselves to my mind during this lecture, of which I shall only notice this one, that it seems to be put beyond a question that the first resurrection of the dead and the change of the living, and their assumption in one body unto Christ in the air, takes place before any stroke of exterminating judgment falls upon the nations.

The idea of His coming, which has been again and again pressed upon us during this lecture, is that, when the times of the Father are accomplished, He shall send forth from heaven Jesus of Nazareth enwrapped in that same cloud of glory in which Jehovah has ever abode since the day that sin entered into the heart, and flesh, and habitation of men.

In this cloud, or clouds,—for it is alike capable of covering all the summits of Sinai, or of contracting itself to the dimensions of the Holy of Holies,—shall Christ come forth from the invisible heavens into the world, the region of the senses, and straightway shall He call His saints, living and dead, into the same most holy presence chamber of God.

The number of the elect being thus accomplished and glorified with their glorious Head, they are constituted the reigning and ruling family of God, His kings and priests forever; and straightway their action shall begin by clearing the world of all wickedness. Then is the Christian Church the spiritual seed, the royal priesthood of God completed; never, I think, to be added to.

I have sometimes thought that the spiritual glory, into which the Christian Church is now baptized, and shall then be introduced, is to be the destination of those also who, during and at the end of the millennium, shall have been found faithful; and that from thenceforth there shall be but one condition of mankind, the spiritual glory of the new Jerusalem: whereas, during the millennium, there has been besides this the natural glory of redeemed men in flesh and blood subsisting; a condition which,

according to this common notion, shall have an end when the thousand years are accomplished.

I begin to doubt this; and incline to believe, that as man was created a living soul at first, an image of God and Lord of His creatures, though in flesh and blood, so shall man continue forever redeemed from the power of death, and upheld in holiness by the work of Christ in the flesh; while we who are born again of the Spirit into the likeness of Christ's glorious body, shall exhibit the glory of the election, they the blessedness of the redemption of God in Christ, we neither marrying nor giving in marriage, they multiplying and replenishing the creation of God, according to the constitution of mankind ere yet they fell.

And thus in a twofold glory shall the purpose of God unfold itself; the governors and the governed, the sons of God and the sons of men, the celestial bodies and the bodies terrestrial, of which both are glorious, though the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

This is a very deep and a very important subject, which properly comes to be handled under the millennium, and of which I have now given my convictions, in order that I may be understood, when I say, that the Christian Church is completed at the coming of Christ, and taken up into the cloud of His glory, ere ever one blow of the iron rod is struck, ere ever any one of the nations is broken to shivers, ere ever the action of putting down all rule and authority and power is once entered upon.

If this be true, it gives an awful importance to the act of the coming of Christ, which in that case becomes decisive of those who are to reign with Him, and conclusive of that blessed society. Then the door of the bridal chamber is shut, and there is an end both of invitation and of admission into the honorable marriage of the Lamb. Those who are taken, are taken to be ever with the Lord in the holy presence of God; those who are left, are left upon the earth to take their portion in the miserable judgments which are to shake it to its center, and consume the fabric of its iniquity.

That out of these judgments a remnant shall escape, both of Jews and Gentiles, by acknowledging the name and dignity of the Lamb and His bride, there is no doubt; and that they shall people the earth, and possess it in much blessedness for a thousand years, and then decline away from their allegiance and be consumed, while the holy city, and the camp of the saints, the twofold containers of the twofold glory, the glory of the spiritual and the glory of the natural, shall be preserved the everlasting monuments,—of the creation redeemed by the work of Christ in flesh, of the election glorified by the work of Christ in the Spirit.

Until Christ comes, therefore, the gospel of the kingdom is preached, and men are called with a heavenly calling, to the inheritance of the resurrection and adoption of the sons of God in the new Jerusalem; after the coming of Christ there shall be no call to this high and glorious dignity. The work of God, which at Christ's former coming made a pause in the earthly things in order that it might proceed with the spiritual things, shall at His second coming, having completed the heavenly things, return to take up the earthly things, and fulfill all which was spoken concerning the earth by the prophets;—to judge the four beasts, to slay the four horns which scattered Israel and Judah, to restore the tabernacle of David, to rebuild the city and temple of Jerusalem, and to reconstitute all things by the hand of Elias, which is to come; and with the Jewish people to make all the Gentiles to rejoice, in Abraham and his seed, to make all the families of the earth to be blessed.

But, oh! through what storms and tempests, through what violence and bloodshed, will this blessed tranquility be brought to pass! What a night, what a fearful night of horrid havoc, before that morning of peace shall dawn! To escape all which calamities that are about to come upon the earth, though it be a most worthy cause of watchfulness and prayer, and by our Lord held out as such,¹²⁶ a much higher object of ambition it is to desire that glory

¹²⁶ *Luke 21:36.*

of the Son of man, which shall then open the gates for the righteous nation to enter in, and anon shall shut them again.

There lurks and lingers about the hearts of men a hope that Christ will so announce His coming as that we shall have time enough to get ready. Alas! shall Christ's words not be able to rouse us out of this shameful security, this dishonorable indifference to the coming of our Saviour, who taught His Church that it should come as a snare upon all them that dwell, on the earth, as the deluge came on the former world, as fire from heaven fell down upon Sodom and Gomorrah?

Will His parable of the virgins, to this very end addressed, not be able to teach the Church, that when His coming is announced, only those who are ready shall be able to enter into the honor and to the love and to the joy of the marriage chamber?

- If the Church would take Christ's own views of this subject, and give it the importance which He gives to it;
- If she would but hear the Spirit making his continual invocation to Christ to come;
- If she would but walk in holiness, and hasten the persecution of this present evil world;
- If she would but know the love of Christ in her redemption, and give scope to her own love of Him, and desire of His appearance;
- If she would but know this dignity of her election of God, and give way to the glorious desire of possessing it;

There would be no unwillingness to treat of the subject of His second coming, but a strong desire to be informed of it, and to know the signs of it, and to catch eager hold of every sign that it is near at hand: there would be no desire to part from the belief of it, to keep reservations in our heart, to remain in doubt, nourishing the vain notion of some sensible warning, or the very equivocal hope that we may be safe without coming to any conviction at all upon the subject.

The greater part of the Church, yea, almost all, are lying in the arms of a most dangerous and fatal security, that without taking any interest whatever in the subject of Christ's coming, all will be safe with them, provided they be resting upon the merits of His atonement.

I believe that no one is a true Christian who does not desire the appearing of his Lord; and being entreated with discourse concerning it does nauseate and reject it. Rest when he please, his is not the true rest who can hear of the coming of our Lord and not be interested in it. He may be a moralist, philanthropist, theologian, or what not, but he is no Christian, who does not desire to hear of the coming of the Lord.

His fear condemns him of lack of faith in Christ as his Saviour and his Husband; his fear condemns him of present worldliness and fatal error. And if he will not be at pains to get rid of this fear, he will be condemned with the fearful; and if he avoid that very subject which calls upon him to deal with his fears, he gives place to his fear and prefers it to faith: he would rather continue in separation than be brought into union with Christ; he would rather doubt, than be assured; and worse signs of a Christian than these are nowhere to be found.

Now to shake the vain security of these men, I present to them the whole New Testament Scriptures, which exhibit the Church in the attitude of waiting and looking for Christ; the instructions of our Lord and His apostles, who ever urge upon the Church the duty of watchfulness and preparedness.

And if in the face of their instructions and invitations they will still persevere in their indifference to the whole subject, through the vain hope that they will receive notable warning time enough for making ready, I present to them the continual declaration that He comes as a thief in the night, and with such sharp decision that the wife cannot help the husband, from whose arms she is taken, nor the friend the friend, with whom he is walking by the way, nor the servant her fellow-servant, with whom she is grinding at the mill.

And if, still, they hope that though they may not be among them who are changed and taken at the Lord's appearing, they may yet be among those who shall be purified by the judgments, I ask upon what authority it rests, that there will be two assumptions of the saints? I find that they who are Christ's are taken at His coming; and consequently those who are not Christ's are left. To be left seems to me equal to not being Christ's.

No doubt there will be a method of salvation still, but it is not the Christian method: the vocation to be with Christ is ended. The vocation to be subject to Christ and His saints is begun; but the vocation to reign with Him is ended.

The dignity of sons of God is co-extensive with the privilege of the first resurrection, and therefore these two names, sons of God and sons of the resurrection, are interchangeable terms.

Luke 20

³⁶ Neither can they die anymore: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

So that to those who are not counted worthy of that age, and the resurrection from the dead, there should still be a means of repairing the loss, and reaching the divine dignity of sons of God, is, if these our premises be right, a hope as vain and nugatory as is that of universal salvation, or of purgatory. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. When the day of grace is ended, it is ended; when the day of judgment is begun, it is begun.

If, then, so much rests upon the act of Christ's coming in the clouds of heaven, to raise the dead, and change the living saints, and if, during the whole course of the judgments which follow thereon, destructive of this present order of things, there be no door of admission open into the royal priesthood of God,—that is, the Christian Church,—this subject of the second advent is one of sterling importance to the Church in all times, and especially in these times we live in when the voice,

Matthew 25

⁶ Behold the Bridegroom comes,

Revelation 16

¹⁵ Behold I come as a thief,

–has gone forth in all directions with such impetuous urgency; in times like these, when the framework of society seems everywhere breaking up around us.

If, as we have learned from this lecture, the judgments upon the nations are not to proceed until the saints be all gathered into glory, and Christ with their full number appear in the clouds of heaven, and we see those judgments threatening to commence with fierce and fiery controversy, we may well call one to another,

“To your watchtower, brother, and look out for His coming.”

The thing now to be apprehended is, lest those who are expecting the Lord should be seized with premature astonishment, and paralyzed in their minds, and laid open to the temptations of false Christs and false prophets; who shall make a stir, saying,

Luke 17

²¹ Lo here, lo there,

–as if Christ were to be found in the secret chamber or in the desert; who will be calling upon you to do this and to do that: but do it not, abide every one at his post, holding forth the word of God, and standing for the testimony of Jesus Christ, well assured that in the day of the Lord we shall be sought out as carefully as Lot was, and borne into a place of safety more secure than Zoar.

To calm such apprehensions and excitements and tumults, must be one of the constant works of the minister of Christ and pastor of the flock. Though the earth were removing, though the nations were rushing against each other like the whirlwinds, what have we to fear, whose city is secure, and whose rest is provided? Rather should we hold up our heads because our redemption draws nigh.

Nevertheless, I count it not good to close this lecture concerning the judgment of the nations, without observing that the thing which we see now proceeding, is only the violence with which Christendom is passing from the Papal to the Infidel form, and not the judgments with which it is to be consumed. It is the breaking up of the Papal firmament and foundations, for the Infidel, whose action is yet to come, and then comes its judgment.

Its action is under one head to make war against the Lamb, and those that are with Him, and then proceeds the judgment. Against that man of sin who heads and leads the last confederacy against the Lord and His anointed, shall the saints of God be called on high, and armed with weapons of heavenly temper, with “swords bathed in heaven.”¹²⁷ Against the beast and the false prophet, and his army, it is that the Lord and His hosts come forth in triumphant array, riding on white horses.

And then it is that the destruction of the nations proceeds with battles of shaking. What we have seen in France is one of the ten horns giving its power to infidelity, that third form of the beast, whose body is all inscribed over with blasphemy. The Papal beast had blasphemy inscribed only on the seven heads, because in Rome only was the blasphemous assumption of that supremacy over kings, which is the single prerogative of Christ, whose name is King of kings, and Lord of lords.

But now the people claim to be the sovereign of the sovereigns, from them the power originates, and to them it is responsible; their king reigns not by the grace of God, but by the authority of the people. He is not God’s king, but the citizen-king. The people, all the members of the beast claim now the blasphemous supremacy of the rulers of the earth, which heretofore was claimed by Rome; blasphemy is therefore written upon the heads no longer, but over the whole body.

What we see is the dispute between these two claimants of Christ’s prerogatives; the people are striking down the pope’s

¹²⁷ *Isaiah* 34:5.

kings and setting up citizen-kings; the kingdoms are hating the whore, and giving their power unto the beast, utterly to destroy her. This is what we behold taking place around us: it is only a new storm and tempest over the deep, it is not the judgment of it as yet.

The beast is casting his old withered wrinkled skin, and will come forth with deepest acts against the Lord and His Church, when he shall have clothed himself in the brightness of Lucifer the sun of the morning. Then when he shall have begun to clothe himself in the glorious immunities of Christ, when he shall stand revealed in all his power and splendor, and shall be putting down all that opposes him, and reigning as God in the temple of God, then it is that the Lord shall be manifested in the cloud with all His saints, to consume him with the breath of His mouth, and to destroy him with the brightness of His coming.



