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"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

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SCRIPTURAL TEST OF SAVING FAITH.

"None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."

UNDERSTAND WHAT? Why manifestly "the words" which were to be "closed up and sealed," till the time here specified. "And I heard," says Daniel, 5: 8-19, "but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified and made white, and tried: but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand but the wise shall understand." The same as to say "Give thyself no uneasiness, Daniel, respecting these things which I have just been speaking of, for the words, or the language which they express, is not to be fully understood till the time of the end; then, when many shall be purified and made white and tried, and when the wicked shall do wickedly, then, at the time of the end, none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand these words, and these things.

But what things and what words are here referred to? Why manifestly those which had just been expressed in the 7th verse, in answer to the question, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" And the wonders here spoken of are specified in the preceding verses of the chapter 5. "At that time,"—i. e. at that time when the Roman power "shall come to his end, and none shall help him," as specified in the last verse of the 11th chapter, or when he shall be broken without hands, as stated in chap. 8: 25, "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people;" i. e. Jesus Christ shall appear as king, (compare Dan. 11: 2, 3, 4,) "and [then] there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: (compare Jer. 25: 15-33; Ezek. 38: 14-22; Joel 3: 1-17; Zeph. 3: 8; Rev. 11: 18; 16: 1-21;) and at that time thy people shall be delivered every one that shall be found written in the book," (compare Rev. 13: 8; 21: 27.) "And many of them," or the multitudes of them, "that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." These passages as clearly relate to the end of probationary time, and to the commencement of the eternal rewards of the righteous, as any passages that can be found in the Bible. We may say further, that any method of interpreting Scripture which will explain away these passages as referring to the end of probationary time, will as easily and with equal propriety, explain away every passage relating to it in the Bible.

Now with reference to this closing period of time, in connection with the events just preceding it, as spoken of in the latter part of the 11th chapter, the question is asked, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders." And the words which were to be closed up and sealed till the time of the end, and which "the wise," and "none of the wicked" were to understand, are those which are the answer to this question at verse 7. "And I heard the man clothed in linen which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." "And I heard, (says Daniel, verse 8,) but I understood not;" i. e. he understood not the words of this answer, stating how long it should be to the end of these wonders, the end of probationary time. And by a careful examination of this chapter, it will be seen, that in the last three verses, "the wonderful numberer," (see Dan. 8: 13, margin) is proceeding to answer, in another method, the same momentous question. Hence these are to be included with "the words" of the 7th verse, which at the time of the end the wise and none of the wicked shall understand. So, also, since the 11th and 12th chapters are designed to give a more particular prophetic account of what is predicted in the 8th chapter, the prophetic period found in the 14th verse of that chapter, showing the time when "the consummation" (see Dan. 9: 27,) and "the last end of indignation" (Dan. 8: 19,) will take place, may also be regarded as belonging to "the words" here referred to.

It being manifest that "the end," to which these prophetic periods relate, is the end of probationary time, it is plain that "the time of the end" when the wise shall understand, must designate a period very near the eventful crisis of this world's history.

But who are the wise, who, at the time of the end, shall understand these prophetic periods? Why, clearly, those who are not the wicked, viz. the righteous. Mankind are generally represented in the Scriptures, as they are regarded by their omniscient Judge, as divided into two classes, the righteous, who are often called the "wise," and the wicked, who are often called "the foolish," (see Prov. 3: 35, compare Matt. 7: 24-27, 25: 1-12.) So here, none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise, i. e. the truly righteous, shall understand. And the language is such as unequivocally to exclude all the wicked, and include all the righteous. If in an assembly of Christians, I should say, "Now none of the sisters will understand what I am about to say," I should of course be understood to affirm that all the brethren would understand me, for that is the legitimate and obvious import of such language. So here, the Revelator evidently intends to be under-

stood to say that, at the time of the end, all the truly righteous will understand the import of these prophetic periods, which are designed to teach us when probationary time will close.

And here we learn what he means when he says they "shall understand." Not mere intellectual knowledge and conviction, however clear, and however satisfactory,—for this the wicked may have as well as the righteous. Whenever the righteous shall come to understand the import of these passages, be it sooner or later, some of them will of course be able so to explain it to others, that any individual who will candidly listen, can be convinced that the explanation given is correct. So now, many of the most candid and considerate persons who make no pretensions to experimental religion, having heard these passages explained, with others pertaining to the same subject, have frankly avowed their full conviction that if the Bible is true, probationary time will close with the present Jewish year. To "understand," then must imply here something more than mere intellectual knowledge and conviction. Of course it must imply an understanding of the heart, i. e. true evangelical faith,—that faith which "is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," such as none but the truly righteous ever did or ever will have. And such faith will always be evidenced by appropriate fruits.

A single fact may help to illustrate the true import of this expression. While lecturing in a certain place several months ago, I became acquainted with a sister in Christ who had long professed to enjoy, and undoubtedly had enjoyed, the blessing of perfect love, and for about six months had been fully convinced, and professed to believe that probationary time would close this year. After a little conversation with her, in which she expressed herself relative to believing and proclaiming the truth on this subject, and respecting the importance of being ready, much as unbelievers generally do, and as no true believer in the doctrine ever does express himself. I became satisfied of course, and frankly and faithfully told her that, however fully she might be convinced of the truth of Christ's coming this year, she certainly did not, in her heart, believe it.—At this she felt very indignant, and was about determined in her own mind not to hear me lecture again. But as I had given notice that my next lecture would be on the "importance of knowing the time" of Christ's coming, she concluded that she would hear on that subject; and while listening to what was said on that occasion, the Spirit of God led her to see that what I had previously told her of her own case was true. She went away deeply convicted of the guilt she had contracted in professing to believe such a momentous truth, when neither her heart or her life had been properly affected by it.—

She went before the Lord with deep contrition and confession, and betook herself prayerfully to a re-examination of the Scriptures respecting the truth of the doctrine, and while thus "taking heed to the sure word of prophecy," "the day dawned, and the day-star arose in her heart." The Spirit of God took of the things of Christ as exhibited in this glorious truth, and so showed them unto her, that they became, from that moment a living reality to her soul, swaying all her conduct and conversation; just as Noah's conduct was swayed by his faith respecting the destruction of the world by a flood at a specified time, and imparting such a degree of peace and joy as she had never experienced before. She now in heart, believed the doctrine. God had fulfilled his promise.—"When he, the Spirit of Truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth." And when God guides one into the truth, he so "understands" that there remains no more doubt or uncertainty in his mind on the subject.*

Thus, at the time of the end, all the truly righteous, all who have the righteousness of true faith, will "understand," or in their hearts believe, what God has revealed respecting the time when this probationary state will close: and this faith will bring into their souls so much of the glory of the Lord, and will have such a sanctifying, transforming, actuating power, as to make them, in distinction from all unbelievers, and from all mere intellectual believers, a peculiar people; praising God for the working of his mighty power within, the earnest of their inheritance; rejoicing in the prospect of speedy, eternal redemption; gloring in the cross of Christ, in suffering reproach for the truth's sake; dead to the world; and making it manifest by their prayers and labors for the immediate salvation of men from sin, and by all their secular arrangements, and concerns, that they have not a wavering doubt that the end will come at the time specified in the written word.

Such being the plain import of the text, it implies of course, that all those who do not, before the Lord is revealed in the clouds of heaven, thus understand the truth respecting the time of his coming, as revealed in the Scriptures, will prove themselves to be destitute of that faith which is necessary to salvation. "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."

Not that every true believer will be able connectedly and logically, to exhibit to others the Scriptural reasons of his faith pertaining to this subject. Persons may, and sometimes do, rationally and clearly understand the truth respecting it, as revealed in the Bible, without being able to state to others, in any way, the reasons which have satisfied their own minds; just as many persons who could not even read their Bibles, have been led rationally and truly to obtain pardon and salvation, and to become devoted

and faithful witnesses for Christ, by believing the truth, through the Spirit, as conveyed to their minds by those who have preached and exemplified it. Any one who is capable of becoming a true Christian, is capable of understanding this subject in the sense of this text: and if a case could be supposed where a true believer is incapable, or has not the means of understanding it intellectually, he will ask, and God will grant him, to have such an understanding of it, in his heart, as to make all his conduct and conversation to accord with the truth as revealed in the Scriptures, and as understood by those who, capable of investigating it for themselves, afford evidence of having been taught of the Lord to understand it.

Nor is it implied that an evangelical understanding of the truth on the subject is a condition of salvation. By no means. Faith and repentance are the only prescribed, indispensable conditions of salvation. But it is plainly the import of this text that their understanding, or not understanding what God has revealed, as already explained, respecting the time of Christ's coming, will, in every case, decide the question whether an individual is already in possession of that faith which is necessary to salvation. It may also be observed that to persist in closing one's eyes upon the light pertaining to this subject, may, and doubtless will in many cases, prove the occasion of their being perpetually abandoned of God to destruction.

Nor is it implied in this text that none are, or have been, true believers in Christ except those who now understand the truth as revealed in the Scriptures on this subject. It says, indeed, that "at the time of the end the wise and none of the wicked shall understand;" but it does not say that they shall all understand at *once*, nor are we authorized to say, at any hour of time before the last, that all the truly righteous do now understand. And as to those who have already died, since it may be supposed the time of the end commenced; we can only say of them what may be said of all that have gone before them, "If they were truly righteous here, they sleep in Jesus, and will have part in the first resurrection."

It is to be hoped, and we will believe, that many will yet prove themselves to have true saving faith, by so crying after knowledge and lifting up their voice for understanding, that they will be guided into the truth on this subject. But at all events, the text plainly teaches that the character and state of every individual in the sight of God will hereby be actually tested *by the time the Lord is revealed*; and in most cases, probably, some time before. Nor should any one be greatly surprised, if nine tenths of all professors and teachers of religion should thus prove themselves to be wanting in true faith, considering what developments have already been made among them. Who does not know, that many who once stood as high in profession, in apparent piety, and in the confidence of the community, as any of those who are yet ignorant of the truth on this subject, and whose labors have been much blest to the good of souls have made it manifest that they had only

—"stolen the livery of the court of heaven
To serve the devil in."

And very many more apparently of the most devoted among them, have, during the few past years, been led to see and acknowledge that their hopes of heaven had never before been built on Christ, through living, overcoming faith. Says the blessed Savior, "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" clearly intimating that, although many might profess and appear to have it, very few would then be found in actual possession of it. And again, "As in the days that were before the flood, they knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." And alas! how few among the multitudes who then professed to be the "sons of God," (Gen. 6: 2,) were found to be truly righteous!

Here let it be observed, that the characters of the antediluvians were tested in the very same way in which ours are to be tested on this subject, as here specified. When God announced his determination to destroy the world by a flood, he stated that it would take place at the end of one hundred and twenty years. (See Gen. 6: 3.) Yes, *the time was revealed*, that it might be understood and believed; and Noah, a preacher of righteousness, both by precept and example, continued to warn, rebuke; and exhort them during this whole period of time. But although it was revealed with sufficient clearness, as appears from the fact that Noah and his family had no doubt in respect to the coming event, or the time of its occurrence; and though multitudes of them were, doubtless, intellectually convinced that it was God's determination to deluge the world at the time specified, and some so far believed it, as to be willing, from selfish motives, to assist Noah in building the ark, notwithstanding the reproach it subjected them to; yet they did not in their hearts understand, or believe it; and thus they were proved to be destitute of that faith which is necessary to salvation. "They *knew* not," says the Savior, "till the flood came and took them all away." Although, seven days before hand, they were told the very day on which the fountains of the great deep would be broken up, and the windows of heaven would be opened, yet they knew not "the time."

In the same way were the characters of the professed people of God tested, at the time of our Savior's first advent to our world. The Jews at that period had access to all that God had revealed respecting the Messiah which was to come. They were familiar with the prophecies which foretold that he should be of the family of David;—that he should be born of a virgin, in Bethlehem;—that he should be called out of Egypt and called a Nazarine;—that he should be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief;—that he should bear our griefs and carry our sorrows; and that he should begin to exhibit his claims to be the Messiah at the end of sixty nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three days, Dan. 9: 25, from the time of the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, as recorded in Ezra, 7: 9.

*There is a wide difference between a tempted and a doubting state of mind. A true believer may be often strongly tempted to doubt, and this tempted state of mind he may mistake for real doubting; but there can no more be true faith where there is any real doubt, than there can be light where there is total darkness. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence [demonstration] of the things not seen."

In consequence of the preaching of a few obscure individuals, like Simeon, who in their hearts understood this prophetic period, and were waiting for the consolation of Israel, there was a general expectation awakened among them that the Messiah was then to appear. And according to these expectations he did appear, fulfilling, with minute exactness, all that had been foretold of him, at the time expected; for precisely at the end of the predicted four hundred and eighty-three days, he "came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, *The time is fulfilled,*" Mark 1: 15.—Some few like Simeon, and Anna, and John the Baptist, could readily perceive that all these predictions were fulfilled in Christ, and of course they hailed him, and treated him as the predicted and long expected Messiah. But the great majority of them, though they afforded as clear and satisfactory evidence of being the true children of God, as nine tenths of the ministers and professors of religion of the present day, did not understand, or if they were intellectually convinced, they did not, in their hearts, believe that the time which was to elapse unto Messiah the Prince had expired, and that these other prophecies had been, and were being accomplished in Christ. Many of them, like Nicodemus and the young ruler, were in the common acceptance of the terms, sincere and honest inquirers after truth, but being destitute of that principle of true faith which makes us like little children, distrustful of any opinions which our Father has not taught or directly sanctioned, and which keeps us continually looking to him with teachable confidence, knowing that he is able and willing to make us know what is truth,—they failed to understand in their hearts that the prophecies relating to the Messiah in his humiliation, and to the time of his appearing, were being fulfilled in Christ. Hence, under the influence of their worldliness, their pride, and their love of popularity, they were led on, first to despise him as the carpenter's son of Nazareth, and then to hate and oppose him; and at length were proceeding with a concerted plot to crucify the Lord of glory, when Jesus with weeping solicitude exclaimed, "O that thou hadst known even thou in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes:" "Behold your house is left unto you desolate:" "because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation." "Ye can discern the face of the sky, but how is it that ye cannot discern *this time*." Had they understood the time when Messiah the Prince was to be manifested as revealed by the prophet Daniel, they would easily have perceived the accomplishment of other prophecies relating to him. But not knowing the time tested their characters, and proved the occasion of their final and perpetual abandonment of God as a people.

Such being the fact in regard to the antediluvians, and the professed people of God at the time of the Savior's first advent, can it be surprising that the characters of those who live in "the time of the end," should be tested in the same way? The passages of Scripture pertaining to the pre-millennium

advent of Christ are far more numerous and intelligible than those that were fulfilled in him in his state of humiliation; while it is stated in several places, that certain specified signs will appear visible to the natural eye, by which we may know when his coming "is near even at the doors." It is also a peculiarly noticeable fact, that the prophetic period now understood by all, which revealed the time of Messiah's first appearing, but which the Jews did not understand, constitutes a part of, and a perfect key to, those prophetic periods which relate to his Second Coming, and the end of probationary time. Hence, although the Savior said "Of that day and hour knoweth [in the time then present] no man," (and no one now pretends to know the day and the hour) yet he adds, "But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched." And since God has, in the prophetic periods, made known in what watch our Lord will come, and since "the wise" who live in the time of the end are required to "know when it is near, even at the doors," in order that he cry may be seasonably made, "Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him,"—who would not reasonably expect, that the understanding or not understanding of these Scriptures at the same time specified, would become a test of christian character? Why, it is not only reasonable to expect it, but it must be so, from the very nature of the case.

The church is represented as the "Bride, the Lamb's wife." "I have espoused you to one husband," says the Apostle to the Corinthians, "that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," 2 Cor. 11: 2. And in Rev. 19: 7, read "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." The true church, then, or true christians are represented in the Scriptures as sustaining the same relation to Christ, that an espoused virgin sustains to one whom she has chosen to be her husband, and who has chosen her to be his wife. And among the declarations of God's word by which we are to be judged at the last day, is the following, "If any man come to me and hate not, (e. i. prefer not me before) his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

The coming of Christ, then, is to the true church, the coming of her espoused husband whom every member loves more than he loves father, mother, wife or children; coming to take them into blissful and eternal union with himself, away from among his enemies and their tempters and tormentors.

Now suppose that a woman whose espoused husband, the object of her warmest love, had been several years absent, should receive a letter from him, containing among other comforting and encouraging things, a designation, couched in language somewhat peculiar, of the time when he intended to be at home for the purpose of taking her to himself as his beloved bride; and suppose that in reading the letter, she had in some unaccountable manner, not expecting him very soon, overlooked or failed to under-

stand this important part of it. Suppose further, that having after reading it, lent it to some of her neighbors, she should hear it noised abroad from them, that this letter of her espoused husband contained a statement of his determination to be at home at a certain time, which time was particularly specified in the flying report. Now who does not know that that woman's heart would leap for joy at the very report, especially if the time spoken of was very near; and that she would, probably, neither eat nor sleep till she had gained access to the letter again, for the purpose of satisfying herself in respect to this deeply interesting point. And suppose that, on re-perusing the letter, she should see clearly that a time was indeed specified when her absent lover would be at home, but that the language was as difficult to understand as the prophetic periods found in the Bible; yet she knew of some friend in the neighborhood who could correctly interpret it; how long would it be before she would be at that friend's house with joyful anxiety for help to understand it? Why, if such were not her feelings and her desire to know the time when her espoused husband would return, it would prove to the satisfaction of every unprejudiced mind, that she had no proper regard for him as sustaining such a relation.

So when, at the time of the end, it is proclaimed abroad as being revealed in the word God, that the blessed Bridegroom of the church will come at a specified time, and that very soon, to take his loving, longing, weary bride to himself, every one that truly sustains that relation will of course rejoice exceedingly at the very proclamation; and so desirous will they be to know the time of his coming, that they will give themselves no rest till they have diligently searched the Scriptures for themselves to see whether these things are so; knowing that the things which are revealed are for them to understand. So, also, every individual who has the spirit of Christ, without which we are none of his,—that spirit of benevolence which led him from heaven to earth, and from the manger to the cross, to rescue sinners doomed to hell—will earnestly desire to know if the Lord is so soon coming to destroy all the wicked from the earth, that they may present it as a motive, in connection with others, to induce their friends and neighbors to flee immediately to Christ for salvation.

It is then certain that all who have the spirit of Christ, all who compose the true church,—the bride, the Lamb's wife, will earnestly desire and diligently search to know the truth pertaining to this delightfully interesting subject; for, at the time of the end, all will hear the proclamation "Behold the Bridegroom cometh." But what if they find themselves unable to determine, with undoubting certainty, what is the precise import of these prophetic periods—when they begin and when they will end? Why, then they will remember the declaration of the blessed Savior, "When the spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth," and their faith—that faith by which they are characterized as truly righteous—will

not fail to secure its fulfilment; for it will be unto them according to their faith. Yes, "the wise will understand," "but none of the wicked shall understand." Here let it be observed, that those who are taught of God are not left in doubt or uncertainty in respect to the point in question; and if an individual has not faith enough to secure the fulfillment of this promise, he will find that he has not the faith which is necessary to salvation.

In accordance with this view of the subject, the question as to the true import of these prophetic periods, is actually proving a test of character at the present time, all over the world where the Bible is read.

It is very generally admitted by reflecting and candid minds, that we must now be living somewhere within the period properly denominated "the time of the end."—It is seen and admitted that what is prophesied of this period in Dan. 12: 4, 10, is fulfilled to the very letter. For several years past "many have been running to and fro" in an unprecedented manner, disseminating information on all subjects; and knowledge has been increasing with wonderful rapidity, especially knowledge of the Scriptures and particularly of the prophecies.

Many, in the scriptural and proper sense of the terms, have been 'purified and made white' in the blood of the Lamb; and their faith has been 'tried' more severely, even, than it could have been by either the sword or the faggot. The wicked too are doing wickedly, to an astonishing and alarming degree.

What was prophesied by our Savior, of the period immediately preceding his second coming, at the end of the world; as recorded in Matt. 24: 29; and in Luke 21: 25, 26, has also been fulfilled to the very letter. That his coming there spoken of, could not have meant his coming to destroy Jerusalem, is manifest, in the first place, from the fact that the 'tribulation of those days' prophesied of in Matt. 24: 21, 22, was to be such as *never was and never shall be again*—which could not have been true of any tribulation since these predictions were uttered, except that which came upon the church during the 1260 days of Papal domination: for according to Dan. 12: 1, when Christ shall have come and delivered his people there will be, on earth, to all his enemies, "to the Jew first and also to the Gentile," such a time of trouble "as never was since there was a nation to that time." And then, the Savior says he will come "after the tribulation of those days," which could not be true, if the tribulation spoken of was that brought upon the Jews by his coming to destroy Jerusalem. Besides it is a simple, plain matter of fact that Christ did not come, in the manner here specified, at the destruction of Jerusalem. But considering this tribulation according to its obvious import, as that which the church has already suffered under Papal persecution, and all is plain and intelligible, and his coming here spoken of will then be seen to mean his final coming at the end of the world, which is described in other parts of the Bible in simple language. In respect to this his Second Coming he says, "Imme-

diately after the tribulation of those days," and Mark (13: 24,) has recorded it, "in those days, [after that tribulation,] shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light;" which was literally fulfilled with in the memory of many now living, "in those days," i. e., in A. D. 1780, before the 1260 days of Papal rule had ended, and "after that tribulation" had subsided: for it had in a great measure subsided by that time:—"the stars shall fall from heaven;" which has also been literally fulfilled, as almost every reader will recollect; for the proper definition of a star is, "a small luminous body in the heavens." There have been, also, within a few years, and especially during the past year, the most remarkable "signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars, and men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth," in exact accordance with the prediction of our Savior as recorded in Luke 21: 26. "And then, v. 27, shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." "Verily I say unto you," v. 32, "This generation," i. e., the generation which is upon earth when these signs appear, and just before he appears in the clouds of heaven, for he is speaking expressly here for *their* benefit, just as the Apostle did in 1 Thess. 4: 15. "We [of this generation,] which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, &c. "This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled."

We, then, of the present generation, are unquestionably living "in the time of the end," when "the words" which the wise and none of the wicked were to understand, are no longer "closed up and sealed." Accordingly, many have, as they believe and profess, been led, intellectually and in their hearts, to understand the true import of these prophetic periods. It is, also, a noticeable fact, that *all* without a single exception, who profess clearly to understand them, and who afford evidence of having been taught of the Lord to understand his word, do believe without a doubt, that probationary time will end with the present Jewish year. And while acting in accordance with their belief, they have, as we have reason to think, caused the cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh," to reach, in some way, the ears or the eyes of every professed disciple of Jesus now living on the globe.

And now, what has been, and what is, the result? Why, to say nothing of the ungodly world in general, who, we expect, will of course disregard the proclamation; a large portion of those who profess to be the bride, the "Lamb's wife," ministers of religion not excepted, instead of appearing glad to think that it may be true, and eagerly setting themselves, with humble and teachable minds, to search the Scriptures for themselves, to see whether these things are so, have persisted in treating the subject with contemptuous indifference; and others have pertinaciously and sneeringly refused, when asked, to examine the subject, or to have it discussed in their places of worship, or even spoken of in their religious meetings; and those who, like Simeon and Anna, are joyfully waiting for

the consolation of Israel, or like John the Baptist and the fishermen of Galilee, are proclaiming the kingdom of God now nigh at hand, have been treated and spoken of by them, just as Christ and his disciples were spoken of and treated by the professors of religion—the scribes and pharisees of their day. "Can any thing good come out of Nazareth?" "Have any of the scribes or the rulers of the people believe him?" "This people who knoweth not the law are cursed." "Thou art his disciple! we are Moses' disciples." "Are ye also deceived?" Who has not heard their sneering remarks about the "Millerites"—their "going up," their "ascension robes," their "dreams and visions," their "setting April fool day" for the coming of Christ, &c. &c. &c. Oh! methinks if our coming Lord and King were here now to speak to them, he would say to them, and to all who feel as they do on this subject, as he once said to their prototypes of old: "Ye hypocrites! ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" for whether the Lord comes this year or not, they have proved it out conclusively that, with all their high professions, they are not the espoused bride of the coming bridegroom. Oh that they had known in this their day, the things which belong to their peace! These professors are all ignorant, of course, of the true import of the prophetic periods, and for the very good reason, they have no wish to understand them.

But another portion of professors and ministers of religion have been willing to look at the subject, and some of them have investigated it with considerable care, and yet they are not satisfied that they understand the import of these prophetic periods. Some of them have not even abandoned their preconceived opinions respecting a temporal millenium of a thousand years or more.—Others have become convinced that the end must be near, and think it *may be* this year, but they do not "understand" what the Bible says about the *time*. Now from careful and extensive inquiry, I have reason to believe, that ninety-nine hundredths of all this class of professors and ministers are conscious that they *have yet some preparations to make*, before they shall be all ready, as they wish to be, for the coming of the Lord. Of course, they feel in a measure under condemnation, for they know they ought to be at all times ready for their departure hence to a world of retribution. It is, therefore, by no means certain as yet, that they are the true disciples of Jesus. God has told us by his inspired Apostles, that "there is no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus;" (Rom. 8: 1) and that "whatsoever is born of God *overcometh the world*; and this is the victory that *overcometh the world*, even our faith;" (1 John, 5: 4,) and then verse 10, "He that believeth [has true faith] in the Son of God hath the witness in himself, that God hath given him eternal life." Hence the exhortation "Be diligent, that ye may found of him in peace *without spot and blameless*." For, "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Whatever professions one may make, or however devotedly pious he may appear to be, if he has not that faith in Christ

which frees from condemnation, and overcomes the world, and brings into his bosom the precious witness that God has given to him eternal life, it is no matter of wonder that he does not "understand." "If thine eye be evil," says the Saviour, "thy whole body shall be full of darkness." "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine." "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

But the true state of many of these hearts has already been tested, and others of them are now being tested very rapidly by means of these "words" which they do not understand, but which the wise shall "understand." Those of them who cannot abandon their preconceived opinions respecting a temporal millennium, are fast making it manifest that they have not the child-like, humble, teachable mind which is implied in true saving faith. In the first place, they are preaching and acting directly in the face of the unquestionable fact, that nearly the whole Christian Church, from the apostles downward, believed and rejoiced in the personal coming of Christ before the millennium; until a little more than one hundred years ago Daniel Whitby conjured up and published to the world the soothing theory which they are now advocating. And then, in this tradition against the doctrine of Christ's pre-millennial advent as now preached, they are obliged to suppose, (for they know it never has been and never can be proved, nor can it be made to appear like common sense,) that all the prophetic periods in Daniel and John have already been fulfilled in literal days; and that too in opposition to the opinion of all the most learned and pious commentators in all past time! In maintaining this tradition also, they utterly disregard the plain instructions in Dan. 7: 21, 22; 2 Thess. 2: 8; Matt. 13: 24-30, 36-42; Luke 21: 24-28, which teach that the man of sin, with all his deceivableness of unrighteousness, with other persecuting enemies of Christ, will continue on earth prevailing against, and oppressing the saints, until Christ comes in the clouds of heaven to set up his everlasting kingdom. It has also been mathematically demonstrated, that should the population of the earth increase no faster than it has in this country for the last fifty years, not a square yard could be found on the surface of the globe at the end of 500 years on which would not be found at least two living human beings, to say nothing of the brute creation! How can a man have the honest teachableness of true faith, who, with all this light in his mind, can persist in interpreting the Scriptures to favor a thousand years temporal millennium, when God has promised his Spirit to guide him into all truth? The time of ignorance has been, when such a course of conduct would be winked at. But now, in the flood of light which is pervading the land on this subject, God is calling upon all men every where to repent of such perverting of the truth. "If I had not come and spoken unto them," says the Savior, "they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin."

But look at some other developments which they have made in laboring to defend

this scriptural tradition. Of one of them, a distinguished theological Professor, a prominent Universalist editor has said, "In his 'Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy,' he confutes Miller's views of the second coming of Christ, by taking Universalist ground, limiting the fulfillment of the predictions of the Revelator, to a time not far distant from that in which they were made. It tends, as we are told by a Presbyterian paper of repute, fearfully to universalism."

Another one of them of similar standing has taken upon him to affirm, in direct contradiction to the obvious import of several well known declarations of God's word, that we have no reason to expect the guidance of the Holy Spirit in understanding the Scriptures, except on those points which are absolutely necessary to salvation! and then charges with fanaticism all those who profess to have had such guidance on any other points.

Another has had the presumption to affirm, "If God had seen any good reasons for destroying the world this year, he would, in some way, have made it known to us." Hence, because he can see no good reason why it should be done, he infers that it would be inconsistent with the benevolence of God to do it, the Bible out of the question! So the Universalist says he can see no good reason why God should punish the wicked forever, and therefore infers that it must be inconsistent with his benevolence to do it! Moreover every advocate of a temporal millennium, in explaining the Scriptures to favor his views, is obliged to disregard entirely, the plain, obvious, common sense principle of interpretation, that "every word and sentence is to be construed literally, unless it involves a palpable absurdity, or a plain contradiction." and in disregarding this principle, they lend their whole influence to encourage the infidel in saying, that the Bible is just like an old fiddle, any one can play just such a tune upon it as he pleases.

But let us notice some developments which are being made by the other class of professors referred to who think the end may be near; but yet do not "understand" what God has revealed respecting the time. They have attended lectures on the subject, and read their Bibles enough to be satisfied that those are not right who are advocating a temporal millennium; and in regard to the time, they have had before their minds all the evidence, in view of which many have been led to believe, without a doubt, that probationary time will end with the present Jewish year; but although they can see no reason to doubt that it will be so, yet they do not "understand," i. e. they do doubt! Now in addition to the fact already stated, that the most of this class of persons are conscious that all is not just right with them, as to a preparation for the coming of the Lord; it will be found that, with a few exceptions, which are diminishing in number daily, they feel no joyful interest in the speedy coming of the Bridegroom, except it be for some considerations, manifestly selfish in their character; nor are they exhibiting the spirit,—the benevolence of Christ in respect to those who acknowledge themselves un-

prepared to meet the Lord. And then, let them be pressed up to the duty of believing without a doubt what they see reason to believe, and no reason to doubt, and you find lurking in the bosoms of some of them,— "What if he should not come?" or "What will my friends and acquaintances think or say of me should I believe it?" or, "What influences shall I have for doing good next year, should I now profess to believe it?"—showing conclusively that they have not yet given up all for Christ, or learned by faith to commit all their interests, all the consequences of obeying God into his hands. If we would be true heirs with Abraham, we must have the faith of Abraham; the faith which trusts God with all consequences, and with all apparent inconsistencies and impossibilities. Others of them when thus pressed, will be heard to say that "they think it enough to be ready!," "If we are only ready, what matter is it if we don't know the time!" thus virtually charging God with folly in revealing the time, and developing the fearful probability that their religion is all selfishness. Such professors will find, when the Lord comes—God grant that they may be convinced of it before!—that the religion of true faith is something more than seeking to get and keep ourselves in readiness for those mansions which are being prepared for those who love God. Such was not the spirit of Christ, when he gave himself for us; and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." God has revealed the time when Christ will come to take vengeance on them that obey not the gospel, and has promised the Spirit to guide into all truth, in order that those who have true faith and true benevolence, at the time of the end, having understood this most deeply interesting and important part of divine Revelation, may go forth, under the thrilling influence of undoubting faith in the time there appointed, and do what they can to get others ready to meet the coming Bridegroom. It must therefore prove, and is proving, a true test of saving faith. "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."

And now, dear reader, I am aware that the picture here presented of the state of the church and of the world, is an appalling one. My own heart alternately sickens and shudders in contemplating it. But to me it appears to be the true image of things as exhibited in the perfect mirror of God's unerring word. Moreover, it accords precisely with what the Savior has given us to understand it will be, when he shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven. "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Great professions of religion there may be;—much of the form of godliness there may be;—much zeal in defence of the truth there may be;—much preaching about the importance of being ready there may be;—much intellectual orthodoxy as to what constitutes a preparation there may be;—much striving to be ready there may be. But where will be the faith which makes us heirs with Abraham and with Christ to the promised inheritance!—that faith which makes us, as the espoused bride of the coming Bridegroom, with the promise

of the Spirit to guide us, to know when he is near even at the doors, and to "understand" what God has in mercy revealed respecting the definite time of his appearing? that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, and which makes us, by our conduct, to condemn the world, as Noah did, for their infidelity in regard to what God had spoken? Where, I say, will be found this saving faith? Where is it found? If you possess it, dear reader, you need not an exhortation from me to rejoice, and to praise the Lord for his distinguishing work of grace on your heart, and in the view of the glory so soon to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. I know you want an angel's powers with which to express the gratitude you feel for that influence of the Spirit which has removed pride, prejudice, and unbelief from your heart in relation to this subject, and given you the gracious sealing witness, excluding all doubt, that you understand when "the sanctuary will be cleansed," when "Michael shall stand up," and when "Daniel shall stand in his lot," as God has revealed it. Thanks be unto God, that some do "understand," and can lift up their heads with joy, knowing that their redemption is soon to be completed. Stand fast, beloved, a few days longer, in the faith and in the power of God; "in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which to them is an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God." Be followers unto the end of those who through faith and patience condemned the world, and inherit the promises. Though the vision tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

"Yes, soon the blissful day will come,
When our dear Lord will bring us home,
And we shall see his face;
Then with our Savior, and our Friend,
A bless'd eternity we'll spend,
Triumphant in his grace."

But perhaps the reader is one who does not "understand," in the sense of our text; and it may be you are a professed disciple, and possibly a professed minister of Jesus! professing to be the light of the world, a living epistle of the truth, the espoused bride of the coming Bridegroom, and yet ignorant, or in doubt about the import of those passages of his word which reveal a truth, the most deeply interesting to the true bride, and the most momentous to all, over whom you are exercising an influence, of any which the Bible contains! You know that the things which are revealed belong to us and to our children,—and yet you do not understand!—that *all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God for our *profit*, and yet you do not understand!—that the Spirit is promised to *guide you into all truth*, and yet you do not understand!!—a watchman on the walls of Zion, and yet you do not understand!!—living, manifestly, in "the time of the end," when God has said the wise and none of the wicked *shall understand*, and yet you do not understand!! Oh! my friend, what is the difficulty? "Where art thou?" Why are you in ignorance or in doubt on such a subject, till this last hour of time? What will you answer, when Jesus shall be

revealed by the close of the present Jewish year, if not before, and shall ask you why you have not, for months or years past, been lifting up your head with joy, and warning the people to be ready for his appearing, with the blissful confidence of undoubting faith in what God has revealed respecting it in these prophetic periods? If you think to say that you *could not* understand this part of his *revelation*, when he has promised his Spirit to guide you into *all truth*; you will find this a serious charge to bring against your Maker, while many will be prepared to testify to the falsehood of such an assertion. If you think to say that you considered it enough *to be ready* to meet the Lord, your own words will condemn you; for you are appointed to be the *light of the world*, a living epistle of the truth, known and read of all men; and if a watchman on the walls of Zion, to see the sword coming and to *warn the people*, lest their blood should be required at your hand.

In a word, you will find that nothing will be accepted there without *true faith*, such as Abraham and Noah had, that faith which, with the promise of the Spirit to guide, will at the time of the end, "*understand*" what God has revealed on such a subject as this, and which will make us to act in regard to it, as to condemn all who have not such faith.

I beseech you then, by all that is glorious and dreadful in the coming of Christ, now just upon us, to get down before the Lord, *immediately*, with deep contrition on account of the manner in which you have hitherto regarded and treated this subject; make an unreserved and an eternal consecration of all you have and are to him; and then, in view of his own sure word of promise to give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him to guide them into all truth, prove yourself to be of those who have true faith, and are the espoused bride of the coming Bridegroom, by *holding him to his word*, till you are sure that he has made you to understand what he has revealed respecting the time of his coming; remembering that when God guides into the truth, he leaves you not in doubt or uncertainty respecting it. "The wise shall understand."

FROM THE MIDNIGHT CRY.

"COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE."

CLEVELAND, O. Feb. 24, 1844.

Dear Brethren of the Midnight Cry:

Our dear brother STORRS says that the Great Head of the Church designed that we should come out of Babylon, and not wait for Babylon to thrust us out. I believe he is right, and I am therefore determined to come out. Subsequently to my being separated from the Newark Presbytery, I was induced, at the solicitation of several clergymen, to unite with the New York Congregational Association, and was received by that body, and became a subscriber to its creed; having also been received by the General Association of the Western Reserve. This is now nearly three years since. I have never met with them since that time, and do

not know whether they retain my name among their list of members or not. But I now wish to say through your paper to the world that I do from this time regard myself, and hereby proclaim myself to all men, as free and independent of all ecclesiastical domination, as a member of no sect, and a subscriber to no creed. At the same time, I receive the Bible as the word of the living and true God, and am looking for the immediate coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom I must give account. "Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ," to all who love Him in sincerity; and love to all who love His appearing. Yours, in the blessed hope,

CHARLES FITCH.

Bro. Fitch, is earnestly requested to pay us a visit in this place, and give a course of lectures, should time continue. His expenses will be met, and any other pecuniary assistance rendered that he may need. We hope he will not disappoint us.

ED. WESTERN MID. CRY.

ONE OF MR. MILLER'S FIRST AUDIENCES.—About the time Mr. Miller began to write on the advent near, as he was passing down the Hudson river to New York in a steamboat, he was standing near a company of gentlemen who were conversing respecting the wonderful improvements of the day, when one of them remarked that it was impossible for things to progress for thirty years to come in the ratio they had done: for man would attain to something more than human. Mr. Miller told him that it reminded him of Daniel 12: 4; "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." A pause ensued, when Mr. M. continued, and observed that the improvements of the present day were just what we should expect at this time, as a fulfilment of Dan.'s prophecy. He then commenced with the 11th chap. and comparing the prophecy with history, showed its fulfilment thus far, while all listened with the most close attention.

He then told them he did not intend to trespass so long on their patience, and leaving them, walked to the other end of the boat. He had no sooner arrived there, than the entire company followed him, and wished to hear more on the subject. He accordingly went through the 2d. chap. of Dan., in the same manner, and fearing he should be tedious, broke away from them, and went down into the cabin. The entire company followed, and continued the conversation. He then went through the 7th, 8th and 9th of Dan. They then wanted to know if he had ever written on the prophecies. He told them he had; and distributed among them what copies he had of the first pamphlet he wrote on the subject. This was one of his first audiences, and men of the highest standing were astonished listeners to his discourse; but the result of that interview can only be known in that great day.—*Advent Herald*.

WESTERN MIDNIGHT CRY.

CINCINNATI, MARCH 23, 1844.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

ON WHICH

THE SECOND ADVENT CAUSE IS BASED.

I.—The Word of God teaches that this earth is to be regenerated, in the restitution of all things, and restored to its Eden state, as it came from the hand of its Maker before the fall, and is to be the eternal abode of the righteous in their resurrection state.

II.—The only Millennium found in the word of God, is the thousand years which are to intervene between the first and second resurrections, as brought to view in the 20th of Revelation. And the various portions of Scripture which are adduced as evidence of such a period in time, are to have their fulfilment only in the New Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

III.—The only restoration of Israel yet future, is the restoration of the Saints to the New Earth, when "the Lord my God shall come, and all his saints with him."

IV.—The signs which were to precede the Coming of our Saviour, have all been given; and the prophecies have all been fulfilled but those which relate to the coming of Christ, the end of this world, and the restitution of all things.

V.—There are none of the prophetic periods, as we understand them, extending beyond the [Jewish] year 1843.

¶ The above we shall ever maintain as the immutable truths of the word of God, and therefore, till our Lord come, we shall ever look for his return as the next event in historical prophecy.

LECTURE.

Bro. Cook will lecture at the College Hall next Sabbath at the usual hours.

Lectures are continued at the Lawrence street Church each evening, except Saturdays and Sabbath.

THE MEETINGS.

On Sabbath last, lectures were delivered at College Hall, and at the Lawrence street house through the day. Both places were well filled, and good attention was paid. Bro. Cook was with us.

A Lecture was delivered at the Hay Scales, in Fifth street, in the morning at 9 o'clock. A respectable congregation were collected, who patiently heard us through notwithstanding it rained most of the time.

Bro. Chittenden spent the Sabbath in Hamilton, and lectured twice. Contention, sectarianism, and the "Little Horn" prevailing, he returned on Monday.

Bro. Cook talks of soon leaving for St. Louis, provided he can make arrangements to satisfy a claim upon his labors at Liberty, Ia. Bro. Chittenden will probably go to Lexington, Ky. soon, should time continue. Bro. Cook attended to the ordinance of baptism on Monday, P. M., at the foot of Pike street. Two were baptized.

The prayer meetings are interesting—souls are converted almost every evening. The ordinance of baptism was again administered on Wednesday, P. M., at the same place, to six male and eight female candidates. A very large congregation were assembled, and a general solemnity prevailed as they witnessed the ordinance. A prayer meeting was held at the church at the close of these exercises. Bro. Cook lectured at the Disciples' church on Sycamore street, Wednesday evening, upon the "penalty of the Divine Law."

We have no place sufficiently large to hold our Sabbath congregations, and there is some talk of again erecting the "Great Tent."

SCRIPTURAL TEST OF SAVING FAITH.

We hope no excuse will prevent any person into whose hand this sheet may fall, from perusing, prayerfully, the article under the above head, found in another column. 3000 copies of it have been published in pamphlet form, which will be furnished to those who wish them for distribution at the rate of \$4.00 per hundred. Single copies will be furnished gratis to all such as are willing to read, and are unable to pay for them.

L. L. HAMLINE.

The last Western Christian Advocate labors hard to prove that Bro. Hamline has never been a "Millerite." This is all superfluous, as we never had the satisfaction of bringing any such charge against him. But the following will prove how near Bro. Hamline has verged upon this awful heresy.

"This is to certify that while on the way from this city to the Muddy Creek Camp-meeting last autumn, in company with Bro. Hamline, he stated to me that he believed the time, as calculated by Mr. Miller, would pass by, to give unbelievers an opportunity to cry more loudly, 'Where is the promise of his coming?' and at that time, when the cry should become general, he believed the Lord would come; furthermore that he had given up the doctrine of the Millennium, &c.

JESSE C. JONES.

Bro. Hamline also told Bro. Cook that he saw no reason why Mr. Miller's calculations were not correct. This was said after he had prayerfully examined the subject. He has also stated in a public congregation within a year past, that he had evidence satisfactory to his own mind that the Lord would come within a brief period.

Bro. Campbell, of New York, has sent us the following lines, which he says were copied from an "old book." We do not recognize the author, but whoever he was, the Bible was not a strange book to him.

Lo! in the last days, behold
A faithless race arise!
Their lawless lust their only rule,
And thus the scoffer cries:
"Where is the promise deem'd so true,
That spoke the Saviour near?
E'er since our fathers slept in dust,
No change has reached our ear.

Years rolled on—years successive glide,
Since first the world began;
And on the tide of time, still floats
Secure the bark of man."
Thus speaks the scoffer; but his words
Conceal the truth. He knows
That from the water's dark abyss,
The earth at first arose.

But when the sons of men began
With one consent, to stray;
At heaven's command, a deluge swept
The godless race away.
A different fate is now prepared
For nature's trembling frame;
Soon shall her orbs be all enwrapt
In one devouring flame.

Reserved are sinners for the hour
When to the gulph below,—
Armed with the hand of sov'reign power,
The Judge consigns his foe:
The contrite race he counts his friends—
Forbids the suppliant's fall,
Condemns reluctant, but extends
The hope of grace to all.

Since all this frame of things must end;
As heaven has so decreed:
How wise our inmost thoughts to guard,
And watch our every deed!
Expecting calm, the appointed hour,
When nature's conflict o'er:
A new and better world shall rise,
Where sin is known no more.

LETTER FROM BRO. CAMPBELL.

New York, March 7, 1844.

DEAR BRO. JACOBS:

I again write to let you know that my faith is still unwavering in the belief that my blessed Jesus will come the present Jewish year. My brother, I cannot, neither do I wish to see any time beyond it, unless I am obliged to. The coming of the Saviour, to me is more desirable than all the riches and honors of the earth. I desire to see Him who was stricken for our transgressions—who was, and still is, despised and rejected of men—who was bruised for our iniquities, and by whose stripes we are healed. I expect HE will soon see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. This will be when he gathers his elect from the four winds, and takes the kingdom from the wicked, and gives it to the saints of the Most High.

This, indeed, is a trying time for those who are child-like enough to believe what the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, and to act accordingly. Every eye is upon us. The eyes of the devil and wicked men—scoffing professors of religion, both ministers and people, are watching over us for evil: but greater is he that is for us, than all that are against us. Consoling is the thought, that the eye of God is over us for good both by day and night. You occupy an important post, surrounded as you are, by those who not only do not love the Lord's appearing, but contend against the doctrine. You have my prayers and sympathies, and shall have them till the Master appears, and we rise to meet him in the air, never to part again.

O my brother, I cannot tell you how much I long to see the Saviour! Of late I have felt an increasing desire for the salvation of souls.

The Lord has opened a new door of usefulness for those brethren who desire to labor in his vineyard. We have hired the Congregational Church, on the corner of Christie and Delancy streets, where the Lord has blessed us abundantly. We have had souls converted in every prayer meeting that we have held.—Bro. D*****'s two little daughters professed to find the Lord one evening this week.

There are no jarring strings among us. We all labor together, and the Lord abundantly blesses us. To him be all the glory.

Your brother in the Lord,

H. CAMPBELL.

LETTER FROM BRO. MAULL.

BELLERROCK, O., March 18, 1844.

DEAR BRO. JACOBS:—God has been with us since we left Cincinnati, but our preaching takes but little effect. The indifference to this subject is awful indeed. We found a few Advent believers along the way as we came, and but a very few indeed; but they appear to be the salt of the earth. We have been able to well improve the time. The Lord has opened our way to the people wherever we have stopped; and we have so far delivered 13 lectures, and expect to keep on till about the first of April, if time should continue. We were much astonished at the scarcity of reading matter on the subject of Christ's Second Coming. There appear to be a willingness to read, but little disposition to pay for publications. We have disposed of about half of what we took with us.

Brethren, please scatter the fruit of the labors of the "holy people" as far as possible, as from all we can learn from the present signs of the times, there will be silence in Heaven for at least half an hour after the 21st day of March, 1844. Wherever we have been, the

