

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



**PATREON**

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expositor-series-1.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php)

struggling habit that is resolved to be out upon us again, which we can resolutely thrust down and bury under the heavy leaden mass of God's condemnation? Surely when God shows us such a vision, and discloses to us the purposes in which He finds pleasure, there are some who give a serious, thoughtful response, some who say within themselves, I will, in the light of God's presence, consider my life, whither its general course tends, what good purpose it can accomplish, and what in me is hindering this good purpose.

MARCUS DODS.

---

### THE PROPHECIES OF ST. PAUL.

#### II.—THE EPISTLES TO THE GALATIANS, CORINTHIANS, AND ROMANS.

WHEN we pass from the Epistles to the Thessalonians to the next group of letters—those to the Galatians, Corinthians and Romans, all four of which were written in the course of a single year, some five years later (A.D. 57-58)—we are at once aware of a great diminution in the allusions to the future. Galatians contains rather more matter than both letters to the Thessalonians, but does not contain a single prediction; and the much longer letter to the Romans, while alluding now and then to what the future was to bring forth, contains no explicit mention of the Second Advent. The first letter to the Corinthians is three times as long as both letters to the Thessalonians, but contains rather less predictive matter. We should not be far wrong if we estimated that these four letters, in about nine times the space, give us about as much eschatological matter as the two letters to the Thessalonians.

The contrast exists in nothing else, however, except the

mere matter of amount. The two groups of letters are thoroughly at one in their teaching as to the future—at one, but not mere repetitions of one another. This group is continually supplying what almost seems to be explanations and extensions of the revelations in Thessalonians, so that it exhibits as great an advance in what is revealed as decrease in the relative amount of space given to revelations. So clear is it that the Apostle's preaching to all heathen communities was in essence the same, and that all grew up to the stature of manhood in Christ through practically the same stages, that we may look upon the Thessalonian letters as if they had been addressed to the infancy of every Church, and treat those at present before us as if they were intended to supplement them. This is probably the true account of the very strong appearance of being supplementary and explanatory to those in the letters to Thessalonica, which the predictions in this group of letters are continually presenting.

In these as in those, the Second Advent is represented primarily and most prominently in the aspect of judgment—as the last judgment. Here, too, the desire for moral perfection is referred constantly to it, as for example in 1 Cor. i. 8 cf. 7, where the actual moment in mind is that of the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. The mutual glorying of the Apostle and his readers in each other is to be “in the day of our Lord Jesus” (1 Cor. i. 14). This is the day of punishment also: the incestuous man is delivered now unto Satan to be punished in the flesh in order that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord (1 Cor. v. 5); and in exactly similar wise, those who are visited with bodily ills for unworthy partaking of the Lord's Supper, receive this chastening that they may not be condemned with the world (1 Cor. xi. 32). The sanction of the anathema pronounced against all who do not love the Lord is Maranatha—“the Lord cometh!” (1 Cor. xvi. 22).

His coming is indeed so sharply defined as the time of judging, in the mind of Paul, that he advises his readers to "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come" (1 Cor. iv. 5). The connotation of "the day of the Lord" was to him so entirely judgment, that the word "day" had come to mean judgment to him, and he actually uses it as its synonym, speaking of a "human day," for "human judgment" (1 Cor. iv. 3). Of like import is the representation of the second coming as the great day of revelation of character. Of the builders on the edifice of God's Church it is declared that "each man's work shall be made manifest by 'the day.'" "For the day is revealed in fire, and each man's work, of what sort it is,—the fire itself shall test." "If any man's work abideth, he shall receive reward; if any man's work is burned up, he shall be mulcted, but himself shall be saved, but so as through fire" (1 Cor. iii. 13-15). It is scarcely an extension of this teaching to declare openly that when the Lord comes, He "will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall his praise come to each from God" (1 Cor. iv. 5).

In the light of this it is evident what time the Apostle has in mind when he declares that "all of us must needs be made manifest<sup>1</sup> before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each may receive the things [done] through the body according to what he practised, whether good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10); and which day to him was "the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ"—"the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. ii. 16, 5). Yet, in this last passage it is beyond all question that the Apostle has in mind the final judgment, when God "will render to every man according to his works," and the two verses which have been adduced are respectively the

<sup>1</sup> φανερωθῆναι, cf. φανερόν, 1 Cor. iii. 13; φανερώσει, 1 Cor. iv. 5.

opening and closing verse of the splendid passage in which Paul gives us his fullest description of the nature and standards of the awful trial to which all men, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether those who have law or those who have no law, are summoned "in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel through Christ Jesus." Elsewhere in Romans, where judgment necessarily holds an important place in the general argument, the wrath of God is kept hanging over ungodliness and unrighteousness (i. 18; iii. 5; v. 9) and the coming judgment is held before the eyes of the reader (iii. 6; xiv. 10).

For the realization of such a judgment scene (Rom. ii. 5-16; 2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Cor. xiv. 10), a resurrection is presupposed, and the reference of the Apostle is obvious when he expresses his confidence that "He who raised up Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor. iv. 14; cf. v. 10; also 1 Cor. vi. 14). In this compressed sentence, there is pointed out the relation of our resurrection both to the judgment (*παραστήσει*, cf. Col. i. 22) as preceding and in order to it, and to the resurrection of Christ (*σὺν Ἰησοῦ*, cf. the use of *συνεγείρω* in Col. ii. 12; iii. 1) as included in it as a necessary result and part of it. The latter matter is made very plain by the remarkably simple way in which Jesus is declared in Rom. i. 4 to have been marked out as the Son of God "by the resurrection of the dead"—a phrase which has no meaning except on the presupposition that the raising of Jesus was the beginning of the resurrection of the dead and part and parcel of it (cf. also Rom. vi. 6; viii. 11, etc.).

At this point our attention is claimed by that magnificent combined argument and revelation contained in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, which has been the instruction and consolation of the saints through all Christian ages. The occasion which called it forth was singularly like and

singularly unlike that which gave rise to the parallel revelation in 1 Thessalonians. As in the one Church so in the other, there were those who failed to grasp the great truth of the Resurrection, and laid their dead away without hope of their rising again. But in Thessalonica this was due to sorrowing ignorance; in Corinth, to philosophizing pride of intellect. And in the one case, the Apostle meets it with loving instruction; in the other, with a brilliant refutation which confounds opposition, and which, although carrying a tender purpose buried in its bosom, as all the world has felt, yet flashes with argument and even here and there burns with sarcasm. The Corinthian errorists appear to have been spiritualistic philosophizers, perhaps of the Platonic school, who, convinced of the immortality of the soul, thought of the future life as a spiritual one in which men attained perfection apart from, perhaps largely because separate from, the body. They looked for and desired no resurrection; and their formula, perhaps somewhat scoffingly and certainly somewhat magisterially pronounced, was: "There is no rising again of dead men." It is instructive to observe how the Apostle meets their assertion. They did not deny the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. xv. 2, 11)—probably explaining it as a miracle like the reanimation of Lazarus. Yet the Apostle begins by laying firm the proofs of Christ's resurrection (xv. 1-11), and doing this in such a way as to suggest that they needed primary instruction. He "makes known to them," rather than reminds them of the Gospel which he and all the Apostles preached and all Christians believed. With this opening sarcasm, he closes the way of retreat through a denial of the resurrection of Christ, and then presses as his sole argument the admitted fact that Christ had risen. How could they deny that dead men rise, when Christ, who was a dead man, had risen? If there is no resurrection of dead men, then not even is Christ risen. It is plain that their whole position rested on the

assertion of the impossibility of resurrection; to which it was a conclusive reply that they confessed it in one case. Having uncovered their logical inconsistency, Paul leaves at once the question of fact and presses at length the hideous corollaries that flow from their denial of the possibility of dead men rising, through its involved denial that Jesus, the dead man, had risen—aiming, no doubt, at arousing a revulsion against a doctrine fruitful of such consequences (xv. 14-34).

Having thus moved his readers to shame, he proceeds to meet squarely their real objection to the resurrection, by a full explanation of the nature of the resurrection-body (xv. 35-50), to which he adjoins a revelation concerning the occurrences of the last day (xv. 51-58). To each of these we should give a moment's attention.

The intimate connexion of our resurrection with that of Christ, which we have seen Paul everywhere insisting upon, would justify the inference that the nature of our resurrection-bodies was revealed to men in His resurrection-body, that was seen and handled of men for forty days. This is necessarily implied in the assumption that underlies the argument at 1 Cor. xv. 12 *sq.*, and is almost openly declared at verse 49; 2 Cor. iv. 14; Rom. viii. 11. In our present passage, however, the Apostle reserves this for the last, and begins by setting forth from natural analogies the possibility of a body being truly one's own body and yet differing largely from that which has hitherto been borne. This is an assertion of sameness and difference. At verse 42 he proceeds to explain the differences in detail. As the change in the form of expression advises us, the enumeration divides itself into two parts at the end of verse 43—the former portion describing in threefold contrast, the physical, and the latter in a single pregnant phrase the moral difference. On the one hand the new bodies that God will give us will no longer be liable to corruption, dishonour or

weakness. On the other, they will no longer be under the power of the only partially sanctified human nature, but rather will be wholly informed, determined and led by the Holy Ghost (verse 44). That this is the meaning of the much disputed phrase: "It is sown a natural (psychic) body it is raised a spiritual (pneumatic) body," is demonstrable from the usage of the words employed. It is plain matter of fact that "psychic" in the New Testament naturally means and is uniformly used to express "self-led" in contrast to "God-led," and therefore, unconverted or unsanctified; while "pneumatic" never sinks in the New Testament so low in its connotation as the human spirit, but always (with the single exception of Eph. vi. 12, where superhuman evil spirits are in mind) refers to "Spirit" in its highest sense,—the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup> In this compressed phrase, thus, the Apostle declares that in this life believers do not attain to complete sanctification (Rom. vii. 14–viii. 11), but groan in spirit awaiting the redemption of the body (Rom. viii. 23, vii. 24); while in the heavenly life even their bodies will no longer retain remainders of sin, but will be framed by (Rom. viii. 11), filled with, and led by the Holy Ghost. The incomparable importance of this moral distinction over the merely physical ones is illustrated by the Apostle's leaving them to devote the next five verses to

<sup>1</sup> This is gradually becoming recognised by the best expositors. Compare the satisfactory article on *πνευματικός* in the *third* edition of Cremer's *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of N. T. Greek*, with the very unsatisfactory one in the second edition. He now tells us that the word is used "in profane Greek only in a physical or physiological sense, commonly the former;—in biblical Greek only in a religious, that is religio- or soteriologico-psychological sense = belonging to the Holy Ghost or determined by the Holy Ghost," p. 675, cf. p. 676. (The reader needs to be warned that he will find no hint of Cremer's entire rewriting of this article, in the *Supplement* to their edition of Cremer's Lexicon issued by T. & T. Clark this year.) So Meyer's latest view (to which he did not correct the Commentary throughout) is given in his Com. on 1 Cor., E. T., p. 298, note: "*Πνευματικός* is nowhere in the New Testament the opposite of *material*, but of *natural* (1 Pet. ii. 5 not excluded); and the *πνεῦμα* to which *πνευματικός* refers is always (except Eph. vi. 12, where it is the *diabolical* spirit-world that is spoken of) the *Divine πνεῦμα*." The italics are his own.



the justification of this, closing (verse 50) with a chiasmic recapitulation in which he pointedly puts the moral difference first: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." For, that "flesh and blood" must here be understood ethically and not physically is already evident from the preceding context and is put beyond question by the settled ethical sense of the phrase—which is, of course, used in the New Testament also only in its established ethical sense, and could not be used otherwise without misleading the reader. All crass inferences that have been drawn from it, therefore, in a physical sense are illegitimate to start with, and are negatived to end with by the analogy of Christ's resurrection-body, which we have seen Paul to understand to be a case under the rule, and which certainly had flesh and bones (Luke xxiv. 39). Paul does not deny to our resurrection body, therefore, materiality, which would be a *contradictio in adjecto*; he does not deny "flesh" to it,—which he hints, rather, will be its material, though of "another" kind than we are used to (verse 39); he denies to it "fleshlyness" in any, even the smallest degree, and weakness of any and every sort. In a word, he leaves it human but makes it perfect.

After so full an explanation of the nature of the resurrection body, it was inevitable that deeper questions should arise concerning the fate of those found by the advent still clothed in their bodies of humiliation. Hence a further revelation was necessary beyond what had been given to the Thessalonians, and the Apostle adds to that, that those found living shall be the subjects of an instantaneous change which will make them fit companions for the perfected saints that have slept. For when the trumpet sounds and the dead are raised incorruptible, they too in the twinkling of an eye shall be "changed." And the change is for them as for the dead a putting on of incorruption

and of immortality. The spectacle of these multitudes, untouched by death, receiving their perfect and immortal bodies is the great pageant of the conquest of death, and the Apostle on witnessing it in spirit cannot restrain his shout of victory over that whilom enemy of the race, whose victory is now reversed and the sinews of whose fatal sting wherewith it had been wont to slay men are now cut. So complete is Christ's conquest that it looses its hold over its former victims and the men still living cannot die. The rapidity of action on "the great day" is also worth notice. The last trump sounds—the dead spring forth from the grave—the living in the twinkling of an eye are changed—and all together are caught up into the air to His meeting,—or ever the rushing train of angels that surround their Lord and ours can reach the confines of the earth. Truly events stay not, when the Lord comes.

Important as these revelations are, they become almost secondary when compared with the contents of that wonderful passage 1 Cor. xv. 20-28, the exceeding richness of which is partially accounted for by the occasion of its utterance. It comes in the midst of Paul's effort to move his readers by painting the terrible consequences of denial of the possibility of resurrection, involving denial of the fact that Christ has risen. He feels the revulsion he would beget in them, and relieves his overburdened heart by suddenly turning to rest a moment on the certainty of Christ's rising, and to sweep his eye over all the future, noting the effects of that precious fact up to the end. He begins by reasserting the inclusion of our resurrection in that of Christ, who was but the first-fruits of those asleep, and then justifies it by an appeal to the parallel of Adam's work of destruction, declaring, apparently, that as physical death came upon all men through Adam's sin, so all men shall be rescued from its bondage by Christ's work of redemption. The context apparently confines the word

“death” in these verses to its simple physical sense, while on the contrary the “all” of both clauses seems unlimited, and the context appears to furnish nothing to narrow its meaning to a class. They thus assert the resurrection of all men without distinction as dependent on and the result of Christ’s work, just as all men, even the redeemed, taste of death as the result of Adam’s sin. “But” the Apostle adds, returning to the Christian dead, “this resurrection though certain, is not immediate; each rises in his own place in the ranks—Christ is the first-fruits, then His own rise at His coming; then is the end” (verses 23, 24). The interminable debates that have played around the meaning of this statement are the outgrowth of strange misconceptions. Because the resurrection of the wicked is not mentioned it does not at all follow that it is excluded; the whole section has nothing to do with the resurrection of the wicked (which is only incidentally included and not openly stated in the semi-parenthetic explanations of verses 21 and 22), but, like the parallel passage in 1 Thessalonians, confines itself to the Christian dead. Nor is it exegetically possible to read the resurrection of the wicked into the passage as a third event to take place at a different time from that of the good, as if the Apostle had said: “Each shall rise in his own order; Christ the first-fruits,—then Christ’s dead at His coming,—then, the end of the resurrection, namely of the wicked.” The term “the end,” is a perfectly definite one with a set and distinct meaning, and from Matthew (*e.g.* xxiv. 6, cf. 14) throughout the New Testament, and in these very epistles (1 Cor. i. 8; 2 Cor. i. 13, 14), is the standing designation of the “end of the ages,” or the “end of the world.” It is illegitimate to press it into any other groove here. Relief is not however got by varying the third term, so as to make it say that “then comes the end, accompanied by the resurrection of the wicked,” for this is importing into the passage what

there is absolutely nothing in it to suggest. The word *τάγμα* does not in the least imply succession; but means "order" only in the sense of that word in such phrases as "orders of society." Neither does the "they that are Christ's" prepare the mind to expect a statement as to "those who are not Christ's," any more than in Rom. ix, 6, when we hear of "Israel," and "those of Israel," we expect immediately to hear of "those not of Israel." The contrast is entirely absorbed by the "Christ" of the preceding clause, and only the clumsiness of our English gives a different impression. Not only, however, is there no exegetical basis for this exposition in this passage; the whole theory of a resurrection of the wicked at a later time than the resurrection of the just is excluded by this passage. Briefly, this follows from the statement that after the coming of Christ, "then comes the end" (verse 24). No doubt the mere word "then" (*εἶτα*) does not assert immediateness, and for ought necessarily said in it, "the end" might be only the next event mentioned by the Apostle, although the intervening interval should be vast and crowded with important events. But the context here necessarily limits *this* "then" to immediate subsequence.

Exegetically this follows, indeed, from the relation of verse 28 to 23 *b*, for the long delay asserted in which it assigns the reason: Christ's children rise not with Him, because death is the last enemy to be conquered by Him, and their release from death cannot, therefore, come until all His conquests are completed. The matter can be reduced, however, to the stringency of a syllogism. "The end" is declared to take place "whenever Christ giveth over (the immediateness is asserted by the present) the kingdom to God;" and this occurs "whenever He shall have conquered" all His enemies, the last of which to be conquered is death (verse 26). Shortly, then, the end comes so soon as death is conquered. But death is already

conquered when it is forced to loose its hold on Christ's children ; and that is at the Parousia (ver. 23). If any should think to escape this, as if it were an inference, it would be worth while to glance at verse 54, where it is, as we have seen, asserted that the victory over death is complete and his sting destroyed at the Second Advent, and that the rising of Christ's dead is a result of this completed conquest. The end then is synchronous with the victory over death, which itself is synchronous with the second coming, and if the wicked rise at all (which verses 21, 22 assert), it is all one whether we say they rise at the Advent or at the end, since these two are but two names for the same event. Of this, indeed, Paul's language elsewhere should have convinced us: "who shall also confirm you unto the end, unaccusable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. i. 7), "I hope ye will acknowledge unto the end, . . . that we are your glorying even as ye are also ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus" (2 Cor. i. 14). So then, the Second Advent is represented to be itself "THE END."

With the emergence of this fact, the importance of our present passage is revealed. It is immediately seen to open to us the nature of the whole dispensation in which we are living, and which stretches from the First to the Second Advent, as a period of advancing conquest on the part of Christ. During its course He is to conquer "every rulership and every authority and power" (verse 24), and "to place all His enemies under His feet" (verse 25), and it ends when His conquests complete themselves by the subjugation of the "last enemy," death. We purposely say, period of "conquest," rather than of "conflict," for the essence of Paul's representation is not that Christ is striving against evil, but progressively (*ἔσχατος*, verse 26) overcoming evil, throughout this period. A precious passage in the Epistle to the Romans (xi. 25 sq., cf. verse

15) draws the veil aside to gladden our eyes with a nearer view of some of these victories; telling us that "the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought into" the Church, and after that "all Israel shall be saved," and by their salvation great blessings,—such a spiritual awakening as can only be compared to "life from the dead"—shall be brought to all God's people. There may be some doubt as to the exact meaning of these phrases. The "fulness of the Gentiles," however, in accordance with the usual sense of the genitive with "pleroma," and the almost compulsion of the context, should mean, not the Gentile contingent to the elect, but the whole body of the Gentiles.<sup>1</sup> And "Israel" almost certainly means not the true but the fleshly "Israel." In this case, the prophesy promises the universal Christianization of the world,—at least the nominal conversion of all the Gentiles and the real salvation of all the Jews. In any understanding of it, it promises the widest practicable extension of Christianity, and reveals to us Christ going forth to victory. But in this, which seems to us the true understanding, it gives us a glimpse of the completion of His conquest over spiritual wickedness, and allows us to

<sup>1</sup> The exegetical question really turns on the sense to be given to Ἰσραὴλ in xi. 26. If τὸ πλῆρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν in verse 25, means "those of the Gentiles who go towards filling up the kingdom," then πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ of verse 26, must of necessity be the spiritual Israel, distinguished from Ἰσραὴλ of verse 25, by the inclusive πᾶς. Then the sense would be that "hardening has befallen Israel" temporarily—viz. until the Gentile contingent comes in,—and thus ("in this way," the most natural sense of οὕτως), ΔΙΕΛ Israel shall be saved;—not part only, but all. So that the passage continues to justify the temporary rejection of Israel by its gracious purpose, viz. that thus the Gentiles receive their calling, and all God's children, out of every nation, are saved. On the other hand if, as is most natural and usual, τῶν ἐθνῶν is genitive of what is filled up, so that the phrase means, the whole body of the Gentiles, then there is no thought to carry over from it to condition πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ in verse 26, and it naturally follows in sense the Ἰσραὴλ of verse 25. The sense then is that which is suggested in the text. That Ἰσραὴλ of verse 26 is the fleshly Israel seems to follow from the succeeding context, as well as from the difficulty of taking the words in two different senses in so narrow a context. But if so, this carries the meaning of the "fulness of the Gentiles" with it, and the interpretation given in the text is the only admissible one.

see in the spirit the fulfilment of the prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth even as it is in heaven." It is natural to think that such a victory cannot be wrought until the end is hastening—that with its completion nothing will remain to be conquered but death itself. But the Apostle does not tell us this,<sup>1</sup> and we know not from him how long the converted earth is to await its coming Lord.

An even more important fact faces us in the wonderful revelation we have been considering (1 Cor. xv. 20-28): the period between the two advents is the period of Christ's kingdom, and when He comes again it is not to institute His kingdom, but to lay it down (verses 24, 28). The completion of His conquest, which is marked by conquering "the last enemy," death (verse 28), which in turn is manifest when the just arise and Christ comes (verses 54, 23), marks also the end of His reign (verse 25) and the delivery of the kingdom to God, even the Father (verse 24). This is indubitably Paul's assertion here, and it is in perfect harmony with the uniform representation of the New Testament, which everywhere places Christ's kingdom before and God's after the Second Advent. The contrast in Matt. xiii. 41 and 43 is not accidental. We cannot enter into the many deep questions that press for discussion when this ineffable prediction is even approached. Suffice it to say that when we are told that Jesus holds the kingship for a purpose (verse 25), namely the completion of His mediatorial work, and that when it is accomplished He will restore it to Him who gave it to Him (verse 28), and thus the Father will again become "all relations among all creations,"—nothing is in the remotest way suggested inconsistent with the co-equal Deity of the Son with the Father and His eternal co-regnancy with Him over the universe. Manifestly we

<sup>1</sup> I shall not deny that the *ζωή ἐκ νεκρῶν* of ver. 15 *may* mean the general resurrection, but it is an unexampled phrase for this conception and cannot be asserted to mean it. Nor in this context is it natural to so understand it.

must distinguish between the mediatorial kingship which Jesus exercises by appointment of His Father, and the eternal kingship which is His by virtue of His nature, and which is one with God's own.

As to the duration of Christ's kingdom—or in other words the length of time that was to elapse before the Lord came—Paul says nothing in this passage. Nor does he anywhere in these Epistles speak more certainly about it than in those to the Thessalonians (1 Cor. i. 7; xi. 26). He so expresses himself as to leave the possibility open that the Lord might come in his own time (1 Cor. xv. 51); but he makes it a matter for experience to decide whether He will or not (2 Cor. v. 1, *ἐάν* with the subjunctive, cf. verse 3 *sq.*). It is only through misunderstanding that passages have been adduced as asserting a brief life for the world. When (1 Cor. x. 11) the "ends of the ages" are said to have already come, a technical term is used which declares that after this present inter-adventual period there remains no further earthly dispensation, but nothing is implied as to the duration of these "last times" (*acharith hayyamim*). So, when (1 Cor. vii. 25–29) the Corinthians are advised to refrain from earthly entanglements because of "the impending distress," which should shortly tear asunder every human tie, there is nothing to show that the Apostle had the Second Advent in mind, and everything in the Neronian persecution and the wars of succession and the succeeding trials to Christians to fully satisfy the prediction.<sup>1</sup> The very difficult passage at Rom. xiii. 11–14 appears also to have been misapplied to the advent by the modern exegesis. Its obvious parallels are Eph. v. 1–14

<sup>1</sup> The reference of the phrase, "for the fashion of this world passeth away" (verse 31) is not to the broad but the narrow context, justifying the immediately preceding statement, that those who use the world should be as those not using it. It is but equivalent to the line, "This world is all a fleeting show," and is parallel to 1 John ii. 17. Although it may have some reference to the Second Advent, as the day of renovation, it does not affect verses 20 and 29.



and 1 Thess. v. 1-11. The whole gist of the passage turns on moral awaking; and the word "salvation" appears to refer to the consummation of salvation in a subjective rather than objective sense (Rom. x. 10; 2 Thess. ii. 13); while the aorist, "when we believed," seems not easily to lend itself to furnishing a *terminus a quo* for the calculation of time, but rather to express the act by which their salvation was brought closer. So that the meaning of the passage would seem to be: "Fulfil the law of love, I say. I appeal to you for renewed efforts by your knowledge of the time: that it is high time for you at length to awake out of sleep. Long ago when you believed, you professed to have come out of darkness into light, and to have shaken yourselves free from the inertia as well as deeds of the night. Now salvation is closer to us than it was when we made that step. Having begun, we have advanced somewhat towards the goal. The night of sin in which the call for repentance found us is passing away. Let us take off at length our night-clothes, and buckle on the armour for the good fight—yea, let us rid ourselves of all that belongs to the night, and put on the Lord Jesus Himself." If this understanding is correct, the Apostle does not count the days and assert that the time that had elapsed since his conversion had nearly run the sands of all time out, but rather appeals to his readers to renew their strenuous and hearty working out of their salvation by the encouragement that they had already progressed somewhat on the road, and could more easily and hopefully take a second step.

There remain two very interesting passages (1 Cor. v. 1-10; Rom. viii. 18-25) which give us an insight as no others do into the Apostle's personal feelings towards this life, death, and the Advent. Nowhere else are the trials under which he suffered life so clearly revealed to us as in the opening chapters of 2 Corinthians. Amid them all, the

very allusions to which, lightly touched as they are, appal us, the Apostle is upheld by the greatness of his ministry and the greatness of his hope. Though his outward man is worn away—what then? He need not faint, for his inward man is renewed day by day, and this affliction is light compared with the eternal weight of glory in store for him. He longs for the rest of the future life (cf. also Rom. vii. 25); but he shrinks from death. He could desire rather to be alive when the Lord comes, and that he might put on “the house from God, the dwelling not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,” over this “earthly tent-dwelling” which he now inhabits. He only desires—does not expect this; he does not at all know whether he shall be found not naked when the putting-on time comes. But he longs for relief from the burdens of life, that somehow this mortality may be swallowed up of life. And when he bethinks him that to be at home in the body is to be abroad from the Lord, the other world is so glorious to him that he is not only willing but even desires (“rather,” verse 8) to enter it even “naked”—he is well pleased to go abroad from the body and go home to the Lord. Like Bunyan and the sweet singer, Paul, looking beyond the confines of earth, can only say, “Would God that I were there!” This longing for relief from earthly life is repeated in Romans (vii. 25), and the groaning expectation of the consummation as the swallowing up of corruption in incorruption is attributed in the wonderful words of Romans viii. 18 *sq.* to the whole of the lower creation. All nature, says Paul, travails in the same longing. And the consummation brings not only relief to Christ’s children, who have received the firstfruits of the Spirit, in the redemption of the body, but also deliverance and renovation to all nature as well. This noble conception was implied already in the teaching of the Old Testament, not only in its declaration that the world was cursed for man’s sake (Rom. viii. 20), but in the pre-

diction of a new heavens and a new earth (verse 21). Paul here simply takes his position in the company of the prophets.

The glories of the future world find comparative expression again in 1 Cor. xiii. 10-13 as not only spiritual but eternal and perfect. There are besides two rapid allusions to future glories which are so slightly touched on in contexts of stinging satire as not fully to explain themselves. The one reminds the saints that they shall judge the world and angels (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3), and the other assumes that at some time or other, they are to come to a kingship (1 Cor. iv. 8). Out of our present epistles alone the time and circumstances when these promises shall be fulfilled can scarcely be confidently asserted. We can only say that if the reigning of the saints refers to a co-reigning with Christ (cf. 2 Tim. ii. 12), it must be fulfilled before Christ lays down His kingdom. And in like manner the judging must come before the Advent, unless it refers only to the part the saints take in the last judgment scene (cf. Matt. xix. 28; xxv. 31). The Apostle expects his readers to understand his allusions out of knowledge obtained elsewhere than in these epistles. Perhaps he has in mind such "words of the Lord" as are recorded in Luke xxii. 29, 30. For us, the whole matter may rest for the present *sub judice*.

*Allegheny.*

BENJ. B. WARFIELD.

---

### THOUGHTS.

**Light.**—When we say, this or that enlightens ignorance or throws light upon what is obscure and perplexing, do we realise what is necessarily and invariably the Manifesting Power? *God is Light.*

If we really believe this, let us strive thoroughly to grasp the nature of physical light and whence it comes, what it can