

THE UNION SEMINARY REVIEW

VOL. XXX.

JANUARY, 1919.

No. 2.

A FOREWORD.

The world will never again be what it was before the war. There have been vast social, political, commercial and geographical changes and the end is not yet. Has the war affected the Church and the progress of Christianity? Will the Church have to change some of her methods of work and some of her forms of organization? Are there any lessons which the Church can learn from the war? These and similar questions are to the fore at present and are insistent. It has therefore seemed wise to the editors to issue a special number of the Union Seminary Review on The Church and the War. In this number we have articles from men who have been thrown into the closest touch with our soldiers and men who are leaders in the Church.

Dr. Edward Mack was for a number of months director of religious work at Marines' Camp, Quantico, Va. Incidentally we may add that Dr. Mack studied at the University of Berlin and is familiar with European history.

Dr. Macfarland traveled all over France and had the most intimate conferences with the political, military and religious leaders of France and Belgium.

*Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman has preached all around the world and since the war has been thrown into the closest touch with our soldiers. At present he is one of the leading spirits in the New Era Movement of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

* Since the above was written Dr. Chapman has been called to his reward. There will be many stars in his crown. The Southern Presbyterian Church will miss him greatly.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

BY THE REV. S. J. CARTLEDGE,

Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, Athens, Ga.

This article will not satisfy either Pre- or Postmillenarian of the stricter sort, but it will be helpful, it is hoped, to all who, while recognizing much truth, believe that there are insuperable difficulties, in both systems.

With the main teachings of the Premillenarians I confess myself in hearty accord; nor is this confession made in any spirit of apology. No man need apologize for being found in the company of such men as Spurgeon, Moody, Campbell Morgan, A. J. and S. D. Gordon, Torrey, Scofield, Broughton, Meyer, Trumbull, Gray, Chapman and Sunday; not fanatics, or idle dreamers, but safe, sane and practical men of God, in the very forefront of the battle for truth and righteousness.

Some of their teachings, however, I cannot accept. Not that I would arrogate to myself superior wisdom above my brethren, but would simply claim, as every man ought, the right to interpret the Scriptures for myself. The spirit of truth dwells in the heart of every believer, and no man need call any other man master.

I do not believe, as Dr. Scofield does, and all other leading Premillenarians so far as I know, that there was no church until the day of Pentecost. Their favorite proof-text is Eph. 3:3-6: "By revelation he made known unto me the mystery—which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men—that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." But what is the "mystery" here, the thing not made known until the dawn of the new dispensation? Not *the fact* of the Church, but *its double composition*, Jew and Gentile "fellow-heirs," members of "the same body" on exactly the same level.

This truth was not made known under the old dispensation, and it required a vision from heaven to convince even so good a man as the Apostle Peter that Jewish exclusiveness was no longer in order, and that God's plan for the Church was as wide as the world.

So far from the Church being unknown in the Old Testament, the germinal truths from which the Church sprang are found as far back as Genesis 3:15. Here in the first gospel promise we find the fact of sin, and of death by sin; the fact of unceasing warfare between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman; and the fact of deliverance only through a Redeemer—fundamental Church truth certainly, committed to the Church for safe-keeping, and by the Church to be proclaimed to all the world.

Under Abraham the Church takes on organic form. There had been covenants before between God and man, but here is a new thing, a covenant with its sign and seal in man's own body; and here we have undoubtedly a new departure. The Church so far had been invisible, unseen by the world, and known only to God and to herself, but now it becomes visible through an outward organization, separate from the world, and every member bears in his body the stamp of divine ownership.

Further development took place under Moses. Here we find additional rites of worship, and the appointment of elders as an official class to assist in the government of the congregation, with special emphasis on animal sacrifice as typical of the Lamb of God who should take away the sin of the world—the heart of Church truth, surely, through all the ages.

After the return from Babylon, in addition to the temple worship, we find the synagogue for Sabbath services, not in Jerusalem only, but throughout all the land.

Such was the situation when Christ came. Did he establish a new Church? Did his forerunner, John the Baptist? Did his apostles? If so, where is the record? So important an event would certainly be committed to record where the advocates of a new Church might easily find it, but so far they

have utterly failed to produce it. If the record of the Church's organization is not found in Genesis 17, it is not found anywhere, and we have this most astonishing fact: The most important institution on earth today with no man able to locate the point of its origin.

According to Dr. Scofield the Apostle Paul had a monopoly of the truth concerning the Church, and hence Paul's testimony in regard to the Church will no doubt be allowed full weight. What, then, does Paul say? So far from representing the Church to be a new thing recently organized by Christ or his apostles, he expressly declares that the New Testament Church is a continuation of the old Abrahamic Church. See Romans 11:17-24. In these verses the apostle speaks of the Old Testament organization under the figure of an olive tree. The Jews, the original members of this organization, are the natural branches, broken off because of unbelief. The Gentiles are branches from a wild olive, not constituted into a new tree, but grafted into the same old tree. By whatever name it may be called, the Gentiles are now in the same organization from which the Jews were cast out. The branches are different, but the tree is the same.

In the second place, I do not believe, with other Premil-lenarians, that there will be no kingdom on the earth until Christ comes again. I heartily accept the doctrine of a kingdom yet to be set up, the Millennial kingdom, with Christ the **King** ruling on the throne of David in Jerusalem, but just as strongly do I contend for the fact of a kingdom here and now, "But how can there be a kingdom without a king? The King is away, and there can be no kingdom until he returns." To which we reply: The King in a very real and vital sense is *not away*. "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." A little child being asked to define home, replied, "Home is where my mother is." The presence of the home-maker constitutes home, and just so the presence of Christ the **King** makes the kingdom.

Such is undoubtedly the teaching of the Scriptures. "The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and given to

a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. 21:43. How could the Jews be deprived of that which as yet was not in existence? I am aware of the fact that Dr. Scofield makes a distinction between the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven, but he utterly fails to establish his contention. Matthew habitually uses the expression, "kingdom of heaven," while Mark and Luke in reporting the same discourse use "kingdom of God," showing conclusively that in the minds of these inspired writers the two expressions were synonymous. Here, then, according to the plain teaching of this passage, is a kingdom already set up, under the Old Testament dispensation in the hands of the Jews, but now under the New Testament regime entrusted to the Gentiles.

This kingdom, so far as this earth is concerned, and for all practical purposes, is identical with the Church, and hence the kingdom, like the Church, has two phases, visible and invisible. Christ has reference to the one phase when he says, "From the days of John the Baptist the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Luke 16:16. (By the way, how can men press into something that has no existence?) For four hundred years the voice of prophecy had been silent, but with John there came a revival, and under the inspiration of his ministry multitudes pressed into the kingdom.

To the second phase of the kingdom Christ referred when he said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with outward show— for behold the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:20-21. To this aspect of the kingdom also the apostle referred when he said, "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. 14:17. Perhaps to both phases Christ alluded when he said to Pilate, John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world;" that is to say, not like the kingdoms of this world either in its origin, its purposes, its methods, or its results.

This kingdom, though here already, entered upon a new era on the day of Pentecost, and to this epochal event our Lord referred when he said, Mark 9:1, "There be some of them that

stand here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." These words present an insuperable difficulty to those who contend that there will be no kingdom until Christ comes again. Dr. Scofield essays to surmount it by contending that our Lord here has reference to the Transfiguration in which the kingdom is pictorially represented, basing his contention on the fact that in Matthew, Mark and Luke the account of the Transfiguration immediately follows this prediction. It is difficult to resist the conviction, or to restrain its utterance, uncharitable as it may sound, that such an interpretation would never have occurred to one who was not face to face with an immovable difficulty that had to be removed.

The kingdom of God, already set up, was soon to enter upon a new phase of its history; was to receive a new commission as a witness to all the world, and as a necessary qualification for her task was to receive the baptism of power from the Holy Ghost, and so vital and far-reaching in its results was this experience that it might properly be called the coming of the kingdom in power. Some of the disciples who heard the prediction lived to see its fulfilment. Judas, we know, did not, and there may have been others. The prediction, however, would have had little or no significance if it had referred to the Transfiguration which occurred only six days afterwards. See Matt. 17:1.

Now let me say, in the next place, that with both kinds of Millenarians I believe in a real Millennium. In recent years teachers have arisen who seek to escape the difficulties of both systems by denying altogether the fact of a Millennium, asserting that the doctrine rests upon a single passage in a confessedly mysterious book, Rev. 20:1-6. But in this they "do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures," for while the expression "a thousand years" (*mille annum*, hence Millennium) occurring six times in this passage, is not found elsewhere, Millennial teaching abounds both in the Old Testament and the New. This will be conclusively shown in the answer to the next question.

What kind of Millennium do the Scriptures authorize us to look for? In one comprehensive term, embracing a great many details, our Lord answers this question for us in the use of the great word REGENERATION. "In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit in thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matt. 19:28. We know what regeneration is in the case of the individual, and this helps us to understand the meaning of the word here. All creation is under the curse of sin; not only man, but the ground, the atmosphere, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea. But "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," and not only is man to be regenerated, but all creation as well, for "the creation itself," says the apostle, "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Rom. 8:21.

This regenerative process, the Scriptures teach, will move along three main lines, Physical, Political and Spiritual:

1. *Physical*. The curse shall be lifted from the ground, and the earth restored to its original fertility and productiveness. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Is. 35:1.

Not only from the ground shall the curse be lifted, but from the brute creation as well. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them." Is. 11:6.

Human life will be greatly prolonged, for conditions conducive to longevity will be greatly improved. One who dies a hundred years old will still be reckoned a child. Is. 65:20.

Prosperity and happiness will be well-nigh universal. "They shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit, they shall not plant and another eat." Is. 65:21-22. "They shall sit every man under his own vine and fig tree, and none shall make them afraid." Micah 4:4.

The fact of death here, though at a greatly advanced age, shows conclusively that this is not a description of the eternal state. Death will reign during the Millennium, for he is the last enemy to be destroyed, but when the eternal state is ushered in, death and hades shall be cast into the lake of fire, Rev. 20:14, and through all eternity death will be no more.

2. *Political.* Christ will be on "the throne of his glory," Matt. 19:28, his millennial throne, the throne of David, as we shall see later on. "Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. And with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." Is. 11:4-5.

His twelve apostles as prime ministers shall also sit on thrones. Matt. 19:28. All his faithful servants of all previous ages shall be associated with him as his bride and queen, some ruling over ten cities, some over five, and some doubtless over one. Luke 19:11-27.

Satan, the prince of this world, the god of this present age, who, in a thousand different ways, largely dominates the political life of the world today, will be out of the way, bound and imprisoned for this whole period of a thousand years, Rev. 20:1-2, and along with him, the power behind so many thrones, will go fraud, corruption and graft.

Under these conditions civil and political life shall feel the regenerative touch of the Son of man, and in these days "the righteous shall flourish," Ps. 72:7, and "the meek shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5:5.

Then we shall have peace, world-wide and lasting peace. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Micah 4:3.

3. *Moral and Spiritual.* The psychological moment for the conversion of the world will have come. Look at the conditions that will prevail:

The Jews restored to their own land, and converted and saved. For the proof of this see just one passage out of many that might be given, Ezek. 36:16-28. In these verses their

dispersion, their restoration, and their conversion are set forth in terms as clear and unmistakable as human speech can provide. Converted and saved, they will once more become God's witnesses to the nations. As in the case of Jonah, so strikingly typical of his nation, they shall receive a second commission to the Gentiles, and like him they will not be this time disobedient to the heavenly vision.

In Palestine they will be in one of the great strategic positions of the world, the geographical center of the Eastern Hemisphere, on the great highway of trade and travel between Europe, Asia and Africa. With their great wealth, their great enthusiasm, their loyalty to their ideals, and their God-given genius for great enterprises, they may be depended on to inaugurate the greatest evangelistic movement the world has ever seen. The prophet Micah, 4:1-2, speaks of these things when he says, "From Zion shall the law go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

The Spirit of God will be universally diffused. Joel's prophecy, 2:28-30, began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, but gracious as were the fruits of that day and of the dispensation that was then ushered in, it is still true that during the whole of this present gospel age we have only the "first fruits of the Spirit," Rom. 8:23. During the Millennial age the prophecy will receive its complete fulfilment, and we shall have the full harvest when the Spirit shall be poured out upon all flesh.

Skepticism and infidelity will then be impossible. The fulfilment of prophecy, especially the prophecies relating to the Jews and to the second coming of our Lord, will be the sufficient answer to every argument.

With Christ on the throne, and his people ruling with him in righteousness, civil and political authority shall be in perfect harmony for the first time in the history of the world, and shall work together to the same great end, the establishment of the kingdom of God in all the earth.

Evil shall be greatly restrained. The devil, the antichrist, and the false prophet, the trinity of evil, shall all be out of

the way; the one in the bottomless pit, the other two in the lake of fire. Rev. 19:20; 20:1-3. When this comes to pass the chief obstacle in the way of the world's conversion will have been removed.

Such will be the situation, and under these happy conditions we shall see "seasons of refreshing," Acts 3:19, that shall greatly eclipse Pentecost itself, not only in Jerusalem, but all over the world (Acts 3:19), and in those days "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Is. 11:9. Then we shall see a converted world, and not before.

And now to the main point of controversy: Is Christ coming before, or after, the Millennium? That he is coming, I need not stop to prove, for this is admitted by both parties. With all my heart I believe that he is coming before the Millennium, coming to usher it in, and that his presence here will constitute the chief glory of that golden age.

Now for the proof:

In the first place, the Scriptures undoubtedly represent his coming as imminent, and we are exhorted to be ready for it as an event that may overtake us at any moment. At this point we must distinguish between the two stages of his coming, the Rapture and the Revelation, his coming into the air *for* his saints, 1 Thess. 4:13-18, and his coming to the earth *with* his saints to set up his kingdom, Rev. 19:11-21, 20:1-6. Several things must come to pass before the Revelation, and well-instructed Christians are not looking for that now, but the Rapture is the next revealed event on the divine program, and so far as Scripture teaching is concerned there is no reason why we should not expect it to occur any day or hour.

This is unquestionably the attitude of mind enjoined upon us by our Lord: "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24:44. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord." Luke 12:35-36. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly

lust, we should live righteously, soberly and godly in this present world, looking for that **blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.**" Tit. 2:11-14. But why tell us to look for the coming of Christ, if the Millennium must come first? What personal interest could we possibly feel in an event that is at least a thousand years in the future?

In the second place, to put the second coming of Christ after the Millennium robs it of all its power as a practical truth to regulate the Christian life. That it is so used by the sacred writers, no careful student of the Scriptures will deny. Persecuted disciples are comforted by the assurance that the coming of the Lord is nigh. Jas. 5:8. Worldly-minded Christians are warned against the danger of becoming so engrossed in the affairs of this life that that day shall come upon them unawares and find them unprepared. Luke 21:34. The strongest incentive to a holy life is the blessed hope of the coming of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Tit. 2:13. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure." 1 John 3:3. The bride who is expecting the bridegroom is in no danger from entangling alliances with other men. The strongest incentive to fidelity in service is the expectation of our Lord's early return. Luke 12:41-46. When believers are exhorted to watchfulness, to sobriety, to patience, to separation from the world, to sanctification, to brotherly love, to endure temptation, to bear persecution, in every instance the motive power for the performance of the duty is the confident assurance that the coming of the Lord is near.

Such is unquestionably the position of this truth in the holy Scriptures, and such the use that is made of it by the sacred writers, and this being true, it is impossible to resist the conviction that these inspired men knew that his coming was imminent: for if the Millennium must come first, then the coming of Christ ceases to be a practical truth, and loses all its power as an incentive to holy living and loyal service.

In the third place, if Christ is to come after the Millennium, then, of course, he will find Millennial conditions prevailing

in the earth. But so far from **this being the case, the Scriptures** clearly teach that he will find a good many things that will make a Millennium impossible. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, lovers of money—lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:1-6. "Evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." 2 Tim. 3:13. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed." Luke 17:26-30. Is this the picture of a Millennium? A world converted, and looking for her Lord? Nay, rather a world immersed in her own affairs, heedless of God's claims, and ripe for judgment.

So far from finding a converted world when he comes, he will even find the Church in a state of apostasy. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ—that ye be not soon shaken in mind—as if the day of the Lord were at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come except there be a falling away first, (apostasy in the Greek), and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." 2 Thess. 2:1-3. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith (Greek apostatize), giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Tim. 4:1. So widespread will be this apostasy, that our Lord as he thinks of those days with great pathos inquires, "When the Son of man cometh, will he find the faith in the earth?" Luke 18:8.

Instead of finding Millennial conditions, Christ, when he comes, will find all the earth just emerging from the throes

of the great tribulation. The ingredients in that cup of woe, we need not now consider. Let it suffice to recall the Master's prediction that it will be a time of "great tribulation such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be"; a time when false prophets and false christs shall arise, showing signs and wonders calculated to deceive, if possible, the very elect; a time of such unparalleled tribulation that except for the merciful shortening of the days no human being could be saved. Matt. 24:21-24. Such are to be the conditions when he comes, for "Immediately *after* the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give her light,—and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven,—and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. 24:29-30.

But this is not all. Instead of finding a Millennium, he will find Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet, in full sway. In these three great adversaries we recognize the trinity of evil, corresponding to the Holy Trinity in the Godhead. Satan, the source and origin of all evil, is the first person, corresponding to God the Father, the source and origin of all good. The antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition, inspired by Satan and Satan's exact counterpart, a civil ruler yet to be manifested, is the second person, corresponding to God the Son who is the effulgence of the Father's glory and the express image of His person. The false prophet, an ecclesiastical ruler, whose mission is to glorify the antichrist, just as the Holy Ghost exalts and glorifies the Christ, is the third person, corresponding to God the Holy Spirit.

When Christ comes this trinity of evil will be in control, and must be dealt with before the Millennium can begin. That the antichrist shall be destroyed *when Christ comes* is explicitly asserted in 2 Thess. 2:8, "Then shall that Wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." In Revelation, 19th and 20th chapters, we are told just what becomes of him, and also of the other two: The beast, another

name for the antichrist, and the false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire, while Satan is bound in the bottomless pit for a thousand years.

These are the conditions, according to the Scriptures, that our Lord will find when he comes again: The Church apostate, the world revelling in moral corruption like that of Sodom and Gomorrah; the trinity of evil at the height of their power; the great tribulation in full sway. Millennial conditions indeed!

This means that the present tendency is downward; that moral and spiritual conditions instead of growing better are gradually getting worse. And this is perhaps the chief reason why the doctrine is so unpopular. We are now living in the very zenith of man's day. He has brought into subjection the earth, the sea, and the air. Learning and culture were never so prevalent, the arts and sciences never so productive, as now; and man, pardonably proud of his mighty achievements, is simply unwilling to believe that this golden age is to end in disaster and ruin.

But man forgets that culture is not Christianity, and that civilization will never save the world. All history teaches that the highest state of civilization is perfectly consonant with the lowest state of morals. Witness Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome.

While we recognize with gratitude the prevalance of learning, the fruits of philanthropy, the progress of moral reform along some lines, and the great missionary activity of the Church, we are profoundly convinced that morally and spiritually the world is on the downward grade. Never before has there been so much crime, so many murders and lynchings and suicides; so much corruption, greed and graft; so much marital infidelity, so many unhappy homes, and so many divorces. Never before has there been so much Sabbath desecration, such neglect of God's house, and God's word, and God's altars in the home. The surest tests of spirituality are the observance of the Sabbath and of the family altar, and it is universally recognized that there never was so much Sabbath desecration, and so few family altars, as now. Never before in

the history of the world has there been so much false teaching as now. The great educational institutions are for the most part hotbeds of infidelity, and in these days when everybody is going to school, the impress of our universities is everywhere seen. Never before have there been so many false faiths in professedly Christian lands; Russelism, Mormonism, Eddyism and Spiritism, all rapidly growing, not by converting the unsaved, but by proselyting professing Christians. The predicted apostasy of the Church has already set in. Conditions would seem to be rapidly ripening for the coming of the Bridegroom for his bride, and when the restraint upon evil is thus removed (2 Thess. 2:7), the antichrist will be revealed, the false prophet will appear and the great tribulation will begin.

The divine order of events in the sphere of eschatology is so clearly set forth in the book of Revelation, that it seems surprising that all have not seen it. This book is divided into two sections, as indicated by our Lord in 1:19: "Write the things which thou hast seen, even the things which now are (literal translation), and also the things which shall be after these." This gives us the key to the structure of the book. The first section comprises the first three chapters, and is concerned with the present order of things, giving us in advance the history of the present gospel age as set forth in the condition of seven representative churches. The period covered by this section ends with the coming of our Lord.

The second section covers the rest of the book, and is concerned with the things that shall come to pass afterward, that is to say, after the present order is closed, and is wholly in the future. In chapters 4 and 5 the true Church is seen in glory with her Lord, the first resurrection having already taken place, in fulfilment of 1 Cor. 15:23, and 1 Thess. 4:13-18. In chapter 6 Christ is seen entering upon the task for which we saw him making preparation in 5:7, the task of recovering the earth, the forfeited inheritance, from the hands of Satan the usurper. It is a period of judgment; judgment upon the usurper, and upon his followers; a period of tribulation such as was never seen before. It is the 70th week of Daniel, and

will last seven years. The history of this period is set forth under the opening of the seven seals, the sounding of the seven trumpets, and the emptying of the seven vials of wrath. It ends at chapter 19, with the personal coming of our Lord, his revelation in glory, attended by saints and angels, the judgment period culminating in judgment upon the antichrist, the false prophet (19:20), and Satan (20:1-3). Then follows immediately in the next verses the ushering in of the Millennium (vs. 4-6). The first resurrection which began seven years before, according to 1 Thess. 4:13-18, is now completed by the resurrection of those who had suffered martyrdom under the beast, and all the saints of earth so far live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

This is that phase of the kingdom so strongly emphasized by Premillenarians, and so clearly taught in the holy Scriptures. To take one passage out of many, the Parable of Pounds in Luke 19: Jesus was at Jericho, on his last journey to Jerusalem, and the disciples, like other Jews, looking for an earthly kingdom, expected that on reaching the royal city "the kingdom of God should immediately appear," vs. 11. To correct this erroneous impression, Luke tells us, this parable was spoken. So far as this phase of the kingdom is concerned, Christ is as yet only "a nobleman"; and instead of setting up his kingdom as soon as he shall reach Jerusalem, he must "go into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and afterwards to return." During his absence his servants are put in charge of his earthly interests, and at his return each will be rewarded, according to his fidelity, with positions of honor and responsibility in his kingdom. After a long time he returns, "having received the kingdom," and hence no longer a nobleman, but a king, and his first act is to reward his servants (vs. 15-26), which takes place when he comes into the air for his own. (1 Thess. 4:13-18.) Then he turns his attention to his enemies: "Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me." Vs. 27. This is the judgment visited upon the trinity of evil, and upon their followers. Rev. 19:20-21; 20:1-3.

And now with the forces that made a Millennium impossible out of the way, and with his bride and queen adorned and made ready, the way is clear for him to set up his Millennial kingdom, at first over the house of Israel, on the throne of David (Luke 1:32) and ultimately over all the earth, the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdom of our Lord.

Such is the divine order of events as set forth in this wonderful book, and if the Scriptures everywhere else were silent upon the subject, this alone would be sufficient to prove that the second coming of Christ is pre-millennial.