

"The First Resurrection."

Paper 17 of 20 'Plain Papers on Prophetic and Other Subjects'.

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There is perhaps no point on which the Church at large has more widely departed from those habits of thought, feeling, and expression, which characterized apostolic Christianity, than that of the place given to death on the one hand and to resurrection on the other. With the apostles and with Christians of their day, death was, so to speak, left behind; while resurrection, or rather the coming of Him whom they knew as "the Resurrection and the Life," was the one object of their joyful, triumphant hope. As to all that makes death really terrible — the fact of its being God's righteous sentence upon mankind as sinners — its connection in this character with that eternal death of which to unbelievers it is at once the type and portal — its import as the expression of vassalage to Satan who "had the power of death" against all who were his slaves — as to all this, we say, the first Christians knew how death had been borne for them by Christ, and robbed of all its terrors. The sentence against their sins had been executed on Jesus; the entrance to eternal death had thus been closed against them by Him whom they knew as their deliverer from "the wrath to come;" and, as to Satan, the resurrection of Christ was to them the demonstration, that "through death he had vanquished him that had the power of death." Death was thus regarded by these Christians as a conquered foe. Nay, they were accustomed to speak of Jesus as the One who "had abolished death, and brought life and immortality (or incorruptibility) to light through the gospel." Consciously partakers of the risen life of Christ — Christ risen being in fact their life — they looked back to his death *for them* as having discharged every claim upon them, whether of the law, or of divine justice, or of Satan, or of death; and being thus one with Christ in His life and partaking of His victory, they joyfully sought to manifest "the power of his resurrection" in dying practically to themselves, sin, the world, and all hopes or thoughts of any rest or portion here. Did sin present its baits? "How shall we *who are dead to sin*, live any longer therein?" Did the flesh plead for indulgence? "Therefore we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh." Whence is this inference drawn? To what does the "therefore" in this passage refer? To the statement by which it is immediately preceded: "And if Christ, be in you, *the body is dead because of sin*; but the spirit is life because of righteousness." Did the world invite to an easier path? *The cross of Christ* was that in which alone they gloried, and by it they were *crucified* to the world, and the world *crucified* to them. Was the danger contemplated of abrogated ordinances resuming their power over the mind? "Wherefore, *if ye be dead with Christ* from the rudiments of the world, why, *as though living in the world*, are ye subject to ordinances?" In a word, their whole position and walk was that of dead and risen men. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God*. When Christ, *who is our life*, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify THEREFORE your members which are upon the earth." (Col. 3: 1-5.) They were still on earth, it is true, and they had evil propensities which required to be mortified; but God in His grace having identified them in life and glory with Christ Himself, as risen and ascended, it became their privilege to mind those things only to which they were thus introduced, reckoning themselves dead to all besides. This led to a path of self-renunciation

which seemed madness to those who were let in the secret of their resurrection-hopes. Indeed the apostle himself says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But resurrection was their hope. "Christ, the first-fruits," had risen, and they knew that they should not be left always here. Not that they calculated with certainty on death in the literal sense. "We shall not all sleep," says the apostle, "but we all (that is, whether asleep or awake) shall be changed." Resurrection was what they counted upon. They *might* fall asleep as some of their brethren had done already, but whether or not, the world was to them already stamped with the character of death, and that for which they looked, was the communication to their bodies, of the life already enjoyed by their souls, in their oneness with the risen and ascended Christ. Man's natural life — all that man naturally knows as life — was now, in their estimate, death; and they waited for the appearing of Christ, "the Resurrection and the Life," when mortality would be swallowed up of life. They knew it was for Him that their departed brethren were waiting; and though the apostles and early Christians esteemed it better to depart and to be with Christ, absent from the body, and present with the Lord, they did not look upon death, and their individual happiness after death, as the object of their hopes, much less could it be the object of their fears. Death was *theirs*, and they so knew this, that instead of regarding death as an officer of justice having absolute power over them, they were able to view it as a servant, which might be employed by their Lord to withdraw them from the conflicts and sorrows of the present scene, to rest with Himself till the moment of His appearing. But it was for that moment they looked and waited. It was to see Him, and be perfectly conformed to Him, in body as well as in spirit, that he might be thus, according to God's eternal purpose, "the first-born among many brethren." Ah, it was this living expectation that made the apostles and early Christians what they were. It was by this they were inspired with courage, armed with fortitude, endued with meekness, made glad to lose what others lived to obtain, and enabled to rejoice with exceeding joy amid afflictions the bare enumeration of which is enough to cause the natural heart to faint. They had the sentence of death in themselves, that they should not trust in themselves, but in God who raiseth the dead.

Why does the Christianity of the present day so little resemble theirs? Why the uncertainty, and want of confidence, of which almost universal complaint is made? Why the fear of death, the shrinking from the cross, the love of pleasure and of ease, and dread even of the world's censure, which so characterize us, alas! in these days? No doubt there has been a great departure from the simplicity of Christ, and the Holy Spirit being grieved, the general tone of christian character and experience is impaired, and the power of divine truth as a whole greatly diminished. There exists a solemn need for self-scrutiny and self-abasement in all these respects. But while admitting this, and praying that it may please God to press the sense of it on our souls, may we not also, dear christian readers, inquire whether the truths by which the first Christians were so powerfully influenced are held by us? or, if undoubtedly held as to the general theory, whether they are held by us in the same relations and proportions as by the apostles and their fellow-christians of that day? If there be some one subject but seldom mentioned in the New Testament, and never brought forward as a prominent or leading theme; if there be another subject, on which the New Testament largely dwells, connecting it with every detail of christian truth and christian conduct; and if in the present day this divine order be reversed — the former subject brought into prominence, while the latter is thrown into the shade — can we wonder that such different results are produced? Let any christian reader turn to the New Testament and see the place given there to the subject of death; let him peruse its sacred pages and mark the position that the subject of

the resurrection fills; let them compare with the New Testament usage on this point, the prevailing character of religious discourses, conversations, and books, in the present day, and he will cease to wonder that we see but little of the Christianity of early days. Death, of which the apostles said so little, is by most uniformly held out to view as the necessary terminus of each Christian's path below, and preparation for it as the great business of the period which may intervene. The happiness of the disembodied spirit is the great element of nearly all the instruction that treats of what is future to the Christian, and it becomes thus the object to which christian aspirations are almost solely directed; while resurrection, of which the New Testament is full, and the coming of Christ, at which the resurrection of the saints is to take place, receive but little attention, and so produce but little effect on either the affections or the consciences of God's people. Nor is this all. The resurrection of the saints, and Christ's coming with which it is inseparably connected, are not only put in the back-ground as to the measure of attention they receive, but the notions respecting them which generally prevail are of a character to keep them in the shade. The whole period of the Millennium is held necessarily to intervene between us and the coming of Christ, so that neither it nor the resurrection which attends it can possibly be viewed as a proximate object of hope, by those who entertain this idea. With such a theory in the mind, death and the disembodied state become unavoidably the objects of habitual expectancy; that is, if there be enough of serious godliness to withdraw the soul in any way from supreme regard to present worldly objects and pursuits. And let us not suppose that all kinds of religious truth are of equal efficiency for this end. If God has chosen to reveal in His word a certain class of objects for the purpose of supplanting the world in the affections of His people; and if, in our individual meditations and social intercourse, as well as in our formal religious instructions, we resolutely prefer employing *another class of objects*, we ought not to be surprised if the worldliness of our own and of our brethren's hearts should prove too strong for us. God is wiser than man! The only issue of preferring our own thoughts to His, is to have it made manifest, that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men." May He teach us the true wisdom, which consists in entire subjection to His blessed word! *What that word reveals as the all-absorbing object of christian expectancy, is not death and the disembodied state, but the coming of Christ and the resurrection from the dead.*

Nor is the Old Testament silent on the subject of resurrection. It is differently presented there, it is true; but this is what we might expect. It is not there set forth as the proximate and heavenly hope of a people identified by grace with an earth-rejected but heaven-enthroned and heaven-exalted Christ. This is not the subject of the Old Testament but of the New. The bright future of the Old Testament is the kingdom of the Messiah. From Moses to Malachi, one prophetic strain after another takes up the joyful, wondrous theme, each celebrating, in its turn, the triumphs, the repose, the magnificence of Messiah's reign — its righteous character, its world-wide extent, and its duration co-eval with that of sun and moon. On the shores of the Red Sea, the Lord's hosts begin to chant these strains; and from the rivers of Babylon where the captives sit down and weep - from that strange land where the oppressors in vain require of them a song — there does sound forth the piteous plaint, which, while bewailing present sorrows and degradations, anticipates the advent of Messiah and the glories of His reign. And has the resurrection no place in these anticipations? Who, that is conversant with the Psalms and prophecies, needs ask a question such as this? In the first place, the Messiah, whose reign is foretold and celebrated is the One whose sufferings are predicted as preceding His exaltation — whose death and resurrection are anticipated as introductory to His reign. Psalms and prophecies

need scarcely be cited in illustration or in proof of this. But further, the thought of resurrection is commonly associated, by the prophets, with their anticipation of the kingdom itself. Who can hesitate as to what "morning" it is of which we read, where, having referred to the wicked and their end, the psalmist says, "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and *the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning*; and their beauty (that of the wicked) shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. *But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave*; for he shall receive me." (Ps. 49: 14, 15.) To what does the prophet refer, when in Isaiah 26: 13-19, he institutes the contrast between the former lords who have had dominion over Israel, and others, whose resurrection he foretells? Of the one class he says, "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise;" while of the others he writes, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Need we point out to our readers the connection between these anticipations, and the predictions of Messiah's kingdom — of millennial blessedness — in the midst of which they are found? Hosea's prophecy, too, is well known: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave: I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." (Hosea 13: 14.) The restoration of Israel is set forth in Ezek. 37, under the symbol of the resurrection of the dry bones, of which the valley, as beheld by the prophet in his vision, was full. Daniel predicts, moreover, that in connection with the time of unequalled trouble, and Michael's standing up on behalf of Israel, and Israel's consequent deliverance, "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." (Dan. 12: 2.) And though Ezekiel's predicted resurrection be evidently a symbolic one — and if it should be, as some suppose,* that Daniel's prediction be also of a figurative character, it is still manifest how the Spirit of Christ in the prophets associated the thought of resurrection with the expectation of Messiah's kingdom. It is only as proofs of this that we refer to the passages we have quoted. We do not adduce them as establishing the doctrine of "the first resurrection," but only as showing that when the Spirit of prophecy looked onwards to the millennial period, the thought of resurrection was in some way associated therewith. Full, clear light as to the nature of the connection between the two is not to be looked for in those earlier revelations. It is in the New Testament we find this. It is surely enough, if in the Old Testament it be apparent that the resurrection and Messiah's kingdom are so associated in the mind of the Spirit, that almost any prediction of the latter ensures some allusion, more or less distinct, to the former. In some instances the allusion cannot denote less than the actual hope of the resurrection of the bodies of God's people; in others the idea is more vaguely introduced; but the connection between the resurrection and the kingdom of Messiah is established by all.

*The whole passage is as follows in our English version. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." The connection in which this prophecy stands proves irrefragably that this resurrection, whether literal or figurative, is premillennial; it takes place at about the same general epoch as the other events predicted in the passage and enumerated above. Some, perceiving how this, if the resurrection be literal, would demonstrate a pre-millennial resurrection, very earnestly press as a counter argument, that if from this passage we expect a premillennial resurrection of the righteous, we are bound by its terms to expect that some of the wicked will also rise before the millennium. But this is by no means so certain as they represent. The most competent scholars, and some who could not be suspected of any doctrinal bias in the case; Jewish rabbis, for instance, maintain, that the Hebrew words rendered "some" — "*some* to

everlasting life, and some to shame," etc., more strictly imply *these* and *those*; and that their use here does not denote a distinction between *some* and *other some* of the raised ones, but between the whole of them that are raised, and the whole of those who remain in the grave. "Many of them that sleep in the midst of the earth shall awake; *these* (that is, the raised or waking ones) to everlasting life, *those* (who do not awake or arise) to shame and everlasting contempt." It is but right to place before the reader this solution of a difficulty which is often urged. We do not, however, press the passage as an argument for a premillennial literal resurrection. Some whose judgment is of weight, and who fully believe in a literal premillennial resurrection of the righteous, do not see in this passage more than the revival of the righteous part of the Jewish race under the figure of a resurrection. We leave both thoughts with the reader for his prayerful consideration.

We would now, dear christian reader, invite your attention to another point of no small importance to the subject under consideration. In the Old Testament we read of the reign of the saints, as well as of Messiah's reign, while in the New we have repeated assurances that the saints are to reign with Christ. "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever." (Dan. 7: 18.) "Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." (Ver. 22.) "In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19: 28.) "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." (Chap. 25: 21, also 23.) And in Luke 19: 17: "Have thou authority over ten (or "five," ver. 19) cities." "And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together." (Rom. 8: 17.) "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. 6: 2, 3.) "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things *to the church, which is his body.*" (Eph. 1: 22, 23.) "It is a faithful saying if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2: 11, 12.) "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, even as I received of my Father." (Rev. 2: 26, 27.) "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Chap. 3: 21.) "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, . . . and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." (Chap. 5: 9, 10.) "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." (Chap. 20: 4.) It is in this last passage that we find the expression, "the first resurrection." It is not for this reason, however, that We now quote it, but as one of the closing testimonies to the truth, that the saints are to reign with Christ. It is a truth, as we have seen, not altogether unrevealed even in the Old Testament, but one which really pervades the New.

At what time, then, dear christian reader, and in what sense does this joint reign of the saints with Christ take place? If, as we have seen, the Old Testament is filled with prophetic anticipations of a kingdom to be established, as all must confess, on the earth; if these anticipations be connected, as we have seen, with glimpses of resurrection-blessedness and glory; if in the New Testament the resurrection at Christ's coming be the great event held out as the proximate hope of the saints, with such oft-repeated assurances, moreover, of their suffering with Him *here* being rewarded by their reigning with Him *hereafter*; if these things be so, when

and how are these prospects to be consummated — these promises to be fulfilled? IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION. Hear the description of it in the words of inspiration, and say if, in the prophetic vision thus unfolded and thus explained, there be not a futurity presented to us, harmonizing with every prophetic anticipation of the Old Testament, and realizing to the full all the hopes and aspirations of New Testament saints, whether directed to resurrection on the one hand, or participation in Christ's glorious reign on the other. And if it be so, can there be a stronger presumption in favour of the natural, unforced sense of the passage being received as the only true one, than that it does thus combine in one harmonious whole, and crown with pure and unfading lustre, the testimonies of the Old Testament to the *earthly* and of the New Testament to the *heavenly* glories of the kingdom of Christ? Let us read the passage, as given us in Rev. 20: 1-6.

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Let it be supposed by the reader that these words had now for the first time passed under his eye — that, ignorant of the existence of such a passage, and therefore entirely free from bias towards this or that theory of interpreting it, he had now read it for the first time in his life, what impression would it naturally make upon his mind? Could any one thus reading it question for a moment that it predicts an actual resurrection of saints and martyrs, and that these risen ones as priests and kings are to reign with Christ for a thousand years — the rest of the dead remaining in their graves till the thousand years have expired? We are persuaded that such is, beyond doubt, the sense in which any intelligent person, unacquainted with systems and theories of prophetic interpretation, and therefore necessarily unbiassed by them, would, on a first perusal, understand the passage. It was thus understood by the universal Church for almost the whole of the first three centuries; and it was not until Christians began to mistake the world's patronage of a corrupted Christianity for the commencement of the Millennium, that they adopted those spiritualizing theories of interpretation by which such a passage could be adapted to such views.

The questions which we would now, however, press on the reader's attention are — If this be not the kingdom of Messiah predicted throughout the Old Testament, and if this be not the reign of the saints with Christ promised throughout the New, how are the predictions of the one and the promises of the other to be fulfilled? If it be not *in His kingdom* that we are to reign with Christ, when are we to reign with Him? We are not forgetting that in Rev. 22: 5, it is said of the saints, "and they shall reign for ever and ever." But if it be so easy to spiritualize and explain away the prophecies of our reigning with Christ for a thousand years, what security have we

against the application of the same principles to such a passage as the one last quoted? We are told, moreover, in Scripture (whatever may be the meaning of the words) that at the end, Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; and it would be extraordinary indeed if the reign of the saints *with Christ* did not commence till Christ had delivered up the kingdom to God. *His reign* continues *till* then. "For he must reign TILL he hath put all enemies under his feet And when all things shall be subdued unto him, *then* shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."* (1 Cor. 15: 24-28.) Clearly, then, the reign of the saints *with Christ* must be *while His reign continues* — in other words, it must be *before* instead of *after* "the end," when Christ delivers up His kingdom. Most of the passages, moreover, which foretell the reign of the saints with Christ, are manifestly inapplicable to the everlasting state, which succeeds this final act of Christ. The kingdom "taken" and "possessed" by the saints of the Most High, or of the high places, in Daniel 7, is that which immediately succeeds the downfall of the fourth Gentile monarchy: *that is to say, it is identical with the millennial reign of Revelation 20*. The sitting of the apostles on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, may find its place in the scene unfolded to us here, and of which it is said, "This is the first resurrection;" but what place has it in the everlasting state? "Power over the nations," promised in the address to Thyatira to those who overcome, is seen here in actual exercise: "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." But will there be earthly nations" in the everlasting state, subjected to the "power" of these overcomers? Then, finally, the reign anticipated by the redeemed in Rev. 5 is expressly said to have the earth for its sphere — "and we shall reign on (or over) the earth." Let the reader judge, whether it be in "the first resurrection," in which the saints live and reign with Christ a thousand years, that these anticipations of reigning *over the earth* are fulfilled, or in the everlasting state, when "*the earth and the heaven*" shall have "*fled away*," an "*no place shall be found for them!*"

*We surely need not remind our readers that the divine dominion of the Son, in the unity of the Godhead, is unaffected by this economic change mighty and all-comprehensive as this change may be. The "kingdom" which Christ delivers up, is a kingdom which has been given to Him, and He — delivers it up, and is subject to Him that put all things under Him, that God — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — may be all in all.

Many, indeed, interpret "the first resurrection" and thousand years' reign of the risen ones with Christ, as implying nothing more than a state of unexampled religious prosperity. They hold that during this season of the prosperity of religion on the earth, Christ is seated, as at present, at the right hand of God, the saints of all former generations being, as to their bodies in the grave; and as to their souls, present with the Lord, and waiting, even as now, for the moment of their resurrection. It is contended by those who take this view, that Christ will not then reign in any other sense than that in which He now reigns over His people; only, that at that time, mankind generally will be included among His people. They maintain, moreover, that the resurrection of the martyrs and saints in the passage before us, merely denotes a revival of their spirit, and the universal spread and predominance of the principles for which they suffered. But how, we ask, could such a revival of the spirit of the martyrs, and such a predominance of their principles, be a reward *to themselves* when they have been perhaps for centuries in their graves, and are still there? *Is this the reigning with Christ which is more than to compensate for the suffering with Him?*

Let it then be distinctly borne in mind, that on any other ground than that of the simple, natural, obvious meaning of this passage, there is no place left for the saints' reign *with Christ*. Their reign *with Him* cannot be what is meant by the everlasting state, which succeeds His delivering up the kingdom; and on the theory of those who spiritualize Rev. 20: 1-6, they are not saints who reign, but the spirit and principles which, during their lifetime, distinguished the saints; whose bodies (according to this theory) will, alas! be still in the dust of death, while the reign of their principles and spirit is taking place upon the earth! Such, however, is but one of the many startling consequences which flow inevitably from this mode of interpreting the passage before us. Many such will be apparent on a closer examination of its contents.

But before we examine more minutely the passage itself, let us turn to some of the previous testimonies of Christ and His apostles as to the resurrection. From these it will be found that while *the phrase* "the first resurrection" never occurs till here, *the doctrine* of an eclectic resurrection — a resurrection of the righteous apart from the wicked — is fully revealed elsewhere. The phrase in question, does but give formal, precise expression to a truth, with which Christians in the apostolic age were perfectly familiar.

Our Lord's reply to the question of the Sadducees, Luke 20: 84-36, is very express. "And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world (or age, *aion*) marry, and are given in marriage: but they who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (or age, *aion*) and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." He proceeds further to prove, from the fact that God proclaims Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that they must rise from the dead, seeing that "God is the God of the living, not of the dead." God's covenant engagements with the patriarchs would fail of their fulfilment if they were not to be raised from the dead. But, observe, this is not the whole of our Lord's reply. The words we have quoted meet the question on another ground. Our Lord speaks of *a resurrection-age*, and of a class of persons which shall be *accounted worthy to obtain that age*, and the resurrection from the dead. He not only declares that they do not marry, but also that they die no more; and He distinguishes them by two epithets — "children of God," and "children of the resurrection." We do not here rest upon what many competent scholars maintain, that the words rendered "resurrection from the dead," mean literally "from among the dead;" we content ourselves with putting it to the reader, whether the passage as it stands does not evidently bear that sense? Can that be a universal indiscriminate resurrection of righteous and wicked, of which it is said that some "*shall be counted worthy to obtain it*? Could it be said of an indiscriminate resurrection, that they who partake of it "*can die no more*?" What then becomes of "the second death?" A resurrection, moreover, the partakers of which are termed "the children of God, *being the children of the resurrection*," can scarcely be one in which righteous and wicked universally and indiscriminately arise. Were this the only passage on the subject, it seems to us that it would be decisive as to the resurrection of God's children being distinct from that of others, and as to its being at the commencement of an age or era on which the character of resurrection is stamped: as our Lord says, "that age."

In a previous chapter, our Lord, when enforcing on His hearers the practice of kindness to the needy, says, "And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." (Luke 14: 14.) Does not the use of such a phrase,

"the resurrection of the just," suggest unavoidably, that the event it so designates is distinct from the resurrection of others? Not that others will not be raised. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts 24: 15.) But the words of the apostle, as well as those of Christ, would seem to imply that they are distinct from each other, rather than that they are one indiscriminate event.

In John 5: 19-29, we have a passage which fully exhibits this distinction, and in every way demands, and will amply recompense, the closest examination. It contains one word which in the original occurs four times in the passage, and is rendered "judgment," "condemnation," and "damnation." The import and the bearing of the passage are more easily perceived if it be uniformly rendered by one of these — by the word "judgment." The great doctrine of the passage is, that of the Son's equality with the Father, and the determination of the Father that the Son shall be honoured even as He Himself is. There are two ways in which this honour to the Son is secured. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and *quickeneth* them, even so the Son *quickeneth* whom he will." This is one way. Observe that in quickening, the Father and the Son act conjointly. They who are so quickened are brought into fellowship with the Father and the and gladly honour the Son even as they honour the Father. These bow of goodwill. As regards those who will not thus bow to Jesus, who will not thus honour the Son, His rights are to be vindicated. Such are to be compelled, however unwillingly, to render honour to the Son. But in the process by which this is to be effected, He being the One who has been dishonoured, acts alone — and not alone merely, *but in the particular character in which He has been dishonoured*. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all *judgment* unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." Again, "And hath given him authority to execute *judgment* also, BECAUSE HE IS THE SON OF MAN." Into this judgment, they who have been quickened by the Father and the Son do not enter. There is no need that they should, for they honour the Son as the effect of being quickened, and for them to be brought into judgment, would be, in fact, to call in question the efficacy of Christ's own work, through which they are absolved. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into *judgment*; but is passed from death unto life." As to all others, they come under the judgment of that Son of man whom they have despised. "Marvel not at this," our Lord proceeds to say, "for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, (the quickened ones,) unto *the resurrection of life*; and they that have done evil, (the rejecters of the Son and despisers of His glory,) unto *the resurrection of judgment*." Thus there is *a resurrection of life* for those who have been previously quickened, and *a resurrection of judgment* for all besides.

"Yes," says an objector, "but if this passage thus evidently distinguishes between the two resurrections in respect to their character and object, it as evidently identifies them as to time. It is in one hour that both resurrections takes place." It is surprising, that this verbal objection should have the weight that it possesses with many minds, in the presence of such an answer to it as the immediate context supplies. Undoubtedly the Lord says, "the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." But had He not said, almost in the same breath, "The hour is coming, AND NOW IS, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live?" Reader! how long has that "hour" lasted? If it had not lasted almost two thousand years from the time when our Lord pronounced the words,

neither reader nor writer of these pages had heard His blessed, gracious voice! And if the word "hour," in verse 25, denotes a period which we know to be so long, why should not the *same word*, from the *same lips*, in pursuance of the same general theme, be also understood of a lengthened period?

To this it has been replied, "that when the word 'hour' is used of a lengthened period, it is because the action or quality by which the hour is designated extends throughout the period and characterizes it: as, for instance, that 'the hour' of quickening souls, is a period *through the whole course of which* this action of divine power and grace is carried on." It is contended that in the case under consideration, the long interval between the 'resurrection of life' and 'the resurrection of judgment' renders it improbable that the word 'hour' can be used in the extended sense in which it is admitted to be used in the preceding verses; and that therefore we must take it in the literal sense, and conclude that the righteous and the wicked rise simultaneously." We have sought to state this argument in its full force, and having done so, we need do little in reply, but refer the reader to the passage itself — to our Lord's own words. Inattention to their scope and drift can alone account for the use of such an argument. Our Lord is really *contrasting* two periods — "the hour" of quickening dead *souls*, and "the hour" of quickening dead *bodies*. The resurrection of all that are in the graves does as much characterize the one period, as the quickening of those who "hear the voice of the Son of God and live" characterizes the other. True, indeed, that "the resurrection of life" is at the beginning, and "the resurrection of judgment" at the close of this period. But when we consider that within that period the resurrection of both classes assuredly takes place, and that the whole period is what our Lord terms in Luke 20 "that age" — that is, the *resurrection-age*, what room is there to hesitate as to whether our Lord uses the word "hour" of both periods in the same sense? To suppose otherwise seems to us to be using a latitude of interpretation in respect to Christ's words which we should none of us use in reference to the words of a mere human author.

But there is a double contrast in our Lord's words. He not only contrasts the hour in which He quickens men's souls with the hour in which He raises men's bodies, but also *His action in quickening* and *His action in judgment*. Indeed this is the great subject of His discourse. And now mark, dear reader, the object of those who deny the doctrine of a "first resurrection," and contend for the simultaneous resurrection of righteous and wicked, is to show that there is no literal resurrection till the end of all things, when, as they allege, righteous and wicked will be raised together, and *together arraigned* before "the great white throne." Now what our Lord insists upon is, that they whose souls have been quickened by him *will not come into judgment* — that "the resurrection of judgment" *is not for them*.* The life which they have received in this "hour" of quickening dead souls is, in the coming "hour" of raising dead bodies, to issue in "the resurrection of life;" while the wicked, who would not come to Christ that they might have life, are to be raised *for judgment*. The doctrine of a simultaneous resurrection of both classes for judgment before "the great white throne," sadly obscures, if it does not entirely and absolutely neutralize, the distinction on which our Lord insists.

*There is nothing here to contradict the truth clearly enough revealed elsewhere, that believers themselves "must all appear before the judgment seat (*bema*, not *krisis*, as in John 5) of Christ." But this appearing is not a question of life or death, — the justification or the condemnation of the "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;

while, as to all the details of their conduct as believers, they "must give account of themselves to God," yea, the very "counsels of the heart" must be "made manifest," that every man may "have praise of God." (See 1 Cor. 3: 11-15, and 1 Cor. 4: 3-5.)

In John 6, our Lord refers no fewer than four times to the resurrection; but in each instance it is to the resurrection of His people; and the terms in which He speaks are such as intimate that the resurrection treated of is to take place *as their distinctive privilege*. "And this is the Father's will that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but *should raise it up again at the last day*." Also, "That every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: *and I will raise him up at the last day*." Again, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: *and I will raise him up at the last day*." Finally, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: *and I will raise him up at the last day*." The "last day" is not, as is popularly supposed, a day of four-and-twenty hours, absolutely at the close of all things. It is the great closing period, in which God makes manifest the character and results both of man's and Satan's actings, and of His own eternal counsels, as well as of His gracious operations throughout the preceding periods. Just as we have in Scripture "the day of the Lord" in contrast with "man's day," and "the day of judgment" in contrast with "the day of salvation," both these being expressive of a lengthened period; so we have "the last day" in contrast with preceding days, or periods, leading on thereto. But the object for which we quote the four passages in which this phrase occurs, is to point out that the resurrection of the saints is represented as the completion of everything that relates to their position and state. It flows from the gift of the saints to Christ by the Father, and from Christ's faithfulness to the charge with which the Father has entrusted Him. It is inseparable from the everlasting life which is the portion of every one that seeth the Son and believeth on Him. It is the final issue of the Father's drawings, and of that faith in a crucified Saviour which is described as "eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man." True, there is nothing here to distinguish it as to time from the resurrection of the unjust. But this is in *itself* a point of secondary importance. There is no resurrection treated of in this chapter save that of believers; but no statements could be uttered or penned more widely to distinguish it as to its source, its *ground*, and its *character*, from the resurrection of the wicked, than those to which our attention has now been directed.

The Church has its existence by virtue of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The life by which it is animated is His life, as risen from the death which He underwent for our sins, by the infinite efficacy of which death those sins are put away. In Eph. 1, 2, where the Holy Ghost unfolds a truth beyond even this, this truth is most strikingly developed. The truth there specially revealed, and which does pass beyond the subject of our present meditations, is that of the association of the Church with Christ, not as risen only, but as ascended also. But ascension implies resurrection; and our participation in Christ's resurrection is, moreover, expressly declared. "The exceeding greatness of God's power to us-ward who believe," is "according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved:) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Thus even now is the Church partaker of the resurrection-life, as well as of the heavenly exaltation of Jesus. The life has not yet been communicated to our bodies, and therefore it is in spirit, not as yet *actually*, that we are in heavenly places. "Flesh and

blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The resurrection of our bodies will place us *actually*, where our oneness with Christ by the Holy Ghost now places us *spiritually*, in the heavenly places whither our risen Lord has ascended, and where He has sat down. It is surely of all importance to have such a testimony, that the resurrection of the Church is on a principle common with that of her glorified Head, and by virtue of her association with Him in life, in inheritance, and in glory!

What a light does the truth just considered shed on the words of the apostle, "that Christ should suffer, *and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead.*" (Acts 26: 23.) As to the simple fact of restoration to life after death, he was not the first in whom such restoration took place. Instances are recorded both in the Old Testament and in the Gospels, of persons being recalled to life. But it was to the natural Adam-life that they were restored, and so had a second time to sleep the sleep of death. But as to the life which exempts its subjects from weakness, dishonour, corruption, and mortality; the life received, moreover, by virtue of sin's penalty having been undergone, God's glory manifested and secured, Satan vanquished, and death completely overthrown; as to this life, and resurrection in the power of this life, how evident that Christ was indeed the *first* that rose from the dead. He who went down under all Jehovah's waves and all His wrath on account of our sins, atonement for which He had undertaken to make: He who tasted all the bitterness and felt all the power of death, though Himself the Prince of life, and the only-begotten Son of God: He was the *first* to emerge from death's dark dominions, as the One on whom death had no claim, and over whom the grave had no power. "It was not possible that he should be holden of it." "In him was life." He had "power to lay down" His "life and power to take it again." He had laid it down, that God might be glorified, His Church redeemed, sin put away, Satan overthrown, creation itself delivered; and that all the counsels of eternal wisdom, holiness, and love might be accomplished. It was sin that had made it needful that at such a cost, in such a way, God should be glorified, and the good pleasure of the Father's will fulfilled. Christ shrunk not from the mighty work. He took flesh and blood that He might accomplish it. While passing on towards it He could cry, "How am I straitened till it be accomplished." When the hour arrived, He was in perfect readiness, and went out to meet those to whom He said, "Now is your hour, and the power of darkness." He died. The sun was darkened, the rocks were riven, the temple's veil was rent, the graves were opened. Even at His expiring cry, the domains of death were laid bare; *and was it possible that He could be holden of death?* No. "Raised from the dead by the glory of the Father," and bearing with Him the trophies of His victory, "the keys of death and of hades," He came forth, "leading captivity captive." Having "spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in Himself." But though in the conflict He stood alone, and the glory of the victory belongs entirely to Himself, of its fruits we are favoured to partake. He was "*the first* to rise from the dead," but it was as "the firstfruits," and the abundant harvest is in due season to follow. "He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." (Col. 1: 18.) "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

We have been guilty of no digression, dear reader, in considering thus the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is when the apostle has described the vision that he beheld, of thrones, and sitters upon them, to whom judgment was given; when He has described two distinct classes of risen ones who partake of this glory, and said of them all, that they lived

and reigned WITH CHRIST a thousand years; when He has explained that the rest of the dead lived not again throughout this period, it is then that he says of the whole vision, "THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION." And can we contemplate the first resurrection without considering Christ's place in it? Christ, "the first" who rose, "the first-fruits," "the first-born," "the first-begotten from the dead," "the firstborn among many brethren!" No, His place must not be omitted or overlooked! It is in proportion as we understand *His place* that we shall understand *our own*. To say that it is by His power we shall rise, is to say the very least that can be said. It is by His power that even the wicked will be raised for judgment. But as to us, who through grace believe in Jesus and belong to Jesus, it is as given to Him of the Father, purchased by His own blood, absolved by His death, partakers even already of His life, nourished by eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood — it is as one with Him, members of His body, and co-heirs of His inheritance and glory, that our bodies shall be raised. True, that some will have part in "the first resurrection" who do not stand thus in the intimate relation to Him which belongs only to the Church, which is His body — His bride: but Christ and the Church surely form the chief part of "the first resurrection." The Lord grant to all His people a more profound sense of the riches of His love, the value of His sacrifice, the power of His resurrection!

The truth of "the resurrection at the last day" seems to have been known among the Jews at the time of our Lord's sojourn on earth. The Sadducees denied it, but with this exception it seems to have been traditionally held by the nation at large. On the occasion of the death of Lazarus, when the Lord had returned to Bethany, but had not as yet entered the town, Martha, hearing of His approach, went out to meet Him; and in answer to the consolatory assurance, "Thy brother shall rise again," she said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." This was true as far as it went, but our Lord would unfold to her truth of a still deeper and more blessed character. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11: 23-26.) The last day might be far distant; but Jesus would have Martha and her sister to understand, that in receiving Him they received not merely the Raiser of the dead, but the One who is in His own person, "the resurrection and the life." In His absence, sickness had been permitted to enter His beloved retreat at Bethany, and death had followed: the grave itself had received its victim, and the friend of Jesus lay to all appearance secure within its embrace. But the sorrowing sisters were to know, — yea, it was to be manifested to his desponding disciples, who had but just said, "Let us also go, that we may die with him," and to the Jews who were assembled as the comforters of the bereaved ones — all were to know, that life is essentially in the person of the Son of God Himself, and life, not for Himself alone, but for all who are His. Death could not prevent *His* communicating and *their* receiving life; "for he that believeth on me," saith Jesus, "though he were dead, yet shall he live." This was now to be proved in the resurrection of Lazarus: but without presenting it as an argument, may we not suggest to our readers, what an illustration is here afforded of the effect, even as to the bodies of the saints, of the *presence* or *absence* of Jesus, "the resurrection and the life?" In His absence, sickness and death may and do befall the bodies of His people. The moment He returns, believers, though dead like Lazarus, (or rather asleep, to use the word by which our Lord would fain have made the disciples understand Him, but they were dull of hearing,) shall live; while all who are then alive and believe in Him, shall, without passing through death, be changed, and thus "shall never die." Christ Himself is the life of His saints. Nor will it be always, as now,

spiritually alone, and by faith, that He is thus known; His life will be communicated to the sleeping dust of those who are His, and in resurrection they shall behold and reflect His glory.

Philippians 3: 11 represents participation in the resurrection from the dead, as the object of the apostle's earnest desire and strenuous pursuit — "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Had the general, indiscriminate resurrection of all mankind, righteous and wicked together, been that to which the apostle looked forward, how could he with any propriety have used such language as this? Surely the resurrection after which he thus panted, was one peculiar to saints. This is an argument which the mere English reader can appreciate as well as the most learned; but there is evidence the most satisfactory that the true version and right rendering of the passage is much stronger than in our Bibles. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection *from among* the dead."* If this be so, it is direct verbal evidence of the doctrine of "the first resurrection."

*The late Mr. Gipps, the esteemed author of a "Treatise on the First Resurrection," combats, throughout that work, the doctrine we are seeking to exhibit and establish; and in discussing the argument stated above, has some remarks deserving of the reader's most serious attention. Assuming that the reading of the *Textus Receptus* is indisputable, he reasons from it to show that the rendering we have given above is inadmissible; and, it must be confessed, that his observations have great force and acuteness. The fact is, that the terms as given in the *Textus Receptus* are irreconcilable, and so subversive of each other; *exanastasis* as plainly intimating an eclectic resurrection on the one hand, as *ton nekron* implies on the other that of the dead generally. We do not give Mr. G.'s reasonings in detail. The learned reader may find them in "note z," to pp. 84, 85 of his Treatise. It is on account of the following remark that we refer to it at all. "I conceive," says he, "that if Phil. 3: 11, had been meant to express the rising *from* the dead, the preposition *ex* in composition with *anastasis* is would have been repeated, and the phrase would have been *ten exanastasis ek ton nekron*." Such was the judgment of this devoted man and excellent scholar, at a time when the labours of criticism had not yielded so abundant a harvest as they have since brought forth. What would have been his astonishment, if God had spared him, to see the critical editions of Scholz, of Tischendorf, and of Lachmann, who all agree to read *the very phrase which he conceived proper to express the idea of a resurrection of saints before that of the rest of the dead!* The only difference is, that the entire phrase in the correct text of Phil. 3: 11, is yet stronger than what he suggests as strong enough — *ten ek nekron*. These three editors adopt systems of recension which vary in important respects, and their unanimity is so much the stronger, as not one of them was influenced by doctrinal views each coming to this conclusion upon external evidences alone.

An attempt, unfair as it seems to us, is sometimes made to evade the force of such passages as this. It is assumed, for instance, when we apply "the resurrection *from among* the dead" to the pre-millennial resurrection of *believers*, that we restrict the other phrase, "the resurrection *of* the dead," to the post-millennial resurrection of the wicked. The real question being left out of sight, it is contended (a point which no one disputes) that the latter phrase, "the resurrection *of* the dead," is not only applied expressly to the resurrection of *both classes*, but specifically to that resurrection which is *peculiar to believers*, and even to the resurrection of Christ Himself. No doubt this is the case; but then no millenarian writer would think of contending that "the resurrection *from among* the dead" is the formula invariably used in Scripture to denote the first

resurrection, and "the resurrection *of* the dead" to express the post-millennial resurrection of the wicked. A child may see that the latter expression is applicable to both events, while the former is necessarily restricted to one. Christ's resurrection was "*from among* the dead," as in 1 Peter 1: 4, and, of course, it was also "a resurrection *of* the dead," as in Acts 26: 23, and Rom. 1: 4. But it is utterly illogical and unsound to infer thence that the two phrases are interchangeable. Either might be used, as occasion requires, of an eclectic resurrection, but *anastasis ek nekron* neither is nor could be predicated of the resurrection which embraces *all the rest of the dead*.

In Romans 8 we have two passages of deepest importance on the subject before us. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." This is our present state. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." A vivifying of these mortal bodies, declared thus to be dependent on the fact of the previous indwelling of the Spirit, is surely what none can anticipate but those who are partakers of this wondrous grace. But this is not the whole. Salvation itself is seen in the light of the verse just quoted to have a twofold character; and this the apostle proceeds to trace out in the verses which succeed. There is a sense in which we believers are already saved; and there is a sense in which salvation is still the object of hope. "The Spirit of adoption" we have already received. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, *that we are the children of God*." This is our present known relationship to God, of which the indwelling Spirit bears full testimony. But "if children," the apostle argues, "then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Our present relation to God as His children associates us in hope with all the prospects of Christ Himself as the "appointed Heir of all things." *Now* it is our privilege to partake of His sufferings; *ere long* we shall participate in His glory; "if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." The anticipation of this makes present sufferings easy to be endured. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." What the apostle reckons upon is not a state of happiness for the departed spirit, (true as that expectation is in its place,) but *a glory to be revealed*, and to be revealed, mark, *in us*. It is the glorification of the body of which he treats. Its *vivification* he has previously inferred from the present indwelling of the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead: its *glorification* he now exultingly counts upon, as the infallible result of present relationship to God as His children, and as the counterpart to the suffering with Christ which at present flows from this relationship. But when are these hopes to be fulfilled? When are these mortal bodies to be quickened, and this glory to be revealed in us? Ask many Christians, and they will reply, "At the last judgment and consummation of all things, when the heaven and the earth shall flee away from before the face of Him who sits upon the great white throne." But what says the apostle here? Is this his doctrine on the subject? No, he speaks of creation's groans and travail; he foretells creation's deliverance from the bondage of corruption; and he connects creation's unintelligent yearnings after renewal and repose, with our own intelligent hope of being glorified together with Christ. "For the earnest expectation of the creation (*ktisis*) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty (literally, the liberty of the glory) of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only it, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to

wit, the redemption of our body." The whole creation, of which man was part, but over which he was placed as lord, became subject by man's sin to vanity and to the bondage of corruption. Misery, decay, and death, are the fruit to all creation of the apostacy of Adam, its responsible head. But these results of sin are not to remain for ever. The groans of creation are to be hushed, and its travail to be succeeded by glad and peaceful repose. Who that has read the Old Testament can fail to be reminded of some of its joyous predictions? Does it not witness of the wolf dwelling with the lamb, and the leopard lying down with the kid? of the calf, the young lion, and the fatling being led, and led together, by a little child? Does it not speak of a covenant with the beasts of the field, the fowls of heaven, and the creeping things of the earth? And does it not call on all creation to rejoice in Jehovah's reign? "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." (Psalm 96: 11-13.) It is needless to multiply quotations on this point. The removal of the curse under which the sin-blighted creation groans, is well known to be associated in Old Testament prophecy with Messiah's reign. And with what does the apostle associate it in the passage before us? *With the quickening and glorification of the bodies of God's children* — with "the adoption — the redemption of our body!" Oh, yes! if it was by the disobedience of the first Adam that all creation was involved in the consequences of his fall, the obedience to death of the second Adam secures for creation the blessings of His reign. If by man came misery and ruin, by man shall also come deliverance and joy. If the groanings of creation have proclaimed the defection and condemnation of the first man, the songs of that creation shall celebrate the faithfulness, the worth, the glory of the second. And when creation itself shall be delivered thus from the bondage of corruption, and be subjected instead thereof to the beneficent rule of the Prince of Peace, it will not be alone that the Blessed One will reign. "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of *the sons of God*." It is for "the liberty of the glory of *the children of God*," that is, the liberty which their glory will bring to creation, and diffuse over its whole extent, that creation waits. When Christ reigns, the saints are to reign with Him. But this must surely be in glory. In point of fact, our mortal bodies form part of the creation which at present groans, and it is by means of our bodies that we are linked with its present condition. Already we possess "the first-fruits of the Spirit;" but this hinders not our groaning in ourselves. Nay, it gives to our groanings what those of creation lack, — the intelligence of that for which we wait, and which is to bring the full deliverance. The redemption of our body — the quickening and glorification of these mortal tabernacles — is that for which we wait; and when Christ unites thus His co-heirs with Himself in that glory which is to be revealed *in them* as well as *in Him* — when the manifestation of the sons of God takes place — then will creation be delivered. The dismal pall with which sin has overspread it will be exchanged for bridal garments and songs of joy; hallelujahs and hosannas resounding throughout heaven and earth shall replace the universal wail which will then for ever have died away; and the glory of the Lord, not merely revealed in the word, made known by the Spirit, and discerned by faith, but openly manifested in the person of Christ and of the many sons whom He will then have brought to glory, shall fill the whole earth with blessing! But if this be the teaching of the apostle in Rom. 8, how fully does it harmonize with the doctrine of "the first resurrection," and how strikingly is that doctrine confirmed thereby!

In 1 Cor. 15 we have a passage which for various reasons demands our attention. It begins by demonstrating the fundamental importance of the doctrine of the resurrection, and then proceeds to unfold it as follows: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." To a mere English reader, the words "then cometh the end," might suggest the idea that "the end" is at the same time as the coming of Christ, or that it immediately succeeds that event. But the words in the original, as all scholars know, have no such signification. "Every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward (*epeita*) they that are Christ's at his coming; then (*eita*) the end," etc. Now these words, *eita* and *epeita*, are used in many passages, where it will be seen that the events mentioned do not occur at the same time, but after a considerable interval. In verse 5 of the chapter before us, where these identical words are used, we have such an instance. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve. After that, he was seen of above five hundred," etc. Does this mean that Cephas and the twelve saw the risen Jesus at the same time? No; but in succession, and, as all know, after a considerable interval. Yet it is the same word (*eita*) which is employed in both cases — "then of the twelve," "then cometh the end." Another instance we may cite from Mark 4: 28: "First the blade, then (*eita*) the ear, after that (*eita*) the full corn in the ear." Here there can be no mistake. The same word is rendered both "then" and "after that," and evidently signifies "after that" in each case. Succession of events is that which is indicated by the words *eita* and *epeita*, without, in any way, defining the length of time which may intervene.

There are, then, three great events which succeed each other, and the apostle, in the passage before us, states the order of their succession. The first is the resurrection of Christ "Christ the firstfruits;" the second, the resurrection of all who are Christ's at His coming; and the third, "the end," which is distinguished by the delivering up the kingdom to God, even the Father. Between the resurrection of "Christ the firstfruits," and the resurrection of those who are His at His coming, upwards of eighteen hundred years have already elapsed. Between the resurrection of the saints at Christ's coming, and His delivering up the kingdom at "the end," the period of the kingdom itself intervenes. By the kingdom itself we mean the kingdom of Christ in its open, manifested character. In mystery it exists even now — in manifestation it is not set up till Christ comes, and then the saints are raised, to share with Him in the glories of His reign.

As to the sequel of this passage, two remarks may serve to clear up its meaning. First, there is an evident allusion to Psalm 110 as well as to Psalm 8. Secondly, we have carefully to distinguish between God's putting all things under Christ, and Christ's actually subjecting all things by His own power. All things put under man is evidently the subject of Psalm 8; and in it we are furnished with the words so often quoted of Christ in the New Testament, "Thou hast put all things under his feet." In Heb. 2 the apostle, quoting these words and applying them to Christ, shows the absolute universality of their scope, but intimates that their practical accomplishment is yet future. "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. *But now we see not yet all things put under him.* But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." The risen Jesus, crowned with glory and honour at the

right hand of God, is set thus over all the works of God's hands. All things, as to acknowledged right and title of supremacy, are already put under Him of God; and faith discerns and owns this, though as to the actual enforcement of his claims, and the subjugation of all things to Him by power, "we see not yet all things put under him." It is just here that the doctrine of Psalm 110 comes in. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, UNTIL I make thine enemies thy footstool." The Lord is seated at the right hand of God until a given epoch, at which His enemies are to be made His footstool. That epoch has not yet arrived, and therefore we see not yet all things put under Christ as matter of fact. God is not at present putting Christ's enemies as a footstool under His feet. He is bearing with them in long-suffering grace, while by His Spirit He gathers out from among them those who, instead of being trodden as a footstool by His feet, are to sit with Him on His throne, and participate in His dominion and His joy. When this work has been completed, the expected moment will arrive, at which Jehovah will make Christ's enemies His footstool. What will ensue on this? The Psalmist replies, "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: *rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.*" We read further, "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." Christ will, in the day of His wrath, actively subdue by His power those enemies who have been placed by Jehovah for this purpose as a footstool under His feet.

We have, then, two entirely distinct and contrasted periods. In the one, Christ sits at the right hand of God, in the acknowledged title of universal supremacy, but waiting for His enemies to be made His footstool. During this period, the enemies are borne with in patient grace, and the co-heirs are gathered who are to sit with Him on His throne. This period fills up the interval between the resurrection of Christ the firstfruits, and the resurrection of those who are Christ's at His coming. The other period is from the time when Jehovah makes Christ's enemies His footstool, and He begins actively to crush them by His power, and as matter of fact to subject all things to Himself. This period extends even beyond the close of the Millennium, for we know that it is not till after the thousand years that "death and hades" are "cast into the lake of fire." "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Let us read now, in the light of those other scriptures, the whole of the passage under consideration.

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming; then the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which 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 that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

The given supremacy of man, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, ("the second man is the Lord from heaven") is evidently the subject of which the apostle in these verses treats. This supremacy is exercised in resurrection. When Christ rose and ascended into the heavens, He took the place of universal supremacy at God's right hand, all things being, as to His title, put under Him. But He rose as the firstfruits. All who are to reign with Him form the harvest. That harvest is not yet ready. While it is being prepared, He sits at the right hand of God. "They that are

Christ's at His coming" will at His coming be raised. His enemies will then be made His footstool. All things will, *in fact* as well as *in title*, be then put under Him. His own power will be exercised in the actual subjugation of everything hostile to His character and sway. "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Scripture amply testifies that when He is thus subjugating all things to Himself, the saints who have been raised at His coming are united with Him in the exercise of His power. Even death itself must at last be destroyed. Then, when all things have been subjected to the sway of the risen and glorified man, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, He delivers up the kingdom in which, *as man*, He has exercised the authority confided to Him, and GOD in contrast with MAN — God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — is all in all. Blessed, wondrous conclusion of God's ways! May our hearts adore Him with more profound reverence! and may He be to our faith now what He will be absolutely and for ever when all the dispensations have run their course! "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things. to whom be glory for ever." Amen: — "THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL."

Not only does this chapter establish thus the simultaneousness of the Lord's coming and the resurrection of the saints, (distinguishing these from "the end," when the kingdom is delivered up,) but it proceeds to give more minute instruction as to these events, and to furnish still further evidence, that they come to pass when Christ takes the kingdom, not when He delivers it up. The apostle shows that the change of the living saints is at the same time as the resurrection of those who have departed, and that the whole is accomplished at or before the commencement of the Millennium. "Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all (i.e., whether we sleep or not) be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *then** shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Now the only passage in which this saying is written is Isaiah 25: 8; and there it is so interwoven with unmistakable predictions of millennial blessedness, that for the apostle to say, as he here does, that it is to come to pass at the same time as the resurrection and glorification of the saints, is equivalent to his declaring in plain terms that the Millennium is thus introduced.

*Not *eita*, as in verse 24, but *tote*, the literal and uniform meaning of which is, at that time.

Some objections which are made to this view of 1 Cor. 15 it may be well to notice before passing on to another scripture. It has been urged that the expression, "they that are Christ's at his coming," implies that the coming of Christ will not take place till all who are Christ's — that is, all who will ever belong to Him — have been saved; and that the affirmation of the passage is, that the whole company of the redeemed, from the beginning to the end of time, will at Christ's coming be made alive. This interpretation palpably takes for granted the question at issue. What, we ask, would be the sense in which any unprejudiced reader, unaware of any questions on the subject, would understand the words, "they that are Christ's at his coming?" Would not the natural sense of the passage seem to him to be, "as many as are Christ's at the time when he comes." That such will then be made alive is all that the passage affirms. The difference between the two statements is obvious; and it is for those who urge the objection to show that the sense in which they use the passage is its natural, obvious, and only sense. If this, as is evidently the case, be impossible, no such argument as that under consideration can be founded on the passage. If it

can be established by other scriptures, let it be so; to appeal to this is clearly inadmissible. When the master says in Matt. 25: 27, "Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then *at my coming I should have received mine own* with usury," does he mean that he had no property besides what had been entrusted to this wicked servant, and that he never would have any other afterwards? To take the words "mine own," used in this particular case as equivalent to the words, "all that is now or ever will be mine own," is precisely such a mistake as to understand "they that are Christ's at his coming," as equivalent to "all that do then or ever will belong to Christ," which is the sense put upon these words by the objection we are considering.

It has also been objected that "the last trump" in 1 Cor. 15 is the same as "the voice of the Son of man" in John 5: 28; and as in the latter passage "all that are in the graves" are said to "hear the voice of the Son of man," it is inferred that "the last trump" will not sound till the resurrection of the wicked takes place; and that, in fact, the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked will take place simultaneously. But it is a pure assumption to identify "the voice of the Son of man" in John 5 with "the last trump" in the chapter before us. The object of the Saviour in John 5 is not at all to depict the circumstances which attend the resurrection either of the righteous or the wicked; it is not of "the archangel's voice" or "the trump of God" that He is speaking, but of His own voice which alike quickens dead souls and raises bodies from the grave. The only difference is, that while the former are quickened by hearing "the voice of the Son of God," some of the latter being raised for judgment, it is by "the voice of the Son of man," to whom, as He says, all judgment is committed. That with which "the last trump" is identified, is "the voice of the archangel and the trump of God" in 1 Thess. 4: 16; but there we have no mention of any but saints being raised or changed, and the passage as a whole is in every way confirmatory of the doctrine of "the first resurrection."

Finally, it has been sought to identify the destruction of death (verse 26) with death being swallowed up in victory (verse 54); and as the former is confessedly at "the end," or immediately preceding it, it has been contended that so is the latter. But the swallowing up of death in victory is not necessarily the destruction of death. A foe, long triumphant, may have laid his rueful grasp on the rightful subjects of some mighty prince; he may, by that prince's conquering hosts, be swallowed up in victory, and all his captives set at liberty — and yet the life of the tyrant may be spared; yea, he may be spared to act the part of jailer to the prince's enemies. It is exactly so in the case before us. Death has had under his grasp the bodies of God's beloved people. At the coming of the Lord, the Prince of life, he will be compelled to relinquish every captive: not one of all the bodies of God's people shall be left in the grasp of the fell destroyer. He must disgorge his prey. He must give up all. Already has he been compelled to release that blessed One Himself, who once entered, voluntarily entered, his dark domains. It was then that death was conquered. A mightier than he who had the power of death had voluntarily subjected Himself to death in atonement; and having in His death put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He came forth, bursting every barrier, and leading captivity captive. Not only was it impossible that He Himself should be holden of death; His death in atonement set aside death's title over the saints. He abolished death; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in Himself. Faith knows this now, and rejoices in this perfect victory of Christ over death. True that for wise and gracious purposes death is still permitted to retain in his grasp the bodies of those who have been put to sleep by Jesus. But when Jesus comes, the bodies of all His saints shall be delivered from every trace of the power of death.

Death shall then indeed be swallowed up in victory! Still death is not destroyed. It is, so to speak, for a thousand years longer, the jailer of those unhappy ones who have lived and died in sin. They, too, shall then be raised in the resurrection of judgment, and then death itself shall be destroyed. "Death and hell (hades) were cast into the lake of fire." But this brings us to Rev. 20, and to that chapter we must now turn our attention.

There are two interpretations of this passage which respectively number among their adherents so vast a proportion of those who pay any serious attention to prophecy, that the question may be said to lie between these two — other explanations of the prophecy being unimportant and not requiring notice. One view — that which has till lately generally prevailed for the last century or two — is, that "the first resurrection" is not a real, but a figurative resurrection — that it denotes the universal triumph and prevalence of true Christianity during the Millennium — exhibiting this prevalence and triumph under the figure of the resurrection of those who have been martyred in Christ's cause. This view denies that there will be any actual resurrection of the saints until, as is alleged, all the dead, both righteous and wicked, are raised to stand before the great white throne. The other interpretation, which for nearly the whole of the first three centuries was universally entertained, and which has been greatly revived among Christians during the last thirty years, is, that "the first resurrection" is a literal resurrection of the bodies of the saints, and that it takes place at the commencement of that period of universal blessing under the joint reign of Christ and His saints, which all Scripture teaches us to anticipate. The question, which of these two views exhibits the real meaning of the passage, must, under the teaching of God's Spirit, be determined by the internal evidence which the passage itself affords, and by its harmony with other parts of God's word.

In maintaining the latter as the true interpretation of the passage, we are met at the threshold by the objection, that the Apocalypse is a book of symbols and figures, and that for this reason we may almost presume beforehand that "the first resurrection" is not actual, but figurative. This, however, would equally prove that the resurrection of "the dead, small and great," in the latter part of the chapter, is to be similarly understood. But this is not the whole of our answer to this objection. It is cheerfully allowed that the Apocalypse is a book of symbols and figures, and that to overlook this in interpreting the book would indeed be a gross mistake. But, besides figures and symbols, it contains divine explanations of the one, and interpretations of the other. The "seven golden candlesticks," beheld by John in vision, were doubtless symbols. The "seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches," is the explanation from the Lord's own mouth of what they denote. The "great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head," is a symbol: "that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world," is the divine interpretation thereof. When John saw "the great whore that sitteth upon many waters," he beheld a symbolic scene. The unchaste woman herself was a symbolic personage; and the "many waters" on which she sat were symbolic also. But when we read, "The woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" and again, "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues," are we to make these also into symbols, and thus deprive ourselves of the light afforded by the divine and literal explanation of what the symbols represent? So in the passage before us. We do not deny that symbols were used in the scene which the apostle describes. "The thrones" which he saw, and the sitters upon them; the souls of them that were beheaded, and which he also says he "saw," no doubt these were symbols. The

whole scene, being one presented to his eye, leaves no question as to its symbolic character. But what did the symbols represent? and in what kind of language is the answer to this question couched? "THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION," is the divine answer to the inquiry, What do the symbols represent? And can we suppose that this answer is anything but literal? Is one enigma solved by another in the word of God? Is this the method of divine teaching? We have no wish to deny the symbolic character of most that the book of Revelation contains: we believe that the recognition of it is essential to the understanding of the book; but there is no principle of sound interpretation, requiring us to regard as figurative the brief explanations of its symbols, which its divine Author has graciously inserted for our guidance. To regard them thus would be a refusal to avail ourselves of the help He has vouchsafed, and a casting to the winds all hope of arriving at any settled certain conclusions as to the meaning of His words.

"This is the first resurrection." Do not these words, inserted by way of explanation, imply that the doctrine of a first resurrection was not previously unknown? We are told by the opponents of this doctrine, that it would be strange if a truth of such importance could be found in but one passage of Scripture; and assuming, as they do, that this is the only passage which can be adduced in proof of the doctrine, they use this consideration as presumptive evidence against its being so understood. But have we not seen that the truth of an eclectic and pre-millennial resurrection is taught by numerous passages? Have we not read of "the resurrection of life" — "the resurrection of the just" — "the resurrection from among the dead?" Does not the apostle speak of "a better resurrection?" (Heb. 11: 35.) Have we not seen, both in Romans 8 and 1 Cor. 15, as well as in the connection of the latter with Isaiah 25, that the resurrection of the saints is introductory to creation's deliverance and millennial blessing? And what is the office of the sacred penman in Rev. 20? Not to reveal truth previously unknown — but to take a doctrine, already familiar to the souls of the saints, and place it in its connection with those disclosures of the future, which it was confided to him to record. Having given us in Rev. 1 the vision of the Lord's glory which he was privileged to receive — in Rev. 2, 3, the Lord's judgment on the successive states of the professing body till it should be spued out of His mouth — in Rev. 3, 4, the relations to each other and to the earth, of God's throne, the Lamb in the midst of it, the redeemed already in glory, crowned and enthroned, and only waiting till their Lord should reign, to reign with Him over the earth — in Rev. 6 - 19, the successive judgments, seals, trumpets, vials, by which the power of God's throne should act towards the earth on account of its consummated wickedness, as well as the forms and characters this wickedness would assume, and the faithfulness even to death of one and another company of earthly saints, during this closing crisis of man's iniquity, Satan's power, and God's judgment: — having in Rev. 19 shown us the advent of Christ Himself in judgment, attended by His heavenly saints, with the complete overthrow and destruction of His adversaries; Babylon, the beast, and the false prophet, with the armies of the two latter, being all cleared from the scene, and the marriage of the Lamb having taken place in heaven, — what can be more beautiful, or in more perfect order, than that in this chapter the apostle should, as he does, show us Satan bound, that he should not deceive the nations of the millennial earth — the thrones and sitters upon them, not now in heaven, as in Rev. 4 and 5, but in their connection with the earth (a connection only anticipated there) — the martyred saints of the Apocalyptic crisis not being left out of the scene, but specifically named that we might be sure they were not excluded: what could be more perfect, we ask, than that he should show us these "blessed and holy" ones, living and reigning with Christ a thousand years, and should say in explanation of the whole "This is the first resurrection?" There is absolutely

nothing in this passage unrevealed elsewhere, save what is evidently a subordinate point, a matter of detail — the *duration* of the saints' reign with Christ.* The participation of the martyrs under the fifth seal, and the martyrs under the beast, in the reign of the saints with Christ, is indeed taught here with a precision not found elsewhere. But this could not be termed a new revelation. It is of these very saints that Daniel had declared, in Dan. 7, that they should take the kingdom and possess it, and that judgment should be given to them. It is not true, therefore, that Rev. 20 is the only passage in which the doctrine of "the first resurrection" is found. If it had been so, it is surely not our place to dictate to our divine Instructor, how often He is to repeat the lessons He would have us learn, but reverently and thankfully to receive each truth He reveals, whether communicated in one passage or in many. But even if there had been weight in such an objection, it does not apply to the case before us. All the truth which the passage teaches additional to what had been previously revealed, is as to the thousand years continuance of the reign of the risen saints with Christ. Their resurrection, apart from that of the wicked, and their joint reign in resurrection with their Lord, is amply revealed elsewhere.

*We are not forgetting here that the saints are to "reign for ever and ever." (Rev. 22: 5.) But that of which prophecy treats, is the participation of the saints with Christ in the kingdom entrusted to Him as man, and which, as we have seen, He is at the end to deliver up to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

It is a mistake to suppose that the latter part of verse 4 is explanatory of the former. "And I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them." This is one statement of the apostle, and what follows is not an explanation of this, but a further statement. As to who are indicated by the word "they" — they sat upon them — we ask no more than what every scholar knows and what is admitted by the ablest opponents of the doctrine we maintain; namely, that the word here rendered "they sat" may be understood *impersonally*, as equivalent to "they were sate upon," a usage quite familiar in the Greek Testament and in the Septuagint.* Reading it thus, "And I saw thrones, and they were sate upon, and judgment was given unto them," this only inquiry remains, By whom were they occupied? Does not all Scripture reply, By the saints - the redeemed? Daniel had seen the thrones set, but not occupied. See Daniel 7: 9, where there is no question that the words "cast down" mean set. John sees thrones in heaven, and elders in white robes and with crowns of gold seated thereon. (Rev. 4, 5) More than this, they are there anticipating what is here exhibited. "We shall reign over the earth," is their language in Rev. 5. They are seen reigning here. Regarding then the crowned elders as symbolic of the whole company of the redeemed, after their translation to heaven, but prior to their issuing forth in the train of the mighty Conqueror, as foretold in Rev. 19, we can be at no loss to understand who they are that occupy the thrones first named in Rev. 20: 4. The Old Testament saints, we know from Hebrews 11: 39, 40, are waiting for the moment of our resurrection; and "they that are Christ's at his coming" would surely include them. They, then, and the Church, symbolized by the elders from chapter 4 to chapter 19 are seen there following in the train of Christ as He comes forth from heaven to execute judgment on His foes, and they, doubtless, are the sitters on the thrones. But in Rev. 6 we read of souls under the altar, slain for the word of God and the testimony which they held, to whom it was said, that they should rest yet for a little season till their brethren who should be slain as they had been, should be fulfilled. Subsequent chapters inform us of the death of these others, under the persecutions of the beast; and now both companies are seen, in addition to the general body of the faithful. "And I saw the souls of them

that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, (martyrs under the fifth seal, chapter 6,) and such as had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; (these are the company for whom the former had to wait;) and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This (the whole scene) is the first resurrection."

*"In the New Testament, verbs are used impersonally in the third person plural." Winer's Gramm. § 49. "Nothing scarcely is more common in the Old Testament and in the New, and especially in the Chaldee of the book of Daniel, than to employ the third person plural for the passive voice, thus making a kind of impersonal verb of it." Moses Stuart's Gramm. § 174, Note 2. (Comm. on Apoc. ad. loc.)

"The first resurrection." It can only be so styled in reference to a *second*. And what other resurrection is referred to in the chapter, but that at the close, where "the dead small and great" are represented as standing before God? How could a revival of the martyrs' spirit, or the triumph of the cause for which they suffered, be "the first resurrection," and the literal, actual resurrection of "the dead small and great," be the second? Some indeed go so far as to say, that this is not the second resurrection implied by the use of the words "the first," but that it is to be found in the revival of the extinct party of the wicked, in the rebellion of Gog and Magog at the end of the Millennium. But are they "the rest of the dead," from among whom the saints are raised at the beginning? The saints "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years; but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Understand this literally, and it is quite clear how the wicked could be termed "the rest of the dead," seeing that righteous and wicked had all alike been dead with respect to the body. But if you understand the resurrection of the saints as a mere figure of the prevalence of true religion, and the second resurrection as the revival of wickedness at the end, how can you class these together, or suppose the Holy Ghost to class them together, by such an expression as "the rest of the dead?"

This phrase "the rest of the dead" seems to us, as has been well said by another, to be "an expression which absolutely and necessarily connects this *remainder of the dead*, later raised to life, with *the other dead* just before said to have been earlier raised to life; as having been originally, and prior to the abstraction of the dead first taken, part and parcel of *the same community of dead*, in whatever sense, whether literal or figurative, that word *dead* be meant: — just as a *remnant* of cloth must needs have been once *on* and *of* the same piece as *the part* whose abstraction left it a remnant; just again as "the rest" said by Luke to have escaped to land, some on boards and some on broken pieces of the ship (Acts 27: 44,) were of the same ship's company with those that had escaped by swimming; or, to take an Apocalyptic example, as "*the rest of men*," (Rev. 9: 20,) that were not killed by certain plagues, were of the same community with those that had been killed by the plagues."* How is the conclusion to be avoided, that the raised ones at the beginning of the thousand years, and "the rest of the dead" who lived not again till the thousand years were finished," were all dead" in the same sense, and at the same time, prior to the "first resurrection?" And in what other sense than that of *the literal death of the body*, could the righteous and the wicked be regarded as alike dead? Evidently the death is an actual, literal death; and if so, the resurrection must be also a literal, actual resurrection.

*Horae Apocalypticae, fourth edition, vol. iv., page 141.

If you reject the plain, obvious sense of the chapter, as foretelling an actual resurrection of the saints to reign with Christ, you are involved in inextricable difficulties. Think of a mere figurative resurrection, in which not a single dead body is raised, being styled "the first," and the actual resurrection of all who have died, being the second! Think of the triumphs of Christianity being set forth by the figure of the resurrection of the martyrs to live and reign with Christ, while the expression "the rest of the dead" who live not again till the thousand years are finished, is explained to mean the extinct wicked party who rise up again at the end of the Millennium! Think too of the expression "priests of God" — "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." One might perhaps speak figuratively of the reign of principles — but what, unless they be persons, can be made of the risen ones being priests of God?

It is objected by some that John only saw "*the souls* of them that were beheaded," etc. But this is merely a term to designate their state just previous to their resurrection, and marking the identity of those so designated, with "the souls under the altar" in chapter 6. "It is no more implied, that they were still in an incorporeal state, than the title "the dead" in verse 12, ("I saw *the dead*, small and great, stand before God) implies that these last were still, at that very time of standing before him, *dead men*." To take a similar instance, "And when the devil was cast out, *the dumb spake*," (Matt. 9: 33,) surely does not imply, that he was still dumb when he did so! It is quite a common mode of expression in such a case.

We do not pursue the subject further. Enough has been advanced to show the real meaning of the vision, and the untenableness of the principles of interpretation which would set it aside. God grant, that the exhilarating prospect of having part in the first resurrection, may give us the victory now over all the vanities of this world of death.