

ARTICLE VII.

"WE SHALL NOT ALL SLEEP."

BY THE REV. SMITH B. GOODENOW, BATTLE CREEK, IOWA.

WE regard this statement (of 1 Cor. xv. 51) as one of the most startling and important announcements of the New Testament. It is commonly said that all men must die. But here it is declared, that we shall not all die! There is coming an end to this sad, sorrowful business of dying. This is the "mystery" here solved, and there is no getting away from it.

What a beautiful *euphemism* (or smoothing of language) this is, by which death in Scripture is represented as *sleep*! It is the favorite expression of the Bible, from the earliest down to the latest times; this being the common word used to designate the departure of godly people. The patriarchs "slept with their fathers;" and they with their successors were said to "sleep in the dust of the earth." David prayed, "Lighten mine eyes, lest I *sleep the sleep of death.*" Christ said of the departed maiden, "She is not dead, but *sleepeth*;" that is, what you call death is really but a sleep. And so of Lazarus he declared, "Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." How often the apostle Paul uses this mode of speech concerning deceased disciples! In 1 Thessalonians he tells us of those "who sleep in Jesus," and in this 15th of 1 Corinthians he repeatedly uses the expression: "they that are fallen asleep in Christ," "them that slept," and here in our motto, "we shall not all sleep."

We need not here stop to dwell on the *reason* why this

term is used, or to show the appropriateness and beauty of it. What we want now is to enforce the astonishing fact here brought out—this "mystery" shown—that *the time is coming when Christians will not die*; when, instead of this, they will be "changed" and "caught up,"—translated, like Enoch, direct from their earth-life to their life in glory. This is said only of pious disciples,—“we,” the people of God.

That wonderful change will come, so sudden! and so glorious! “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all 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.” And, lest there should be any doubt about this, he proclaims the same fact in another epistle (1 Thess. iv. 15, 16): “And this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord,”—it is no mere theory of Paul’s, but a direct revelation from Christ,—“that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent (or get before) them that are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Here we see it more fully explained, *when* this wonderful cessation of dying is to take place. It is at “the coming of the Lord,” when “the Lord himself shall descend from heaven,” in all the pomp and power here and elsewhere portrayed. It is when “*the dead in Christ shall rise first.*” So then, in the Resurrection Day at the second coming of Christ, the Christians who then “are alive and remain” *will never die*, but will be sweetly “caught up” to glory! This determines positively *when the resurrection and second*

coming of Christ are to be. Not until the translation of the then living saints without dying can those events occur.

More than eighteen hundred years have passed since this coming end of death was proclaimed; and how many more years will elapse before it will arrive? Some think that a millennium of dying is yet to intervene; while others think it is much nearer at hand, and may arrive in quite a short time. The truth is, we "know not the day or the hour when the Son of man cometh," to introduce this time of resurrection and translation, in place of the present process of dying.

But it is *sometime* to come! That is the point. The certainty of this great change in the order of things cannot be got rid of. The earth is growing old. This moss-grown world is going to decay, and will not always continue to swallow up the dead, as it is doing. For, matters are coming to a crisis. The old routine of natural law is going to have a break. The wheels of nature's engine will creak, and stop, and turn back another way. The dying of believers will cease; and the translation of saints will begin!

Then, what a different world this must be! And how all present kinds of earthly scheming and living must suddenly come to an end! Men now will not believe that such a time is hastening on. They will not reflect upon it, and live in view of it. Even professed Christians, and professed preachers, ignore it; and many (alas!) go so far as to deny it. There is no sight more pitiable, than to see pretended believers of the gospel discarding this great gospel truth, this "mystery" of future reconstruction so lucidly unfolded in Scripture.

It is just as certain that death is thus to cease in the future history of our earth, as it is that we have a Bible revelation, plain and unerring, which we can depend upon. And the church universal in all ages has maintained this truth. Yet, there are not wanting modern innovators who

dare, while professing a reverence for Scripture, to deny most boldly (almost arrogantly) this fundamental truth, and attempt to explain away the positive assertion of it contained in the passages before us.

THE TRUTH ASSAILED.

We have read a book, a large and learned book, published a few years ago in London,—an imported copy of which we obtained,—called "The Parousia" or Coming of Christ. It is announced on its title-page as "a critical inquiry," and it claims to be very scholarly and thorough in interpreting the Scriptures. But what does our close examination of its pages show it to be? It is a complete reiteration of the old Universalist theory (which we used to battle fifty years ago), that there is to be no future Day of Judgment and Resurrection and Coming of Christ; but that all these things transpired and ended at the destruction of Jerusalem, eighteen hundred years ago,—since which the translation of living saints has been going on, and will go on perpetually hereafter. The overthrow of the Jewish temple (it is said) was the "End of the World," and there is no prophecy or promise whatever left for us or remaining to be fulfilled!

It is plain that this tears down the whole gospel fabric, and leaves our hopes and our hereafter a mass of ruins. Yet this author, though intimating universal salvation on his last page, does not avow himself a Universalist; but through the book passes himself off (anonymously) as a good, scholarly Bible teacher. And there are numbers of such to-day; preachers and theological teachers in our evangelical denominations, holding just these sceptical views concerning all the great gospel events of futurity; yet passing as orthodox leaders, while they fill the churches and the candidates for the pulpit with this benumbing scepticism.

A book of the same name, "Parousia," and teaching

the same doctrine, has been put forth in this country by I. P. Warren, D. D., editor of the *Portland Mirror*. And recently, E. B. Fairfield, D. D., LL. D., has published in the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA (January, 1891) a very positive assertion of the same theory,—only carried to its legitimate extreme, of *ruling out all resurrection from the dead*, and assigning mere *translation in death* to every human being ever since Abel. This unbiblical dogma is spreading in high quarters, and it needs to be met with "the sure word of prophecy," which will at once bring it to naught. The single text before us completely overturns that whole fabric: "We shall not all sleep (or die), but we shall all be changed."

Professor Bush's work on the Resurrection (A. D. 1844) was about the earliest, and certainly the most thorough and candid exposition of the Scriptures, in favor of the new theory of resurrection (drawn from Swedenborg) as taking place at each individual's death. And he makes no attempt to set aside the plain meaning of "sleep" as *death*, but frankly and fully concedes the meaning that we, in common with all Christendom, attach to the language before us, "We shall not all sleep." He acknowledges that it is very difficult for him to explain. It is Dr. Warren in his "Parousia," who alone (so far as we know) has gone so far as to change the universally accepted meaning of the word "sleep;" and his attempt in this direction is the only possible subterfuge by which the theory in question can for a moment defend itself. The specious attempt must be at once and overwhelmingly met.

Dr. Warren says that "sleep" means (not dying, but) *staying in hades* after death. So that, Paul's meaning is (as alleged), "Though we shall all die, yet we shall *not all be in hades*, but we shall all be changed" to a *different place*, viz., to heaven. He has to concede, that during all the Scripture times till after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, death was indeed a sleep (as the New Testament plainly

reads). And this sleep he (sadly enough) assigns to those early saints and apostles as actually an *absence from Christ's "prepared place,"* directly in the face of Paul's confident affirmation, that when "absent from the body" he was "to be present (or at home) with the Lord,"—"having a desire to depart and to be with Christ." Along with this great error concerning the dying New Testament saints, he alleges the greater error, that the destruction of Jerusalem ended all that process of bodily sleep in dying; so that since that "parousia" *nobody falls asleep* (as the apostles and New Testament Christians did), though still everybody dies. For, he alleges that since A. D. 70, when the resurrection of the dead took place (i. e., their *change of abode*), there is nothing for saints but an *ascension spiritually through death* to heaven, the "prepared place;" affirming that this is all the resurrection (really no resurrection at all) that is ever to be expected!

We will not here remark upon the absurdity of the novel scheme, in trying to fasten this wonderful transformation of things at such a point as A. D. 70, and then at the close slyly slipping the date back forty years to the ascension of Christ. By this strange two-headed monster of theory, such texts as cannot be made to fit the one head, are deftly turned to help the other or contrary head. A very convenient system, that! Nor will we dwell upon Paul's warning against this *error* (which he says has "overthrown the faith of some"), "*that resurrection has taken place already.*" (So the Greek of 2 Tim. ii. 18.) His language there, having in the best copies *no article*, and having no suggestion of the thing as *past* or *finished*, only as having *occurred*, shows plainly, that, in Paul's opinion, *nothing had occurred* down to his time which could be rightfully and scripturally designated by the name of *resurrection*. Our only purpose now is, to take out at once the whole underpinning of this specious but fallacious structure, by showing that scriptur-

ally no such perversion of the word "sleep" is possible. Let us here look at the Bible use of the word.

EXPOSITION OF THE DEATH-SLEEP.

Does the word "sleep" in the Scriptures express merely *the state or place of the dead*, or does it not rather express *the act or event of dying*?

This Greek verb, *κοιμάομαι*, means "fall asleep" as an *act or event*; being so rendered in the New Testament by the received version five times, by the revised version twelve times, or properly fourteen times, out of the eighteen times it is used in the New Testament. (Viz., Acts vii. 60, and xiii. 36; 1 Cor. xv. 6, 18; 2 Pet. iii. 4. Also in revision, Matt. xxvii. 52; Jn. xi. 11, 12; 1 Cor. vii. 39 marg.; 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, 15; so it should be at 1 Cor. xv. 20, 51.)

So the meaning plainly is, "We shall not all *fall asleep*," i. e., *die*. It is rendered "dead" at 1 Cor. vii. 39. So it is plainly *die* at Acts vii. 60, and xiii. 36; 2 Pet. iii. 4. Christ expressly defines "sleep" as *dying* in the case of Lazarus, Jn. xi. 11, 13, 14. (It is worthy of note, that when he wished to *deny* irrecoverable death, he used a different word "sleep," *καθεύδω*, which was not applied to dying. Matt. ix. 24; Mark v. 39.)

This verb *κοιμάομαι*, "sleep" or *die*, is used seven times in this account of the resurrection (at 1 Cor. xv. and 1 Thess. iv.) and in five of the seven cases it is rendered *fall asleep* by the revision; while plainly, the whole seven cases should be so rendered. 1 Cor. xv. 6, "Some are fallen asleep;" ver. 18, "they that are fallen asleep;" ver. 20, "them that slept," Rev. "are asleep," rightly "those having fallen asleep" (*τῶν κεκοιμένων*); ver. 51, "We shall not all *fall asleep*." Why should these verses 20 and 51 be rendered differently from the other verses 6 and 18?

The *contrast* is between those remaining *alive* and those that have *died*. So at ver. 6, "the greater part remain

(alive) until now, but some have fallen asleep (have died)." So here at ver. 51, "We (that live) shall not sleep (or die)." It is thus fully expressed in the parallel passage (1 Thess. iv. 13-15), "We that *are alive*, that are left, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep (or have died)." The next verse (16) calls them "the dead." So that, there can be no doubt that to fall asleep means to die; and that the assertion "We shall not all sleep" means simply, "We shall not all die."

To see, then, the impossibility of the proposed perversion of the word "sleep," note (1) as above, that the New Testament use of the word requires it to be understood as the *act or event* of dying, not as a *state* following death, much less as the *place* of the departed. Whatever thought of a state or place of the dead may have been associated with the thought of dying, there was no such idea in the word "sleep" itself; which designated the sleep or lying down of the *body* rather than of the spirit, as indicated by its being called a "sleep in the dust of the earth." (Dan. xii. 2; comp. Eccl. xii. 7.) "We shall not all sleep" could not mean, "We shall not all *be in hades*." Not the place, but the *laying down of the body*, made it "sleep." When Stephen saw heaven opened and Jesus there, and then crying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, *he fell asleep*,"—the meaning of the word is certainly "he died," not "he went to hades." For him "to depart" was surely "to be with Christ." If he did go to hades, it must be found out some other way than by this word "sleep."

Even if the word "sleep" *included* a thought of the state resulting, it could not *exclude* the act of dying which began that state; and that resulting state itself could not be called a "sleep," if it was a *resurrection-state* in the spiritual body, as claimed in the theory before us. It must be a *separate state* (of soul away from body), in order to be called in any scriptural or rational sense "a sleep." And in that

case, the act of separation, or "falling asleep," or *dying*, could not be excluded from the denial "We shall not all sleep." It must mean, "We shall not all even begin to sleep," or *by dying fall asleep*. The whole process is denied.

(2) The change contrasted with the "sleep" proves, that those who do "not sleep" do *not die*. "We shall all be changed," positively *all*, whether dead or alive. And *all at one date*; "we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *at the last trump*: for the trumpet shall sound, and"—what then?—"and *the dead* shall be raised incorruptible, and WE shall be changed." That is to say, "We all shall be changed"—at that one time of the last trump—the dead to be changed in being raised from the dead, and those of us then *not dead* to be changed without resurrection from the dead. It is *not resurrection for all*, but one universal *change* for all of us. And what that "change" is the apostle elsewhere declares (Phil. iii. 23): "Who shall CHANGE OUR VILE BODY, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

So then, in resurrection of the dead there is a *personal bodily change*; not a mere change of place (from hades to heaven, as Warren strangely makes it), but a change of embodiment. As Paul has just now said (ver. 44), "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body," "it is raised in incorruption" (ver. 42). In like manner here (at ver. 52), "the dead shall be raised *incorruptible*," i. e., in the "spiritual body." This is the resurrection-change of the dead; but it is immediately added, "*and we* (the not-dead also) shall be changed,"—of course without resurrection or recovery from death. That is, as the apostle explains in his next epistle (2 Cor. v. 2-4), "we shall be *clothed upon* with our house which is from heaven,"—not "*un-clothed*" or "found naked" in death, but so *over-clothed* that "mortality may be swallowed up of life." How plain, that the *change* to the "spiritual body" is for the living a *putting over* of it upon

the mortal body, which is thus "swallowed up" without decay or death, as in the case of Enoch and Elijah.

This great change of living ones had been clearly illustrated by God, for human apprehension, not only in those two ancient cases, but also more recently in the transfiguration and ascension of Christ; so that Paul well knew what he was talking about, and his readers at once saw that he was foretelling an era of such deathless translation, of which those instances were the providential type, meant on purpose to prepare us to understand this "mystery" as here declared by Paul. In Enoch's case, we are expressly told (Heb. xi. 5), "By faith Enoch was translated that he should *not see death.*" What possible right, then, has any one to allege, that in the similar translation here (at 1 Cor. xv. 51) the living ones changed and caught up will "see death"? If they are to *die*, and be changed only through immediate *resurrection* out of death (as Dr. Warren's theory has it), why is there a marked discrimination made, in verse 52, between the *resurrection-change* of "the dead" and the non-resurrection change of the living? It is perfectly obvious, that Paul makes *two classes*; and that the living changed ones are not to require resurrection, but are sharply contrasted with "the dead," who are "raised." Therefore, his statement "We shall not all *sleep*" *must* mean, "We shall not all *die.*"

(3) The positive statement of the parallel passage (1 Thess. iv. 17) is, that the persons not dead shall be "caught up" while "alive," to be with the Lord. The language is this: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: THEN WE THAT ARE ALIVE, that are left, shall *together with them be caught up* in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." This is plainly the same event described in the other passage, the same resurrection

of the dead, the same bodily change of all, living as well as dead, at the same time of Christ's *coming* with the sound of *trumpet*; only here, instead of speaking of the *bodily change*, the apostle is speaking of its *result*, a being "caught up together to meet the Lord."

It is the saints that then "are alive" who are "THEN" caught up, *while in that live condition*,—in direct contrast with "the dead," who "rise first." That is, on that occasion, "the dead in Christ" will first be *raised to life* in the changed "spiritual body;" and "then" they that already "*are alive*" and remain,—having their "natural body" changed to the spiritual body ("in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye")—will join the risen saints, and "together" all will ascend to their Lord. Thus is fulfilled what was asserted in the other passage: "We shall not all sleep" or die; for, those *living* at Christ's second advent will be taken up to Christ *alive*, without seeing death, which for the saints at least will then have been "destroyed." (1 Cor. xv. 23, 26, 54.) It is not till *the saints are through rising* ("first"), that the living saints are "caught up," which therefore must be *without dying*.

So the Scripture reads, and means; and so all Christians of all ages have understood and rejoiced in the teaching, as portraying the final conquest over death. But now, after eighteen hundred years, one man comes forward (Dr. Warren) in opposition to the whole world, and boldly asserts that all this accepted Bible instruction is wrong; that "sleep" does not mean *death*, but *abode in hades*; that Paul's assertion is, "We *shall* all die, but we shall not all go to sleep in hades;" and that Paul's declaration, "*then* we that *are alive* shall be caught up together," means that "we shall *one by one die* (all along down the ages) and in dying be caught up singly and alone! In a word, the theory claims that *dying will never cease*, or at least that we have no promise of its destruction; but for untold ages (intermin-

able so far as we know); the human race is to go on dying as now, with no other victory over the grave than has already transpired in the experience of each departed believer.

How utterly unscriptural and impossible is such a hitherto unheard-of notion! How could a divine revelation, in rational human language, mean to tell us merely, that, one by one all down the ages, each of us should die and in dying be taken to heaven; yet pretend to tell this by saying, that, while *the dead* shall one day be thus raised up, *all of us then living* at that particular date shall be instantly caught up together to meet the Lord, being changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye? Such a pretence of *revelation* would be preposterous in the extreme.

ST. JOHN'S DEATH.

We know that we rightly understand Paul as asserting "We shall not all *die*," because St. John informs us that this was the current Christian opinion in that day. When Peter asked the risen Lord, concerning John, "And what shall this man do?" Jesus answered (Jn. xxi. 22), "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me." To which John himself appends this remark: "This saying therefore went forth among the brethren, that *that disciple should not die*." Here "the brethren" plainly means the apostles and other disciples; so that, we are thus informed authoritatively, that the current belief among Christians then was, that *any one living till Christ's second coming would thereby escape death*, being caught up "alive" to meet the Lord, as Paul declares. Here then is a full concurrence of apostolic testimony to this doctrine of the future. Paul says that he learned it "by the word of the Lord," perhaps in a special revelation. Others may have taken it from such utterances of Christ as at Matt. xxiv. 30, 31, concerning the *gathering of the elect* at his coming (comp. 2 Thess. ii. 1), or from some still plainer words of Jesus.

So fully was this expectation of living translation fixed in the churches then, that the Thessalonians were sorrowing for *their dead*, lest those should not have part in this triumph; and this was the very thing that led Paul there (at 1 Thess. iv. 13-18) to emphasize the *resurrection for the dead*, to offset the living translation, so that they might "comfort one another with these words." And this current view of his times John does not call in question (at xxi. 23), but rather he tacitly endorses it; only correcting the wrong inference drawn from it, that *he personally* had received assurance from Christ of living to the second advent, and so escaping death. Verse 23, "Jesus said not unto him [declaratively], He shall not die; but [only hypothetically], *If I will*," etc., "what is that to thee?" And so, we have concurrent Scripture testimony, that not only Paul, but the other "brethren," and no doubt John himself, understood that there was to be *no dying of saints after the coming of Christ*.

But now comes forward the London "Parousia," claiming that John, in his correction (just cited) of the mistaken inference, was *denying that doctrine* of no death after the parousia; because he was *still living*, though the *parousia had already passed* (at the destruction of Jerusalem!). As it is generally agreed, that John's Gospel was not written till some twenty years after the fall of the city, the theory before us locating the parousia as occurring at that time, makes it necessary for the theorizers to treat John as here conceding that Christ's coming was past, though he himself was still alive on earth, and the doctrine of all living saints being translated without death at Christ's coming must (they think) be given up. This view of John's meaning may seem specious; but it cannot be maintained, as we proceed to show.

In mentioning this (otherwise unrelated) incident (at xxi. 21, 22), and correcting an error concerning it, John must have had some *special motive*, which could have been only *one of two things*: Either (1) he wished to prevent error

and unbelief concerning the promised second coming of Christ; or (2) he wished to correct as an error the current belief that Christ's coming was to be accompanied with cessation of death to believers. The church of all ages has understood John's motive and meaning to be the first named; but the new "parousia" theory substitutes the second-named view.

Now the first or established orthodox view (1) is perfectly reasonable and satisfactory. Not only is it in full accord with the abundant teachings of Paul (which we have shown), but it is just what would be likely to move the heart of John under the circumstances. He and his brethren had been long looking for the promised return of their Lord; but that great event lingered in the future. He was now getting very old, and in the course of nature must soon die. But many brethren had wrongly understood Christ as *actually promising* that the disciple should live till the Master's coming, and so should escape death. And therefore, upon his decease, they would become sceptical, thinking Christ's promise had not been fulfilled, and might doubt whether the Lord would come at all. To keep up the faith of such, as well as his own faith under long delay and prospective death, John took pains in this passage to correct a prevalent mistake, by emphasizing the fact that Christ had made no such *promise*, but had only rebukingly suggested a hypothetical case. This is a fair and sufficient explanation of the apostle's design.

On the other hand, the new-theory view (2) above is not only contradictory to Paul's explicit teaching, but is quite untenable on other grounds. If John had really considered the Lord's coming as past and over with, he could not have alluded to it thus slightly, but would have announced the fact distinctly and with emphasis. His silence speaks louder than his utterance. Dr. Fairfield has thought to deduce great things from John's silence. He says in

regard to Christ's prophecy of his coming (Bib. Sac., p. 90), "Not one word is there concerning it in John's Gospel," because (as he explains it) that coming had now already taken place some twenty years before, and "there was no occasion for him to record the prophetic words of Christ which had already passed into history." And the writer speaks exultantly of the memorable hour when he made this *great discovery* of the reason why John's Gospel does not repeat Matt. xxiv., etc. In contradiction of this assertion of John's *silence*, the London "Parousia" (in pushing the same theory) says, p. 122, "In the Gospel of St. John we shall find that the references to the subject are very important and full of interest;" and he proceeds to cite and discuss *ten or twelve* different passages therein treating of the second advent. As for the *reason* assigned for John's silence on Christ's utterances given in the other Gospels, particularly on what he foretold of Jerusalem's overthrow and his coming in Matt. xxiv.,—observe how unreasonable the alleged reason is.

If the destruction of Jerusalem was the grand era alleged by these writers, the "end of the world" age, the "coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory," the day of Resurrection and Judgment when living saints were "caught up;" and if all the grand redemptive hopes of the past and of the future ages were then crowned and consummated, as these theories allege,—then that fall of the city was the most stupendous event in the whole history of the church; and it is simply inconceivable, that St. John, writing twenty years after it, could in that case pass it over, as he does, without one mention or allusion! Why, if John had supposed Jerusalem's disaster, which had passed before his eyes, to contain any such astounding developments, and to involve the very coronation and finish of the kingdom of Christ, he would have been all alert to reiterate all that Christ had said about it, so as

to show how exactly his promised advent had come to pass, how certainly the wonderful Resurrection, Translation, and Judgment Day had transpired in accordance with his word!

Instead of this, John entirely ignores that event, as, after its occurrence, seeming only a trifling ripple in the world's history, with no special bearing on the kingdom of the Redeemer, and only foretold by Christ as the sign and proof of greater things ahead. The silence of John's Gospel, written twenty years after the event, is the most decisive proof we could have, that the ruin of the Jewish capital had no such gospel importance in the eyes of the apostles, as these theorizers attempt to put upon it. The whole Jewish dispensation had passed away forty years before, being "nailed to the cross" of Christ, as Paul declares; the overturn of the city was only the burial of a defunct carcass, not seriously affecting the progress of the gospel then "preached in all the world."

If in that Jewish disaster John had seen wrapped up all the magnificent things foretold of Christ's kingdom, the final coming of the Son of man, the Resurrection and Judgment of mankind,—would he have slipped by that consummation of all things with the bare allusion to a proposed coming in correcting the error at xxi. 23? No! he would have noted and emphasized the fact, that that promise of coming had been gloriously fulfilled. Instead of there being "no occasion" for John's Gospel to mention the foretold fall of Jerusalem after its occurrence, the theory before us, by magnifying its profound importance, makes most urgent the occasion and the demand for a full and vivid notice of that event in this subsequent Gospel.

Everything goes to show conclusively, that the correction of error made by John in his last chapter was not intended to prove the second advent as past already, in the destruction of Jerusalem, but simply to fortify the faith in a promised coming of the Lord, yet to occur, even though he

himself should presently die. This universal church understanding of the passage makes it a decisive corroboration of the doctrine of Paul then so current, that there was to be *no dying* of saints after the Lord's coming. And there is no escape from that doctrine; for 1 Cor. xv. 23-26 makes certain such a coming.

DESTRUCTION OF DEATH.

Says the apostle: "Afterward [shall be made alive] they that are Christ's AT HIS COMING. THEN () THE END, when . . . he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed (Rev. *abolished*) is death." Mere resurrection from *death still and ever occurring* (as claimed by the theory we oppose), is not a destruction or abolishment of death itself. Nothing can fulfil this promise but the transfiguration and translation of *living men without dying*, just as illustrated in the case of Enoch and Elijah, and foretold by Paul in this very chapter, as the triumph over death at the coming of the Lord. The arrival of such an epoch in human history will open a *possibility* for continuance of the race upon our earth, with death (the great curse of the fall) removed; and in the vista may be seen any conceivable vision of triumphal progress for Redeemed Mankind. This glorious anticipation suggests a theme too large for consideration here; which we elsewhere discuss in the light of Scripture. All we now emphasize is the sad fact, that the newly devised theory we are controverting simply demolishes the whole Bible doctrine of a coming *abolishment of death*, with all the grand possibilities which it opens up, and leaves the world forever to plod on with its present sorrowful experience of *universal suffering, sickness, and death*.

Christendom believes in the conscious survival of Christ's redeemed spirits after death, in a separate state, "absent from the body, present with the Lord." The new theory

sounds abroad the confident dictum, that *this is all* the future we have before us; that all promise of our Lord's return to the earth, of our bodily resurrection, and of the translation of living saints, is completely fulfilled and finished in the dying pangs of each one of us; and that this scene of present desolation and dying is forever to go on, with no promised abolishment of death. Christendom accepts God's word, that besides and beyond the present blessed state of the dead while "absent from the body and present with the Lord," the earth itself is to be blessed again with a second visit of the Lord "with all his saints," raising up their dead bodies and changing their living bodies into spiritual bodies; when they are to reign with him in the all-conquering kingdom for which they are here and now laboring, and which then only will be fully reached. The new theory *denies all this added glory*, and refuses to believe in any resurrection (anything which the church of Christ considers resurrection); diluting that term into a mere ideal description of *the present state of the dead*.

The mischief that we deprecate is *scepticism*, the denial of essential truth. The half-truth taught is well enough, but the other half denied breeds infidelity as to the whole truth, and as to the book which reveals it. We have in our evangelical faith *all that the new theory claims* of future bliss, the blessed presence now of the sainted dead with Christ (not only all since A. D. 70, but all since Christ's ascension); but we have AMAZING MORE, which the new theory disowns, — a grand vista of personal triumph and conquest for our Lord, in the possibilities of a renewed earth and a redeemed race in the Paradise Restored. The new theory is cold and bald, quenching the enthusiasm of humanity by a shadowy idea of mere philosophical "immortality of the soul." On the contrary, the orthodox faith is radiant with all optimistic anticipation and loving labors, for the conquest of our world to Christ, as *the scene of our own future triumph with*

him. Let no one think it of small account, whether we are led astray into the new dogma of denial, or not. For the church to accept it generally, would be not only to engender general unbelief in the Scriptures (which so positively teach a different doctrine); but would inaugurate a reign of inactive stoical endurance of the earthly death-fate, instead of the "lively hope" which is pushing on Christians to help the world reach the final *abolishment of death*.

The effort of the new theory is, *to eliminate the miraculous* from the future history of our globe, just as sceptical science has already eliminated the miraculous from the origin of human history. It leaves little or no prophecies unfulfilled, little or no assuring promises of development to illuminate the church of these latter days. It offers a constantly waning instead of culminating light for the days to come. Its animus seems to be, a *timidity of faith* in God's word,—a fear of holding to something that science or lapse of time may discredit. It renounces and tramples down that loving *abandon* of belief with which the trusting soul rests on "the impregnable rock of holy Scripture."

When the miraculous (and even the supernatural) element shall have been completely blotted out, in this way, from men's apprehension of a *beginning* and an *end* of things,—then faith in anything miraculous—even in an incarnate risen Redeemer—must soon disappear. Unless an Infinite God has begun our world in a wonder-working way, and will settle up at last its moral affairs in a like wonder-working way,—what reason will be seen for thinking, "against all experience," that for a little far-off time, in the middle of events, a hidden deity interfered with the otherwise invariable grinding of the machine? Let us beware how the Supernatural of Creation and of Consummation are eclipsed; lest all our faith in the miracle-teaching Bible be gone. In that event, the gloom of an infidel midnight must settle down upon us, and upon our race!