

CHILIASM,
BIBLICALLY
AND
HISTORICALLY
CONSIDERED

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

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This work is missing some of the sections as outlined in the Table of Contents. The missing sections are in **blue colored font**. If I locate them, I will add them to the current document.

There were numerous endnotes. Many of the endnotes were just Biblical citations of Book, Chapter and Verse. In an effort to produce a user-friendly document, all the notes have been incorporated into the body of the document with a **maroon colored font**. This facilitates easy access to the information, allows its portability between word processors (for me using Pages, MS Word for Mac, and Mellel) and aids in less redaction for the final PDF version.

Greek and Hebrew Fonts are needed to read the original language citations. The fonts are Old Greek and Old Hebrew and can be downloaded from the messiahskingdom.com/ludlum webpage. Right click to download to your respective Operating System Font Folder.

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PREFACE

John the Baptist made the proclamation of the Kingdom of God his central message. Jesus of Nazareth did the same. There is a true Christian belief concerning the Kingdom of God. It came first, and was the “alpha” of the forerunner’s, and the Lord’s, and the Apostles’ preaching.

And not only so, but the Lord Jesus made it the “omega” of Christian preaching. For He designated it as the central message of the last days, saying:

And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (Matthew 24:14)

And what could be more fitting? What message is there like this, having power to confront today’s world, to contradict its dominant mentality of revolt against God, against morals, and against all authority? What message is better fitted than this message for the Communists and their satellites, for the oil-producing nations in their domineering mood, and for the entire array of Earth’s nations, namely, the word that the Lion of the Tribe of Judah will soon return to break them with a rod of iron, and to dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel? And what message would be easier for them to grasp? We mean, considering what they are. For it ought to be noted, and duly weighed, that many of them—yea, most—have come into existence through deceit and violent usurpations. Such were they. They still remain little else. And therefore, whoever remembers their thoughts, and words, and ways, and works, will understand perfectly that this message speaks their language. It speaks Lenin’s language, and Mao’s. It speaks the Dragon’s language, and his host’s, and his beasts’. It speaks the only language that they are able to understand, or probably, ever will be. This proclamation is, therefore, in the first instance, a message in their own language to them and their crowd. They may reject it, and very likely will. They may harden their hearts and become worse and not better for hearing it. Its proclamation may only incite them to fiercer rebellion. By pouring its oil on raging flames, it may involve them in reiterated and aggravated guilt. It will be up to them to decide. The proclamation asks them to repent, and believe, and live. It informs them that the alternative is to be crushed by shattering force. Such is the message which the King wants delivered to them.

The message, however, is not less for the Church than for the nations of mankind. The proclamation of “this Gospel of the Kingdom” summons Christians to look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.

To them it cries:

The Bridegroom comes! Go ye out to meet Him!

The purpose of the preaching of this message will be to wake Christians out of their sleep. For the predicted proclamation, in the last days, of what Jesus called “this Gospel of the Kingdom” has commonly been equated with efforts to translate and disseminate the Scriptures, or with business-as-usual missionary outreach, or with educational efforts, or with evangelistic campaigns aimed at reaching unconverted masses. Such interpretations have missed the point. For however good such activities may be, they are not by any means a fulfillment of what Christ promised when He designated this message as the “omega” of Christian preaching. For there is a “Gospel of the Kingdom.” New Testament Chiliasm gives us the original Apostolic form thereof. Early post-Apostolic Chiliasm elucidates and interprets it in

complete accord with the Scriptures. This truth, which is also called “Millennialism,” is one of the highest themes a Christian can meditate and expound. For it defines what is called “the Hope,” and presents it to the world. That hope includes the victory and permanent establishment of all the religious and ethical realities contained in the Scriptures and in our other articles of belief; that is, insofar as the latter also contain truth.

What about this? We have two things here. One is the Kingdom itself. It has a divinely promised future, when its day arrives. The other is the message, the doctrine, the Gospel of the Kingdom. It too has a divinely promised future. As long as the actual arrival of Kingdom Come remained far off in a distant future, “this Gospel of the Kingdom” could be safely relegated to second or third place on the agenda. As the time approaches for the Kingdom to arrive, however, the message, the proclamation of its coming, has to be taken out of mothballs, and refitted and refurbished for battle. The proclamation of this particular message must now be put in place number one on the agenda. This is so not just because it needs proclaiming, but principally because it needs a lot of work done on it before it is ready to be proclaimed. How so?

When Mr. Enemy, the sower, went forth to sow tares, he took special care to bury this grand doctrine under tons of tare seed. And so it became the fate of this doctrine, as it had been the fate of its subject matter, to suffer violence at the hands of violent men. And thus, despite its greatness, and really, we would suppose, because of its greatness, and because of its great strategic importance for the days of the time of the end, the Devil singled it out for special treatment. He first smothered it, and then buried it in oblivion. We mean, in the first instance, in the churches, and from as early as the days of St. Augustine. Certainly, it had well nigh completely disappeared in the largest part of Roman Catholic, Reformed, Presbyterian and Lutheran congregations, schools, and curricula. It has been continually aspersed and slanderously misrepresented. And if it has at times been preserved, as in popular forms of dispensationalism and in the heretical sects, it has survived only in adulterated and greatly mangled forms. Everywhere it has been reinterpreted in a thousand different ways, and transformed out of all recognition. And therefore, as we said, a lot of work has to be done on it in order to ready it for effective proclamation. We may add, incidentally, that one really encouraging sign of these times is the fact that many able Christians are at work restoring this ancient masterpiece which our Lord Himself painted for us.

Our aim has been to try to discover and describe the original form of Chiliasm. We have attempted to remove accretions, purge adulterations, and vindicate it against misrepresentations and slanders, of which there have been enough. We have also made an effort to point out some of its richness, beauty, and glory, and especially the righteousness and the power of the Kingdom it tells men of. And it is right on all occasions to dwell on such subjects con amore. Our present purpose, however, is to distinguish between the Kingdom itself, its qualities, and its power, on the one hand, and the message and its qualities and power, on the other. It is only the latter that we now wish to define and stress.

What about this particular proclamation and its power? Certainly, if there is any single element or teaching in Scripture which is more entitled than others to be regarded as the Sword of the Spirit for today’s embattled saints to wield, it is this great truth of a promised kingdom—the Kingdom which comes, which will break in pieces and consume all governments, which will institute many long-awaited vindications of Jehovah’s works and ways, which will inaugurate the eternal life of the world to come for God’s risen and translated saints, and which Jesus our Lord will establish, when He has returned to rule

supreme and reign alone. First of all, then, we have in the message itself a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth. It is a word sharper than any two-edged sword, which can pierce to the dividing between soul and spirit, in order that it may prove able to reveal the thoughts out of many hearts. He Himself, none other, will be sifting out the hearts of men with this winnowing word. And in the coming, final round of Christian proclamation it will be His own mercy's great engine. Love's millennia-long labors will culminate in Love's great final "push" to reach those who do not want to be reached:

How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

This particular message makes the very strongest appeal to every lost spirit's self-interest. For unlike us, who always hold ourselves in readiness to lose with Jehovah, none of them wants to lose. Therefore, the power this particular message has to make such an appeal to their self-interest, as they ever have and ever will understand it, is the thing that makes it of highest value for God to use in his last-ditch effort to realize His purposes of love for them. Only hearts which He has hardened can fail to get the point. And if we are like our Father who is in Heaven, if we pity the lost children of men of this present age, as we surely ought to, then we too will want them to hear again, even though it be for the last time, and even though it be in vain, the command of the Most High:

Repent! the time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand!

Even now the axe already lies at the root of the trees. Repent ye, and believe the Gospel!

Now, it is the will of Jehovah and His plan that they shall hear it again, even as it is written:

And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

Jehovah will make His sun to rise on the evil for a short while longer. He will still send His rain on the unrighteous for a brief period.

The future proclamation of "this Gospel of the Kingdom" will serve three grand purposes. First, it will give the bulk of mankind one last chance to choose life. Secondly, it will clarify to Christians many things they will need to know—all the great issues—in order that they may be able to suffer with joy, and endure to the end, and obtain the crown of life. While lastly, it will put Jehovah God out into the clear. For when He has caused this Gospel of the Kingdom to be preached with all the unction and power of the Holy Spirit Himself, and with the mightiest effectual workings from Himself, the Father, added thereto, then even the lost will know that nothing more could have been said to them, that had not been said, or done for them, that was not done. And all the saved will understand it too. For it is of utmost importance for their eternal peace and joy that they should know how much was done for the lost, and that nothing more could have been done. Then God will know it too. Wisdom will have been justified of all her children. Then, this proclamation having been delivered, Earth will await only the last moves on the chess board, if we may so speak.

What are those last moves? Results will follow from the preaching. Who can doubt it? For in the hole the great ace yet to be played is the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The half has not been seen of what He is able to do, and will do. And when He has done His mighty works, what then? Then the strong Son of God will look. He will look on the outcome. He will look on the travail of His soul. How will He feel? He will be satisfied! Is that all? By no means! He will jump up and down, leaping for joy, crying aloud, and saying:

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father!

Then He will shout, even as it is written:

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

At about the same time the world will witness

the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed.

In these operations, if we ponder them, we cannot fail to notice that a certain strong man, who is fully armed, will be receiving a frightful trouncing. When the winner takes all, the loser has to lose all, sad though it may be to tell. For our part, however, we cannot help thinking that the musical numbers will be the best part of the entire series of events. For there will be a concert. It will feature the Song of Moses the Servant of God, and perhaps even two of his songs. It will feature the Song of the Lamb also. These numbers will be sung by the victors, that is, by all who beat the beast, and his image, and his number. A large elect chorus will render a number entitled "New Song." All angels will sing the Hallelujah Chorus. And all creatures will sing a number called "Comprehensive Hallel." The lyrics will give the meanings of the epic events. The settings will arouse the noblest, purest feelings. The marriage of the two, that is, of words and music, will bring all heaven before our eyes, and dissolve us into ecstasies. Then Heaven will be above, and Heaven will be on Earth, and Heaven will be within.

With these things and others like them in mind, we have offered the following explanation of the Gospel of the Kingdom. May God grant those who read these pages the power to love that Gospel, and may He enhearten them to preach it.

CHAPTER ONE: CONCERNING CHILIASM

WHAT CHILIASM IS

“Chiliasm,” “Millennialism,” and “Millenarianism” are common names of the same belief. We may commence our consideration of it by giving a short definition. Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis, said:

There will be a period of a thousand years (= a millennium = a chiliad (Greek, Χίλιος) of years) after the resurrection of the dead, when the kingdom of Christ will be set up in material form on this earth. [Eusebius, *Church History*, III, xxxix, 12. *χιλιαδα τινα φησιν φησιν ετων εσεσθαι μετα την εκ νεκρων ανααστασιν, σωματικως της Χριστου Βασιλειας επι ταυτησι της γης υποστησομενης.*]

This statement comes, at the latest, from the early years of the second century. It may come from as early as 80 A. D. in the first century, however. [Irenaeus's words were: *παπιας ο Ιωαννου μεν ακουστης, πολυκαρπου δε εταιρος γεγονως, αρξαιος ανηρ...* (= Papias, who had become the disciple of John and also the close associate of Polycarp, a primitive man ...) Eusebius, *op. cit.*, III, xxxix, 1. In the same passage Eusebius groups him with Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp.]

If we go back earlier still, we find a passage of Scripture in which the Greek phrases *χιλια ετη* (= a thousand years) and *τα χιλια ετη* (= the thousand years) occur six times in the space of seven verses. The passage is very explicit in its statements, and we give it below in full.

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.

And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,

and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished; after this he must be loosed for a little time.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection.

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power (or, authority); but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a (or, the) thousand years.

And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations.

If the time element, the thousand years, is deemed of the essence in Chiliasm, then the foregoing statement from Revelation 20, must be considered its true origin, though, of course, other elements in the view had earlier origins.

How then should Chiliasm be defined? Our opinion is that it ought to be defined as the belief, or view, or position of those who hold that the things mentioned in the passage just quoted are to be interpreted literally and are going to have literal fulfillments sooner or later in a kingdom of Christ on earth. Let us be specific. Chiliastic belief deals with the following particulars:

First, a group of people who will be raised from death—the resurrected dead, namely, Christ and beheaded martyrs and others who refused to compromise their integrity or their religious allegiance to truth, to God, or to Messiah;

Secondly, a worldwide government, which will be administered by those same resurrected dead, exercising judicial powers and authority God will give them;

Thirdly, a religious establishment that will be conducted by the same persons—“they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years”;

Fourthly, a Satan, who will be immobilized, imprisoned, and temporarily rendered powerless to deceive the nations;

Fifthly, the nations of the world—what remains of them—who will then exist for a time in a condition in which they are not Satanically deceived; and

Sixthly, an explicitly defined period of time, namely, “a” or “the thousand years,” during which each of the above preceding five things are to exist, or function, or be true.

Such are some of the principal elements in Chiliasm, which is well enough defined for our present purposes as the position of Christians who believe those things literally true.

What about this definition? It ought to be adhered to rigorously, yet most fail to do so.

If it be rigorously adhered to, all the statements actually found in Scripture concerning the Millennium, or applicable to it, will be found compatible with the idea that the Coming Kingdom of God will be a righteous government which is strong, and rules in the midst of enemies, and shatters them, exactly as we find it written in the following applicable portions of Scripture:

The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion:
Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. (Psalm 110:2)

The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.
He shall judge among the heathen,
He shall fill the places with the dead bodies;
He shall would the heads over many countries. (Psalm 110:5f.)

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;

Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (Psalm 2:8f.)

Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power.

For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. (I. Corinthians 15:24f.)

Moreover, consider the facts of history, of evil and of death. Does rigorous adherence to Scripture's statements compel us to think that the advent of the Kingdom implies immediate abolitions of all the world's governments, or of evil, or of death? Not at all, but rather the opposite.

Now consider, on the other hand, what may happen if the definition drawn from Scripture is not rigorously adhered to. Great confusion not only may then follow, but almost always will. For experience shows that when people hear the word "millennium," they react emotionally, and permit their imaginations to run away with them. For they think of dream-worlds, in which everything is pure, peaceful and glittering. They see visions of crime-free, slumless, alabaster cities gleaming undimmed by human tears, in the sunshine of a bright new day. They dream dreams of unsurpassed prosperity and wealth, of pomp and circumstance and gracious living, of good government and glory, and of scenes of universal peace and security. Such visions and dreams suffice for most. Others, however, think of religion as everywhere triumphant, of billions converted to truth, spiritually regenerated and morally rejuvenated, while piety and holiness fill all men's hearts and evil and deceit have completely vanished out of the world. What is the inevitable consequence of such vain imaginings, when they are long indulged in by many, or rather, by most? The result is two great evils. First, the grand distinctive features of the Biblical view of the millennium have been lost; namely, such things as its radical righteousness, its mighty, avenging גואל (= Redeemer), and its triumphant vindication of the Crucified, etc. And secondly, the Kingdom has been replaced. And replaced by what? By just whatever brands of sociological fuzz and of utopian cotton candy the spirit of any particular age happens to be enamoured of! In almost no time at all the dictionary definitions and other widespread popular definitions of the millennium will reflect the delusions produced by men's uncontrolled imaginations far more closely than they fit the simple, sober statements of God in His holy Word.[3] And when it has been recreated in non-Biblical forms and described in non-Scriptural terms, the Kingdom of God has been radically transformed. How so? It has come to be just any set of ideas anybody happens to like to entertain in his head. And so it comes to pass that even most Christians, when they meditate on the Kingdom, see visions which are not really much better than fatuous dreams of gracious, fleshly living in chromeplated Utopias (= Nowheres). Such imaginations, by expelling the correct Biblical views from their thoughts, have blinded even them. The sad plight that many of them are in through being filled with false expectations, and some of its consequences, will be considered later. In essence it amounts to this: that, being excited by their dreams of chiffon pies, they will be unable to see anything attractive (much less, glorious) in a serving of meat and potatoes, which the Kingdom may serve up to them, when it has come. Let us only suppose that it should offer them spiritual glories in the form of plain-as-mud righteousness, established and reigning

supreme on Earth. If it did so, they might still be looking for the Kingdom to come long after it had already come. Did not the Synagogue, misled by its false expectations, fail to recognize its Messiah, when He had come? Why may not the Church, misled by her false expectations, fail to recognize her Lord when He comes again. Why? What is the wild olive grafting compared with the good stock?

We shall let what we have said suffice to define Chiliasm for the present, and to suggest how necessary it is to adhere rigorously to what the Bible tells us of the Kingdom, striving to extract from Scripture all that it has to say to us, while adding no new features from our own imaginations.

The Importance of Chiliasm, If It Be True

When Chiliasm is looked at Biblically, and its doctrines are compared with other doctrines of Scripture, we are led to ask what place it has in the total picture.

The Bible foretells and promises many things, some of which have already happened, while others have not. If we consider the religion of the Old Testament in itself, and by itself, it will appear to be a torso of a statue which has neither head, hands, nor feet. The Jews, whose religion is very largely confined to the Old Testament, have taken cognizance of this situation, and have supplied the defect by referring all fulfillments to the period in the future when all will be fulfilled in what they call “the days of the Messiah.”

All the prophets prophesied not but of the days of the Messiah. (Sanh. 99a)

The world was not created but only for the Messiah. (Sanh. 98b)

The religion of the New Testament partakes of the same character to a large extent. In so far as it embodies valid fulfillments of very many Old Testament predictions and promises, it is indeed vastly less incomplete than Old Testament religion. Nevertheless, it still requires to be brought to completion by the occurrence of particular events, which are as yet still future. For they (= those future events) only have the power to vindicate its truths fully and completely. If this situation is kept in mind, then we will see that the Chiliasts, in Christian circles, are men who are holding on to, and are holding out for, things of highest importance. They claim that they hold the orthodox scriptural and Apostolic doctrine of “the days of the Messiah.” For, for Christians, “the days of the Messiah” are not just the days of Christ’s first Advent here, but are, preeminently, the days of His return to Earth and of His reign of righteousness here. For Chiliasts, certainly, and for many others too, “the days of the Messiah” are the days of Kingdom Come.

Moreover, if the entire work of God be looked on as a single piece, as it should be, then we will seek for some comprehensive principle, or framework, which will include the entire work and give it a unified rationale. It is undoubtedly possible to think of the Abrahamic covenant as commencing, and the Kingdom of God as ending, a single process of development stretching across the centuries. Such a principle would reduce the Israelite nation and the Christian Church to subordinate chapters in the ongoing narrative of the mighty works of God in His saving history, as it may be called. Israel might be thought of as the original son, and heir designate, turned for a time prodigal. The Church from the Gentiles might be viewed as the adopted child in the house with all the rights of the homeborn conveyed to her through adoption. Both would be subordinate under the general plan, which originated with Abraham and will terminate in the Kingdom of God. This is at least a possibility, a thought, which one of our Christian theologians has stated in the following words:

Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

Whatever anybody may think of the opinion just quoted, he will surely have to admit that the things which Chiliasts believe in must have an exalted position. This is due to their nature, which is to describe the great, culminating strokes of the operations of the hands of the All-Wise—blessed be He! And therefore, if they were true, such doctrines would of necessity be headstones of the corner among Christian beliefs, or the closest thing thereto. They must needs be considered as being among the prime, objective dogmas of the true religion.

Chiliasm, if true, would have several uses. A first use would be in conciliating the minds of men to Christianity. All the prime objective dogmas have this use, namely, the Incarnation, Atonement, Resurrection, Ascension, Enthronement, Return to Victory, etc. All of these have a mighty power to threaten, to awe, and to command men to bow in submission to moral and religious verities. Were many moral and religious truths to be left standing in their native strength alone, men would contemn, spurn, and trample them. But they are not contemptible when they are accompanied by other truths which plainly announce that a power exists which will back them up and will insure their complete vindication and ultimate victory. The prime, objective dogmas of Christianity confront the mind of man with realities, and bring it to book, thus conciliating it to Christianity. And it is this particular doctrine of the coming victory of the Kingdom of God, above all, which does so. For it makes it clear to every man that it is in his own best interest to accept Christianity. In the light of this doctrine he perceives that he faces a simple question. Does he want to be wiped out? Or would he prefer to be on the winning side?

What then is this that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner? Every one that falleth on that stone shall be broken to pieces; and on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

He has to ask himself quite simply the potent question that Mohammed, Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, and Mao have been popularizing.

The King of Glory—He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings—knows that there can be no substitute for victory. He therefore demands unconditional surrender. Do you think you can fight against Him and win?

Or what king, as he goes to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends ambassadors and asks conditions of peace.

These considerations afford rational motives. And even though there may be nobler motives, yet there are none more rational. And as rational considerations they function to bring the minds of men into adjustment to and into reconciliation with the Christian faith. And they perform this function quite as well, and perhaps even better, than do the nobler truths of God's love and salvation by grace.

Another use of Chiliasm arises from the fact that men have an elementary spiritual need for something for which they can live, work, and sacrifice. In the brute creatures, which are lower than man in the scale of being, there is some power to live with a mental orientation toward the future, but it is very limited. In the case of men, due to their neotic expansions, we have "animals" living a life that has a high-grade, that is, a highly rational, orientation to the as yet hidden future and toward the invisible realities of the spirit. As a result of the special nature of their human existence, men cannot live unless they care about

something. Nor can they care unless something of value is dangled before their mind's eye—something they are freely willing to admit is worth caring about and living for. When this has been understood, and the doctrines of Chiliasm have been evaluated in the light of the rational essence of man, which demands purposes and sufficient reasons for living, then it is necessary to admit that if Chiliastic doctrines be true, they answer to, meet, and fill the deepest needs of the human heart. For they include an introduction and establishment of everlasting righteousness, a creation of new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, the annihilation of death, the capere deum, and the supercelestial glories. They also include full realizations of the parts of the entire Jewish Hattikvah (= התקוה = the hope), namely, the promised land, the reassembled Israelis, the restored Zion, the rebuilt Temple, etc. Besides, it must never be forgotten that the Chiliastic doctrines are doctrines of the complete vindication and personal triumph of a particular individual, namely, Jesus of Nazareth. Hence, to those who love Him and obey Him from the love and adoration they owe Him, nothing could be half so acceptable or more welcome than Chiliasm's doctrines proved true by future events.

Here then is a good question to consider. For men, who have to have a future, “a latter end” (= אחרית), what can be conceived of that is nobler, or more worth living, working, and sacrificing for than the Kingdom of God, service therein as priests, reigning as kings therein, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, ruling the Gentiles with a rod of iron in righteousness, dashing them in pieces as a potter's vessel, etc.?

Let the saints be joyful in glory:
Let them sing aloud upon their beds.
Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,
And a two-edged sword in their hand;
To execute vengeance upon the heathen,
And punishments upon the people;
To bind their kings with chains,
And their nobles with fetters of iron;
To execute upon them the judgment written:
This honour have all his saints.
Hallelujah!

A third use of Chiliastic doctrines is in preaching. If in our efforts to confront men and convert them we confine ourselves exclusively to proclaiming the love of God and the gospel of a spiritual salvation, then our foundation is too narrow and too shallow, even though it be solid as a rock. Our adherence to and proclamation of evangelical truths should be combined with preaching the coming Kingdom of God. Pleas for repentance should be coupled with a command to repent, a command from the King who is to come. If the doctrines of Chiliasm be true, then they are the true doctrines of the Kingdom of God. As such they deserve a central place in all preaching, namely, the very place Jesus our Lord Himself gave to the Kingdom of God in His teaching and preaching. And if they are not handled in such a way that the proclamation of them is thrilling, it should be considered a huge fault in any preacher. For the prospect of the culmination of the work of God in the reign of Jesus Christ, the victor, over a new creation is an awe-inspiring and thrilling prospect. If it is not, then what, pray, is?

Let the foregoing suffice to show the importance and uses of Chiliasm, if it be true.

Its Scriptural Origins

We just said, if it be true.” The grand question is this question of truth:

Are the doctrines of Chiliasm true or not?

And this question turns out to be two equally important questions.

The first of them is:

In working with the Bible’s statements, are we dealing with genuine oracles that have really come from God, or not? For Chiliasm is a belief concerning future events, and therefore it is necessary to be sure that we are in contact with a source that is knowledgeable—in this case, God, who probably alone knows the events of the distant future which He will be creating and controlling.

And the second question is:

What is the correct understanding of the Bible’s statements about future events? In other words, do the doctrines of Chiliasm give correct interpretations of what the Scriptures say? How do we get right understandings? How can we know when we have correct interpretations?

What about these two questions? The first is of the utmost importance, of course. And we assume that those who will be reading these pages know very well that it is, and that they have already found sufficient reason for trusting the Bible as a true record of true divine oracles. And for this reason we will pass over that supremely important question, and, leaving it undiscussed, we will proceed directly to the second part of the truth question, the part a reader will want answered. And we will restate the question as follows:

What is the best way to go about to discover what the Bible really says, or suggests, concerning the beliefs Chiliasm hold and the doctrines they propagate?

To this question we will give an answer, and a short comment on it, as follows. If we wish to know what the Bible says or suggests concerning Chiliasm, we must first identify, isolate, and list about twenty elementary ideas which are found in relevant Biblical passages. We must next consider various principles and methods of interpretation, and decide which of them we ought to use.

Thirdly, we will need to devise a method of studying each elementary idea in connection with passages of Scripture that are related to it. It is especially important to have means of detecting the presence not only of foreign ideas, but also of one-sided or shriveled Biblical ideas. These become stereotyped. The stereotypes often have very misleading implications, some of which introduce false ideas, while others exclude very obvious ideas, which it is not only valid but profitable to take account of. And the consequence is that we meet everywhere with hidden assumptions. If we fail to detect these, we will be virtually certain to succumb to their powerful influence. Examples of truncated Biblical ideas, which we will need to subject to careful examination, are extremely unsatisfactory conceptions of the so-called “rapture,” which limit the idea of it to being snatched up, away from, and altogether out of the world into a region outside Earth and above it. Such definitions effectually push out of men’s minds the idea of

being with Jesus on Earth and conducting a government under Him and with Him there. As a result they virtually erase the Kingdom of God and participation therein from the Christian's hope. Another example is an extremely narrow conception of the tribulation, in which it is conceived of almost exclusively as a religious persecution of Christians, whereas it really has a much more comprehensive meaning. Other examples might be mentioned. Now interpreters do a great deal of this unfortunate stereotyping, and habitually use certain images and idioms as their coins and counters. They are very prone to parrot them uncritically, and to smuggle them in when and where there is no real reason to introduce them. They may be doing it unconsciously and unintentionally, of course. But even so, that makes very little difference in the final outcome, which is, that foreign ideas, or shriveled ideas, or implications thereof, very soon become so many hidden assumptions. And such ideas control their thinking, whether they make explicit mention of them or not, and even whether they know it or not. For when those ideas and their implications are in any one's mind, they are at work silently, inducing complete blindness to important truths and possibilities in some cases, and assorted distortions in others, even when men are completely oblivious of their presence. Certainly the Devil can get a lot of mileage out of interpreters who are only half, or less than half, with it.

Fourthly, it will be needful to consider the different ways in which genuinely Biblical ideas themselves may be combined. For nothing is more common than the making of thoroughly unwarrantable connections of such ideas, and no hidden assumptions are more pervasive than those in regard to illicit connections of this sort. Moreover, no errors can lead to any results more disastrous for believers than some of those can, which have to do with the connections and the orders of succession of predicted events, as we shall see.

Lastly, it will be necessary for us, to the best of our ability, to try to conceive of, and to evaluate, a great number of possible interpretations of what the Bible's words may be saying or hinting about what will be happening in the future. For in this kind of interpretation we deal with promises and predictions. And therefore in it it is necessary to work with ideas about what can happen in this world, and what ought to be happening here. Now it is possible to recognize an impending event, and to see for the first time in it a true fulfillment of a prediction or a promise, because the features of that up-coming event have caused us to see for the first time that there is a possible interpretation, which the words of Scripture will bear, but which it had never previously occurred to us to put on them until then. Events may suggest to our minds the best interpretations to put on the divinely inspired words that had been used for predicting them.

Now, having offered the foregoing answer to the question that was before us, we have the following comment to make. In the wisdom of God the Biblical prophecies were designed to be very baffling, but yet not perfectly inscrutable. It is written:

the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but they that are wise shall understand.

The baffling prophecies prevent the wicked from seeing, and permit God's friends to see at the right times, but not before. The prophecies, being mysterious and baffling, are necessarily subject to very many and great misconstructions. It cannot be avoided. Moreover, two parties are involved, namely, those who love truth and those who hate it. Among the latter we ought to take special note of Satan and the hosts of sin. We ought to assume that they, as highly intelligent spirits and as deeply interested parties, have some clear ideas as to what interpretations of the prophecies are right, and also as to how

they can hurt men and spite God by arranging to bury as many valid interpretations as possible, and to get men to embrace wrong ones. Moreover, to their mind and for their purposes, some wrong answers are far preferable to others. The “best” in their eyes are sure to be those which can delude Jews and Christians with false hopes, thus plunging them into reckless courses of action that tempt Jehovah, and drive them to use vain expedients, to their utter ruin in the sequel. Moreover, having access to most minds, as they indeed do, they will often be able to foist the most pernicious errors upon the most refined minds as well as the ruder sort. It will be especially easy for them to do this. This particular department of Biblical interpretation is quite exciting. Angels tremble, but fools rush in. Here, too,

some of them that are wise shall fall, to refine them and to purify, and to make them white, even to the time of the end.

And therefore, except the grace of God save them, the greatest experts and the most accomplished scholars, will be bread for such enemies. We ought never to let ourselves forget for a moment, then, that in this special area of Biblical interpretation our wrestling cannot fail to be with principalities and powers, et al. For this particular doctrine is the doctrine of the coming of Christ’s Kingdom in total victory for Him and with total defeat for them. This doctrine they hate! None more than it! Striving against it, they will be sure to outdo themselves. Doctrines of demons are sure to be rife. The history of interpretation of apocalyptic prophecies is sure to be infested with them. At times it is going to be harder to recognize false interpretations than to find true ones. Will it indeed prove to be so? Let’s see.

Post-Biblical Interpretations

As its title indicates, our study will have two main divisions. The general question that defines the scope of the second of them is as follows:

What is involved in ascertaining and in evaluating post-Biblical interpretations of Chiliasm which emerged in the churches and among the sects?

An adequate historical consideration of Chiliasm will discuss the way in which post-Biblical writers across the centuries have understood and expounded the relevant Biblical passages. And it will even deal with the understandings of some of the Biblical writers themselves; that is, whenever extra-Biblical evidences have rendered it possible to ascertain their positions and teachings on the subject. For, among other resources, we have living connections between Irenaeus and the Apostle John the son of Zebedee through Polycarp. We also have the remarkable fact that those four men who were the most acute and zealous fact-finders in the early Church—namely, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian—have supplied much information. Our first task, therefore, will be to go to the historical sources and to gather from them a body of ascertained facts. The sources used may be synagogical, ecclesiastical, sectarian, heretical, or private.

The second task will be to study and evaluate the interpretations. This will include the preliminary work of distinguishing genuinely Biblical materials from human inventions. Unauthorized speculatists will camouflage their speculations. In them the voice will be the voice of Jacob, but the hands will be Esau's, and the duly careful, and even wisely suspicious father will fail to identify his own son. For inasmuch as the passages being interpreted will for the most part be taken directly out of the Bible, the fulfillments which speculators suggest need only be consistent with the original texts, in order to seem thoroughly acceptable, and to gain admission by the dozens. Then, if they are skillfully woven together and attractively embroidered, they will have the taste of Scripture in them, and the smell of Scripture on them. The relish and thrill of truth will seem to be in the talking of and hearing them, due to the artificial flavorings and the additives that were utilized.

In this same connection it is worth pointing out that the subject matter itself has a natural attractiveness for two sorts of parties. Egotistical teachers, if they desire to create followings for themselves, or sales for their books, have a good thing here. It is a very heady drink, too, offering them the delights of intoxication. For the very nature of the subject practically forces them to speak and write as if they were oracles, and they may soon come to see themselves in that flattering light. If the prospect of becoming gnostics, illuminati, "scientists," (either Christian or Jewish), and "spiritual," is an attractive one for most men, then it must be a thrilling experience to be the purveyor of illumination to the illuminati, and of gnosis to the gnostics. Many will undertake the task with relish, and one distinguishing feature of such purveyors will be that at every moment they will hold themselves in readiness to show anybody and everybody that their position is solidly based on the Bible. They must be ready alway to give an answer to every man that asketh them a reason concerning the gnosis that is in them. They will be the practitioners, therefore, of carefully reasoned, skillfully articulated, dialectical programs of deception.

Moreover, much in the same manner that honey attracts ants and uncovered flesh draws flies, so a prospect or a premonition that the end of the world is drawing very near will incline many of the most materialistic and worldly of men to abate somewhat their headlong pursuit of this world's approbations

and goods. They will consider wisely that something may be in the offing which it would be a very good thing for them to cash in on. And if they should become really excited by the prospect of advantages that stood to be gained, they might even part with a little of their hard cash, regarding the expenditures as something in the nature of the premium payments they make on their insurance policies. In such a state of mind they will be able to do a fine job of receiving fools gladly, and of entertaining, regaling, and subsidizing them very acceptably.

The two kinds of parties which we have been describing are ideally suited to each other. They deserve each other. There may be many fine marriages. And there will be, for we may be certain that Satan will be glad to catalyze those courtships and solemnize the nuptials. And we may rest assured that such marriages will be highly prolific. For reasons such as those we have given, and for others, too, the preliminary part of the second task is not going to be easy to perform.

The second part of the same task will consist of careful observation of several kinds of mishandling of the genuinely Scriptural views themselves, such as, cases in which Chiliastic doctrines have been (1) slighted and ignored; (2) misrepresented and slandered; (3) adulterated and degraded; (4) suppressed; (5) replaced with other doctrines; or (6) revived with unjustifiable additions or modifications. Besides these cases, there are others in which two or more parties, all of them unsound, have monopolized the actual discussions of questions in such ways that truth has never had any chance to be heard, yet everybody thinks that the discussions have left no stone unturned.

The third task involves an examination of the course of history, in order to see to what extent any particular special interpretation of the things foretold seems to have been fulfilled, or to be on its way to fulfillment. For the course of history is the judge which will sooner or later decide the fate of all interpretations, and it has already sealed the fate of many. But it also opens up new possibilities of interpretation. Many of them are such that they could scarcely have been foreseen, until emerging events had first rendered them conceivable.

We have now presented the outline of the investigations which we shall try to carry out in the present work, and are ready to take in hand the tasks we have been describing.

CHAPTER TWO: CHILIASM BIBLICALLY CONSIDERED:

or

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS AND SUGGESTS CONCERNING CHILIASM THE ELEMENTARY IDEAS

It is well known that great confusion exists in many minds on the subject of millennialism. The reason is not far to seek. Multitudes are interested in the subject and are extremely talkative about it. Nearly every one of them has ideas on it—many ideas, all of them connected up to form a plan or scheme of events which he thinks is going to unfold in days to come. The result is that programs and schemes of future events are being advocated by many. They confront one on all sides, both in people we meet and in books we see on the bookracks in the supermarkets and newsstands. It seems as if almost everybody is trying to sell, or is buying, some “package” of beliefs or other. For it is not a matter of propagating simple ideas singly, but of trading in ideas by the peck and bushelful. For the packages that are offered for sale are like the baskets of fruit you can buy to give to a friend who is sick or who is going on a journey. The people who put them up try to include as many items as they can manage to pack in, and every basket is different from every other. And therefore, if we want to know what the Bible says, or suggests, concerning Chiliasm, we must first answer a prior question, namely: How are we to clear up the confusion that meets us on every hand? For when it is seen how commonly the partisans of Chiliastic beliefs are puffed up, youthful novices, who are excited about a few ideas they have just heard for the first time, and who leap up to plead, trumpet-tongued, the merits of what they have not understood, you will surely understand that there is confusion and why it is noisy. Other partisans are often very ignorant persons, who are not a bit modest. As a result, the confusion is horrid, and we have to deal with what is, potentially, the makings of a new tower of Babel.

What does the Bible say concerning Chiliasm? If we wish to be able to answer this question, we must take certain steps with a view to moving out of confusion into clarity. The first of such steps is to make a list of a number of the ideas which many define in various ways and discuss in books. The following list is not complete, but will serve as a starting point.

1. The great apostasy: the revelation of the son of perdition, alias the man of sin, the Wicked: his activities, lying signs, successes, and doom.
2. The great tribulation and the so-called indignation (= הַזֶּעַם).
3. The coming of the seven-headed, ten-horned beast.
4. The coming of the two-horned beast, alias the Anti-christ, alias the false prophet: his activities, kingdom, and doom.
5. The promised preaching of “this Gospel of the Kingdom” in the entire inhabited world for a witness to all the Gentiles.
6. The advent, parousia, appearing, or second coming of Christ considered purely and simply in itself.
7. The rapture, or meeting the Lord in the air. The translation of then living saints and the transformation of their bodies of flesh into incorruptible spiritual bodies.
8. The place and condition of the departed dead.
9. The first resurrection, the resurrection of the just.
10. The one thousand year reign of Christ and the victors.
11. The one thousand year binding and imprisonment of Satan.
12. Separations, judgment, or judgments, at the commencement of the Kingdom of Christ and His

saints.

13. Israel's destined role: the rebellion (= עֶהְפֶשׁ) and the desolations; the promises and still unfulfilled prophecies (= the hope = הַתְּקִנָּה), and the vision (= דְּסִהּוּזוּ).
14. The time of Jacob's trouble, the great repentance, the healing of his incurable wound, and the great outpouring of the Spirit.
15. The arrival of Christ's two witnesses.
16. The glorious land of Israel and the City of God, Zion-Jerusalem—their roles and destinies.
17. The Temple—a third Temple to be built?
18. The Christian Church—its role and destiny.
19. Earthquake(s) and geological transformations.
20. Skyquake and other celestial phenomena (solar, lunar, stellar, etc.), meteorological phenomena (winds, thunders, lightnings, hail, etc.), and fire.
21. The Day of Jehovah, alias the Day of Wrath, the Great Day, Armageddon.
22. The nations of mankind: their rebellion, roles, and destinies.
23. The mystery of lawlessness: Babylon the Great, her role and fate.
24. The regeneration: the new Heavens, the new Earth, the renewal into superabounding fruitfulness, and the new tameness of predatory beasts.
25. The necessary release of Satan for a short period: his instigation of men to apostasies and rebellions, and their summary extinction by a blast of fire.
26. The second resurrection of the rest of the dead.
27. The great white throne, and the last judgment before it.
28. The heavenly city, New Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven.
29. The supercelestial existence: the capere deum and its nature.

Our list sets the stage for a fruitful separate study of each of nearly thirty leading ideas. And it will make such study easier to pursue. Our effort will be to try to arrive at an independent evaluation concerning what the rightful place of each leading idea is in the total picture. Another effort will be to try to recognize foreign additions which have become attached to genuinely Biblical elements, as well as arbitrary uses of Biblical materials themselves. Our list will be helpful to us in doing this, which is the first step out of confusion into clarity.

In order to illustrate the point, which may not be too clear without a concrete example to make it plain, we shall give a quotation, which consists of nine items plus a comment. It will show how foreign elements may gain entree and how Biblical elements may become distorted. It is given here with no desire on our part to convince anybody of anything, but simply for the purpose of showing what a “package” is like. It is, so to say, our “Exhibit B,” nothing more, and it is as follows.

In its distinctly prophetic aspects this (particular Mystery-Paraphrase) Dispensational teaching may be summarized briefly as follows:

- *1. The Millennium is that future period of human history during which Christ will reign personally and visibly with His saints on and over the earth for a thousand years.
- *2. A visible coming of Christ will precede it.
3. This coming will be in two stages, the rapture and the appearing, with a considerable interval of time between them, in which important events will take place.
4. The rapture may take place at “any moment,” and will certainly precede the great

tribulation.

5. The rapture is the “blessed hope” of the Church.
6. The Church is composed of those, and those only, who are saved between Pentecost and the rapture.
7. The Church age is a mystery period (a parenthesis dispensation unknown to prophecy) lying between the 69th and 70th weeks of the prophecy of Daniel ix.
8. Between the rapture and the appearing, the events of the last week of the prophecy of Daniel ix., of Matthew xxiv., and of Revelation iv.-xix. are to take place.
9. After the rapture a Jewish remnant will take the place of the Church as God’s agent on earth for the conversion of Israel and the Gentiles.

***Of the nine points enumerated above, only the first two are entitled to be regarded as characteristic of Premillennialism historically understood. (4)**

The foregoing quotation illustrates two important points. First, it shows how non-Biblical elements can be inserted into an arrangement or scheme of connected events and passed off as if they were genuinely Biblical. And secondly, it shows how genuinely Biblical materials can be presented as parts of a special interpretation which gives a scheme of a series of future events, the Bible itself does not authorize, even though there can be no doubt that it has furnished the materials that have thus arbitrarily been arranged and connected.

Our list of the twenty leading, elementary ideas is going to be very helpful to us. For it will serve to make us conscious of the fact that there are at least a score of subjects on which we may easily be led to entertain wrong ideas, from which it may be very hard for us to free our minds. And it will make us aware that our task has a positive, constructive side. That side is both the largest in size and the greatest in importance. We refer to the work of discovering truth and appropriating it for our own and others’ benefit. And this task is thrilling, for the truth is no ordinary truth, but is of a special kind, namely, truths about things to come, invisible future events, the exciting last things of a coming knock-down and drag-out battle between good and evil, the last things of God’s own awful wrap-up. For we deal here with what the Scriptures call

a more sure word of prophecy a light that shineth in a dark place

For a promised future has indeed been revealed.

Surely, the Lord Jehovah will do nothing (said Amos), except He reveal His secret unto His servants the prophets.

It was revealed long, very long, ago. God-given words of understanding in many passages of the Bible have long stood waiting for the blessed day and hour, when God will be ready to open some men’s minds, in order to permit them to perceive their meanings. And not only does revealed truth, long hidden, await timely discovery by those whom God Himself will render capable of seeing and appropriating it, but the task of discovery will go forward as men feel a sense of utmost urgency, as knowing that discovering truth will be the means of enabling them to take the right side, God’s side, in a Holy War, which will be the war to end all wars. What about this?

Our assignment, then, is to try to perform two absolutely necessary and equally important tasks. The first

is to recognize very numerous errors, reject them resolutely, and thus to extricate ourselves from a widely pervading confusion. And the second is to discover truths—wonderful, hidden mysteries, not hitherto disclosed to us. And what we have just done, in establishing a list of basic, elementary ideas as our point of departure, was to take our first step toward clarity. But beyond that, our list has opened up new possibilities for effective constructive efforts to find truths, and enter into possession of them. It has also opened up ways and furnished means to use for effectively extricating ourselves from errors, and for preventing future allurements into and entrapment in new errors.

Let me define these two equally necessary tasks. I will first indicate what we are up against, and then will show some possibilities for constructive efforts that have been opened up to us by the step we have already taken.

First of all, we are up against a mighty power—the power of error. And secondly, we are up against a still mightier power—a Devil, whose interests lead him to work and fight for the widest propagation of errors.

The strength of error, considered in itself, is very great. As long as it can manage to go unperceived, its great strength lies in the fact that it is thought to be truth and will continue to be thought of as the truth. And similarly, the weakness of truth, all the while that it continues to go unperceived, arises from the fact that it is thought to be error. And thus it very naturally comes to pass, as a common fact of life, that when error is in, truth will be out.

In still another regard error is strong in itself, for it has power to handcuff, shackle, and straitjacket men's minds. It does so by blinding them mentally in several ways. One way is by means of hidden assumptions. This way is very potent, for error is enabled to reign supreme and unchallenged whenever it resides in hidden assumptions we fail to notice. A second way is through the use of plausible reasons, which exert positive power in several ways. First of all, they directly and positively incline the mind to believe that some given error is a truth. Secondly, they supply to each other a powerful mutual reinforcement, so that two or three plausible arguments linked together will push and almost drive the mind into believing that an error is truth. While thirdly, the forceful operation just mentioned gains strength whenever no contradicting reasons from the opposite side counterbalance their positive force. For it is easy to assume that we are already fully apprized of all relevant considerations. That is, we are prone to assume that we already know all the reasons pro and contra that it is needful to know. It is also easy to assume that if nobody is giving contradictory reasons, then that must be due to the fact that none exist to be discovered or stated. Thus, the purely negative fact of silence is usually interpreted to mean consent. Silence gives consent, as they say. The absence of countervailing reasons is taken as a positive ratification of uncontradicted error. The "logic" of this is well expressed by a man who says:

There are so many of us who agree in seeing things this way that it is impossible that we should all be wrong.

The foregoing considerations apply to our task in several particular ways to be mentioned in a moment. They also apply to it in a general way. In general, error parades as truth, and in doing so it creates a preliminary task for us. It is this: we have to acquire a power to recognize it as error, and convict it of being falsehood. This is a positive task of the highest value and usefulness. For if it is not successfully accomplished, the result will be that we will remain in the darkness of blindness, while claiming that we see. Moreover, the chances are that we will be self-blinded, and also quite pleased with our condition and blissfully happy about it.

That this preliminary task is a positive one is clear from the fact that it must be deemed fully as necessary to get off any wrong track as to get onto the right one. No one knows this better than the Devil, because nobody sees the picture as a whole better than he. Therefore his strategy and tactics are simple. They can be expressed in one word:

Deceive!

He perceives that his purposes are usually very well served if he permits you to get off one wrong track, as long as he can be sure that you will end up on another. For he sees that if he keeps you on almost any wrong track you will be quite certain to reject true and right opinions as being seemingly too unlikely for words.

We have now moved into a position from which it is possible to show two kinds of constructive efforts that we have been enabled to make. The first kind has to do with getting onto the right track, while the second kind has to do with getting off wrong tracks. We are deliberately putting the preliminary task in second place because its nature will be better understood in the light of our description of the positive task of getting onto the right track.

Our aim is to discover truths and to take possession of them, namely, of truths about the promised future fulfillments of prophecies. We hope to be able to achieve a well-rounded, integrated view of what the Bible says and suggests about Chiliastic opinions. What does this involve? It involves finding, uncovering, all possible interpretations of the Biblical passages that foretell or describe the future events we are interested in knowing about. We need to uncover all possible interpretations, because any possible interpretation may tell or may hint at the ways future events may take shape or unfold. Therefore every possible interpretation of the passages in question ought to be carefully spelled out, and fully described, in order that we may be able to consider each and all of them carefully. It is necessary to do this because the nature of many of the Bible's prophecies requires it. Let me explain why.

It is a mistake to think that in studying Chiasm our task is simply to decide what God is surely going to do. Our problem is quite different and may be explained as follows. We are seeking to learn—to form ideas—about what He has suggested or hinted that He may do, in order that we may watch intently and intelligently for its occurrence, so that when He does perform what He has foretold we may plainly see the connection between the announcement and the event which is its fulfillment. And though not always, yet it is usually the case that the forecasting has been done in such forms and terms that we are able to judge as to what the prophecies may mean. At the same time we remain unable to know what they do mean, and are intended to remain in that state of suspense until they are on the verge of being fulfilled or have been fulfilled. Then, at that time, and usually not long before the actual fulfillment, if at all, we shall be permitted to comprehend the meaning of the prophecy, which many even then may not be able to comprehend.

From the nature of the prophecies and of the process of our work with them, it is clear what we are to do. We must think of every possible interpretation—literal and spiritual—we can conceive of, and of every conceivable fulfillment thereof in all conceivable combinations of order or successive occurrence. We are to consider each carefully in prolonged meditation and pondering. As we do this, we will be evaluating them for a purpose—the purpose of choosing from among all of them not just one but all those on which we ought to keep our minds open and look ahead, watching for possible future fulfillments which may be looming on the historical horizon. For our personal comprehension and grasp of the meaning of the

prophecies is, so to speak, a growing edge. The shaping and unfolding of events in the arena on the stage of world history is another growing edge. We are told to watch both of these growing edges anxiously—ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω to see if, when, where, and how they will match up and fit together and make sense, like the pieces in a puzzle, that is, in some way that is in line with the well-known purposes of God. Such is the nature of the divine method of using prophetic promises and drawing from us an intelligent response to them. Thus, when we have rightly grasped the nature of what prophecy is, and what our appropriate response to it ought to be, we will then understand the necessity for digging up and spelling out all possible literal and figurative interpretations that are conceivable and all conceivable possible fulfillments including all conceivable combinations of order or successive occurrence. For God's ways are very high and most wise; they are deep, too, and very subtle. If we are to discern God's ways, if we are to think His thoughts after Him, then we dare not presume to be able to overlook any conceivable possibility.

Of course, we are not to dig up and spell out all conceivable possible interpretations and fulfillments with the idea of inventing and promoting some newfangled ideas of our own. Rather, we are to do it because we do not want to overlook some simple and sensible idea through careless inattentiveness. For we are seeking to achieve an integrated view of what the Bible says and suggests about Chiasm, and it would be a great pity if we were to overlook anything of real value which is there waiting to be noticed. Moreover, we should remember that it is perfectly possible that we may discover some valuable interpretation hitherto unobserved. It may be superior to any as yet conceived of. You may notice it. Anybody might. Nor is it at all conceited in us to think thus. For as events of world history transpire and unfold, they cast their light on the sacred text. They bring to light new possibilities of interpretation. And not only so, but they make them seem highly likely to be true. For example, consider the recent regathering of Israelis to Palestine and events that have lately been happening there. Have they not made many things foretold in the Scriptures come to seem very probable, which a short time ago, would have seemed absolutely unthinkable?

Thus, the great command for us in these matters

Watch! Γρηγορεῖτε

We are to get onto the right track for purposes of watching intelligently and intently. In order that we may do so, we have to dig up and spell out all possible interpretations and fulfillments.

It is obvious, we think, that to have isolated twenty leading ideas, as we have done, has put us in a good position to dig up and spell out the possibilities we are seeking to recognize. For having disentangled the threads, we can now take them into hand one at a time. We can meditate long on each, in order that, if God permits, we may discover all of its bearings, and may thence arrive at a position in which we can think up ideas of combinations of successive events that may happen in the future. And thus we should be able independently to conceive of schemes which consist of combinations of events other than those combinations we find in the packages commonly offered for sale. In short, isolation of the twenty leading ideas—of course, you should add others to the list, if you see fit—has put us into a better position to construct schemes which we can meditate and then evaluate.

Enough has been said to suggest how isolation of these ideas may help us get onto the right track. In the light of the explanations just given, let us now add a few words on how much it helps us when we make constructive efforts to get off wrong tracks and to stay off them.

ON GETTING OFF WRONG TRACKS

What is our problem? It is to try to insure that others will not mislead us, and that we will not deceive ourselves.

In considering Chiliasm we are often deceived through swallowing non-Biblical ideas unawares. For it is easy to mistake Biblical words and phrases for Biblical ideas. And thus, whenever un-Biblical or pagan ideas are dressed in Biblical sheep's clothing, it is easy for others to pass them off on us, and we take them up readily and pass them off on ourselves. We are therefore always to be on guard against swallowing them. In meditating on millennialism and the things of eschatology it is especially easy to be misled and to mislead ourselves in this manner. The subject is unusually slippery. A strenuous effort to be on guard is therefore required of us. We must not permit ourselves to be taken in. What is merely a Biblical excuse or pretext for holding some non-Biblical belief must not be mistaken by us for a clear statement of Scriptural teaching and a sufficient, divinely provided authorization for holding it. In order to avoid being misled, we must analyze all packages, dismantle each, take up each element by itself in isolation from the others, and then study it critically. We must at all times turn to the Bible, re-examine its exactly worded statements, extract their correct meanings, and then make our ideas square with their true sense. Only so will we be able to keep ourselves from unconsciously taking up with or sliding into unwarranted ideas—that is, unwarranted because unBiblical.

Moreover, it is always easy for us to accept ideas we like and to reject those we dislike. We are therefore to be on our guard against hasty acceptance of what we like, lest we rush into errors; and equally against hasty rejection of what we dislike, lest we be found to be fighting against God and against truth. We must not be controlled by our likes and dislikes, lest they deceive us.

Furthermore, it is always easy to accept ideas we think highly likely, yet which are possibly erroneous. It is equally easy to reject ideas we think extremely unlikely, yet which are possibly true. We are prone to trust our own judgment in its hasty or unwarranted exercises. And people who are pious and devout in their disposition of mind, and who are also steeped in the Bible's statements through much reading and meditation, are especially inclined to trust their judgment as to what they think God is likely to do or not do. Yet it seems to be the case that they, even more than others, need to exercise great caution.

Due to the nature of our subject matter and the circumstances in which we are placed, it is wrong in principle and often fatal in practice to reject ideas because they seem to us to be highly unlikely to be true. For in pondering questions of Chiliasm and eschatology we are dealing (usually) with predictions of things to come. In such matters we are likely to be ill judges of what God will or will not do. For He has purposes we often fail to perceive, some of which are far out of sight over our heads. And He usually goes about to realize them by the use of plans that are incomprehensible by us. While lastly, He executes those plans in subtle ways we usually cannot observe or inspect and by using means that are almost always out of our sight. And therefore, such being the case, we ought never to condemn or reject any possible interpretation of texts or any possible future fulfillment of any possible interpretation hastily, on the basis of our judgment of its apparent merits or defects. The real question is whether it would be a wise measure for God to take. We should assume that He may be the only fit judge of this matter. Under these circumstances the most plausible reasons may be the most misleading. The true reasons may seem very implausible and unconvincing to us when we hear them stated. And thus it often happens that specious reasonings and arguments push out sounder but less plausible lines of thinking.

If you will watch men, you can easily notice how ready many always are to assert, as if they knew assuredly, that God will certainly do some things, and that He will never do or permit others. Nothing can be more foolish than this. It is almost never our task to try to make such assertions. We have a far different assignment, and one we are far better equipped to manage. We are rather to try to ascertain what interpretations may reasonably be put upon the words of Scripture. And in doing this we are not to content ourselves with finding a few possible interpretations. We are in duty bound to search out every possible interpretation. This is a manageable assignment, for possible interpretations are not numberless. They are usually few in number, and when many, they are not overly many, but merely enough to provoke the impatience which is commonly one of our greatest disqualifications for making sound studies. Then, having uncovered the possible interpretations and rendered them explicit, we are to keep our minds open in regard to all of them. We are to watch for possible fulfillments of any of them. For God may have His own deep reasons for fulfilling a possible interpretation that seems utterly unlikely to you or me.

This means that we must exercise great care not to judge hastily, either in rejecting ideas that seem unlikely to us, or in favoring unduly ideas we think likely to be true, especially not in the case of those darling ideas which our own minds have concocted. The most careful analysis of texts is called for. The most impartial treatment of ideas is required of us. The greatest openness of mind is necessary. Impatience and hastiness must be overcome. In particular, we should always take time to ask whether every interpretation we have embraced or favored may not turn out to have been erroneous. And we must always take time to ask whether every interpretation we dislike, especially an opponent's interpretation which contradicts ours, may not possibly be correct. By such means, God willing, we may get off wrong tracks. It is obvious, we think, that the isolation of twenty leading ideas will be of great help to us in our efforts to do so. For as we try to be cool-headed in handling quantities of emotion-loaded and excitement-rousing materials, what better help could we have than a tool which virtually forces clarity upon us?

Most of what was just said is also applicable in another way, namely, to the arrangements of materials and to the resulting sequences of predicted events. Here, if we are not greatly mistaken, even more strenuous efforts to be on guard are required at all times. For let us suppose that a man is working with simon-pure Biblical ideas. Even so, he may incur vast damages in numerous ways merely through having the events out of order, as we shall explain in due time. What then is our task? Having correct Biblical ideas of specific predicted events which are going to happen as the future unfolds, we must consider the different orders in which they may possibly occur. It will always be easy to take it for granted that a proffered arrangement of genuinely Biblical materials is safe. The soundness of the materials will seem to guarantee the safety of the arrangement. False arrangements, if assumed to be true, will push true arrangements out of mind. A false arrangement equipped with plausible reasons will make a true arrangement, the reasons for which have not yet been discovered or stated, look sick. Especially will a false arrangement and connection of bona fide Biblical materials be able to do this. Obviously, therefore, it will be wise to start from the twenty leading ideas we isolated, and then to put them together in all the different arrangements we can think of. In this way we can be fairly sure that no major possibility will have been inadvertently overlooked. But if we fail to do this, then it will scarcely be possible for us to avoid being swept along into accepting unconsciously one special interpretation or another—arbitrary combinations in arbitrary schemes of future events. For we will be led to assume that things have to be understood in certain ways, whereas no such thing is necessary. For other ways of understanding, other possible interpretations, exist, and may be superior. We may remain unaware that other interpretations are possible, yet there is no need that we should. One only has to take up the list of twenty elementary ideas,

and consider each one as a bead which may be given a definite place in a string of beads. In this way any thoughtful Christian should be able to produce his own catalogue of possible arrangements, then look them over, then eliminate the ones that are seemingly self-contradictory. All the rest he should keep in mind for reiterated testing, as follows. He should ask, item by item:

Is the position this item occupies in this particular arrangement necessary?

Is it superior in any respect to another position it might have?

And, above all, has it Scriptural warrant?

A TRAP OF THE DEVIL

The precautions we have suggested are not to be ignored except at greatest peril. For it is obvious that once a man concludes that he has found the correct interpretation of Biblical statements concerning future events, he will think that he knows the mind of God. If he does indeed have the correct interpretation, he will. However, if he does not,—that is, if his interpretations he thinks are correct are really erroneous—then he is deceived and is well on the road to blind fanaticism. What he has is a mistake pure and simple. He thinks it is a word of God, and therefore true beyond all doubt. It is possible that a single individual may know many divinely revealed truths that all those around him have not attained to perceive. Such a situation is of frequent occurrence. Everybody is well aware of such a possibility. Some actually are in this position. There are many, however, who unwarrantably think they occupy it. When they think so unjustifiably, the result is almost certain to be as follows:

Blindness + arrogance = fanatical zeal.

One bad feature of this situation is that the blindness is nearly impossible to cure. A second bad feature is that when a man has become convinced that he knows the mind of God, he will rightly conclude that he owes the same allegiance and total devotion to God's truth that he owes to God Himself. Here therefore we are dealing with the worst of all possible kinds of wrong track to be on. Satan will be at work putting as many as possible onto this particular kind of wrong track. For here we have arrogant blindness propagating errors with fanatical zeal. What is worse, the errors are propagated as God's truth! In deluding men in this particular way, as you may well suppose, the father of lies has a field day for himself. And from his standpoint the advantage is great. For the divine truth opposes and contradicts these errors. But where he can get men to swallow the errors, there the divine truths will appear to them as undeniable falsehoods. Prophets will look like liars. The truth-bearers will be considered so many arrogant, blind fanatics. From the diabolical viewpoint, therefore, such a situation is the optimum development Satan can hope to achieve. He has little snares and big traps. This is undoubtedly one of his great traps. It spites men who fall into it, for it deceives them into receiving outlandish ideas in a dogmatic, blind faith, and propagating them zealously out of blind fanaticism. Thus he makes men a laughingstock. At the same time he makes God ridiculous, in that His word returns unto Him void, having utterly failed to accomplish the purposes for which He sent it. And in the particular matter of the Antichrist's pretensions and his kingdom versus the coming of Christ and His credentials we have a possibility of the greatest of all traps being based on these and similar deceptions. Scripture plainly hints, indeed, that this is, and will be, the great deception, leading vast numbers of men to accept the performances of the Antichrist as valid credentials and sure signs of a divine mission, and at the same time to reject the God-ordained events of the days of the Messiah, as if they were brought to pass through the agency of an evil power. We hope, God willing, to make these things very clear later on.

In view of the fact that such great perils may be involved when we get onto wrong tracks, it cannot be amiss to summarize what we have been saying by putting a few helpful rules into a short statement.

In efforts to get off wrong tracks do as follows:

First, analyze all packages, dismantle each, and study every element critically, considering it in itself and in every connection it may have with other elements.

2ndly, render explicit, preferably in writing, all your reasons for thinking you have genuinely Biblical ideas as your materials, and that you are in fact interpreting them correctly and using them in reasonable ways.

3rdly, do the same in examining arrangements of materials into series and their connections.

4thly, resolve to be unsparing in your efforts to see through enticing blandishments of plausible but specious reasons, for they possess power to blind you.

5thly, strive to find equally good or superior reasons, which often exist and stand before you waiting to be discovered. For once they are uncovered it is their great work to render the suppressed truth superior in reason's eye to the error which had managed to masquerade as truth because it was dressed up in plausible considerations.

6thly, resolve to treat your opponents' ideas with utmost respect, and give them careful study.

7thly, remember to treat your own favorite ideas with great distrustfulness at all times.

8thly, make thoroughgoing studies before forming your conclusions. This is rarely done. But if done, it will enable you to see new possible arrangements and equally good or better reasons for some of them than for others you once had liked well enough.

If the above directions are followed you will be greatly helped in your attempts to get off wrong tracks.

We have just considered our entire task and two constructive efforts which it calls for. It is clear enough by now, we think, that the isolation of leading ideas can introduce clarifications at every point where confusion exists, and will be most helpful both in the positive efforts we make to discover truths, and in the equally positive work of extricating ourselves from the strong hold which hidden assumptions, errors, and traps may have upon our minds.

PROBLEMS OF INTERPRETATION

We now have before us some elementary ideas and some suggestions on how to work with them. The next question is this:

How is each of them to be understood? Or,

In order that we may understand them aright, how should we interpret the Biblical passages dealing with them?

What is the right method, or methods, of interpretation?

THE GENERAL SITUATION

The texts of Scripture upon which Chiliastic teachings are based can usually be interpreted in several ways. Literal interpretations of many features are perfectly possible, and often make good sense. Figurative interpretations, that is, allegorical, spiritual, and moral interpretations, are also perfectly possible, and they too often make excellent sense. In fact, it may be argued that since spiritual verities are superior to material blessings, therefore the allegorical interpretations should always be preferred above any literal interpretations. And of course, there is no reason, in many cases, why both kinds of interpretation may not be adopted. For in a given passage both might well be true. For unless a direct contradiction or a flagrant disagreement is involved, the only question is one as to the fitness of using two fully compatible interpretations in combination. And it is certainly perfectly conceivable that to do so might be deemed most fitting, namely, to make a joint application of a wholesome literal interpretation combined with a nobler, or even a glorious, spiritual. Furthermore, we should be at pains to remember that this principle applies to fulfillments as well as interpretations. For a passage can have both a spiritual interpretation and a spiritual fulfillment to match; and the same passage can have a literal interpretation and a literal fulfillment to match. Moreover, either kind of interpretation can have several appropriate fulfillments, not just one. And thus, if it should turn out that a given passage containing a prophecy or a promise can be interpreted in both ways, then both interpretations may prove to be correct. Moreover, each of them may have several appropriate fulfillments. At different times or in different ways the literal interpretation may have several literal fulfillments, not just one. The same may be the case with a spiritual interpretation. And in such a case, a situation involving multiple interpretations and multiple fulfillments, there need be no contradiction whatever, nor even any unfitness.

From what has just been pointed out it is obvious that there may come times when a radical misunderstanding is likely to be involved on our part; that is, if we become anxious to take one interpretation and fight to set it up as alone correct, and to put all others down. For it is necessary to see all possibilities and to keep our minds open as to them all. For the events are future, and often several possible future developments have a good rationale and would make good sense, if God should cause them to take place. When several interpretations seem to make good sense, all of them may prove significant and meaningful. We have no right to close our minds to real possibilities. To do so might cause us to fail to see the operations of God's hand in unfolding events due to a self-inflicted blindness.

Such is the general situation. It is reasonable to suppose that under ordinary conditions questions as to method of interpretation might be settled easily by skillful and dispassionate scholars. Alas! The "ordinary conditions" just referred to do not exist.

PARTISAN INTERPRETERS

For there are quite a few powerful parties. They are deeply interested in seeking to insure that particular interpretations which favor what they deem their vested interests shall be made to prevail everywhere, and that others contrary thereto shall be discredited in all eyes. Among such parties are the Jews, the Christians, certain sects, certain heretics, the antinaturalists, certain gifted individuals, and last but not least, the Devil. All have vested interests in determining what interpretations shall not be permitted to prevail. We have purposely stated our thought negatively.

As might be expected such a situation creates quite a few complications. Problems that would normally arise become aggravated, while not a few new ones are introduced. Hidden motives, which sometimes are conscious but often are not, work powerfully. They drive men to fight for the exclusive sway of one method of interpretation or one set of special interpretations. They drive them to do battle against all others. Emotions are deeply involved. Egos become ulcerated. The human problems often become more difficult than the exegetical. And the result is that all efforts to deal with Chiliasm from the standpoint of the Bible are rendered extremely hazardous. But, since there is no escape, we have to face all the difficulties that confront us and do our best to overcome them.

The subject of this chapter is "Chiliasm Biblically Considered." The question is:

What is the correct way to understand Biblical statements?

The answer is controverted. It has been matter of controversy for almost two thousand years. For although there have been many attempts to consider the question of the millennium Biblically, nearly all of them have been undertaken either from the standpoint of Israel and its hopes, that I not say its prejudices, on the one hand; or from the standpoint of the Church and her aspirations or prejudices on the other. And since so much of the handling of questions has been from these two divergent viewpoints by men dedicated to the maintenance and propagation of each, it has frequently happened that men of party spirit on both sides have been unduly swayed by partiality for their own side and by prejudices against the other side in a very definite way or pattern which we will now describe.

Consider how the rivalry between the Synagogue and the Church affects interpreters. The Old Testament contains many predictions of a glorious future. Jewish interpreters look at these and see them in the light of Israel's future and its hope. Christian interpreters view them in the light of the Church, the "new Israel of faith," as some say, and in the light of her past history, her future, and her hope. Now it is thoroughly conceivable that either or both of these two groups of interpreters might freely concede the fairness and the correctness of the other group's interpretations, while yet insisting most firmly on the correctness of its own. Usually, however, neither will do this. For they are rivals. They envy each other, and are therefore intent upon denying and invalidating each other's interpretations. Thus, when interpretations are offered from the Synagogue's side, from the Jewish viewpoint, a concentrated effort is made to minimize or rule out all possibilities of applying glorious Old Testament forecasts to the history of the Church and finding noble, spiritual fulfillments therein. This effort is carried out by denying the legitimacy of allegorical, spiritual, or figurative interpretations. All of this insistence upon literal interpretations as alone valid, and other interpretations as illegitimate, arises out of the determination to make it look as if the Church is a perverted, invalid form of Judaism. In the same way, on the other hand, when interpretations are offered from the side of the Church, it is common to find Christian interpreters engrossing all the Old Testament promises to the Church. The means they employ in order to do this are

allegorical and spiritual interpretations of the promises of material benefits and blessings. At the same time they regard Israel as a “has-been,” and insist upon denying future literal fulfillments of the promises to Israel as impossible. And, in general, the Christian interpreters would make out their case by allegorizing and insisting that material things promised and predicted were to be understood spiritually, and only spiritual fulfillments were legitimately to be looked for. Likewise, in general, Jewish interpreters would make out their case by rejecting allegorical interpretations as empty bubbles, while insisting that the letter gave the realities which were to be looked for from the hand of God.

From this situation it is clear enough, we think, that in both kinds of contention there may be valid elements. What is needed is a determined attempt to set aside both Jewish and Christian prejudices, and then to seek to deal as impartially as possible with the many questions of interpretation that arise. Someone may ask whether it is possible to set aside Jewish and Christian prejudices. Our opinion is that it is possible, but only with considerable effort. We will point out how it may be attempted. As we do so in the somewhat extended discussion that follows, please keep in mind that everything we say is intended to have direct reference to the subject of this chapter, the Biblical understanding of Chiliasm. It does so because the question is as to how to interpret the Bible, and the Church and the Synagogue are the two leading and officially recognized interpreters of Scripture. We are going to show that both are likely to be prejudiced. They are rivals. Their positions on some points are contradictory. This insures that one or the other will have to prove to be wrong, and sooner or later must end up in disgrace with great loss of face. Each feels threatened by the other. Both make high pretensions. Neither can easily bear to think poor (or even modest) thoughts of itself or of the importance of its assigned rôle. Both have images of themselves which are gravely threatened by Chiliastic doctrines of Messiah’s victory, and the rôle He is apparently destined to play. He is apprehended as a threat by both of them. And therefore, under such circumstances as these, the proverb applies:

Sed quis custodiet ipsos custodes?

There is good cause to suspect that the official custodians of Scripture may be swayed more by thoughts of their self-images, self-interests, and self-preservation than by desire to discover and propagate the truth of the divine oracles.

Between Jews and Christians two main points of disagreement exist. One is the obvious disagreement concerning the nature and offices of Jesus of Nazareth. For Jews, as their position is commonly defined, He is not the true Messiah, while for Christians He is. For Christians, again, He is the Son of God, but for Jews He is not. The disagreement on this point is basic. It will probably continue to exist until decisive future events have settled the question for good in one way or the other.

The other disagreement we referred to is less obvious. It lies in the different natures of two largely self-assumed or self-assigned roles. Both the Synagogue and the Church have images of themselves. The Synagogue believes it has a divinely appointed destiny. It thinks it has been given a distinguished part to play in the sight of God and men as the divine plan for the universe develops and unfolds. The Church also believes that she has such a destiny and role.

Prejudices and partial reasonings do indeed arise frequently enough out of both these disagreements. It is our opinion, however, that more potent prejudices and greater degrees of irrationality arise from the second, namely, from the high thoughts the Synagogue has of itself and the role God has assigned it to play on the one hand, and from the exalted idea the Church has of her nature and the role God has

appointed her to play on the other. Herein we have a fertile source of numerous psychological pitfalls. Truth is greatly endangered thereby. Let us look closely at the origins of some powerful prejudices, in order that we may the better be able to recognize them and set them aside.

Take the first disagreement. Any disagreement, if it is considered simply for what it is in itself, only implies that two opinions on a subject exist and are held by two parties. It carries with it no suggestion that either of the disagreeing parties is partial or prejudiced. When the disagreement takes the form of a contradiction, then it is of course implied that one of the two parties must be wrong. But even so, his being mistaken need not be taken to mean that any prejudice or partiality exists in him. For he may have been mistaken as a result of zealous attempts to be impartial. This often happens, when such attempts are sincere but ill-advised or misguided.

All that has been said is, or may be, true enough in some cases. It is also true, however, that there are certain kinds of disagreement which have such a nature that they practically compel one or both of the disagreeing parties to become partial and prejudiced. Disagreements about Jesus of Nazareth are usually of such a sort. For the basic question that is at issue in regard to Him produces a simple disagreement, if it be considered alone, in and for itself. However, it has so many and such far-reaching implications that the most judicious and impartial judges will find themselves sore put to it, if they are to be able to maintain their uprightness and preserve their integrity, when they take in hand the task of dealing with this problem.

We start here with a dilemma:

Either Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, or He is not. This means that one of the two parties must be wrong, if two sides are taken. Whether it is, in this case, the Christians or the Jews, one of the two parties has to be wrong.

Let us consider briefly the alternatives which this dilemma presents. In doing so, we shall seek to bring out what almost everybody senses, feels, and in some degree knows, but which few ever take pains to render fully explicit. We shall do so because psychological rivers and rocks create perils which prevent objective consideration of Chiliasm.

We shall assume, in turn, the truth of the two alternative views of Jesus, noticing some implications of each view as we do so. To start, let us assume that Jesus of Nazareth is actually not the true Messiah. We are merely assuming this for the present moment. Now if you assert that He is the true Messiah, when He really is not, then you have plainly made some serious mistakes. For you have offended against true religion. You have accorded recognition to an impostor. You have upheld His false claims. Moreover, it may even be contended that you have blasphemed the true Messiah (who is yet to come) and His God. Your blasphemy, to be sure, is only against a Messiah who has not yet appeared; that is, against one who has not permitted Himself to be identified by you and confronted by you in actual blasphemy. However, even though your blasphemy is indirect, merely implied, and not actualized, you nevertheless do stand engaged and plighted to deny the truth whenever it is discovered and stated; that is, whenever the true Messiah does appear, make His claims, and show His credentials. For you have taken steps which have committed you to falsehood. For the truth, when known and fully explicated, will contradict the false claims of the false Messiah you have accepted and whose claims you are currently upholding.

The consequences, the implications, we have just pointed out would be applicable to all Christians, past,

present, and future, if the assumption we have temporarily adopted were true. And therefore, on that assumption, it would seem to be thoroughly reasonable for everybody who sincerely believed the Christian position to be wrong to level charges against believers and put blame on them. It would seem natural for them to do so, and it would seem as if we should expect them to do it. Of course, such charges and blame would need careful defining, stating, and weighing. But it is also desirable, after the charges have been suitably defined, and after due care has been taken not to exaggerate their legitimate import, to make careful inquiry. It ought to be asked:

Who has a right to level the charges, such as they are, and to hand out the blame? Now it is absolutely certain that the charges and blame might come with very good grace from a party or parties who had never countenanced false prophets, who had never rejected true ones, who were known never to have been deceived by false Messiahs or taken in either by them or by their equivalents. And it is equally certain that they would come with ill grace indeed from any party that was famous for rejecting and killing true prophets, for according recognition to false ones, and that had frequently been taken in by self-appointed and self-accredited false Christs, and had suffered horribly as a result. Even so, it is more a question of strict justice than it is one of good grace or ill grace. It is not so much the common kind of case which calls for application of the rule of common prudence that pots should be modest when they feel like calling errant kettles black. It is much more the kind of case that comes under the ancient legal constitutions, which have declared:

He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. Of course, these remarks have an obvious application to the Jews. But they also have wider applications to all who ever embraced false religions and vain philosophies. Justice involves matters of a right to level charges and hand out blame. And thus, if the first assumption were true, and if charges could be leveled and blame handed out, it does not follow that it would be reasonable, natural, or just that they should. Keeping these things in mind, let us go on to consider the second of the two alternatives.

Our assignment now is to make the other assumption, and note its implications. We are to reverse the previous assumption. This time we are to suppose that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah. Once again we are merely making this assumption for the present moment, in order that we may see what would be involved in it, if it were true in fact. What about this?

Now, then, if you assert that Jesus is not the true Messiah, when He really is, then you have made some grave mistakes. In fact, in this case, which we are now considering, you have made far, far greater mistakes than would have been made by any person who had believed in an impostor, when the true Messiah had not as yet appeared or been advertised. For in the case created by the assumption we are at present considering something new is found. Here is something decisive which was not present at all in the case previously described. In your denial, this time, you are fighting against the true, living, really existent God and against His manifested Christ. In this case you have stood face to face with the true Messiah actually come. You have seen His credentials. In the full light of His manifested character and known tokens you have failed to recognize or refused to acknowledge Him. And this kind of mistake in which you are involved on our present assumption is quite different in its magnitude from the sort of error involved in the Christian's position as it would have to be understood in the light of the assumption which governed in the case that was considered previously. On our present assumption this is the kind of

mistake that the Jewish position involves. But it is also the kind of mistake that other positions involve their adherents in; namely, the Mohammedan position, the positions of certain heresies, the positions of knowledgeable heathens, and, above all, the position of apostatized former Christians. Billions would be equally involved in this great error, if our present assumption were indeed true.

We do not wish to deal here with any of these wider applications. But this is not because we think them unimportant or desire to pass over them. It is merely because our present interest is narrower, and is confined to discovering Jewish and Christian prejudices and noticing how they affect Jewish and Christian interpretations of the Biblical passages that contain Chiliastic ideas or may be connected with them. And therefore we will now proceed to point out what some of the more obvious implications are, if the unbeliever's position is assumed to be an error, and also what the real nature of such an error would be, and what its magnitude is. We shall be doing all of this with a view to showing what a prolific source of prejudices such a position is almost certain to become, if it is erroneous.

If it be assumed, as we are momentarily assuming, that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, that He has indeed come, and that you have rejected Him, two conclusions are implied. The first, which has already been noticed, is that you have taken a step in which you are actually at war with God and against His Christ. And the second is that you have done so out of deference to some error or other which you were persuaded to think true.

Moreover, if you have embraced error and acknowledged its claims, then it is surely reasonable to suppose that you have done so either for invalid reasons, or from ill-grounded motives, or both. For you have reasons and you have motives. And one way or another they have landed you in error. Therefore in the nature of the case you must have had bad reasons, ill motives, or both. For otherwise you would not have been landed in error. And thus, such kinds of fault, and the proper kinds and degrees of guilt attendant thereon, are necessarily implied. The degree of guilt will depend upon the perspicuity and strength of the reasons you knew which favored the true Messiah's claims, but which you have set aside erroneously, compared with the relative strength or weakness, clarity or obfuscation, of the reasons you have preferred above them.

Or, look at it in another light. You have rejected the true Messiah and His claims. It would follow that you must have done so out of favor to some other claimant or potential claimant—out of favor to an as yet unseen Messiah, who has not yet appeared, and is not yet fully or sharply defined in many of his characteristics or credentials. He exists at present, in fact, only in your own head. He is at present a nonentity, and when he does appear, if he ever does, he will be a nobody. Worse still, he will be an impostor—the impostor—a false Messiah, an antichrist. These features are all contained implicitly in the situation as defined. And sooner or later, when you get your eyes opened, you will be forced to acknowledge these concomitants of your mistake.

Furthermore, at this particular move on the chessboard, you, or the Jew, or any other who rejects the true Messiah, have forced yourself into a new position. For now, having repudiated something as false and evil, you stand obligated to define what you consider true and good, and to show that it possesses, in comparison with what you have rejected, credentials of truth and characters of good that render it plainly superior to the character, teachings, and works of the true Messiah. If you succeed in this, if the Jew succeeds in this, good! But if you fail of success, if he fails, then your position and his is that of which the Lord spoke by the mouth of His prophet:

Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith Jehovah. For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:12f.)

Nor is this all, though surely it is more than enough to dismay the soberer sort of spirits. In the act of deciding the question you have faced there exists an interesting possibility. Ex hypothesi you stood face to face with the true Messiah, heard His claims, evaluated His credentials, and then you ended by rejecting Him. It certainly was possible that, in doing this, you had at first recognized Him, and had acknowledged the validity of His claims, but were determined not to accept His claims, and then had proceeded to harden your heart, and had retracted the recognition which your honest mind, in its first spontaneous action, had originally freely accorded Him. It is possible, surely, that an impenitent heart in you, in deliberately overruling your honest mind's first verdict, has dishonestly withheld recognition of the true Messiah, and that you have proceeded to contrive many plausible, specious, and clever arguments, all of which were indeed lies, in an attempt to justify yourself. We speak of this only as a possibility. We are only desirous to point out that this is a kind of thought you will not be able to exorcize from your mind. It will never go away if your motives were not of the purest sincerity. It will keep on coming back.

Moreover, the kind of thought we have just described, if it does keep on returning to mind, will be very likely to produce a severely aggravated sense of guilt. This will be due to several particular circumstances. For the question you have decided was handled by you in a concrete situation. If the circumstances in that situation were of one kind, they might have rendered it most difficult for you to decide for or against the true Messiah. They might have made any decision either pro or contra highly uncertain. But on the other hand the attendant circumstances may have been such that it was relatively easy for you to decide correctly. For example, if the alleged Messiah had done evil deeds, or if He had given immoral instructions, then the attendant circumstances of that kind would disprove His claims. They would make it easy for you to decide against Him, and to do so unhesitatingly with the clearest conscience. And similarly, though in an opposite manner, if one who claimed to be the Messiah had done mighty works greater than those anybody had ever before performed, then such deeds might render it very easy for men to recognize that He was indeed the true Christ. Or the purity of His religion, or the correctness of His verdicts on ethical questions, or the known fact that a great prophet had identified Him and had introduced Him, etc., might likewise have power to produce the same effect. Such circumstances as these, if present, would render it easy for men to identify a true Messiah, and would even go very far towards proving His claims. Thus, in different situations, depending in each case upon the particular concrete circumstances, it would be more or less easy to decide the momentous question correctly, either pro or contra.

Now, then, consider this case. If it is quite easy to decide a question, if it is mere child's play to come up with the right answer to it, and you have failed to do so, what conclusion must follow? Will not an imputation of immense stupidity and incompetence lie against you, or any party which had been mistaken, when it was so easy to be correct? The liability to such an imputation is a thing that is inherent in the situation as it was defined and delineated above. And therefore you cannot avoid thinking of a frightening possibility that such an imputation may apply to you. For as long as the Gospels are in circulation, the character, teachings, and deeds of Jesus, as recorded in them, will be known, as well as the auspices under which He was identified and His divine rank as the officially designated Christ was

announced. And they will always raise a good question. They cannot help causing men to ask:

If these things be so, do they indeed prove nothing? Are they not, if true, and especially the miracles, credentials which would make Jesus' divine commission practically undeniable?

The possibilities just described are very real. The thought of them will enter the head of any rational adult who has acquired a modicum of subtlety and sophistication. And if he has any self-knowledge, even a modest awareness of the complexity of his thoughts and his power to hide his real reasons and his real motives from others and—alas!—even from himself, then he will be haunted by the thought of the possibilities we have described; that is, if he has rejected the claims of Jesus of Nazareth.

THE TWO ERRORS COMPARED

It is clear by now, we think, that the two alternatives we started with, whose implications we have been considering, are by no means twin peas in a pod. A small feature, so minor that it easily went unnoticed, has made a great difference. It has radically differentiated the two cases.

In the first case the Christian's position was wrong. Ex hypothesi he had accepted an impostor. However, the true Messiah had not appeared, made His claims, or shown His credentials. Hence, the Christian view, if it is wrong, as we were then and are now supposing, is an offense against what is presumably a correct, a more enlightened opinion as to what Messiah will probably prove to be like when He shall have been manifested in His actual future appearance. The Christian "error" consisted in a failure to detect and reject an impostor, a failure which might be inexcusable under some circumstances, but highly excusable in others. But in any case, since Messiah had not appeared, made His claims or shown His credentials, the Christian error was not an offense against the true Messiah as present in person in the world and manifestly disclosed. Nor was it an offense against God as undoubtedly revealed in Messiah's august person, words, and deeds. Such an offense does not even properly come into question in the first case in which we have assumed the Christian position to be in fact erroneous, although it is of the essence in the second case where we have supposed the Jewish view to be in error. Here, however, the Christian, in the supposed case, had not rejected Messiah directly, knowingly, or in person, but merely by implication. At most, we may say that he had severely handicapped himself through committing himself to errors.

In the second case the Jew's position was wrong. He may or may not have accepted an actual impostor in the person of some false Messiah. In order to simplify the questions at issue, we have deliberately left this particular feature out of our reckoning. But ex hypothesi he has seen and rejected the true Messiah. The Light has shined. He has seen it and has rejected it. And therefore, if only it be granted that the assumption we have temporarily posited is true, the following words describe the case aptly enough:

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no excuse for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. (John 15:22f.)

And such is the kind of mistake that is implied in the second case, if its assumption be granted true, but is not implied in the first. Its magnitude is so very great, that it is impossible to conceive of any more woeful error into which men or angels—for they are included—may fall. Men are rendered sleepless at night by the thought of dreadful blunders they might have made or may be committing. Or, if they sleep, their dreams and nightmares appall them with thoughts of embarrassing episodes involving them in disgrace and confusion of face. However, none of these terrors that keep men awake at night can be compared with the kind and magnitude of such a blunder as deciding wrong involves, if Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah.

Furthermore, if rejecting Him is a mistake, it is one that reflects with special disgrace upon Jews who make it. For more than a thousand years before He appeared Israel's prophets had begun to tell of "the Coming One." They had given many descriptions and clues. These had enabled numbers of Jews and hosts of Gentiles to recognize Him when He had appeared. Why then had the great mass of Jews, and their religious leaders, failed to see what so many others, who were less well instructed, supposedly, had been able to see? And moreover, if we consider the fact that almost all Jews have ever since been

continuing on for more than nineteen hundred years in the same failure to see, and that there are even today no visible signs that any change in their position may be in the offing, then, on the assumption that it was indeed a mistake, we must be astounded. He who made it has missed the boat, and the only one that it was important for him to catch. What a blunder! They have been at war with Jehovah, and Jehovah's Christ, and truth, too, for two thousand years a-running. Who ever saw any error which was the like of this, either for its greatness, or in its long continuance, or so unjustifiable? Who?

Keeping in mind at all times that these thoughts have only been put forth here as assumptions, it is still true, nevertheless, that in connection with certain particular circumstances, in certain concrete situations, they are necessary implications. That is, they are thoughts and ideas which rational beings cannot avoid conceiving of and thinking. They only render explicit certain possibilities which men either know or suspect are real threats to them personally. For they know that they are personally implicated in real situations in which such obvious possibilities might well turn out to be the woeful actualities. And therefore, in both cases, indeed, but above all in the second, where the error, if it be one, would be colossal and utterly tragic, the issues are frightening to contemplate. One is face to face with God Himself, face to face with eternal truth, and is forced to choose which side he is going to take in each of these confrontations. Even to entertain seriously the idea that one is deciding questions of this sort is a mind-shaking experience. How much more will it shatter anyone's mind to think seriously that he may have decided questions of this magnitude wrongly! As applied to somebody else, it is easy to think of the responsibility involved, the guilt incurred, and the punishment deserved in the case of such a mistake. But as applied to himself it is almost impossible for anyone to reckon seriously with the thought that he may have blundered so egregiously.

A COSMIC ALTERNATIVE?

Let us consider the matter somewhat further. Who are implicated in the error, if it be one? It is not the Jews alone who are affected, but, along with them, all apostatized Christians, all knowledgeable Moslems and heathens, very many heretics, as well as the Devil and his not insignificant entourage! When this multitude of the implicated parties is remembered, then we have to regard the situation with trembling. For they used to say in Alexandria that it was “Athanasius against the world.” That was an awe-inspiring confrontation. But here it is two (*i. e.*, Jehovah and His Christ) against the billions, against innumerable hosts of men and angels. They are at war. In this war the foes of God and of His Messiah are rational creatures. And therefore, if they are to be defeated and hung, then it would certainly seem right that some logical gallows ought to be prepared and used for the executions.

It is absolutely certain that the dilemma we are considering has such an inherent potential force and such a wide possible application to all men and angels—to all rational creatures without exception—that it is admirably fitted to do the work. That is, it enables two or three on one side—standing alone, if that were necessary—to maintain their rightful position against all opponents. It is a rational instrument, a logical gallows fitted to do execution upon all the enemies of God.

Note well, then, this key feature, namely, the adaptedness of this alternative to serve the cosmical purposes of Jehovah. For if it were true that this particular individual, Jesus of Nazareth, was the true Messiah, then such a situation as we are contemplating may well prove to be the prime stroke of divine wisdom. It may turn out that the All-Wise—blessed be He!—has designed it that the truth should be of this particular sort, and has engineered its presentation in this particular way, because He had seen that in this way He had the arrangement that was best adapted to put all rational creatures to the test. For it implicates them in a situation in which their greatest interest is at stake, and in which they are forced to decide. They must take sides. They cannot not choose. In choosing they are required to exercise their moral and rational judgments. The situation thus creates an arena. In it they are to use their mental equipment. At the same time the situation is such that its very design will insure that any who judge amiss will have been found to have sinned in the highest degree, and to have been indefensible in their sinning. For they would have no excuse for their sin, even as it is written:

But now they have no excuse for their sin. (John 15:22)

For let the reader only ask himself a question:

Is it reasonable to suppose that a situation of this sort may occur by chance?

Is it not necessary to suppose that, being what it is, if it does occur, then it would have to be something that had been invented, contrived, and then staged in a faultless manner under controlled conditions amid appropriate circumstances that had been designed to meet the specifications?

For otherwise the facts would not have been of the proper character, nor would they have been established in a sufficiently solid and irrefragable way, in order that the dilemma might be applicable to all, inescapable, and of such power to leave all who erred without any excuse for their mistake. Only so would the logical ax have its power to do annihilating executions such as it performs upon an indefensible and inexcusable opposition.

It is quite possible, therefore, that we may here be confronted with a dilemma which is a divine trap and which was created on purpose, in order to silence all opponents of God for all eternity by reducing them to a condition of impotence in irrationality. Their cause, devoid of any reasons that can be alleged in its favor, would have to resort to force as its ultima ratio. But if it had no reserve of force, then it would be able to do no more than assume a posture of sullen, silent, and, we may add, stupid rebellion.

If you believe God did this, you will say that it is good. If you think He may have done it, you will concede that it would be a good strategy. If you think He did not do it, then you will probably wonder why He did not think of it and do it.

THE SAFE SIDE AND THE UNSAFE

If you are going to be in error, then this dilemma has a relatively safe side and a most unsafe side. If Christians are in error, they are on the safer side, and the implications and guilt of their error are not overly upsetting. If others are in error, they are on the dangerous side, and the implications and guilt of their error are horrifying. Even if they are merely felt or sensed vaguely, they are already frightening. If they are rendered fully explicit and fully understood, they are appalling. If anybody on this unsafe side feels the slightest uncertainty about the facts he holds to be true, then he will perceive that all the implications we have been explicating may apply to his own case. All the horrifying, nightmarish fears attendant thereon, may descend at any time, and repeatedly, like an avalanche upon his defenseless heart. The same will be true if he feels unsure of his own judgment, doubting the validity of his reasons or their applicableness. And if he at any point questions his own sincerity or doubts the integrity of his motives, the same result will follow. His spirit will be on a psychological rack. Over a question of most momentous import he has a divided heart. He is double-minded. He is *δψυχος*. He will be afraid of being wrong. He will be afraid of being shown to be wrong, and of being left in disgrace as a result of his being discredited. Such is the situation. These are the psychological hazards. They militate against dispassionate and objective consideration of Chiliasm. All these considerations have great power to upset and unsettle Jewish minds. And it has also been reliably reported that there is someone who on at least one occasion felt impelled to accost a complete stranger, and to start up a conversation with Him by saying:

If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down.

Whoever he was, we may certainly gather that these same considerations must have had power to make him nervous. For otherwise what could ever have made him talk in that way?

Through fear of possibly being in the wrong all who are the least bit uncertain of their facts, their reasonings, or their motives will usually be impelled to plead self-justifications. And although such pleading can be done fairly, it is usually self-partial and prejudiced. Disagreements need not imply the existence of self-partiality or prejudice, of course. But nevertheless in a situation of the kind we are considering, and amid the storms and stresses of the overt clashes that develop from time to time, it is quite difficult for either side to achieve real objectivity in interpreting many Scripture passages.

RIVALS AND RIVALRIES

There are still worse psychological perils that those just noticed, however. For the Synagogue envies the Church, and the Church envies the Synagogue. Why? It is because they have ideas of rôles they think they are destined to play in God's plan. They have images of themselves they are trying to create and preserve in the public mind. Herein is the fertile source of emulation, rivalries, and envy. Now envy is the great breeder of self-partiality and of prejudices against rivals. Permit us to elucidate these statements by showing several ways in which their self-images cause both the Synagogue and the Church to abominate Chiliastic doctrines.

THE CHURCH AND HER SELF-IMAGE

Let us first consider the Church and the image she has of herself, the role she sees herself as playing, or destined to play. She has liked to think of herself as a divine agent, as God's instrument, appointed and sent to save the world by converting it. Nor was this enough, but she must needs think of herself as triumphing over the world and putting down its evils by means of her spiritual superiority. Nor is this sufficient, but she must envisage herself as reordering human society from top to bottom in ways that eliminate all injustices, feed all the hungry, etc. The mind of the Church can be ascertained by making a test. Put forward a suggestion that the visible Church may be destined to dwindle in numbers and influence, until she will seem very insignificant and her power to influence the world will become very small, or even nil. Suggest that her precious and abiding spiritual excellence resides in a small, invisible remnant. Suggest that she will finally end up as a tiny remnant amid a vast apostasy. Suggest that the remnant will be disclosed when her Lord returns to Earth, and they will then be transformed and given spiritual resurrection bodies. Suggest that when He then triumphs they will reign with Him. If you do this, you will find that these suggestions are not welcome. Why are they not acceptable? It is because a Church of the kind depicted in your suggestions cuts too poor a figure. Its image is almost despicable. It is not flattering enough to men's egos. It gives them too little glory, too late in the day, and not accompanied, even then, by enough flesh-gratifying concomitants. And therefore it seems hardly worth having and too unreal for serious consideration.

If you point out that your suggestions appear to get some authority and plausibility from the New Testament; if, on such grounds, you urge churchmen not to reject them, it will not help or avail. They are likely to tell you—*ignoramus!*—that the New Testament gets its authority from the imprimatur of the Church. They will tell you that the Bible must never be interpreted in ways that derogate from the prestige and lessen the power of its churchly sponsor and defender. And some churchmen even go so far as to assert that part of the New Testament is, while part is not, the Word of God, and that it is their office to decide which is which. Such are the facts of life. What is the interpretation of them?

The plain truth would seem to be that as a rule churchmen have bigger ideas of themselves and their importance, which require them to hold bigger ideas of the Church and her importance. They assume that the entire world is going to be converted, or to be saved with or without conversion. This assumption may be questioned, but they do not question it. They assume that they have been commissioned to do the saving. This assumption, also, is most questionable. They assume that evil will be defeated and abolished. Such an assumption is fully justified, but they think this is to be done by themselves. They think they are able to do it. They think that they will speak, men will listen and be persuaded, and will accept their advice. They think a spiritual excellence of theirs will procure a triumph over evil without any need for employing force or using coercions. Such assumptions are unwarranted indeed, and utterly unrealistic. They are, really, fatuous dreams of mad egotists, even though nobody seems to think of them as such, or to say out loud that they are. And if it be asked where the Messiah fits into the picture, the answer is that He will appear at the right moment, in order to say, "Thank you," to offer His congratulations, and to award pay and distribute prizes and crowns to the winners.

THE SYNAGOGUE AND ITS SELF-IMAGE

The Synagogue also may well be observed. It has liked to think of itself in a somewhat similar way. What image does it have of itself? What rôle does it see itself as playing, or as destined to play?

First of all, it thinks it has a monopoly on God. It also thinks it has a monopoly of religious knowledge. For example, a question is raised:

Whether Orthodox Jews should participate in ecumenical dialogues with Christians?

The answer is given:

Such discussions are permissible as long as they are restricted to social and ethical issues, but do not get into the realm of religious belief.

The Synagogue envisions itself as the teacher of the world, the preceptor of the Gentiles. Indeed, it thinks of itself in this office or capacity as being a guide of the blind, a light of those who walk in darkness, an instructor or corrector of the foolish, and a teacher of babes. It assumes this remarkable posture because it thinks of its Law (the Torah) as providing the form of knowledge and of the truth. It regards its Law as providing the definitions of righteousness. And therefore, since the Synagogue alone has these advantages, it follows that it alone is wise and understanding *vis-à-vis* the rest of mankind.

Sad to tell, the Synagogue regards itself as wiser than all its teachers. Thus, if Moses needs an editor to bring his Law up to date, the Synagogue will provide the talent needed to do it. Or, if Moses is seeking someone who can rewrite his Law in ways that will render it fully consistent with the tradition of neo-Kantianism, there is no problem. The requisite skill exists in the Synagogue. Or, if Aristotle has to be corrected, the Synagogue has worthy teachers who are fully equipped to contradict the law of contradiction and to deny the principle of the excluded middle.

The spirit of one age leads men to feel confident that there must be answers to all questions. If men can create problems, they must be able to solve them. If men can ask questions, they must be able to answer them. So they reason. At such times the Synagogue announces that it has on tap any needed answers. It is happy to inform the world that its teachers stand by in readiness to define and pronounce them. But on the other hand, if the spirit of another age inclines men to believe that no answers exist to be discovered, defined, pronounced, or known, then the special needs of that day will be met. For the Synagogue has teachers who will affirm that most questions are unsolvable. Or, if the men of any special age feel inclined to concede that solutions of questions may indeed exist, but that men lack power to know them, then the task is somewhat different. Teachers have to be found who can define the antinomies and contradictions. Then each has to be carefully embalmed and buried in some suitable urn or cemetery plot. Where may that be? In God, for He shall be the graveyard where all contradictions end their days, and enjoy their eternal life. For He is the great "coincidence of opposites"—nothing less! In Him they are fully reconciled. You might wish to ask how we know that they do not remain for ever unreconciled in Him. But do not indulge your wish. Do not ask. The answer will be a rebuke. You will be told:

O ye of little faith!

For in such times men are in a bad mood. They are hell-bent on hailing superlative nonsense as excellent metaphysics.

e' hanno perduto il ben dello intelletto.

They have lost the good of the intellect. In their eyes mere assertion has more force than all reasons. It is wiser on your part if you do not contradict them. Why should you waste your breath? If the versatile Synagogue is equal to all occasions, be thankful. Do not raise needless questions.

There are many species of infatuation, yet the collectors of specimens will find it hard to come up with any to compare with this pedagogical variety. In fact, it is exceeding mad. These teachers would seem to be even wiser than the Almighty. They say of Him that He spends His days studying the Torah and His nights studying the sic tractates of their Mishnah. Moreover, when He has a question He cannot answer, He asks a Rabbi, who then gives a perfect answer that sets His mind at rest.

What about this particular image? We will be commenting on it a good deal in a few minutes. But at this moment we would like to bring out only one feature, namely, the direct, and we may even say, violent clash between it and the claims made by Jesus of Nazareth in the following statements. We quote:

All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knows the Son, except the Father; neither does any know the Father, except the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son wishes to reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:27f.)

But all their works they do for to be seen of men: for they love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, Rabbi. But don't you be called Rabbi: for one, a single individual, is your teacher (= ὁ διδάσκαλος), and all ye are brothers. And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters (= καθηγηταί): for one, a single individual, is your master (= καθηγητής), even the Christ. (Matthew 23:5ff.)

The first quotation directly contradicts the Synagogue's claim that it has a monopoly on God and of religious knowledge. It does concede however that there is such a monopoly in existence elsewhere, namely, in the person of the Son of God in the first instance, and then, secondly, in those to whom He wishes to give a share therein. There can be no doubt about it. Jesus of Nazareth claimed for Himself the monopoly the Synagogue has bespoken for itself.

The Lord's statement in the second quotation directly challenges the Synagogue's teachers. But how? In what ways, and to what extent? Formally considered, what He gave was a prohibition addressed to His own followers, a direction that would determine what their practice should be. The prohibition deprives them of the right to use three honorific titles in any wide or general applications, viz., the titles of "Rabbi," "father," and "teacher." But of course the occasion which led Jesus to utter it makes it clear that He had in full view the use of those titles by the Synagogue's teachers and in applications to them, and the ill effects that resulted from the usages involved. And nobody has ever expressed any doubt but that when the big gun blasted away on that day it was aimed by Him at the Synagogue's teachers and that it hit the mark. But how? For it needs narrower defining. For they functioned as teachers, as His followers also would function as teachers. And they had authority and were to be obeyed, as His appointees would

also have authority, and would be to be obeyed. For it is written:

The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat: all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe.

What is it then? It is a question about the use of three titles, namely, "Rabbi," "father," and "teacher." As to the second of them, the title "father," Jesus asserts that it has and can have only one valid application, namely, in referring to or in addressing God the Father who is in Heaven. As applied to any other persons whatsoever, it is invalid. Therefore His followers must not apply it to other men, and they must decline to accept it from others, who may want to use it in order to honor them, when they address them, or refer to them. As to the first and third of the three titles, Jesus asserts that they belong rightfully to a single individual as His exclusive right. In the case of the third title He explicitly states who that individual is, namely, the one who rightfully holds the office of Jehovah's Messiah, that is, Himself. In the case of the first, His identification of the appropriate individual is of course the same, even though it is not explicitly stated in the saying we quoted. Other statements and deeds of Jesus make it certain. The effect of this is to establish a rabbinate. It consists of a single Rabbi, namely, Messiah Himself. It is valid to call Him "Rabbi," and correct usage to do it. It is also valid to call Him "teacher," and correct usage. There can be no doubt about it. Jesus claimed that He personally displaces and replaces the rabbinate. He preempted for Himself a higher authority than any Synagogue, Church, or other establishment may rightfully claim. Men may teach under Him, but they may not take His office or His title or that degree of authority which belongs to His office. The same is true in the churches. Men may teach and exercise authority under Him, but they may not take His offices or His titles, or claim that degree of authority which belongs to them. Nor may they permit His titles to be bestowed either on themselves or on others. Now whatever may be the right or wrong of this, the head-on collision is unmistakable, and that is all we are trying to establish at this moment. The Synagogue has one mind. Jesus of Nazareth was of another mind.

The mind of the Synagogue can be ascertained by making a test. Put forward a suggestion that the innumerable mass of Israelis may be rejected or by-passed, while a tiny remnant, a true Israel, a people circumcised in heart and ears, will be left. This remnant will be visible to God, exceedingly precious in His eyes, and will have the divine approval. It will receive the blessing of the fathers. It will receive the fulfillments of the promises—the hope. Assert that the true Jew is he who is in heart a Jew, in whose heart is no guile, and that only such a Jew is an Israelite indeed. Affirm that only in such an individual is to be found the true spiritual essence of Judaism, which alone imparts validity to all the boasts and vaunted pretensions of the Synagogue; that is, to whatever extent they may be valid. Suggest the thought that it may even prove to be the case in the final outcome that a little band of renegade Jews who have apostatized to Christianity were right in the judgment in which they acknowledged Jesus of Nazareth to be the true Messiah. Could it be, you will ask them, that so many distinguished teachers, all of them the sons of distinguished teachers, may turn out to have been in error? Could it be, you will ask, that a despised minority, who were excommunicated by the establishment, and were cursed out as traitors and betrayers, who had denied the positions those revered teachers had affirmed to be the surest, and who had ever affirmed as central what they had all denied, may turn out to have been in the right? Might it not be possible that such a despised remnant in Judaism may have been right and the main stream in the synagogues wrong? Propound these merely as questions to be thought about and answered in some suitable way. Do not ask that they be answered in any particular way. Then step back and notice two things carefully. First, count the number of those who express gratitude to you for having given them something important to think about. Secondly, count the number of those who offer an answer, that is, an

answer that deals with the issues. You will certainly get rebukes that do not deal with the issues. If you point out that the ideas you suggested appear to have some basis in the Old Testament, which they recognize; if you say that your thoughts seemed to get some possibility, or even plausibility, and perhaps even authority therefrom, you will receive an answer. That is for sure. But it will be a rebuke and a putdown. The rabbis may inform you that they alone are the qualified and fully authorized interpreters of what the Old Testament says or suggests. They sit on Moses' seat, whereas you people who do not know the Law are accursed. Or, they may tell you that they are amazed to find you turning the clock back to the times of the darkness of the uncouth Middle Ages, when arrogant Christians challenged rabbis to debate, and demanded answers to rude questions that could only have been asked by those who were ignorant of philosophy and history, and were totally devoid of civilized graces and culture to boot. Or, they may accuse you of being aware that they please God, and may assert that that is the reason you have envied them and are persecuting them. Or, they may simply decline to discuss religious beliefs, on the ground that it is not appropriate. But of real answers there will be few, if any, and probably none. Such are the facts of life. How are we to interpret them?

The truth obviously is that the rabbis have bigger ideas about themselves and about the importance of their institution, the Synagogue, than your suggestions would permit them to continue to hold and to enjoy comfortably. If their big ideas are compared with the big ideas of churchmen that were previously noticed by us, there is a great similarity. But there is also quite a difference. For example, you might have been inclined to think that the Synagogue, in its vision of future events, would confidently expect that the Gentiles would welcome and listen to their God-sent pedagogue and mentor. You might have thought the Synagogue would think of itself as educating and elevating the Gentiles. Such does not seem to be the case, however. At least not usually. Rather, it is their expectation that when Messiah comes He will execute a great putdown. He will make the excellence of the teacher plain in the sight of all. He will also exhibit clearly the badness of the pupils, whom He will soundly thrash. Thereafter, a suitably vindicated Israel will be the head in the world, while a fitly castigated mass of Gentiles will be the tail. The Synagogue will be the head of the head, and the head of the Synagogue will be the rabbinate. The course of the world will then go well, and all will live happily ever after.

If you ask where the Messiah fits into the picture, the answer to your question has just been given. If you ask why the Synagogue does not envision a process, under His auspices, in which it serves as God's instrument to educate the Gentiles and elevate them into the enlightenment and glorious liberty of the children of God, it is not hard to find an answer. An obvious thought comes to mind. What if the pupil should become as his teacher? There would no longer be any difference between them. He would no longer need his old teacher, who then would have no further function to perform. Once the child is born all need for the midwife is at an end—she is superfluous. Now in life there are many cases of this kind, cases in which people put forward a claim to superiority, pinning their claim on an intellectual headstart which they happen to have enjoyed. They have a goodly status in the world, based upon their possession of certain understandings and certain items of knowledge. And such status may entail remunerations, or be the gateway to remunerative employments. A man who is in such a position will be conscious of the possibility that others who are now behind him in knowledge and understandings may overtake him. Not only so, but they may go on to outstrip him and supplant him. He knows that the foundation on which his status with its advantages now rests may thus be shot out from under him. And if he earns his livelihood by giving instruction to disciples, they may no longer come to him. And thus, along with his loss of status, may go a loss of gainful employment.

Consider a secular example. If pupil performance is substandard in our schools, we are eligible to obtain funds from the federal government. If we improve their performance so much that we bring it up to standard levels, we will lose our right to obtain these funds. We educators, our school boards, and our communities have to make a choice. Do we wish to do this? Do we want to achieve this particular quantity of improvement to our own disadvantage? Shall we purchase excellence, nay, rather, shall we purchase a mere stinking mediocrity, at the price of great impoverishment? Do we want our students to make such a decently mediocre, standard performance that their performance will become the cause of our losing such a good source of funds? Do we want that?

A similar question arises here. Is it in the Synagogue's interest, if that interest be narrowly conceived in terms of preserving its status and functions, to secure the education and permanent elevation of the Gentiles? Would not their elevation bring to an end her superiority in position over them? The gap would be wiped out. Her former excellence would now be the common property of all. In the general excellence she would be really, indeed, no less than she was before, but all her superiority relative to others would be gone. However, in contrast to such a state of things, if the Messiah were merely to execute a putdown of the pupils, then her superiority relative to the others would abide unchanged. She asks herself, therefore, will not a simple putdown be quite satisfactory? For as the saying goes: "That will teach them a good lesson!" It will also preserve the learned caste in its integrity, that is, with no loss of status and no loss of face. Moreover, it will afford a peculiarly great satisfaction. For it satisfies the hungry soul of a pedagogical egotist very well, if only everybody else in the room shall be compelled to wear a dunce cap. If you say that this view is ungenerous, our reply is as follows. We are dealing with human nature, which is very sinful and weak. Men know when they have a good thing going for themselves. They easily apprehend how it might be "blown"—how others, or altered circumstances, or they themselves might "blow" it. They easily foresee possibilities of such eventualities, and are never slow to act, in order to forestall them. And therefore, if this be a fault of the Synagogue, then surely it is merely such a fault as it has in common with the churchmen, the educators, and the learned castes of all ages of the world, as well as in common with the guilds, the trades, the professions, and all governing classes.

CONFLICT: THREE TWO-WAY RIVALRIES

Let us consider the images. What about these images? First of all they bring the Church and Synagogue into conflict in one two-way rivalry. Be mindful now of the fact that Chiliastic doctrines have to do with events of the final ending. That final ending will bring to light which of these two rivals has won and which has lost. At that time it is not at all impossible that each of them may be found to have won on certain points, but to have lost on others. Moreover, if Messiah should prove to be the star performer on the great day, then He may turn out to be the great winner, and both the Church and Synagogue may lose at the points where they had boasted most of winning. Meanwhile, as long as the final outcome is in doubt, it is natural to suppose that both the Synagogue and the Church will each continue to claim a total win for itself and a total loss for the other. For if either were to moderate its claims in any important regard, a great loss of face would be quite certain to result. Experience justifies us in supposing that neither will abate its claims in the foreseeable future. And this means that neither is likely to welcome any Chiliastic doctrine that comes into collision with its claims and pretensions based on its image of itself.

Moreover, in the second place, these two images are of such a nature that each of them brings the party that holds it into two-way conflicts with the Messiah in person. For one of them creates a two-way rivalry between the Church and the Lord she awaits from Heaven, while the other pits the Synagogue and the Messiah it expects against each other as rivals. Can it be, you will ask, that the Church envies her Lord, or that the Synagogue envies its Messiah? Isn't that unthinkable? We must answer: "Yes, it can indeed be!" We must reply: "No, it is not at all unthinkable!" However, since ideas such as these will strike many as very novel, it will not be amiss if we show that these things are possible, and are probable, and are in fact so.

First, then, do not fail to notice that there is an opportunity for a tremendous rivalry to exist between the Synagogue and the Messiah it expects, as also between the Church and the Lord she awaits from heaven. Obviously, as you can see, there are three questions here. First, who has the brains? Second, who has the power? And lastly, who shall perform the glorious exploits and receive the credit for them? Who? The Synagogue, the Church, or the Messiah? Which is it? The Church will tend to answer these questions according to the image she has of herself, the Synagogue according to its image of itself, and the Messiah according to His of Himself. Obviously, neither the Synagogue nor the Church will be able rightly to take credit for what He will do for them. Both are conscious that if He does everything, they will deserve little or no credit. If He does everything, their entire claim to usefulness and fame may be impaired, or may fall. And we may be sure that these thoughts will be present in their minds and will influence their thinking when they interpret the Bible's prophecies of things to come. Such thoughts as these may well render them, as interpreters of the Scriptures, less than fully dispassionate and objective. They will be gravely tempted to play down the Messiah's role and to play up their own, to attribute as little as possible to His excellence and efficacy.

Secondly, do not fail to observe also that it is characteristic of the Scripture passages that are to be interpreted that they assign the great role to Messiah and make all other rôles played by others strictly subservient thereunder.

Consider, for example, the ministry of the fathers and of Moses. It was subservient to the realization of a purpose or purposes which none of them could attain unto by his own powers. Consider the ministry of

the prophets. It was subservient and preparatory to the realization of purposes which they could not achieve by their own power. Consider the ministry of the priests. That too was preparatory and subservient unto a purpose that all of them were powerless to attain through their own character or performances. Now if none of all these —patriarchs, prophets, or priests—was able to achieve these great purposes, who then was able? Only one, namely, the Christ.

Or consider the office of king and the ministry of the kings therein. Shall we say that it was subservient? Shall we not assert rather, that it was a direct trespass? It was a stepping on God's toes, an intrusion into His very own office, and a usurpation of His throne. For God was Himself King in Israel—the only rightful King! Had these kings of Israel and Judah any power to accomplish the high purposes to which the office of king and their ministry therein were subservient? Were not all of them poor substitutes for the real thing, that is, for the Coming One: that is, until He should come whose right alone it was to rule, until He should reign supreme and rule alone. And were not all their devices but sad makeshifts for what Messiah would do when He should come and do indeed what they could merely try to do, and trying, fail?

What of the whole ministry of the angels? Had they any power to accomplish the purposes to which their ministrations were subservient, and still are? No! But it, too, was subordinate to Him, and yet is! What of the whole ministry of the Apostles? The same is true of it.

Now if all these ministries, namely, of patriarchs, prophets, priests, kings, apostles, and angels, are subservient to purposes that none of them singly, nor all of them together, was able to attain unto; and if all of their ministries were and are subordinate to Him, the Messiah; then how is it with the ministries of Israel, or the Synagogue, and of the rabbinate? How does it stand with regard to the ministries of the Church and the prelates? Certainly, the Synagogue and the Church form no exception, nor should they. Their ministries are both subordinate under Him and subservient to the realization of purposes which neither of them can achieve by its own power, but which He has already achieved singlehanded or which He will achieve, when He comes in the glory of His Father with His holy angels. However, they have been led by their images of themselves to take too much upon themselves. Dissatisfied with their subordinate positions and subservient rôles, they used their imaginations. They wrote new parts for themselves, which they have been trying to play. But this they could not do without usurping Messiah's place and taking over His rôles to a great extent. And the question is this: how did it come to pass that the Synagogue and the Church lost the crucial sense of the glory of the Messiah, and were emboldened to abase Him who alone was able to exalt them? It came about in the following manner.

Jewish thinkers first put the Israeli nation into the place of the Kingdom of God, and this was essentially the same thing as replacing the Kingdom of God with the Synagogue. Similarly, Christian thinkers first put the Church as a whole into the place of the Kingdom of God. Then Jewish and Christian thinkers took a further step. The Jewish thinkers next put the Pharisaic leadership of the Synagogue, the rabbinate, into the place of the Synagogue. The Christian thinkers, similarly, next put the clergy into the place of the Church. Such steps in thinking are quite easy to take. It may be said that men gravitate and slide into these ways of looking at things. Surely, it is not hard to see what the result would be, or what it has been. When the first step was taken, the Kingdom of God and its true place were obscured. It was in fact thrust into the background by the corporate entities, Synagogue and Church. Its viewpoint was displaced by theirs. Naturally, therefore, it came about that Biblical interpretations were being made very generally in corporate interests, be those interests synagogical or ecclesiastical. And at times they were made at the behest of corporate prejudices. [Use Kaftan's statement concerning the uselessness of apocalyptic for the

purposes of a theology of the Kingdom of God.] Then too, when the second step had been taken, a further obscuration naturally ensued. The corporate bodies, in their turn, were in effect replaced by two classes. And then, naturally enough, Biblical interpretations began to be made in the interests of a class, be that class rabbinical or prelatical, and at times in deference to the prejudices of a class. As a result, not only was the place of the Kingdom of God obscured, but it was virtually abolished. For when men heard the words "the Kingdom of God," they imagined that nothing else could be meant or intended but only their Synagogue or their Church. After all, they asked, what other meaning could these words bear? This was particularly true of the Christians. For them "the Church" and "the Kingdom of God" were practically synonyms. For them "the Church age" and "the coming of the Kingdom" were synonymous expressions for one and the same thing. This was a trap of the Devil, and they tumbled into it without even thinking. It was easy for them to do so, because Messiah had already come. He had already accomplished what seemed as if it must be all, or nearly all, that was in God's plan for Him to do. Moreover, the Church had grown and had developed in ways that were very impressive, and which seemed to augur well for future expansion and ecumenical triumphs.

In reality, however, this development was a dreadful blunder and a revolution. It struck directly at the personal rights and prerogatives of God and of His Messiah. In that it eliminated their kingdoms, it took the reins out of both their hands. It assumed that virtually nothing was left to be done by them, whereas much was waiting to be done by their direct agency, and very much indeed. And thus instead of waiting eagerly for them to do the mighty works that were scheduled in the great plan, the Church with its image of itself tended to make them (= Jehovah and His Christ) figurehead presidents of an ecclesiastical establishment conducted on their behalf by the prelates. The Synagogue, for its part, in accord with its image of itself, awarded them dunce caps and appointed them to administer whippings on its behalf to the bad pupils.

A few examples will show that what we have said happened really did happen. A case in point is a belief which some Jews have held that only the Messiah will be capable of bringing Israel back to Palestine. And therefore, they reason, every other attempt to return thither, before He has come, will end in dismal failure. Why? Because Messiah must do it or it cannot be done! However, other Jews have strongly resisted and rejected the modest line of thought just described. They think far otherwise. They believe that the Israelis are fully capable of going home and establishing themselves in the glorious land without need for Messiah's wisdom to direct, or of His prowess to assist, and indeed without any need of any supernatural intervention whatever. The only miracle needed, according to them, is the "miracle" of what they are. They will take all the credit.

A second case is found in Jesus' parable of the husbandmen or tenant farmers. He spoke it during a confrontation with the religious leaders of the Synagogue. He aimed it at them. His thought which He gave expression to in it was as follows. God had sent His Son. The leaders of the Synagogue recognized the particular individual God had sent as being "the heir" of the establishment of which they then held possession, which they were managing, and the fruits of which they were enjoying. They at once saw two possibilities. They might let Him live, or they could kill Him. If they let Him live, He would inherit. He would take over what He rightfully owned and stood destined to inherit. In that event, they would be forced to relinquish their possession and management of the owner's vineyard, that is, the religious establishment. But if they killed Him, then He would not inherit and take possession. They will be able to retain possession and management of the establishment. How simple! What He gets, what He takes over, they will lose. What He doesn't get, what He loses, they will take over. How utterly clear!

They decide to kill Him, and do so. Did they perhaps determine by accident to kill Him, being unaware that He was who He was? No! They knew! It was precisely because He was who He was that He was a threat to them. If He were not who He was, namely, if He were not "the son," "the heir," "the Messiah," then He would not have been a threat to them. It is precisely because He was the heir, therefore, that He was an obstacle to them. For He constituted a standing threat to their takeover, namely, as one who had certain titles and rights that they lacked. And thus, as you will understand readily, it was because they knew who He was that they had decreed that He had to be rubbed out. For it was either that, or they stood to lose the dominant position and personal advantages which they had as members of their class. The motives, then, for the murder were: first, envy and hatred of the Messiah, whom they had identified and recognized; secondly, to try to insure, by eliminating Him, that He would not be able to take possession of what was rightfully His own; and thirdly, to try to insure that they would be able to continue in possession and management of the religious establishment. And the point of the parable was that their nefarious plan would be carried out, and would temporarily succeed, but only temporarily. For they would be brought to book for their murder, executed, and dispossessed of their booty in perpetuity. Such was the parable. We are to keep in mind that it was a story, and that we have up until now been doing no more than explaining what a story contains. We have been using a story as our "second case" in illustrating a point.

Our second case is of great interest, however, because it has turned out to be much more than a story. For it involves the teller of the story, who actually claimed the office and title of the Messiah. It was such a one—nobody less—who, in telling it aimed it at contemporaries who almost at once proceeded to sentence Him to death. For He was sentenced to death by the leaders of the Synagogue, and he was executed by the legally competent authority at their explicit and instant request. The parable, as it has turned out, has interesting features which correspond well with the characteristics and deeds of contemporaries at whom it was originally aimed.

[The hearers at whom Jesus aimed His parable were aware of several defects in their titles to manage the religious establishment. No doubt they sat on Moses' seat. Doubtless they were to be obeyed whether they practiced what they preached or not. Even so, the question of their right to occupy Moses' seat was quite a different matter. How did things stand? The Sadducees, as religious activities leaders, were not heavyweights. They were conscious of the fact that they stood at a great disadvantage in comparison with their competitors the Pharisees, whose piety and knowledge of the Scriptures were superior to theirs, and who had popular favor and support. That alone gave them an inferiority complex. But in addition, the Chief Priest was painfully aware that he knew and his cognation knew and everybody else also knew that he owed his office to the Romans rather than to Jehovah of Hosts. This situation naturally did not help to bolster up the Sadducees' morale. Besides, they understood well enough that it was largely through their activities and skill as usurping politicians that they controlled the Temple and its עֲבוֹרָה. This undermined their confidence in themselves, too. Now if things stood thus with the Sadducees, how did they stand with the Pharisees? Their solid accomplishments in piety and learning certainly gave the Rabbis a good deal of confidence. At the same time, however, they could not but know that they were not divinely called and designated occupants of divinely instituted offices. For what were they, really? They were only a learned confraternity. And as such, therefore, in the same way that the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis cannot claim to be considered a Church, and just as the World Council is not a Church, but only acts as if it were one, so their consociation of lettered colleagues could not claim to be considered the קהל ישראל (= εκκλησια). Far from it. But on the contrary, as they knew, it was mostly due to their educational imperialism that the Rabbis were able to exert influence and function as interim managers of the religious establishment. They had their managerial roles as a de facto thing

which they were free to enjoy as long as nobody who had a divinely conferred right to teach and to govern put in an appearance. Such thoughts as these will necessarily breed inferiority complexes in men's minds, yes, even in the minds of men who are conscious that they possess the highest qualifications, sincerest piety, and best of motives. How much more in others! What about this? The considerations we have adduced make it highly probable that Sadducees and Pharisees would be extremely sensitive to threats and to the presence of potential competitors, and would be quick to react—lethally.]

But that is not all. For it has also proved to be the case that the parable was prophetic. For ever since the parable's inventor was executed by His contemporaries at whom He had aimed it, it has been the case that any Jew who recognized His claim to be Messiah as valid was also in trouble with the Synagogue. For in doing so, that is, in recognizing that claim as good, he became *ipso facto* an anti-Jew. He was excommunicated from the Synagogue, and disinherited by the nation. That is, he lost his birthright. Two authorities acted to deprive him of it, the one civil and the other religious. And thus, from the time this parable was originally spoken, around 29 A. D., a series of excommunications commenced. It has continued on until the present day. In the latest decisions of the Supreme Court of Israel in Jerusalem and of rabbinic courts elsewhere it has been reconfirmed. Christian discipleship on the part of any Jew is not just a serious offense against Jewish "togetherness." It is viewed as an infection in the bloodstream, a foreign element, which the body has to reject and expel. For if it did not expel this specific element, then it would cease to exist as a body, at least so they say. Jewish citizenship, therefore, as it is understood in strict conformity with legal decisions of the highest civil and synagogical tribunals in Judaism, has two constitutive elements. One is birth from Jewish parents, or parent. The other is denial, either explicit or implied, that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah. Acceptance of Him as Messiah means automatic cancellation of a Jew's status as a birthright Jew, and of his rights as a Jewish citizen.

What about this? The only conclusion which we wish to draw is the following. A mere parable, if it stood alone, might seem unimpressive. Anybody might think that he was free to discount its teachings as shallow assertions. However, when its teachings have such a mass of concrete, corroborating exemplifications, which already have continued to appear throughout a period of almost two thousand years, from 29 A. D. to 1993, they should be able to make some impression even on those who wish to remain unimpressed. [See [Matthew 21:33-46](#). Note the same idea, essentially, in the Parable of the Pounds, [Luke 19:11-27](#). Verse 14: But his citizens hated him, and sent an ambassage after him, saying, "We do not want this person to be king over us." Verse 27: But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to be king over them, bring them here and slay them in my sight. And notice Pilate's understanding of the real issue between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. For he knew that for envy they had delivered him up. ([Matthew 27:18](#))]

A third case, or set of examples, may be seen in certain positions which various groups of Jews have been taking up in the most recent period. Some leading scholars have been confidently asserting that the nation, that is, Israel itself, is the Messiah. In other words, there is no Messiah. There never was and never will be any such person. This position of theirs, of course, in that it directly eliminates Him and His rôle, makes the Messiah a nonentity. Other Jews have become convinced that all the calamities which have befallen the Jews for two thousand years past have resulted from the fact that they have followed one false Messiah after another. Therefore, such men reason, let us throw the Messianic idea overboard. Let us stigmatize it as an illusion, and never let it be mentioned in our hearing again. Let us not even allow ourselves to think it. And thus, their position also, in a way quite as drastic, eliminates the Messiah and His role. It is like saying: "Marriage has ruined life for many people; therefore, it should be

abolished." Or, "Governments are corrupt and inept; therefore, wipe them out!" As such things could be said only by those who disvalued and hated marriage or magistracy, so also only men who disvalued and hated the Messiah and His rôle could want Him and it erased.

We see the same thing at another point. Masses of Jews have been engaging in numerous activities of the Zionist movement, of the return of Jews to Palestine, and of the establishment of the State of Israel there. We watch for signs of anticipation of the Messiah or of interest in Him and His rôle. We see, it is true, a few indications. In place names such as Rosh Pinna, Rishon le-Zion, and Petach Tikvah, there is at least a slight emphasis on Messianic days. And there are other signs of some interest to be aware of. But is it not true, as far as can be judged from nearly all the prominent, visible indications, that almost all the emphasis is not on the Book, or on the Messiah, or on His rôle, but on the people, and on the land? Why is this so?

For a fourth case, we may look to the Church. It is one in which ecclesiastical envy is directed, though more covertly, against the Lord Jesus. Some Christians have held that the Church is going to create a paradise on Earth, and that following those times Christ will come again. That is, He will return postmillennially, after others have done all, or nearly all, the work for Him. In order to grasp what is involved in their belief, consider the difference between two situations, namely: between the Church saving and conquering and reordering the world prior to Christ's coming, on one hand; and Jesus doing it, when He returns to function as King in the Kingdom of God, on the other. Corresponding to these two situations there are two basic philosophies among Christians. Some of them think it is the task of the Church to save, conquer, and reorder the world. Others believe the Church has not been commissioned to construct a new world, but rather merely to witness and to prepare the building materials and have them in readiness, available for Christ to use and build with when He returns to Earth. He, not the Church, will do the building. Naturally, the modest view last mentioned is far the less popular of the two.

A fifth case, or set of cases, may be seen in the activities of a never-ending procession of heretics in Christendom. Nearly all of them attack the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, the work of atonement for sin, and the doctrines of grace. When this work of the heretics is studied and analyzed, in order to discern its bearings with reference to the person and work of the Messiah, what has it proved to be? It has been one prolonged attempt to downgrade Him, to strip Him of His Deity, and to take from Him credit for His accomplishments as Redeemer and Saviour. "Play down the Messiah." "Take away His glory." "Deny His main accomplishments." "Minimize all others." Such have been the mottoes of almost all heretics, the rules they have followed. And what is this but envy and hate, even as it is written:

They only consult to cast him down from his excellency. (Psalm 62:4)

It is the truth, we think, and these cases show, that both the Synagogue and the Church envy the Messiah. To a considerable extent they have done so openly, but far more covertly. For they are unwilling to concede that He may have a role to play that would reduce their rôles, in comparison with His, to relatively minor parts of the drama. In fact, we may compare them to two actresses who have leading parts in a play. They are jealous of each other, but are even more jealous of the leading man and His role in the play. For His role makes theirs, in comparison with it, seem very minor and unimpressive in their eyes. Their rôles are really of high value, and even of a very distinguished character. But to them they seem poor. Prima donnas do not like to have anybody around who outshines them, or even threatens to. They wish that he would get out of their sight, that he might drop dead, or at least get lost. The problem in the case of prima donnas is that they need a whipping. And insofar as the Synagogue and the Church

insist on acting like prima donnas they should be thought of as a pair of shrews, who are badly in need of taming. They need someone who can put them in their place, and will. And Jehovah and His Messiah are just the ones who can do it, and will. They will no doubt do it at the proper time, even as it is written:

He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen. (Matthew 21:41)

Therefore I say unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. (Matthew 21:43)

But when the King heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. (Matthew 22:7)

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:22f.)

Now doubtless the prima donnas will sooner or later be put in their place, but in the meanwhile they have the key of knowledge, and they interpret the Bible's prophecies of things to come. Due to the positions they occupy it is they who will be giving the "official" interpretations which define Messiah's rôle. And who will be able to contradict them? Only very determined men, of an independent mind, and who are qualified to explicate the texts of Scripture, will be able either to see through prejudiced interpretations and reject them, or to arrive at better interpretations and evince their validity. And what can such men be expected to do? They are certain to be lonely voices crying in the wilderness. For consider what they will be up against. Later we shall show in detail the ways in which the Church, in particular, has become precommitted to antichilastic views. Here, therefore, we will limit ourselves to mentioning a few facts that are common knowledge.

Orthodox Roman Catholics, on the basis of certain special interpretations of Scripture passages officially adopted by their Church, generally stand opposed to any view that envisions a reconstitution or reestablishment of a Jewish foundation in Palestine for the Kingdom of Christ. The Reformed Churches—Presbyterian, Congregational, Huguenot, German, Dutch, Hungarian, and Swiss—were launched on their careers with strong antichilastic commitments. They simply let the Millennium drop out of their picture of things to come. And they have continued for upwards of four hundred years on the same basis. The orthodox Lutheran bodies are in the same boat. It is also true that in some of these bodies the leading teachers have produced quite sizable antichilastic literatures. They have also trained the clergy to think antichilastically, and to carry on an aggressive warfare against all "fundamentalists" and "dispensationalists" who broach the subject of the Kingdom to come. And once such teachers or their disciples have put their positions into print, it usually becomes a point of "honor" with them not to admit that they have erred, as also not to concede that any different position taken by another party may have some merit. Enough has now been said, we think, in order to make clear how exceedingly difficult it would be for the parties who are principally interested, namely, the Church and the Synagogue, and who also control most interpretation, ever to be able to exhibit disinterested fairness in interpreting the Bible's doctrines on Chiliasm. Of course, all things are possible. They might do it. Yet it is unlikely, from any realistic standpoint, that they will. For why should they alter their positions or moderate their claims? They do not need to. They occupy, normally, a position of strength, in virtue of the fact that they are

continuing establishments. When a storm of opposition arises against any position they hold, it is then only necessary for them temporarily to softpedal the unpopular teaching. If they deemphasize it, and wait, a favorable opportunity to reassert it will arise after a short time has elapsed, a few years at most.

From the fact that we have been concentrating our attention on prejudices that are found in the Synagogue and Church, it would be a mistake to assume that they exist only there. For they exist, we may almost say, everywhere. For connected with the churches, or related to them, Millerites and their successors the Seventh Day Adventists, and fifty-seven varieties of dispensationalists, have taken up special positions of their own on all related matters. Some of them have produced sizable literatures. Who can contradict them? Moreover, outside the Church a number of heretical groups have busied themselves with matters related to Chiliasm. Moslems, Mormons, Russellites, Dawn people, Jehovah's Witnesses, and others, all purport to teach Biblical views, but distort them, or replace them with attractive, misleading substitutes, which draw men from truth, not to it. Vast literatures have been produced and circulated by these groups too. Even when events prove them wrong they will hardly admit it, how much less, when no necessity compels, will they express diffidence about their opinions.

At the present day two great parties exist outside the Church. They are so disorganized that nobody thinks of either of them as parties. However, both have the strongest prejudices against Chiliastic views, and under the right circumstances they might easily act violently against those who hold, preach, and propagate them. And moreover, if they did, their action would almost certainly have in it the unanimity of a well-engineered avalanche. The first such "party" consists of the great mass of apostatized Christians. They are today very numerous. How hardly could they feel any sympathy whatever for the thought that oracles of God have promised the complete triumph of the Lord whose cross they had trampled! Much less could they ever bring themselves to concede that the doctrine made good sense and was inherently reasonable. The second "party" is the company of the antsupernaturalists, which is nowadays very numerous also. Now, largely as it gains its recruits from the ranks of apostatized Christians, still its sources of membership are far more extensive than the Christian minority which it helps deplete. How hardly could the antsupernaturalists such as those who propagate the Communist ideology and run Socialist governments ever bring themselves to take seriously anything whatever that smacked of Chiliastic hopes!—the kind of hopes which threatened to end Earth's secularistic governments! We mean, while they remain in their present mad mood. These two "parties" have an importance far greater than their numbers might lead anyone to think. For they have taken over educational establishments, and they have almost monopolized the sounding boards which the publicity media offer. In a now highly secularized world they create the atmosphere of public opinion. That atmosphere is already so strongly antsupernatural that it paralyzes the thought-processes of normal-thinking men, including masses of nominal Christians. It is so hostile to Chiliastic ideas that if anybody even expresses them at all, if he even mentions them merely for purposes of discussion, he can only expect to be greeted with ridicule on every hand. The bare mention of them will encounter on all sides the utter impatience of a totalitarian, dictatorial prejudice.

Lastly, we ought not to neglect to consider the Devil and his numerous party. Nor will we. But before we consider them, we want to mention two minor groups which are in the picture. At the moment they are relatively small, but they are very aggressive, and have an unusually great potential for growth. If, in days to come, they do grow into large parties, nobody will be in the least surprised.

The first of these "parties" consists of Jews who have been converted to a belief that Jesus is the true

Messiah. They are certainly not in the Synagogue. Are they, then, in the Church? In a loose sense, they are, but hardly in any strict sense. Nor are they likely to be assimilable by any more than a very few congregations. For in view of the fact that, as disciples, they are such strong-minded individuals, they will prove strongly resistant against assimilation. As Jews, they are proud of their derivation and naturally desire to retain a distinctively Jewish aura. On becoming Christians they usually tend to assume that they should have a special status vis-à-vis Gentile Christians, for their Jewish extraction makes them blood brothers of the Messiah. It is certainly reasonable to suppose that they may have more part in Him than Gentile Christians who are not His blood brothers. Moreover, being not less full of themselves than most of us are, they naturally tend to assume that they, as a kind of firstfruits redeemed out of Judaism's transmillennial apostasies, probably have a great, original, spiritual contribution to make. These assumptions of theirs may be very natural. Not a few indications go to show that some of them may be well-grounded expectations. We earnestly hope so. Nevertheless, their assumptions are very dangerous. But however that may be, it does seem pretty certain that Jewish converts will form distinct parties of their own—a New Christian Reformed Synagogue—which will be located in a no man's land lying somewhere between the Church and the Synagogue. What we wish to notice in connection with them is the fact that this new party furnishes still another instance of the same sort of envy of the Messiah that we have already observed in the Church and the Synagogue. We will give two examples of it.

Writing in The Chosen People on "The Jews and the Tribulation," the Editor, Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, says:

The Jews are related to the end of the Tribulation by virtue of the fact that the Tribulation ends with the Second Coming of Christ, and Christ will not return until the Jewish people ask Him to return. The power of the Second Coming of Christ is very much in the hands of Israel. The Chosen People, Vol. LXXX, No. 9 (May, 1975), p. 18.

His contention is not that some Jews will be sure to survive until Messiah's D-Day has arrived. Nor is it merely a claim that those who survive will be converted then, or shortly before. Neither is it simply an assertion that "Christ will not return until the Jewish people ask (= have asked) Him to return." Rather, the writer has asserted that Christ cannot return unless the Jews have first seen fit to act in a certain specified way. [Please do not assume that the three relatively modest positions are necessarily Scriptural. The first of them is. But as to the others, it is certainly perfectly possible that the Jews may be converted subsequently to the return of Christ. The key passage is Zechariah 12:9f. There we read:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn...

It is not only consistent with this passage and connected statements that the Jews should be converted subsequently to Messiah's advent, but almost necessary that they should. For how can they look on Him until He has appeared and is present, in order that He may be seen by them? And let us add, also, that if Jewish vaunting against Jehovah, or against Jesus, does happen to constitute a problem which they have to deal with, then this writer for one cannot imagine any more beautiful way for them to take, in order to

administer a coup de grace to it, than by arranging for a postadvent gift of sight to the blind. In any case, the problem did certainly exist in the days of Gideon, and required the use of drastic measures then. Is it really no longer in existence?]

In so interpreting his words we have not erred. For the section preceding the one from which we quoted was devoted to making this very point plain. Its heading reads: "B. The Basis of the Second Coming of Christ."

In it the following statement appears:

"Now we have the answer. Satan knows that once Christ returns his career will be finished. He also understands that Christ will not come back until the Jews ask Him to come back. If Satan can succeed in destroying all the Jews before they have a chance to ask Christ to come back, Christ will not come back and Satan will be safe. That is why Satan is in an all-out campaign to destroy the Jews." [The writer is correct in saying that "Satan is in an all-out campaign to destroy the Jews." But he errs greatly if he thinks Satan is counting upon success in his "Jewish Wars" to save his skin. For he knows better than that. The result, for him, would be the very opposite. To underestimate our great Adversary's intelligence so much is highly slanderous. We will have no part in it.]

Here indeed is a kingbolt! What a kingpin is here! It is not Jehovah, nor is it His Messiah. They are bystanders. Their hands are tied. And why? Because somebody's conceit would have us think so!

Our second example is the following. An advertisement appeared in the New York Times for May 19, 1975. It was sponsored by "American Jews Against Ford (AJAF)." It bore the following title: "For the sake of the United States, the free world and Israel, President Ford Must Go." It first gave four reasons why Mr. Ford "must go," and then five ways of trying to get rid of him. It propounds this question: "How can this be done?" In reply to its question (part four of its five-part answer) it states:

4) A serious effort to reach the Christian fundamentalist Bible community will be made (in order) to impress upon them the Biblical axioms that make the final redemption conditioned upon the prior return of all the Jewish people to Israel, and the resurrection of the Jewish state from the hands of its illegal conquerors.

The preceding statement is our second example. It asserts that two conditions have to be met before God and Messiah can proceed to accomplish "the final redemption." One of them is that all Jewish people must first have returned to Israel. The statement is strong and sweeping. It has a Scriptural ring to it. However, it is probably too strong. Some Biblical passages seem to tell against it. Cf. Micah 5:7f. The second condition is that a Jewish state should be fully liberated. The statement of this condition also makes an impression that is tantalizingly Scriptural. However, the state of affairs which Scripture seems to depict is one in which both the Israelite nation and its state are to be almost totally wiped out before Messiah returns to Earth. Then He will intervene, in order that He may nail the illegal, would-be conquerors red-handed in their attempt to perpetrate a genocide, namely, just at the moment they drive forward at full tilt with all systems firing, and while they shout:

This is blood...Now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!

It is right at that moment, apparently, namely, just when the gangsters seem certain to succeed, yea, even already to have succeeded, that He is to appear and act. Cf. Zechariah 13:8f. and 14:2f. If the Israelis were so saved out of the Lion's mouth, they would never be able to claim that they had saved themselves, nor even that any action on their part had been the fateful hinge which had opened the way for Messiah and had set Him free to do His thing. We will say no more. Our present purpose is not to deal with matters of interpretation or to argue such questions. We will take them up in due time.

We are much more interested at this moment, for our present purpose, in highlighting another feature of our second example. For in it, as you will have noticed, we have Jewish teachers assigning themselves the task of giving "the Christian fundamentalist Bible community," as they call it, instruction in Biblical "axioms," and especially in "axioms" which severely restrict the sovereign freedom of Jehovah and His Messiah to carry out their programs. What about this? It is true, as we have suggested, that the "axioms" are rather doubtful special interpretations. And it is also true that they unwarrantably restrict Jehovah's and Messiah's freedom to act. Our chief purpose in giving both examples, however, was to bring out the fact that what is now nothing more than a small, nondescript group of Jewish converts to Christianity has in it the potential makings of a potent influence. For it is only natural that Jewish converts to the belief in Jesus' Messiahship should have a lot to say on religious subjects, and that many Christians should want to give them a very respectful hearing when they offer their interpretations of eschatological teachings. It is very important, however, in this regard, to keep in mind at all times that the situation is full of peril for them and for all of us. For if they function legitimately in sound ways, good. But it is perfectly possible for them to take too much upon themselves, and to begin, with no authorization whatsoever, to function as self-appointed oracles. It is also fully possible that Christians, while thinking that they are only encouraging them to play legitimate roles, should in actuality prove to be encouraging them to function in usurped rôles, and approving their false opinions uncritically.

For example, as our readers will all know, one school of dispensationalists teaches that, after all Christians have been removed from the Earth, the Jews will be left and will thereafter have full charge of and responsibility for carrying on work in the Name of Jehovah and of His Messiah. Christians who seriously entertain such views will naturally be led to expect great things of converted Jews. For in such teachings a Jewish remnant is scheduled to scale new heights of superspirituality, and is slated to achieve phenomenal successes in making converts, successes which will far surpass everything ever accomplished before. What a challenge these ostensibly Christian teachings present to Jewish converts. What a stellar role they assign them. If they should rise to that challenge, they may offer the world something which is quite out of this world. We mean, either for good, as they will suppose, or for ill, as we may well fear. For example, consider the following continuation of a statement we have already quoted:

The power of the Second Coming of Christ is very much in the hands of Israel.

Conclusion

Unlike other missions, Jewish missions is not merely evangelistic. The purpose of missions in general is to evangelize and disciple. But Jewish missions is more so. Not only does Jewish missions seek to evangelize and disciple, it is also a prophetic (sic) ministry. God is using Jewish evangelism today to fulfill His program of the future. It must be remembered that people will be saved in all ages by faith. "But faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." By evangelizing the

Jews today, (tho many will reject the Gospel today) after the Rapture many will see by the events around them that what has been told them is indeed the truth and will begin to preach the Gospel. So they will become part of the 144,000 Jews. They in turn will reach out with the Gospel to the Faithful Remnant in the closing days of the Tribulation. So Jewish missions is very much a prophetic ministry. [The theory of a pretribulation, secret rapture of Christians will be up for discussion later. But right here is a good place to ask the reader to note that for one set of reasons it has a great appeal for Christians, and for other reasons it makes an immense appeal to Jews. He will want to begin at once to ascertain and evaluate the basis of its two appeals, and the various motives to which it appeals. For it is possible that it may be a trap and that it may have two sets of jaws.]

In such words there is considerable self-exaltation. The self-exalted enthusiast evaluates all earlier missionary outreach as very ordinary. He feeds on hopes of future developments of higher religious activities under new auspices. Yet he merely asserts that such activities will be superior, without defining at all wherein their excellence will consist. And he is limited to finding a token of future influence in the fact that what is now being rejected by Jews will later impress them. What he calls for is a prophetic ministry led by Jewish converts. Typographical errors sometimes have a way of being ironical, and in this case he looks forward to a "prophectic" ministry. Now Israel may well become the scene of a vast "prophectic" ministry in days to come. For in Zechariah's description of the days of Israel's conversion, we have the statement previously cited:

And they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him.

In closest connection with it, the very next subject Zechariah discusses, we read as follows:

And also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass that, when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of Jehovah; and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he prophesieth... (13:2ff.)

Apparently, therefore, if we may judge from this passage, Israel is to have such a marvellous "prophectic" ministry that the only way to stop it will be the way Moses took to stop the rioting on the plain in front of Mt. Sinai. The "prophectic" ministry that gave Israel the golden calf, or the "prophectic" ministry in which God put a lying spirit in the mouth of all Ahab's prophets, or the one in which all the prophets contradicted Jeremiah, are to be duly weighed and kept in mind. For the real question is what Satan will be able to do as he uses Jewish conceit and fanaticism in the days immediately preceding Jesus' return. And the thought of this should cause Israel's friends to tremble. Jewish converts may develop into parties having tremendous influence, which may be either for good or for evil.

The second "party" we said should be watched consists of the already fairly large, and constantly growing, masses of those who are dabblers in or devotees of all forms of the occult. And among them the coteries of Satan worshippers are especially important. This "party" has a potential for massive growth in days ahead. It may occur at any time and at a fast rate. All depends upon certain favorable

circumstances. For the occultists will of course race to any place where they think they will see signs. They will attach themselves to anybody who seems to be performing wonders. But not only they, for the atheists and antisupernaturalists will also be easy targets. There will be mass conversions of them whenever really supernatural miracles—in this case under evil auspices, and in order to license evil deeds—have begun to occur. For the false signs and lying miracles will be solid facts, whereas atheism and antisupernaturalism are doctrinaire fads. They will be forgotten the instant Satan is permitted to dazzle the lost children of men with a display of false signs, lying wonders, etc. When he or his antichrist begins to use such fireworks, then not only all the occultists but all the atheists as well will be bread for him. He will have them in his bag. And how much more so if God Himself should see fit to engage Himself to send, with His compliments, His own not less miraculous "working (or, operation) of error" (= ἐνεργεῖαν πλάνης), even as it is written:

And for this cause God shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. (II. Thessalonians 2:11)

Why would He want to do that to them? For what reason? What can it mean "for this cause"? Why of course, because He would want to give them what they wanted!

Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved! (2:10)

Why? He would want to give them what they needed, what they deserved, and what would best serve the interests of the universe at large:

That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness! (2:12)

For just as a day had once come, and an hour, when Jehovah said to Pharaoh:

For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart... (Exodus 9:14),

so it may be then. And just as there once came a fateful day and hour when Jehovah put a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets, as it is written:

Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets; and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee... (I. Kings 22:23),

so it may be tomorrow, or already even now. Who knows?

It is certainly perfectly possible, therefore, that this "party" may have a great future. It may even seem to have hit the jackpot and to be the great winner who takes all. We will probably not know, however, until a display of miracle-pyrotechnics occurs. Meanwhile, we urge the reader not to discount this possibility. For in many things both the Church and the Synagogue have for too long been content to work with very near-sighted perspectives. The Synagogue had not only not foreseen the numerous Satanic recaptures of Judaism, it has not even seen them. It has even been unable to conceive the thought that any such thing could ever happen to it or its leaders. And the Church has been unable to think of a Satanic recapture of

the Church or of European civilization as even remotely possible. Christians have believed that, because Christ had appeared, taught, worked, and established His Church, an everlasting foundation was now in existence. They naturally, but wrongly, assumed that Christians only had to try to build on it, and that the Church would then almost automatically continue to grow and prosper, and that God's purposes and His kingdom would be certain to prosper in the hands of Mother Church. Few could ever have brought themselves to believe that Christian civilization could be wiped out in Europe and swept into oblivion. Almost nobody could have really believed that the Church could be seriously infiltrated, or that a leadership could be saddled on God's people who would repudiate the Scriptures of God and their truths. It was unthinkable that such leaders could ever be divinely permitted to take over, and to cause the Church to act so largely the part of a Devil's errand boy. Very similar assumptions held sway in the Synagogue. In both Church and Synagogue blind spots controlled what the leaders could imagine possible in reference to their establishments. But although they were thus handicapped, Scripture's perspectives were not near-sighted. It foresaw the mighty "rollbacks" Satan would be able to carry out and would be permitted to accomplish. It foretold that evil powers could and would prevail over the saints, and leave them reduced to a state of powerlessness in the Earth. [See [Daniel 8:23f. and 12:7, for example.](#)] For these reasons we urge that the potential of this "party" not only for expansion, but also for swallowing up the Earth, be not ignored.

And finally we must not forget to consider the Devil and his numerous entourage, namely, the hosts of sin. What about them? If we think of Satan's interests, as he understands them, it seems obvious that he would try his best to kill any Christian dogma of the Kingdom of God and the triumph of God's Messiah. Above all, we may be sure, he would try to kill this particular one which guarantees that he shall be imprisoned ignominiously for one thousand years, and rendered incapable of deceiving the world at large during all that time. His aim would be to do all in his power both to wreck a dogma of this kind and to stifle its preaching. Failing that, he would aim to insure that it would be proclaimed, if at all, only in garbled versions overloaded with arbitrary innovations by unsavory fringe groups, despised sects, or discredited heretics. For them he can always manage to turn into laughingstocks.

As we come to the end of our survey we can hardly fail to see that we have just been looking at one of the strangest of the many strange sights Earth affords. We have here orthodox Roman Catholics, a wide assortment of orthodox Reformed, orthodox Lutherans, and other respectable Christian groups. Along with them we also have the heretics we have mentioned, the apostatized Christians, the antisupernaturalists, the Devil himself, and his hosts of sin. All of them have ended up as confirmed antichiliasts. They are all hard at work fighting Chiliasm and stifling the preaching of its doctrines. Are not these strange bedfellows? We are amazed as we behold this unusual alliance—this entente cordiale. Such amazing detente! How is it, why is it that these parties are found in such complete agreement, for once, on this particular question? This cannot but seem an odd thing to anybody who will ponder it well.

Since, then, so many strong parties have here, as they think, such vital interests involved, how can it be otherwise than that we will find signs of much self-partiality and prejudice appearing on all sides, whenever they set to work interpreting what the Bible says about things to come, especially passages that tell of the Millennium, or which may easily and naturally be connected therewith? Partiality and prejudice are also going to produce their natural fruits, namely, many misrepresentations, much slander, along with many accusations and more recriminations. In situations of this sort it is absolutely necessary for truth-seekers to be suspicious. It is their only defense and help to be so. They dare not trust what sounds good, nor any authorities that seem safe guides. They must go directly to the passages of

Scripture and must ask the Holy Spirit to enable them to establish their correct meaning, namely, His own intended meaning which He intended those passages to embody and to communicate.

Our task may be difficult. There are many pitfalls. But this should deter no one. We are to be watchful and to do our best. God willing, and His heavenly Counsellor guiding, we shall have good success.

THE INVESTIGATION

THE ORIGINAL POSTURE OF THE QUESTION

We are now ready to ask what the Bible says concerning Chiliasm and its doctrines. We may proceed in either of two ways.

If he wishes a writer may begin by defining what he thinks Scripture says and then try to document his interpretations. There are many pitfalls in this method. For it leads a writer who uses it to think, and to try to get his readers to think, that he is giving the latest, most accurate, impartial interpretation of the original sources. Yet in such an approach what he would really be doing would be something quite different; that is, in most cases and most of the time. For he would really have commenced by forging out the newest and latest views on the subject, namely, his own. Then, as he proceeded to go to work, he would be professing to let Scripture speak for itself. In reality, however, he would be showing how Scripture can be used to back up his own opinions. Scholars are fond of this method. For when his work is done a writer will "know" that the correct interpretation of the original sources has been achieved—at long last. And he will be happy when he reflects that his readers also cannot but "know" that it has. And furthermore he will also "know" above all that his own interpretation must be sound. For he has shown in detail that the original sources, when correctly interpreted, as they now have been by himself, have backed up every opinion he holds. It will be obvious, we think, why many writers like and use this first method. But naturally any writer who distrusts his own ability to be impartial will see in it a snare. He will look around for some other method.

For we may take a different approach. We may begin by trying to establish, as nearly as possible, the original posture of the question. In order to do this we can go to the ancient documents. We can assume that there must have been somebody somewhere who was the first to take into hand the investigation and discussion of what the Bible says on this subject, either Jesus, or His apostles, or their successors. We may know with certainty who the very first ones to do this were, or we may not know, or we may conclude that it is impossible for us to know. In any case, we may search for the earliest known efforts to set forth "Chiliasm Biblically Considered." And when we have found the oldest extant statements on the subject, we can label them "Exhibit A," and then proceed to read them into the record. They may be used as our point of departure. And if we use them we can have perfect assurance that we did not cook up the interpretations, the opinions, we have used as our starting point. We will know that they existed eighteen centuries before we had forged out our own lately acquired opinions, and even almost that long before we were born. It will thus be possible for us to be very sure, as we discuss those views, that we are not fighting for our own personal opinions every step of the way, and trying to twist Scripture's arm to get her to say what we want to hear her say. For reasons already sufficiently hinted at, therefore, we like this method and will use it.

Back then to the writings of early Christians we go. In them we find what seem to be the earliest statements on this subject which have survived and are available for us to use. The three earliest known efforts to set forth "Chiliasm Biblically Considered" seem to have been by Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. It may be claimed, and is explicitly claimed or implied by these writers, that they are merely stating what the apostles themselves had said on this subject to their immediate followers and successors. We will discuss the claim later. Right now all that we wish to do is to read the statements into the record as what seem to be the three earliest known efforts to expound "Chiliasm Biblically Considered," and to

pin on them the label "Exhibit A." And, if we may, we would like to do this in the following way.

We will first reproduce a statement which we want the reader to use, in order that he personally may test the statements in Exhibit A. It comes from a very honorable scholar of great accomplishments. It, along with others similar to it which say essentially the same things, has led many theologically conservative Protestants to reject Chiliasm and its doctrines. The test we have in mind is easy to run. If a reader will keep the scholar's assertions in mind as he reads the three statements in Exhibit A, he will see, unless we are greatly mistaken, that the latter falsify the former. And if they do, then some of the most damaging slanders against Chiliastic doctrines will have been confuted.

The scholar's statement is:

The conclusion, so often drawn by Premillennialists, that because chiliastic views were more or less widely current in the Early Church, this teaching must be regarded as Apostolic and Biblical, as the pure because primitive faith of the New Testament Church, ignores the vitally important fact that chiliastic views were extensively circulated in the Early Church through such Jewish or Jewish-Christian writings as Enoch, 4 Esdras, Assumption of Moses, Ascension of Isaiah, Psalms of Solomon, Baruch, writings which neither Jews nor Christians regarded as canonical. Judaizing tendencies were very strong even in Apostolic times, as is made clear by the attitude of Jewish Christians to the Gentiles (e. g., Acts xv.), and especially by the Epistles to the Galatians and to the Hebrews. (Cf. Vos, The Pauline Eschatology, pp. 228-235). Whether Chiliasm is Scriptural must, therefore, be determined solely by an appeal to the Scriptures. [Oswald T. Allis, Prophecy and the Church (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1945), p. 287. We have cited Allis's footnote 12.]

The test just mentioned is the very one we would like the reader to run, and it is easily carried out. Let him peruse our Exhibit A. As he reads the three statements there let him ask himself every so often whether he has run onto anything that is not 100% Scriptural. If, in order to make the test, it were necessary to know the contents of Enoch and the other extrabiblical documents mentioned in the citation, then very few would feel that they were qualified to make it. As it happens, however, it is only necessary for one to know the Bible's contents, in order to be well qualified to make it. For if he knows them, he will be well able to see that almost everything he reads in Exhibit A came from Scripture. [Whenever a nonbiblical element appears we shall call attention to it in a footnote (**EDITOR - the footnotes to which Dr. Ludlum refers will be included in the same paragraph in maroon colored font**).]

We give you Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian.

APPENDIX

Exhibit A

- I. Justin Martyr
- II. Irenaeus
- III. Tertullian

Exhibit A
I.
Justin Martyr

[From the Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew, we have reproduced chapters 80 and 81. We give Reith's translation from The Ante-Nicene Christian Library, edited by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1879), Vol. II., pp. 199-202. The title which the translator has given to chapter 80 is: "The opinion of Justin with regard to the reign of a thousand years. Several catholics reject it." His title for chapter 81 is: "He endeavours to prove this opinion from Isaiah and the Apocalypse." **EDITOR - Our incorporated footnotes and/or comments are in maroon colored font.**]

80. And Trypho to this replied,

I remarked to you, sir, that you are very anxious to be safe in all respects, since you cling to the Scriptures. But tell me, do you really admit that this place, Jerusalem, shall be rebuilt; and do you expect your people to be gathered together, and made joyful with Christ and the patriarchs, and the prophets, both the men of our nation, and other proselytes who joined them before your Christ came? or have you given way, and admitted this in order to have the appearance of worsting us in the controversies?

Then I answered,

I am not so miserable a fellow, Trypho, as to say one thing and think another. I admitted to you formerly, that I and many others are of this opinion, and (believe) that such will take place, as you assuredly are aware; [Or, "so as to thoroughly believe that such will take place" (after "opinion")] but, on the other hand, I signified to you that many who belong to the pure and pious faith, and are true Christians, think otherwise. Moreover, I pointed out to you that some who are called Christians, but are godless, impious heretics, teach doctrines that are in every way blasphemous, atheistical, and foolish. But that you may know that I do not say this before you alone, I shall draw up a statement, so far as I can, of all the arguments which have passed between us; in which I shall record myself as admitting the very same things which I admit to you. For I choose to follow not men or men's doctrines, but God and the doctrines (delivered) by Him. For if you have fallen in with some who are called Christians, but who do not admit this (truth), [i.e., resurrection] and venture to blaspheme the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; who say there is no resurrection of the dead, and that their souls, when they die, are taken to heaven; do not imagine that they are Christians, even as one, if he would rightly consider it, would not admit that the Sadducees, or similar sects of Genistae, Meristae, Galilaeans, Hellenists, Pharisees, Baptists, are Jews (do not hear me impatiently when I tell you what I think), but are (only) called Jews and children of Abraham, worshipping God with the lips, as God Himself declared, but the heart was far from Him. But I and others, who are right-minded Christians on all points, are assured that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a thousand years [We have translated the text of Justin as it stands. Commentators make the sense, "and that there will be a thousand years in Jerusalem," or "that the saints will live a thousand years in Jerusalem."] in Jerusalem, which will then be built, adorned, and enlarged, (as) the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah and others declare.

81. (Justin continues)

For Isaiah spake thus concerning this space of a thousand years:

For there shall be the new heaven and the new earth, and the former shall not be

remembered, or come into their heart; but they shall find joy and gladness in it, which things I create. For, behold, I make Jerusalem a rejoicing, and my people a joy; and I shall rejoice over Jerusalem, and be glad over my people. And the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, or the voice of crying. And there shall be no more there a person of immature years, or an old man who shall not fulfil his days. [Literally, "time."] For the young man shall be an hundred years old; [Literally, "the son of an hundred years."] but the sinner who dies an hundred years old, he shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and shall themselves inhabit them; and they shall plant vines, and shall themselves eat the produce of them, and drink the wine. They shall not build, and others inhabit; they shall not plant, and others eat. For according to the days of the tree of life shall be the days of my people; the works of their toil shall abound. [Isaiah 65:17 to end.] Mine elect shall not toil fruitlessly, or beget children to be cursed; for they shall be a seed righteous and blessed by the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call I will hear; while they are still speaking, I shall say, What is it? Then shall the wolves and the lambs feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent (shall eat) earth as bread. They shall not hurt or maltreat each other on the holy mountain, saith the Lord." [Psalm 90:4; II. Peter 3:8.]

Now we have understood that the expression used among these words,

"According to the days of the tree shall be the days of my people; the works of their toil shall abound," [Or, as in margin of A. V., "they shall make the works of their toil continue long," so reading $\pi\alpha\lambda\alpha\iota\omega\sigma\sigma\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu$ for $\pi\lambda\epsilon\omicron\nu\alpha\sigma\sigma\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu$: thus also LXX.]

obscurely predicts a thousand years. For as Adam was told that in the day he ate of the tree he would die, we know that he did not complete a thousand years. We have perceived, moreover, that the expression,

"The day of the Lord is as a thousand years," [Psalm 90:4, II Peter 3:8]

is connected with this subject. And further, there was a certain man with us, whose name was John, one of the apostles of Christ, who prophesied, by a revelation that was made to him, that those who believed in our Christ would dwell [Literally, "make."] a thousand years in Jerusalem; and that thereafter the general, and, in short, the eternal resurrection and judgment of all men would likewise take place. Just as our Lord also said,

They shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but shall be equal to the angels, the children of the God of the resurrection. [Luke 20:35f.]

Exhibit A
II. Irenaeus

[From Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book V., we have reproduced the last part of chapter 30 and all of chapters 31-36. We give Rambaut's translation from The Ante-Nicene Christian Library, edited by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1871), Vol. IX., pp. 138-157.]

V. 30 (3) ... We will not, however, incur the risk of pronouncing positively as to the name of Antichrist; for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would have been announced by him who beheld the apocalyptic vision. For that was seen no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian's reign.

(4) But he indicates the number of the name now, that when this man comes we may avoid him, being aware who he is: the name, however, is suppressed, because it is not worthy of being proclaimed by the Holy Spirit. For if it had been declared by Him, he (Antichrist) might perhaps continue for a long period. But now as "he was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the abyss, and goes into perdition," [Revelation 17:8.] as one who has no existence; so neither has his name been declared, for the name of that which does not exist is not proclaimed. But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the righteous the times of the kingdom, that is, the rest, the hallowed seventh day; and restoring to Abraham the promised inheritance, in which kingdom the Lord declared, that "many coming from the east and from the west should sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." [Matthew 8:11. (Luke 13:28f.)]

31 (1) Since, again, some who are reckoned among the orthodox go beyond the pre-arranged plan for the exaltation of the just, and are ignorant of the methods by which they are disciplined beforehand for incorruption, they thus entertain heretical opinions. For the heretics, despising the handiwork of God, and not admitting the salvation of their flesh, while they also treat the promise of God contemptuously, and pass beyond God altogether in the sentiments they form, affirm that immediately upon their death they shall pass above the heavens and the Demiurge, and go to the Mother (Achamoth) or to that Father whom they have feigned. Those persons, therefore, who disallow a resurrection affecting the whole man (universam reprobant resurrectionem), and as far as in them lies remove it from the midst (of the Christian scheme), how can they be wondered at, if again they know nothing as to the plan of the resurrection? For they do not choose to understand, that if these things are as they say, the Lord Himself, in whom they profess to believe, did not rise again upon the third day; but immediately upon His expiring on the cross, undoubtedly departed on high, leaving His body to the earth. But the case was, that for three days He dwelt in the place where the dead were, as the prophet says concerning Him: "And the Lord remembered His dead saints who slept formerly in the land of sepulture; and He descended to them, to rescue and save them." [See Book III. 20 (4)] And the Lord Himself says, "As Jonas remained three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth." [Matthew 11:40.] Then also the apostle says, "But when He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth?" [Ephesians 4:9.] This, too, David says when prophesying of Him, "And Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell;" [Psalms 86:23.] and on His rising again the third day, He said to Mary, who was the first to see and to worship Him, "Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to the disciples, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and unto your Father." [John 20:17]

(2) If, then, the Lord observed the law of the dead, that He might become the first-begotten from the dead, and tarried until the third day "in the lower parts of the earth;" [Ephesians 4:9] then afterwards rising in the flesh, so that He even showed the print of the nails to His disciples, [John 20:20, 27] He thus ascended to the Father; - (if all these things occurred, I say), how must these men not be put to

confusion, who allege that "the lower parts" refer to this world of ours, but that their inner man, leaving the body here, ascends into the super-celestial place? For as the Lord "went away in the midst of the shadow of death," [[Psalm 23:4](#)] where the souls of the dead were, yet afterwards arose in the body, and after the resurrection was taken up (into heaven), it is manifest that the souls of His disciples also, upon whose account the Lord underwent these things, shall go away into the invisible place allotted to them by God, and there remain until the resurrection, awaiting that event; then receiving their bodies, and rising in their entirety, that is bodily, just as the Lord arose, they shall come thus into the presence of God. "For no disciple is above the Master, but every one that is perfect shall be as his Master." [[Luke 6:40](#).] As our Master, therefore, did not at once depart, taking flight (to heaven), but awaited the time of His resurrection prescribed by the Father, which had been also shown forth through Jonas, and rising again after three days was taken up (to heaven); so ought we also to await the time of our resurrection prescribed by God and foretold by the prophets, and so, rising, be taken up, as many as the Lord shall account worthy of this (privilege). [[The five following chapters were omitted in the earlier editions, but added by Feuarentius. Most manuscripts, too, did not contain them. It is probable that the scribes of the middle ages rejected them on account of their inculcating millenarian notions, which had been long extinct in the church. Quotations from these five chapters have been collected by Harvey from Syriac and Armenian manuscripts lately come to light.](#)]

32 (1) Inasmuch, therefore, as the opinions of certain (orthodox persons) are derived from heretical discourses, they are both ignorant of God's dispensations, and of the mystery of the resurrection of the just, and of the (earthly) kingdom which is the commencement of incorruption, by means of which kingdom those who shall be worthy are accustomed gradually to partake of the divine nature ([capere Deum](#)) [[Or, "gradually to comprehend God."](#)]; and it is necessary to tell them respecting those things, that it behoves the righteous first to receive the promise of the inheritance which God promised to the fathers, and to reign in it, when they rise again to behold God in this creation which is renovated, and that the judgment should take place afterwards. For it is just that in that very creation in which they toiled or were afflicted, being proved in every way by suffering, they should receive the reward of their suffering; and that in the creation in which they were slain because of their love to God, in that they should be revived again; and that in the creation in which they endured servitude, in that they should reign. For God is rich in all things, and all things are His. It is fitting, therefore, that the creation itself, being restored to its primeval condition, should without restraint be under the dominion of the righteous; and the apostle has made this plain in the Epistle to the Romans, when he thus speaks: "For the expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature has been subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; since the creature itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." [[Romans 8:19](#), etc.]

(2) Thus, then, the promise of God, which He gave to Abraham, remains steadfast. For thus He said: "Lift up thine eyes, and look from this place where now thou art, towards the north and south, and east and west. For all the earth which thou seest, I will give to thee and to thy seed, even for ever." [[Genesis 13:13, 14](#)] And again He says, "Arise, and go through the length and breadth of the land, since I will give it unto thee;" [[Genesis 13:17](#)] and yet he did not receive an inheritance in it, not even a footstep, but was always a stranger and a pilgrim therein. [[Acts 7:5](#); [Hebrews 11:13](#)] And upon the death of Sarah his wife, when the Hittites were willing to bestow upon him a place where he might bury her, he declined it as a gift, but bought the burying-place (giving for it four hundred talents of silver) from Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite. [[Genesis 23:11](#)] Thus did he await patiently the promise of God, and was unwilling to appear to receive from men, what God had promised to give him, when He said again to him as follows: "I will give this land to thy seed, from the river of Egypt even unto the great river Euphrates." [[Genesis 15:13](#)] If, then, God promised him the inheritance of the land, yet he did not receive it during all the time of his sojourn there, it must be, that together with his seed, that is, those who fear God and believe in Him, he shall receive it at the resurrection of the just. For his seed is the church, which receives the

adoption to God through the Lord, as John the Baptist said: "For God is able from the stones to raise up children to Abraham." [Luke 3:8] Thus also the apostle says in the Epistle to the Galatians: "But ye, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise." [Galatians 4:28] And again, in the same epistle, he plainly declares that they who have believed in Christ do receive Christ, the promise to Abraham thus saying, "The promises were spoken to Abraham, and to his seed. Now He does not say, And of seeds, as if (He spake) of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." [Galatians 3:16] And again, confirming his former words, he says, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith are the children of Abraham. But the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, declared to Abraham beforehand, That in thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which are of faith shall be blessed with faithful Abraham." [Galatians 3:6, etc.] Thus, then, they who are of faith shall be blessed with faithful Abraham, and these are the children of Abraham. Now God made promise of the earth to Abraham and his seed; yet neither Abraham nor his seed, that is, those who are justified by faith, do now receive any inheritance in it; but they shall receive it at the resurrection of the just. For God is true and faithful; and on this account He said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." [Matthew 5:5]

33 (1) For this reason, when about to undergo His sufferings, that He might declare to Abraham and those with him the glad tidings of the inheritance being thrown open, (Christ), after He had given thanks while holding the cup, and had drunk of it, and given it to the disciples, said to them: "Drink ye all of it: this is my blood of the new covenant, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of this vine, until that day when I will drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." [Matthew 26:27] Thus, then, He will Himself renew the inheritance of the earth, and will re-organize the mystery of the glory of (His) sons; as David says, "He who hath renewed the face of the earth." [Psalm 104:30] He promised to drink of the fruit of the vine with His disciples, thus indicating both these points: the inheritance of the earth in which the new fruit of the vine is drunk, and the resurrection of His disciples in the flesh. For the new flesh which rises again is the same which also received the new cup. And He cannot by any means be understood as drinking of the fruit of the vine when settled down with His (disciples) above in a super-celestial place; nor, again, are they who drink it devoid of flesh, for to drink of that which flows from the vine pertains to flesh, and not spirit.

(2) And for this reason the Lord declared, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, do not call thy friends, nor thy neighbours, nor thy kinsfolk, lest they ask thee in return, and so repay thee. But call the lame, the blind, and the poor, and thou shalt be blessed, since they cannot recompense thee, but a recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just." [Luke 14:12, 13] And again He says, "Whosoever shall have left lands, or houses, or parents, or brethren, or children because of me, he shall receive in this world an hundred-fold, and in that to come he shall inherit eternal life." [Matthew 19:29; Luke 18:29, 30] For what are the hundred-fold (rewards) in this world, the entertainments given to the poor, and the suppers for which a return is made? These are (to take place) in the times of the kingdom, that is, upon the seventh day, which has been sanctified, in which God rested from all the works which He created, which is the true Sabbath of the righteous, in which they shall not be engaged in any earthly occupation; but shall have a table at hand prepared for them by God, supplying them with all sorts of dishes.

(3) The blessing of Isaac with which he blessed his younger son Jacob has the same meaning, when he says, "Behold, the smell of my son is as the smell of a full field which the Lord has blessed." [Genesis 27:27, etc.] But "the field is the world." [Matthew 13:38] And therefore he added, "God give to thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, plenty of corn and wine. And let the nations serve thee, and kings bow down to thee; and be thou lord over thy brother, and thy father's sons shall bow down to thee: cursed shall be he who shall curse thee, and blessed shall be he who shall bless thee." [Genesis 27:28, 29] If any one, then, does not accept these things as referring to the appointed kingdom, he must fall into much contradiction and contrariety, as is the case with the Jews, who are involved in absolute

perplexity. For not only did not the nations in this life serve this Jacob; but even after he had received the blessing, he himself going forth (from his home), served his uncle Laban the Syrian for twenty years; [[Genesis 31:41](#)] and not only was he not made lord of his brother, but he did himself bow down before his brother Esau, upon his return from Mesopotamia to his father, and offered many gifts to him. [[Genesis 33:3](#)] Moreover, in what way did he inherit much corn and wine here, he who emigrated to Egypt because of the famine which possessed the land in which he was dwelling, and became subject to Pharaoh, who was then ruling over Egypt? The predicted blessing, therefore, belongs unquestionably to the times of the kingdom, when the righteous shall bear rule upon their rising from the dead: [From this to the end of the section there is an Armenian version extant, to be found in the [Spicil. Solesm.](#) i. p. 1, edited by M. Pitra, Paris 1852, and which was taken by him from an Armenian manuscript in the Mechitarist Library at Venice, described as being of the twelfth century.] when also the creation, having been renovated and set free, shall fructify with an abundance of all kinds of food, from the dew of heaven, and from the fertility of the earth: as the elders who saw John, the disciple of the Lord, related that they had heard from him how the Lord used to teach in regard to these times, and say: [In what follows we have a nonbiblical element. How should we regard it? What is a fair interpretation? See ** below. - J. H. L.] The days will come, in which vines shall grow, each having ten thousand branches, and in each branch ten thousand twigs, and in each true [This word "true" is not found in the Armenian.] twig ten thousand shoots, and in each one of the shoots ten thousand clusters, and on every one of the clusters ten thousand grapes, and every grape when pressed will give five and twenty metretes of wine. And when any one of the saints shall lay hold of a cluster, [Or, following the Armenian Version, "But if any one shall lay hold of an holy cluster."] another shall cry out, "I am a better cluster, take me; bless the Lord through me." In like manner (the Lord declared) that a grain of wheat would produce ten thousand ears, and that every ear should have ten thousand grains, and every grain would yield ten pounds ([quinque bilibres](#)) of clear, pure, fine flour; and that all other fruit-bearing trees, [The Armenian Version is here followed; the old Latin reads, "[Et reliqua autem poma.](#)"] and seeds and grass, would produce in similar proportions ([secundum congruentiam iis consequentem](#)); and that all animals feeding (only) on the productions of the earth, should (in those days) become peaceful and harmonious among each other, and be in perfect subjection to man.

[This very extended footnote begins by asking: "How should this nonbiblical element be regarded?" If the reader will glance back over what he has just been reading, he will see that what we have here is a minor detail in a larger context which is entirely Biblical. For in this section Irenaeus started from God's promise to Abraham and to his seed, namely, the promise that they should have the land in perpetual possession (V. 32 (2)). He then went on, in 33 (1), to put a Biblical saying Jesus had uttered at the Last Supper into direct connection with that promise, relating the express terms of the utterance to the express terms of the promise. As Irenaeus explained it, Christ was "declaring to Abraham and those with him the glad tidings of the inheritance being thrown open ..." ([ut evangelizaret Abrahae, et iis qui cum eo, apertionem hereditatis](#)). This thought, though it may seem a bit unusual, is certainly thoroughly Biblical: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad." ([John 8:56](#)). Christ was making the point, Irenaeus says, that as 'Ruler of all Nature,' "He will Himself renew the inheritance of the earth ..." ([utique hereditatem terrae ipse novabit](#)). Christ was also making the point that He "will reorganize the mystery of the glory of sons" ([et reintegrabit mysterium gloriae filiorum](#)). The 'His' in brackets, which the translator inserted, is not needed, and may even positively mislead. Then a verse from [Psalm 104](#) is used, as promising that Jehovah, or Jesus, will renew the face of the earth. The promise of Jesus that He will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God shall come, is understood to imply four things: first, that He will drink of it again in Kingdom come; secondly, that there will be an inheritance of the land, the earth; thirdly, that there will be a resurrection of His disciples in the flesh; and fourthly, the impossibility of thinking of drinking wine when settled down with His disciples above in a supercelestial place, namely, because of the impossibility of those who are devoid of flesh drinking the fruit of the vine. Following this Irenaeus next introduced two Biblical sayings of Jesus which have reference to eating in the Kingdom of God. The first was the teaching in [Luke 14:12f.](#), where

Jesus had rebuked the selfish habit of inviting to dinner only those who would be able to pay back the favor by giving a return invitation, and had stated that those who feed the moneyless would be paid back in "the resurrection of the righteous." The second was Christ's promise of hundredfold rewards, or repayments, "in this world" for those who had given up much in order to follow Him. Cf. Matthew 19:29 and Luke 18:29f. In both cases Irenaeus understood Jesus to teach that men, risen in the flesh, will then eat the kind of food that now sustains our life in the flesh. It is thus that the larger context begins to set the stage.

Then Irenaeus, continuing on in the same vein, introduced the blessing Isaac gave to Jacob. This was a promise of much corn and wine, as well as of the land, and Irenaeus laid stress on the express terms of this promised blessing. He understood it as implying a renovated, liberated creation (33 (3)), which will produce enriched wheat and wine in abundance. He connected this blessing and its express terms with the larger Biblical views of what is variously called a new creation, a new heavens and a new earth, a restoration of all things, the regeneration (= h paliggenesia), etc. This included changes in two spheres: first, in the world of predatory animals, which would become tame, live at peace with one another, and be at peace with and under men; and secondly, in the horticultural world, where plants would be rendered lush and productive, both by reason of increased vitality in themselves, and by reason of the fact that weeds and other causes of stunted growth would no longer impair their power to be fruitful. It was thus that Irenaeus connected the mention of much corn and wine in Isaac's blessing with this botanical aspect of "the hope." And such was the larger context.

In this setting, in direct connection with this general hope and these promised blessings, Irenaeus drew in and cited another saying of our Lord's, namely, one which commented on "much corn and wine." The saying this time was an extrabiblical one. He believed, and he said that it came from Jesus' teachings, as heard and understood by John the son of Zebedee, the beloved disciple, the Apostle who wrote our fourth Gospel. John the son of Zebedee had told it to certain men - to the "Elders." They, in turn, had passed the information on to others - to their successors, among whom Irenaeus numbered himself, as we know. For Irenaeus the term "Elders" meant those men whom he and the men of his day knew or referred to as Elders, e. g., Ignatius, Polycarp, Clement of Rome, Papias, and a few others. In view of what Irenaeus wrote to Florinus we ought to assume that he got his information directly through Polycarp, at one remove from John the son of Zebedee. In our opinion it is not reasonable to insist that Irenaeus must have obtained his information from Papias alone. For while it is true that he mentions Papias, that is because Papias was a collateral witness of the very best kind, namely, one who had recorded in writing what he knew in his own right, both as a very ancient man who had been a hearer of John the son of Zebedee, and who had been an intimate associate of Polycarp. (See footnote 2 to Chapter One). For Papias had been a zealous collector of information. He had composed an extended work, of five books, on the sayings of Jesus. Irenaeus was therefore able to inform his readers that the saying of Jesus which he mentions had been recorded in writing and might be found in Papias' fourth book. And he was personally acquainted with what Papias had recorded. For even though he did not give Jesus' teaching on corn and wine as an express citation from Papias' book, yet he did quote twice from the passage containing Papias' record that Jesus had spoken such words. For he gave from that passage Papias' personal opinion that what Jesus had foretold was believable; and from it he also gave Papias' record of how Judas had been incredulous and of how Jesus had answered him.

If Jesus had spoken the words Irenaeus quotes, what would His teaching have added up to? It would have had two parts: one on animals and the other on plants. As to the first, He would have predicted that in Kingdom come fierce carnivores would no longer devour flesh, but would eat plants and would be at peace with their natural enemies, as we say, and submissive to men. And thus, if He had really uttered such words, His teaching in this area would have been 100% Biblical. As to the second, He would have foretold that in the days of the Kingdom certain food plants would thrive and would bear fruits of improved quality in unprecedented quantities. It would have been implied, of course, that they would not

so thrive and produce in times prior to Kingdom come. Such would have been the essence of His teaching.

Now it is certainly true that by taking parts of such teaching very literally, we can create problems in connection with it. For example, by insisting on a 100% literal interpretation we could claim that it predicts the production of 22,500 billion billion gallons of wine from one vine. And we could also claim that it foretells that clusters of grapes will speak to men in real voices employing human languages. And if we, as interpreters, shall insist on being such consummate literalists, we may expect that the stones will certainly cry out. R. H. Charles says (The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), Vol. II., p. 498):

As to the ten thousandfold yield of corn and wine Dr. Rendel Harris gives a probable explanation in a misreading of br = "plenty" in the blessing of Isaac (Gen. 27:28) as wbr (sic) = 10,000.

Our opinion is that no mistake was made, but we have an example of innocent use of hyperbole. The Greek original of Irenaeus' work probably had the word *muriov*. Behind it might have stood a Hebrew or an Aramaic word such as *wbr*, *awbr*, or *hbbr*. Now any of these words may stand for the definite number ten thousand, but it is also true that any of them can be used in indefinite senses for indefinitely large sizes, quantities, periods of time, etc. Any of them may be translated appropriately by words like "countless," "numberless," etc. And just as it is perfectly normal for us to speak of "myriads" or of "scads" of something, without having in mind any definite number whatever, so it was perfectly permissible for the ancients to use those Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic words without having any definite number in their minds. The man who translated Irenaeus' Greek into Latin probably took the word *muriov* as a definite number. He did not have to do so, but he probably did. He then translated it as decem (or dena) millia. It was then necessary for the English translator to render faithfully what he found in his Latin "original." What about this?

We think it makes very good sense for us to apply in this case all we have been told by the older, rationalistic "orientalists" about "oriental exaggeration." The words to be interpreted would certainly have taught that the Earth will literally be rejuvenated and will literally be exceedingly fruitful. Such teaching is certainly Biblical. The only question is whether it would be well-advised on our part to demand a mercilessly literal rendering of a literal translation (in the Latin) of what Irenaeus and Papias gave in Greek, and of what, before them, the Elders, John the son of Zebedee, and Jesus may have given in Hebrew or in Aramaic. In other words it is a question of exegetical principles. And we can postpone dealing with the problem of clusters that speak with the tongues of men and of angels until such time as superliteralistic philologists have made out a more convincing case in favor of their style of interpretation.

Scholars have discovered that similar words occur in a work called The Apocalypse of Baruch. This however is not the book of Baruch mentioned in Allis' footnote which we quoted before we began to give Exhibit A, and which will be discussed later in our footnote 86, below. Rather, it is The Book of the Apocalypse of Baruch the Son of Neriah (translated from the Greek into Syriac), which is known as II. Baruch. An English translation is given in R. H. Charles, op. cit., vol. II., pp. 470-526. In chapters 29 and 30 of II. Baruch we read as follows:

29:1. And he answered and said unto me: "Whatever will then befall (will befall) the whole earth; therefore all who live will experience (them). 2. For at that time I will protect only those who are found in those selfsame days in this land. 3. And it shall come to pass when all is accomplished that was to come to pass in those parts, that the Messiah shall then begin to be revealed. 4. And Behemoth shall be revealed from his place and Leviathan shall

ascend from the sea, those two great monsters which I created on the fifth day of creation, and shall have kept until that time; and then they shall be for food for all that are left. 5. The earth also shall yield its fruit ten thousandfold and on each (?) vine there shall be a thousand branches, and each branch shall produce a thousand clusters, and each cluster produce a thousand grapes, and each grape produce a cor of wine. 6. And those who have hungered shall rejoice: moreover, also, they shall behold marvels every day. 7. For winds shall go forth from before Me to bring every morning the fragrance of aromatic fruits, and at the close of the day clouds distilling the dew of health. 8. And it shall come to pass at that selfsame time that the treasury of manna shall again descend from on high, and they will eat of it in those years, because these are they who have come to the consummation of time.

30:1. And it shall come to pass after these things, when the time of the advent of the Messiah is fulfilled, that He shall return in glory. 2. Then all who have fallen asleep in hope of Him shall rise again. And it shall come to pass at that time that the treasuries will be opened in which is preserved the number of the souls of the righteous, and they shall come forth, and a multitude of souls shall be seen together in one assemblage of one thought, and the first shall rejoice and the last shall not be grieved. 3. For they know that the time has come of which it is said, that it is the consummation of the times.

What about this? R. H. Charles has commented on 29:5 above as follows:

We have here another fragment of an old Apocalypse, of which we find a version in Irenaeus, V. 33. Papias is there said to ascribe it to our Lord. Irenaeus preserves a longer and fuller form than our text, and all seeds and fruit trees share in the miraculous fruitfulness in his quotation. I. Enoch 10:19 gives a still more fragmentary quotation. (Op. cit., p. 497, for Charles' words, and p. 195, for the Enoch passage.)

We are not able to see things as Charles sees them. Our opinion is that we have unusually good reason to believe that Irenaeus gives a bona fide word of Jesus which has excellent credentials. We have no reason for supposing that he transmits "another version" of "a fragment of an old Apocalypse" that is found in II. Baruch. It is inaccurate, and it gives a misleading impression, moreover, to say that "Papias is here (i. e., in Irenaeus) said to ascribe it to our Lord." For the truth is that Irenaeus has other authorities in addition to Papias, and they are equally good, or better than Papias. Now Charles' statement suggests that Irenaeus may have nothing more than Papias' word as a foundation for his attribution of the saying to Jesus. Such an impression is the same as Eusebius gave in his Church History, III., 39 (12-13), sixteen hundred years earlier. Certainly Eusebius, and very probably Charles, would father on Papias the idea that Jesus had taught as Irenaeus' statement claims, and we would be expected to reject the idea as a bizarre notion arising from a worthless source. Actually, however, it has excellent credentials other than any recommendations Papias may supply in addition. For our part, therefore, we take Irenaeus' passage as it stands in its larger context, and compare it with the passage in II. Baruch taken in its larger context in that document. The latter presents a scene in which the whole Earth has been turned into a shambles after the twelve woes have come and gone, but Palestine has escaped. Against such a background the passage foretells that there will be a lush agriculture in a "regeneration" which will precede the coming of the Messiah and the Kingdom. Now this, it is to be noticed, reverses the Biblical idea, which is that after Messiah has come in glory and while He reigns on Earth, a rejuvenated Earth will offer the prospect of a restored Garden of Eden, and will, as such, be an unmistakable sign of His presence and reign. In order to avoid the necessity for putting this correct interpretation on the facts, Charles suggests revising the statement in 29:3, which says:

The Messiah shall then begin to be revealed.

He would make it seem as if the passage must have said that the Messiah had already come and was reigning. This would make it contradict the explicit statement in 30:1, thus creating a new difficulty, which it would be necessary to overlook or explain away. In conclusion let us only add that the two statements are so different that the idea that Irenaeus has given us "a longer and fuller form" of what is found in II. Baruch and in I. Enoch does not make sense to us. Nor do we find very meaningful the underlying assumption that old apocalypses had once existed, and that these statements are fragments thereof which have survived as a kind of literary debris or detritus. We do feel, moreover, that the statement in II. Baruch is a piece of junk. It describes a bizarre menu of old meat, new wine, and odors of fruits, with manna for dessert. It comes to us from nobody knows where, and nobody cares either. And therefore even to class it with the other statement does not add up. - J. H. L.]

(4) And these things are borne witness to in writing by Papias, the hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp, in his fourth book; for there were five books compiled (syntetagma) by him. And he says in addition, "Now these things are credible to believers." And he says that, "when the traitor Judas did not give credit to them, and put the question, 'How then can things about to bring forth so abundantly be wrought by the Lord?' the Lord declared, 'They who shall come to these (times) shall see.'" When prophesying of these times, therefore, Esaias says: "The wolf also shall feed with the lamb, and the leopard shall take his rest with the kid; the calf also, and the bull, and the lion shall eat together; and a little boy shall lead them. The ox and the bear shall feed together, and their young ones shall agree together; and the lion shall eat straw as well as the ox. And the infant boy shall thrust his hand into the asp's den, into the nest also of the adder's brood; and they shall do no harm, nor have power to hurt anything in my holy mountain." And again he says, in recapitulation, "Wolves and lambs shall then browse together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the serpent earth as if it were bread; and they shall neither hurt nor annoy anything in my holy mountain, saith the Lord." [Isaiah 11:6 etc.] I am quite aware that some persons endeavour to refer these words to the case of savage men, both of different nations and various habits, who come to believe, and when they have believed, act in harmony with the righteous. But although this is (true) now with regard to some men coming from various nations to the harmony of the faith, nevertheless in the resurrection of the just (the words shall also apply) to those animals mentioned. For God is rich in all things. And it is right that when the creation is restored, all the animals should obey and be in subjection to man, and revert to the food originally given by God (for they had been originally subjected in obedience to Adam), that is, the productions of the earth. But some other occasion, and not the present, is (to be sought) for showing that the lion shall (then) feed on straw. And this indicates the large size and rich quality of the fruits. For if that animal, the lion, feeds upon straw (at that period), of what a quality must the wheat itself be whose straw shall serve as suitable food for lions?

34 (1) Then, too, Isaiah himself has plainly declared that there shall be joy of this nature at the resurrection of the just, when he says: "The dead shall rise again; those, too, who are in the tombs shall arise, and those who are in the earth shall rejoice. For the dew from Thee is health to them." [Isaiah 26:19] And this again Ezekiel also says: "Behold, I will open your tombs, and will bring you forth out of your graves; when I will draw my people from the sepulchres, and I will put breath in you, and ye shall live; and I will place you on your own land, and ye shall know that I am the Lord." [Ezekiel 37:12, etc.] And again the same speaks thus: "These things, saith the Lord, I will gather Israel from all nations whither they have been driven, and I shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the sons of the nations: and they shall dwell in their own land, which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell in it in peace; and they shall build houses and plant vineyards, and dwell in hope, when I shall cause judgment to fall among all who have dishonoured them, among those who encircle them round about; and they shall know that I am the Lord their God, and the God of their fathers." [Ezekiel 28:25, 26] Now I have shown a short time ago that the church is the seed of Abraham; and for this reason, that we may know that He who in the New Testament "raises up from the stones children unto Abraham," [Matthew 3:9] is He who will gather, according to the Old Testament, those that shall be saved from all the nations, Jeremiah says: "Behold, the

days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, who led the children of Israel from the north, and from every region whither they had been driven; He will restore them to their own land which He gave to their fathers." [[Jeremiah 23:7, 6](#). Irenaeus's quotation from [Jeremiah](#) has some unusual features. In the first place, it is defective. A large part of the Biblical passage has fallen out of Irenaeus' text. The result is that the fragment which remains states that the Israelis of the future will not say the very thing that they will say, and which expresses the entire point that both Jeremiah and Irenaeus wished to make. The full passage is in [Jeremiah 23:7-8](#) (not 7, 6). It compares two forms of statement used in swearing oaths. The first of them is one the Israelis had long used, but which they are going to forget about and stop using; while the second is one which they will adopt after Jehovah has caused them to return to Palestine and has established them there, and which they will continue to use ever after. We give here what was probably the original, full form of Irenaeus' text, putting in parentheses the words that fell out of it:

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, "The Lord liveth, (who led the children of Israel up out of the land of Egypt;" but, "The Lord liveth, who brought up, and) who led the children of Israel from the north, and from every region whither they had been driven;" He will restore them to their own land which He gave to their fathers.

To account for the omission of the bracketed words is easy. For homoioteleuton is the commonest of all the errors copyists make, and the repetition of numerous words and phrases in this particular passage would practically insure that any nodding scribe would lose, or would repeat, some of its words.

In the second place, the citation ends strangely. For the final thought (expressed in the words "He will restore them to their own land ...") is not smoothly connected with the expressions of ideas which precede it. Moreover, it differs from the ancient Hebrew, which reads "And they shall dwell in their own land." While, lastly, it also differs from the ancient Greek version, which says: "And he restored them to their own land." What about this?

Irenaeus himself used the ancient Greek version and was quoting from it. We shall consider it first, and shall begin by asking the reader to notice how its exact words, including the "and," the "He," and the "restored" in the past tense, make excellent sense. The final thought, which is the thing in question, should be understood as forming an integral part of the statement Israelis will use in swearing oaths in the days of Messiah's reign. So understood, what Israelis will then say is:

The Lord lives, who led the children of Israel from the north, and from every region whither they had been driven, and (who) restored them to their own land which He gave to their fathers.

Such an understanding would make the "and" right, and the "He" right, and the "restored" right, and its tense right, too. We thus have a perfect unity which makes excellent sense in the Greek version. And therefore, if Irenaeus used it, it is very natural to ask why it got changed, or how. Now if these questions are to be answered, the principal things that have to be accounted for are: first, the change in verb, from "dwell" in Hebrew to "restore" in Greek and in Latin, or vice versa; and secondly, the change in tenses from a past tense in the Greek to a future tense in the Hebrew and in the Latin translation of Irenaeus' text, or vice versa. What about this?

As to the first question, namely, of the different meanings of the two words ("dwell" versus "restore"), we find here a phenomenon that is very common, and one which linguists easily understand. For the inflected forms of the Hebrew verb *bvy* (= to sit, remain, dwell, inhabit), on the one hand, and the inflected forms of the Hebrew verb *bwv* (= to go back, to return, to cause to return, to restore, to bring back), on the other, are very easily confused, both by those who try to translate Hebrew into other

languages, and also by those who, as Hebrews, are trying to read Old Testament texts in their own language. And this is certainly one of those passages in which the Greek may present us with an accurate translation of a Hebrew reading superior to what the Masoretic Text now offers. It is true, of course, that the present Hebrew reading in the last half of verse 8 makes good sense where the passage (which consists of verses 7 and 8) now stands in the Masoretic Text. For though the statement in the last half of verse 8 cannot be understood as part of the oath, it may easily and naturally be taken as referring to 23:3, or to 23:6, or to both. It is thus well adapted to the context there, and there is no need whatever to take it as an integral part of the oath of the future. Nevertheless, there is a question as to what was the original, proper location of verses 7 and 8. The Greek version puts them after 23:40, at the very end of chapter 23, thus separating them a full 32 verses from verses 3 and 6. And therefore, if the Greek version has the passage in its proper place, then it would be virtually necessary to take the last half of verse 8 as an integral part of the formula of swearing, for there is nothing in the context there to which it can refer, either in the verses preceding, or in those following. Verses 7 and 8 make a self-contained unit. It fits well both where it stands in the Masoretic Text and in the Greek version. But the final thought in the last half of verse 8 as the Masoretic Text gives it does not fit equally well in either place. As the Greek version gives it, it would fit well in either place, but if the Greek form is closer to the Hebrew original in wording than the Hebrew form is, then the original pre-Masoretic form of Hebrew would have to have been some form of gwv, and also in the past tense.

As to the second question, namely, concerning the tenses, the principal fact to notice is that we are dealing with a Latin translation of whatever it was that Irenaeus had written, and that in Latin the two words restituēt (future tense) and restituīt (perfect past tense) are almost identical in spelling. This means a subsequent copyist may easily have changed the tense, either accidentally or on purpose. If the original translator had checked with a Hebrew text, it might have led him to change the tense, while retaining the meaning "restore." It would certainly be easy for any reader to fail to perceive that the relative pronoun was implied as subject of the second of the two clauses which were parallel members of the formula of deposition. And thus, if there was confusion, as we suppose there must have been, it is certainly very understandable how it might have arisen. For our purposes there is no need to discuss this matter any further here. We shall only add that it is this writer's usual practice to trust the Masoretic Text, but that in the present case he has to acknowledge that the reading in the Greek version of the last half of verse 8 is preferable to the Hebrew reading, and that the position of the unit at the end of the chapter is also preferable. It is also this writer's opinion, of course, that Irenaeus had used the Greek version's text in full, and that an apekatesthsen (= restituīt) lay behind the text's restituēt. - J. H. L.]

(2) That the whole creation shall, according to God's will, obtain a vast increase, that it may bring forth and sustain fruits such (as we have mentioned), Isaiah declares: "And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every prominent hill, water running everywhere in that day, when many shall perish, when walls shall fall. And the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, seven times that of the day, when He shall heal the anguish of His people, and do away with the pain of His stroke." [Isaiah 30:25, 26] Now "the pain of the stroke" means that inflicted at the beginning upon disobedient man in Adam, that is, death; which (stroke) the Lord will heal when He raises us from the dead, and restores the inheritance of the fathers, as Isaiah again says: "And thou shalt be confident in the Lord, and He will cause thee to pass over the whole earth, and feed thee with the inheritance of Jacob thy father." [Isaiah 58:14] This is what the Lord declared: "Happy are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down (to meat), and will come forth and serve them. And if He shall come in the evening watch, and find them so, blessed are they, because He shall make them sit down, and minister to them; or if this be in the second, or it be in the third, blessed are they." [Luke 12:37, 38] Again John also says the very same in the Apocalypse: "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection." [Revelation 20:6] Then, too, Isaiah has declared the time when these events shall occur; he says: "And I said, Lord, how long? Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses be without men, and the earth be left a desert. And

after these things the Lord shall remove us men far away (*longe nos faciet Deus homines*), and those who shall remain shall multiply upon the earth." [Isaiah 6:11] Then Daniel also says this very thing: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of those under the heaven, is given to the saints of the Most High God, whose kingdom is everlasting, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." [Daniel 7:27] And lest the promise named should be understood as referring to this time, it was declared to the prophet: "And come thou, and stand in thy lot at the consummation of the days." [Daniel 12:13]

(3) Now, that the promises were not announced to the prophets and the fathers alone, but to the churches united to these from the nations, whom also the Spirit terms "the islands" (both because they are established in the midst of turbulence, suffer the storm of blasphemies, exist as a harbour of safety to those in peril, and are the refuge of those who love the height (of heaven), and strive to avoid. By thus, that is, the depth of error), Jeremiah thus declares: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye nations, and declare it to the isles afar off; say ye, that the Lord will scatter Israel, He will gather him, and keep him, as one feeding his flock of sheep. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and rescued him from the hand of one stronger than he. And they shall come and rejoice in Mount Zion, and shall come to what is good, and into a land of wheat, and wine, and fruits, of animals and of sheep; and their soul shall be as a tree bearing fruit, and they shall hunger no more. At that time also shall the virgins rejoice in the company of the young men: the old men, too, shall be glad, and I will turn their sorrow into joy; and I will make them exult, and will magnify them, and satiate the souls of the priests the sons of Levi; and my people shall be satiated with my goodness." [Jeremiah 31:10, etc.] Now, in the preceding book [See Book IV. 8 (3)] I have shown that all the disciples of the Lord are Levites and priests, they who used in the temple to profane the Sabbath, but are blameless. [Matthew 12:5] Promises of such a nature, therefore, do indicate in the clearest manner the feasting of that creation in the kingdom of the righteous, which God promises that He will Himself serve.

(4) Then again, speaking of Jerusalem, and of Him reigning there, Isaiah declares, "Thus saith the Lord, Happy is he who hath seed in Zion, and servants in Jerusalem. Behold, a righteous king shall reign, and princes shall rule with judgment." [Isaiah 31:9, 32:1] And with regard to the foundation on which it shall be rebuilt, he says: "Behold, I will lay in order for thee a carbuncle stone, and sapphire for thy foundations; and I will lay thy ramparts with jasper, and thy gates with crystal, and thy wall with choice stones: and all thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be the peace of thy children; and in righteousness shalt thou be built up." [Isaiah 54:11-14] And yet again does he say the same thing: "Behold, I make Jerusalem a rejoicing, and my people (a joy); for the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. Also there shall not be there any immature (one), nor an old man who does not fulfil his time: for the youth shall be of a hundred years; and the sinner shall die a hundred years old, yet shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them themselves; and shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them themselves, and shall drink wine. And they shall not build, and others inhabit; neither shall they prepare the vineyard, and others eat. For as the days of the tree of life shall be the days of the people in thee; for the works of their hands shall endure." [Isaiah 65:18]

35 (1) If, however, any shall endeavour to allegorize (prophecies) of this kind, they shall not be found consistent with themselves in all points, and shall be confuted by the teaching of the very expressions (in question). For example: "When the cities" of the Gentiles "shall be desolate, so that they be not inhabited, and the houses so that there shall be no men in them, and the land shall be left desolate." [Isaiah 6:11] "For, behold," says Isaiah, "the day of the Lord cometh past remedy, full of fury and wrath, to lay waste the city of the earth, and to root sinners out of it." [Isaiah 13:9] And again he says, "Let him be taken away, that he behold not the glory of God." [Isaiah 26:10] And when these things are done, he says, "God will remove men far away, and those that are left shall multiply in the earth." [Isaiah 6:12] "And they shall build houses, and shall inhabit them themselves: and plant vineyards, and eat of them themselves." [Isaiah 65:21] For all these and other words were unquestionably spoken in reference to the resurrection of the just, which takes place after the coming of Antichrist, and the destruction of all nations under his

rule; in (the times of) which (resurrection) the righteous shall reign in the earth, waxing stronger by the sight of the Lord: and through Him they shall become accustomed to partake in the glory of God the Father, and shall enjoy in the kingdom intercourse and communion with the holy angels, and union with spiritual beings; and (with respect to) those whom the Lord shall find in the flesh, awaiting Him from heaven, and who have suffered tribulation, as well as escaped the hands of the Wicked one. For it is in reference to them that the prophet says: "And those that are left shall multiply upon the earth." And Jeremiah

[The quotation that follows is not found in Jeremiah, but in the apocryphal book of Baruch, chapter 4:36-37 and 5:1-9.

Irenaeus used a Greek Bible. In Codex Vaticanus (B) and in Codex Alexandrinus (A) Baruch is found lying between Jeremiah and Lamentations. In them, therefore, or in similar manuscripts, it would certainly be easy for a reader or writer to turn to his codex or roll, and to think that he was reading or was quoting from the prophet Jeremiah (either from the book of Jeremiah or from Lamentations) whereas he was actually reading or quoting from Baruch. (In Codex Sinaiticus (a or S) Baruch is missing. Nothing is found between Jeremiah and Lamentations. The latter is extant only as far as 2:20, which was the end of the section Tischendorf rescued from the fire on his first visit to St. Catherine's Monastery. Baruch may have followed Lamentations in Codex Sinaiticus, or it may have been completely omitted. Rahlfs says: ... S post Ier. scripsit librum Thr. usque ad 2:20 conseruatum; librum Bar. utrum post Thr. scripserit an omiserit, non liquet, quia post Thr. 2:20 multa folia interierunt. (Septuaginta, Vol. II., p. 748).

What about this? The quotation from Baruch is the only one from a nonBiblical document in our Exhibit A. It raises two questions. First, what was the status of the document which Irenaeus has quoted in the churches in his day, or before, or after? And second, what is the nature of the contents of the passage which he quoted? Was it essentially Biblical or not?

As to the first question and the issues involved, Dr. Allis said that Baruch is a writing "which neither Jews nor Christians regarded as canonical." His assertion would be true enough of the other works he listed, namely, Enoch, etc., but it is not true of Baruch, which "occurs in lists which rigorously exclude the noncanonical books." Swete has stated the basic facts as follows:

Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremiah (Barouc, Epistolh Ieremiou, (prophetia) Baruch) were regarded by the Church as adjuncts of Jeremiah, much in the same way as Susanna and Bel were attached to Daniel. Baruch and the Epistle occur in lists which rigorously exclude the non-canonical books; they are cited as 'Jeremiah' (Iren. V. 35. 1, Tert. scorp. 8, Clem. Alex. paed. i. 10, Cypr. testim. ii. 6); with Lamentations they form a kind of trilogy supplementary to the prophecy (Athanas. ep. 39 Ieremiou kai sun autw Barouc, yrhnoi, Epistolh, Cyril Hier. catech. iv. 33 Ieremiou meta Barouc kai yrhnwn kai Epistolh). (Origen, while omitting Baruch, includes the Epistle in a formal list of the Hebrew canon (Eus. H. E. vi. 25 Ieremiav sun yrhnoiv kai th Epistolh en eni).) In some Greek MSS. the Epistle follows Baruch without break, and in the Latin and English Bibles it forms the sixth and last chapter of that book. (H. B. Swete, An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1900), p. 274.)

The facts mentioned in the preceding statement show that a good many Christians thought Baruch was canonical. Among them were some of the most knowledgeable and orthodox. It would be very unfair to think his use of Baruch entitled us to think of Irenaeus as dabbling with extraBiblical documents. And as to the second question, there can be little doubt but that the ideas in the passage which he has cited are

essentially Biblical and could be found in many passages of [Isaiah](#) and [Ezekiel](#), of which they seem to us to be rather feeble imitations, which contain nothing original or different than what is being copied. J. H. L.]

the prophet has pointed out, that as many believers as God has prepared for this purpose, to multiply those left upon earth, should both be under the rule of the saints to minister to this Jerusalem, and that (His) kingdom shall be in it, saying, "Look around Jerusalem towards the east, and behold the joy which comes to thee from God Himself. Behold, thy sons shall come whom thou hast sent forth: they shall come in a band from the east even unto the west, by the word of that Holy One, rejoicing in that splendour which is from thy God. O Jerusalem, put off thy robe of mourning and of affliction, and put on that beauty of eternal splendour from thy God. Gird thyself with the double garment of that righteousness proceeding from thy God; place the mitre of eternal glory upon thine head. For God will show thy glory to the whole earth under heaven. For thy name shall for ever be called by God Himself, the peace of righteousness and glory to him that worships God. Arise, Jerusalem, stand on high, and look towards the east, and behold thy sons from the rising of the sun, even to the west, by the word of that Holy One, rejoicing in the very remembrance of God. For the footmen have gone forth from thee, while they were drawn away by the enemy. God shall bring them in to thee, being borne with glory as the throne of a kingdom. For God has decreed that every high mountain shall be brought low, and the eternal hills, and that the valleys be filled, so that the surface of the earth be rendered smooth, that Israel, the glory of God, may walk in safety. The woods, too, shall make shady places, and every sweet-smelling tree shall be for Israel itself by the command of God. For God shall go before with joy in the light of His splendour, with the pity and righteousness which proceeds from Him."

(2) Now all these things being such as they are, cannot be understood in reference to super-celestial matters; "for God," it is said, "will show to the whole earth that is under heaven thy glory." But in the times of the kingdom, the earth has been called again by Christ (to its pristine condition), and Jerusalem rebuilt after the pattern of the Jerusalem above, of which the prophet Isaiah says, "Behold, I have depicted thy walls upon my hands, and thou art always in my sight." [[Isaiah 49:16](#)] And the apostle, too, writing to the Galatians, says in like manner, "But the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." [[Galatians 4:26](#)] He does not say this with any thought of an erratic Aeon, or of any other power which departed from the Pleroma, or of Prunicus, but of the Jerusalem which has been delineated on (God's) hands. And in the Apocalypse John saw this new (Jerusalem) descending upon the new earth. [[Revelation 21:2](#)] For after the times of the kingdom, he says, "I saw a great white throne, and Him who sat upon it, from whose face the earth fled away, and the heaven; and there was no more place for them." [[Revelation 20:11](#)] And he sets forth, too, the things connected with the general resurrection and the judgment, mentioning "the dead, great and small." "The sea," he says, "gave up the dead which it had in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead that they contained; and the books were opened. Moreover," he says, "the book of life was opened, and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works; and death and hell were sent into the lake of fire, the second death." [[Revelation 20:12-14](#)] Now this is what is called Gehenna, which the Lord styled eternal fire. [[Matthew 25:41](#)] "And if any one," it is said, "was not found written in the book of life, he was sent into the lake of fire." [[Revelation 20:15](#)] And after this, he says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth have passed away; also there was no more sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, as a bride adorned for her husband." "And I heard," it is said, "a great voice from the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them; and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them as their God. And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, because the former things have passed away." [[Revelation 21:1-4](#)] Isaiah also declares the very same: "For there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; and there shall be no remembrance of the former, neither shall the heart think about them, but they shall find in it joy and exultation." [[Isaiah 65:17,18](#)] Now this is what has been said by the apostle: "For the fashion of this world passeth away." [I.

[Corinthians 7:31](#)] To the same purpose did the Lord also declare, "Heaven and earth shall pass away."
[[Matthew 26:35](#)] When these things, therefore, pass away above the earth, John, the Lord's disciple, says that the new Jerusalem above shall (then) descend, as a bride adorned for her husband; and that this is the tabernacle of God, in which God will dwell with men. Of this Jerusalem the former one is an image - that Jerusalem of the former earth in which the righteous are disciplined beforehand for incorruption and prepared for salvation. And of this tabernacle Moses received the pattern in the mount; [[Exodus 25:40](#)] and nothing is capable of being allegorized, but all things are steadfast, and true, and substantial, having been made by God for righteous men's enjoyment. For as it is God truly who raises up man, so also does man truly rise from the dead, and not allegorically, as I have shown repeatedly. And as he rises actually, so also shall he be actually disciplined beforehand for incorruption, and shall go forwards and flourish in the times of the kingdom, in order that he may be capable of receiving the glory of the Father. Then, when all things are made new, he shall truly dwell in the city of God. For it is said, "He that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And the Lord says, Write all this; for these words are faithful and true. And He said to me, They are done." [[Revelation 21:5, 6](#)] And this is the truth of the matter.

36 (1) For since there are real men, so must there also be a real establishment (plantationem), that they vanish not away among non-existent things, but progress among those which have an actual existence. For neither is the substance nor the essence of the creation annihilated (for faithful and true is He who has established it), but "the fashion of the world passeth away;" [[I. Corinthians 7:31](#)] that is, those things among which transgression has occurred, since man has grown old in them. And therefore this (present) fashion has been formed temporary, God foreknowing all things; as I have pointed out in the preceding book, [[Book iv. 5, 6.](#)] and have also shown, as far as was possible, the cause of the creation of this world of temporal things. But when this (present) fashion (of things) passes away, and man has been renewed, and flourishes in an incorruptible state, so as to preclude the possibility of becoming old, (then) there shall be the new heaven and the new earth, in which the new man shall remain (continually), always holding fresh converse with God. And since (or, that) these things shall ever continue without end, Isaiah declares, "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I do make, continue in my sight, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain." [[Isaiah 66:22](#)] And as the presbyters say, Then those who are deemed worthy of an abode in heaven shall go there, others shall enjoy the delights of paradise, and others shall possess the splendour of the city; for everywhere the Saviour [[Thus in a Greek Fragment; in the Old Latin, Deus.](#)] shall be seen according as they who see Him shall be worthy.

(2) (They say, moreover), that there is this distinction between the habitation of those who produce an hundred-fold, and that of those who produce sixty-fold, and that of those who produce thirty-fold: for the first will be taken up into the heavens, the second will dwell in paradise, the last will inhabit the city; and that it was on this account the Lord declared, "In my Father's house are many mansions." [[John 14:2](#)] For all things belong to God, who supplies all with a suitable dwelling-place; even as His Word says, that a share is allotted to all by the Father, according as each person is or shall be worthy. And this is the couch on which the guests shall recline, having been invited to the wedding. [[Matthew 22:10](#)] The presbyters, the disciples of the apostles, affirm that this is the gradation and arrangement of those who are saved, and that they advance through steps of this nature; also that they ascend through the Spirit to the Son, and through the Son to the Father, and that in due time the Son will yield up His work to the Father, even as it is said by the apostle, "For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." [[I. Cor. 15:25, 26](#)] For in the times of the kingdom, the righteous man who is upon the earth shall then forget to die. "But when He saith, All things shall be subdued unto Him, it is manifest that He is excepted who did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." [[I. Cor. 15:27, 28](#)]

(3) John, therefore, did distinctly foresee the first "resurrection of the just," [[Luke 14:14](#)] and the inheritance in the kingdom of the earth; and what the prophets have prophesied concerning it harmonize

(with his vision). For the Lord also taught these things, when He promised that He would have the mixed cup new with His disciples in the kingdom. The apostle, too, has confessed that the creation shall be free from the bondage of corruption, (so as to pass) into the liberty of the sons of God. [[Romans 8:21](#)] And in all these things, and by them all, the same God the Father is manifested, who fashioned man, and gave promise of the inheritance of the earth to the fathers, who brought it (the creature) forth (from bondage) at the resurrection of the just, and fulfils the promises for the kingdom of His Son; subsequently bestowing in a paternal manner those things which neither the eye has seen, nor the ear has heard, nor has (thought concerning them) arisen within the heart of man. [[I. Corinthians 2:9](#); [Isaiah 64:4](#)] For there is the one Son, who accomplished His Father's will; and one human race also in which the mysteries of God are wrought, "which the angels desire to look into;" [[I. Peter 1:12](#)] and they are not able to search out the wisdom of God, by means of which His handiwork, confirmed and incorporated with His Son, is brought to perfection; that His offspring, the First-begotten Word, should descend to the creature ([facturam](#)), that is, to what had been moulded ([plasma](#)), and that it should be contained by Him; and, on the other hand, the creature should contain the Word, and ascend to Him, passing beyond the angels, and be made after the image and likeness of God. [[Grabe and others suppose that some part of the work has been lost, so that the above was not its original conclusion.](#)]

Exhibit A
III. Q. S. F. Tertullianus

[From Tertullian, [Against Marcion](#), Book III, we have reproduced chapter 24. We give Peter Holmes' translation from [The Ante-Nicene Christian Library](#), edited by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1868), Vol. VII., pp. 169-174.]

III. 24. Yes, certainly (= [immo](#)), you say, I do hope from Him that which amounts in itself to a proof of the diversity (of Christs), God's kingdom in an everlasting and heavenly possession. Besides, your Christ promises to the Jews their primitive condition, with the recovery of their country; and after this life's course is over, repose in Hades (= [apud inferos](#)) in Abraham's bosom. Oh, most excellent God, when He restores in amnesty (= [placatus](#)) what He took away in wrath! Oh, what a God is yours, who both wounds and heals, creates evil and makes peace! Oh, what a God, that is merciful, even down to Hades! I shall have something to say about Abraham's bosom in the proper place. [[See below, in book iv., chap. iv.](#)] As for the restoration of Judaea, however, which even the Jews themselves, induced by the names of places and countries, hope for just as it is described, [[Ita ut describitur \(i. e., in the literal sense\).](#)] it would be tedious to state at length (= [persequi](#)) how the figurative (= [allegorica](#)) interpretation is spiritually applicable to Christ and His church, and to the character and fruits thereof; besides, the subject has been regularly treated (= [digestum](#)) in another work, which we entitle [De Spe Fidelium](#) (= [On the Hope of the Faithful](#)). [[This work which is not extant \(although its title appears in one of the oldest MSS. of Tertullian, the Codex Agobardinus\), is mentioned by St. Jerome in his Commentary on Ezekiel, chap. 36; in the preface to his Comment. on Isaiah, chap. 18; and in his notice of Papias of Hierapolis \(Oehler\).](#)] At present, too, it would be superfluous (= [otiosum](#)) for this reason, that our inquiry relates to what is promised in heaven, not on earth. But we do confess that a kingdom is promised to us upon the earth, although before heaven, only in another state of existence; inasmuch as it will be after the resurrection for a thousand years in the divinely-built city of Jerusalem, "let down from heaven," [[Revelation 21:2](#)] which the apostle also calls "our mother from above"; [[Galatians 4:26](#)] and, while declaring that our politeyma, or citizenship, is in heaven, [[Philippians 3:20](#), "our conversation," A. V] he predicates of it (= [deputat](#)) that it is really a city in heaven. This both Ezekiel had knowledge of, [[Ezekiel 48:30-35](#)] and the Apostle John beheld. [[Revelation 21:10-23](#)] And the word of the new prophecy which is a part of our belief, [[That is, the Montanist. This is not Biblical. Nor is it anything that is at all related to Enoch and the other extrabiblical documents Allis referred to. Nor is it related to any Judaizers or Judaizing tendencies. It is a](#)

claim that a sign was seen in the sky quite recently. The attested appearance of the sign was connected with Tertullian's belief that Montanist prophets had predicted that when the city described in Ezekiel (40:2; 48:15-20; 48:30) and in Revelation (21:2, 10-27) was about to come to Earth, an image of the city they had described would appear in the sky. And thus, what he looked for (= the city itself) was thoroughly Biblical, and that fact is not changed by the other undoubted fact that his new prophets and other informants had misled him.] attests how it foretold that there would be for a sign a picture of this very city exhibited to view previous to its manifestation. This prophecy, indeed, has been very lately fulfilled in an expedition to the East. [He means that of Severus against the Parthians. Tertullian is the only author who mentions this prodigy.] For it is evident from the testimony of even heathen witnesses, that in Judaea there was suspended in the sky a city early every morning for forty days. As the day advanced, the entire figure of its walls would wane gradually (= evanescente), and sometimes it would vanish instantly. [Et alias de proximo nullam (or "de proximo" may mean, "on a near approach").] We say that this city has been provided by God for receiving the saints on their resurrection, and refreshing them with the abundance of all really spiritual blessings, as a recompense for those which in the world we have either despised or lost; since it is both just and God-worthy that His servants should have their joy in the place where they have also suffered affliction for His name's sake. Of the heavenly kingdom this is the process (= ratio): After its thousand years are over, within which period is completed the resurrection of the saints, who rise sooner or later according to their deserts, there will ensue the destruction of the world and the conflagration of all things at the judgment: we shall then be changed in a moment into the substance of angels, even by the investiture of an incorruptible nature, and so be removed to that kingdom in heaven of which we have now been treating, just as if it had not been predicted by the Creator, and as if it were proving Christ to belong to the other god, and as if he were the first and sole revealer of it. But now learn that it has been, in fact, predicted by the Creator, and that even without prediction it has a claim upon our faith in respect of [Apud (or, "in the dispensation of the Creator").] the Creator. What appears to be probable to you, when Abraham's seed, after the primal promise of being like the sand of the sea for multitude, is destined likewise to an equality with the stars of heaven - are not these the indications both of an earthly and a heavenly dispensation (= dispositionis)? When Isaac, in blessing his son Jacob, says, "God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth" [Genesis 27:28], are there not in his words examples of both kinds of blessing? Indeed, the very form of the blessing is in this instance worthy of notice. For in relation to Jacob, who is the type of the later and more excellent people, that is to say ourselves [Nostris (i. e. Christians).], first comes the promise of the heavenly dew, and afterwards that about the fatness of the earth. So are we first invited to heavenly blessings when we are separated from the world, and afterwards we thus find ourselves in the way of obtaining also earthly blessings. And your own gospel likewise has it in this wise: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and these things shall be added unto you." [Luke 12:31] But to Esau the blessing promised is an earthly one, which he supplements with a heavenly, after the fatness of the earth, saying, "Thy dwelling shall be also of the dew of heaven." [Genesis 27:39] For the dispensation of the Jews (who were in Esau, the prior of the sons in birth, but the later in affection), [Judaeorum enim dispositio in Esau priorum natu et posteriorum affectu filiorum]. (This is the original of a difficult passage, in which Tertullian, who has taken Jacob as a type of the later, the Christian Church, seems to make Esau the symbol of the former, the Jewish church, which, although prior in time, was later in allegiance to the full truth of God.)] at first was imbued with earthly blessings through the law, and afterwards brought round to heavenly ones through the gospel by faith. When Jacob sees in his dream the steps of a ladder set upon the earth, and reaching to heaven, with angels ascending and descending thereon, and the Lord standing above, we shall without hesitation venture to suppose, [Temere, si forte, interpretabimur] that by this ladder the Lord has in judgment appointed that the way to heaven is shown to men, whereby some may attain to it, and others fall therefrom. For why, as soon as he awoke out of his sleep, and shook through a dread of the spot, does he fall to an interpretation of his dream? He exclaims, "How terrible is this place!" And then adds, "This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven!" [Genesis 28:12-17] For he had seen Christ the Lord, the temple of God, and also the gate by whom heaven is entered. Now surely he would not have mentioned the gate of heaven, if heaven is not entered in the dispensation of (= apud) the Creator. But there is now a gate

provided by Christ, which admits and conducts (to glory). Of this Amos says: "He buildeth His ascensions into heaven"; [Amos 9:6] certainly not for Himself alone, but for His people also, who will be with Him. "And Thou shalt bind them about Thee," says he, "like the adornment of a bride." [Isaiah 49:18] Accordingly the Spirit, admiring such as soar up to the celestial realms by these ascensions, says, "They fly, as if they were kites; they fly as clouds, and as young doves, unto me" [Isaiah 60:8] - that is, simply like a dove. [In allusion to the dove as the symbol of the Spirit, see Matthew 3:16] For we shall, according to the apostle, be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord (even the Son of man, who shall come in the clouds, according to Daniel), [Daniel 7:13] and so shall we ever be with the Lord, [I. Thessalonians 4:17] so long as He remains both on the earth and in heaven, who, against such as are thankless for both one promise and the other, calls the elements themselves to witness: "Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth." [Isaiah 1:2] Now, for my own part indeed, even though Scripture held out no hand of heavenly hope to me (as, in fact, it so often does), I should still possess a sufficient presumption (= praejudicium) of even this promise, in my present enjoyment of the earthly gift; and I should look out for something also of the heavenly, from Him who is the God of heaven as well as of earth. I should thus believe that the Christ who promises the higher blessings is (the Son) of Him who had also promised the lower ones; who had, moreover, afforded proofs of greater gifts by smaller ones; who had reserved for His Christ alone this revelation (= praeconium) of a (perhaps (= si forte)) unheard of kingdom, so that, while the earthly glory was announced by His servants, the heavenly might have God Himself for its messenger. You, however, argue for another Christ, from the very circumstance that He proclaims a new kingdom. You ought first to bring forward some example of His beneficence (= indulgentiae), that I may have no good reason for doubting the credibility of the great promise, which you say ought to be hoped for; nay, it is before all things necessary that you should prove that a heaven belongs to Him, whom you declare to be a promiser of heavenly things. As it is, you invite us to dinner, but do not point out your house; you assert a kingdom, but show us no royal state. [Regiam (perhaps "capital" or "palace").] Can it be that your Christ promises a kingdom of heaven, without having a heaven; as He displayed Himself man, without having flesh? O what a phantom from first to last (= omne)! O hollow pretence of a mighty promise!