

THE MIDNIGHT CRY!

VOLUME I.

NEW-YORK, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1842.

NUMBER 25.

"Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

BY JOSHUA V. HIMES.

DAILY—NO. 36 PARK-ROW.

PRICE TWO CENTS.

THE MIDNIGHT CRY.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1842.

Bible Class,

At this office, this evening, at seven o'clock.

Lecture in Newark,

This evening, at the Free Church.

"POWERFUL AND TIMELY ANTIDOTES."—Such is the character given by the Evangelist to the recent sermons against Mr. Miller's "wild and visionary notions," among which Mr. Hatfield's is especially mentioned. Next Sabbath evening he is to lecture on the 7th of Daniel. May the Lord guide him into all truth.

Our readers see we have no room for a letter to-day.

BROTHER STORES writes that he expects to leave Albany for this city to-day. He will commence a course of lectures in Brooklyn or Harlem, as the Lord may direct.

IS THE N. Y. EVANGELIST AMONG THE SCOFFERS?—That paper, which we have heretofore so highly esteemed, commences an article this week, as follows:

"We are not certain that after all we have said, our readers wish for anything more on the subject of Millerism, or of any of the odd and frivolous theories which ignorant and fanciful men have attempted to palm upon the Church. The following communication contains so much plain common sense, that we think its publication will be useful."

The article which follows this scoffing introduction contains five propositions. Three contain no argument, one begs the question, and the fifth,—which gives all the point to the rest,—is FALSE. Mr. Miller does not say there will be contention between those who are raised in the first and second resurrections. He believes what the Bible says: "The rest of the dead, [the wicked,] lived not again until the thousand years are finished. . . . And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go forth to DECEIVE the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, TO GATHER THEM TOGETHER to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went, [will go] upon the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about the beloved CITY, and fire came down from God, out of heaven, and DEVOURED THEM." Is here any contention? They are DECEIVED, when they expect to contend;—and the writer in the "Evangelist" was deceived when he wrote about Mr. Miller's views.

The point on which the writer begs the question, is this: "According to this system, time continues, after the world is destroyed, and a portion of the human family are made immortal, when the Scriptures so plainly assure us that, at the end of the world, *time is no longer.*" Now, the dear brother who wrote this, has often said, "There is no time," without meaning that duration had ceased? Can duration cease? Did not God create time-measurers before man sinned? Will they not exist when "there shall be no more curse?" We do not contend against our translation, for it only needs to have fair principles applied in understanding it, to make it plain. We have, however, consulted the accurate and beautiful translation of the learned Gilbert Wakefield. It was made in 1791, and, where he had no temptation to choose words for the sake of favoring his own peculiar

views, as he certainly had not here, it is one of the purest and most literal of all our translations. He renders the whole passage thus: "Then the angel, which I saw standing upon the sea, and upon the land, lifted up his right hand unto the heaven, and swore by Him who liveth forever and ever, who created heaven and the things therein, and the earth and the things therein, and the sea and the things therein; THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO LONGER DELAY: but in the days of the sound of the seventh angel, when he is going to blow his trumpet, the mystery of God should be finished, according to his glad tidings to his servants the prophets."

This is accurate; is it expressive? We might quote Matthew Henry, Campbell, Doddridge, and others, who give the sense, "There shall be NO LONGER DELAY." We hope the brother who wrote the article will remember that this language relates to the time of the seventh trumpet, and the SIXTH HAS ALREADY CEASED. O may we be ready for the glorious change which shall come in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the LAST TROMP!

Elder H. V. Teal.

This brother is well engaged in the work of sounding the "midnight cry" in the state of New Jersey. We, a few days since, published a letter from him, at which time he was successfully engaged at Hope. He is now at Newton, N. J., from which place he says:

BROTHER FLEMING,—I am lecturing in the Court House in this place to crowded assemblies. I have just received a letter from Hope. The work of the Lord is still going on there. I have had many enquiries for books. Send me such as will be the most useful. Send immediately. From here I go to Belvidere, and commence a course of lectures next Tuesday, the 20th inst. Yours, in the full hope of the Lord near,

H. V. TEAL.

May the blessing of God attend the labors of our worthy brother, and he be the means of waking thousands from their dreamy slumbers, to prepare for the coming—the SPEEDY coming of our blessed Lord. What is done must be done quickly.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

CONCORD, N. H., Dec. 12, 1842.

DEAR BRO. SOUTHWARD,—I have just arrived at this place, on my way to Vergennes. I lectured twice yesterday in Boston—once at Chardon street Chapel, and once at the Melodeon. Brother Hawley had lectured during the previous week to immense audiences, at the Marlboro' Chapel, which has created great sensation throughout the city. The cause is prevailing.

Yours, J. V. HIMES.

For the Midnight Cry.

MILLER REFUTED.

[We learn that this comes from an eminent scholar and theologian, who is examining for himself. Speak on!—Ed.]

MR. EDITOR,—I trust that you are disposed to encourage free discussion in reference to the topics which are noticed in your sheet. Under this persuasion, I submit the following arguments, which tend to show the unsoundness of Mr. Miller's scheme. In doing this, I make no pretensions to originality, as they have been repeatedly urged by various individuals, both in and out of the church, since the attention of the public has been called to the subject.

Yours, &c., DORRISH.

Argument 1st. If Miller's scheme be true, why has it not been found out before?

Argument 2nd. Mr. A. told Mr. B. that Mr. C. said that he *guessed* Mr. M. was *crazy*. Now, as this proves that he is actually crazy, it follows, of course, that he can say nothing worthy of attention. Does not the Bible say, "Thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad?"

Argument 3rd. Mr. Miller is not a learned man. It is quite clear that none of "the common people" can understand the Bible; hence he cannot understand it, and all which he can say is mere nonsense.

Argument 4th. I do not believe that he is right, for if the world should be destroyed, no new improvements could be made; farewell to rail-roads, canals, and all banking operations!

Argument 5th. It would be a most *awful* thing if the earth and the works therein should be "burned up." It would be the very "perdition of ungodly men." Now, ungodly men form the majority, and does not God always take particular care of the majority? Are not we told in the Bible that the ungodly waited for Noah one hundred and twenty years, and then "all flesh" entered into the ark "by sevens?" If so, Miller is wrong.

Argument 6th. Prophecy cannot be understood; and it was never designed to be understood; and any one who pretends to understand it, is a blasphemer.

Argument 7th. All the unconverted are frightened when they think of being brought to judgment. It is wrong to frighten men by telling them that "the Lord shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel." 'Tis not speaking religiously to preach such dreadful things.

Argument 8th. The Bible certainly says, "Where is the promise of his coming, for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." I defy Mr. Miller to get over this text.

Argument 9th. Mr. H. H. and Mr. T. T. both preach against Miller's doctrine. They would not preach against it unless it were false—therefore it is false.

Argument 10th. Whoever makes a disturbance in the world by preaching, is a fanatic. The Second Advent people have made a disturbance, and are "turning the world upside down;" therefore they are fanatics, and not to be believed.

Argument 11th. If wicked people believed that "the Judge standeth at the door," it would deprive them of reason—they would become *crazy*. Now, it is a greater evil to be crazy, than it is to be rational and die in one's sins.

For the Midnight Cry.

The Advent of Christ.

He comes, He comes, in clouds descending,
He comes, he comes, with power divine;
Hail him in triumph, saints ascending,
And meet the Lord, for He is thine.

He comes, He comes, and is surrounded
With holy angels from on high;
He comes, He comes, He that was wounded,
And on the cross did bleed and die.

The saints above on Him attending,
All decked in robes of snowy white;
The saints below to Him ascending,
Shout with triumph and delight.

The sinners look with fear and trembling,
On all the glorious scene complete,
And low before His throne are bending,
To seek for mercy at His feet.

Alas! they see they have neglected
Their soul's salvation—all is lost!
To rocks their prayers are now directed,
And they on fiery billows tost.

But to the saints, what joy and gladness,
When Christ their Saviour comes in sight—
He drives away their fear and sadness,
And now they walk in robes of white.

A. B. H.

that this battle of the dragon's last power will be in America; and if so, it must be mainly in these United States. It will be a battle on political principles, as we may learn by the passage in Rev. xvi. 13-16, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet;"—the "unclean spirits" show that it is political principles; and, like the frogs in Egypt, it will pervade all the departments of life—the social, civil, and religious. By "dragon," we must understand the kings of the earth; by the "beast," Papal principles, or the church of Rome; by the "false prophet," Mahometan power;—"for they are the spirit of devils, working miracles,"—that is, spirit of deceit, separating friends, dividing kingdoms, states, societies, churches, and families, and crumbling every man-made institution, and levelling to the dust, all law, order, and bond of union, which the wisdom of man may have invented,— "which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world." This shows the universal spread of this fanatical spirit of disorganization, and it will finally lead to "gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." We are here notified that his coming will be like a thief to those who are engaged in this political warfare, and in those popular and men-made societies of the day; and we are told that those will be blessed who watch, that is, for his coming, and the signs of the times, and that keep their garments unspotted from these worldly institutions, which engender strife and animosity among brethren. Be warned, dear Christian; "enter into thy chamber, and hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be over and past, that ye need not be ashamed before him at his coming." It will also be a battle of religious principles, as is evident by the following scripture, Rev. xix. 11-16, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself; and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called, The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." This passage proves that there will be at the close of this dispensation, immediately preceding the marriage of the Lamb to his bride, a great and last struggle between error and truth, between infidelity and the word of God. And you may inquire, perhaps, and with propriety too, How shall we know on which side we are engaged in this great war of principle? I answer, "In righteousness" he doth make war. But, say you, we are so prone to follow tradition or prepossessed notions, and think we are right, that, like Paul, we may be found at last fighting against God. You must see to it, that you are "faithful and true," have faith in his name; "and his name is The Word of God;" this is your only rule.—The Word of God. Be careful; lay yourselves on this word. Try yourselves by this standard. If your life, faith, experience, and hope, are built on this foundation, you can never fail; for he, that is The Word of God, is "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Again: it is to be a literal battle with the sword, for Christ says, "He that taketh the sword shall die by the sword." And kings, Papal Rome, and the Mahometans, have ruled the world by the sword; and their swords, during all the days of their power, have been red with the blood of their subjects, and the innocent victims of their hate. And in Rev. xix. 17-20, it is evident, by the "fowls" spoken of in the 17th verse, is meant, warriors in favor of liberty, who are to "eat (destroy) the flesh (strength or power) of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and them that set on them, (armies are undoubtedly meant in this passage,) and the flesh of all men," who are engaged in favor of kings, papal Rome, or false prophet, "both free and bond, both small and great." "And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon!" (readable to the wall,) Rev. xix. 16-21.

These will be the means the dragon will use, in his last great struggle to gain ascendancy over the minds,

consciences, and bodies of men. He will fan up their political animosities; he will stir up strife and division among religious communities; and, last of all, and not least, he will encourage an intolerable thirst for blood. In which battle, Christ will come, chain the dragon, give his body to the burning flame, confine the spirits of all who worship the dragon, beast or false prophet, in the pit of woe; raise the saints, purify, cleanse, and glorify them with his own glory.

IV. We are to speak of the time the saints, or church, were to be in the wilderness, "one thousand two hundred and threescore days." I believe all commentators agree that these *days* are to be understood *years*; and, as I have proved this point in a former lecture, I need not stop to argue this given principle at this time, but will proceed to give some proof when this time began and when it ended. The time given in our text is the same length of time as given by Daniel for the reign of the little horn. See Daniel vii. 25. It is, also, the same time John has given for the image beast to have power "to continue forty and two months." Thirty days to a month is 1260 days, Rev. xiii. 5. It is, also, the same length of time that was given to the Gentiles to tread the holy city under foot. See Rev. xi. 2. Also, for the witnesses to prophesy, clothed in sackcloth, Rev. xi. 3. And there can hardly be a shadow of a doubt but that all these times had their beginning and ending at one and the same time. If so, then the arguments used heretofore may have their proper bearing in this place.

But let us consider a few things in addition to our former reasons. 1st. What may we understand by the woman "fleeing into the wilderness," and "from the face of the serpent." We must consider it in a state of obscurity; this was true in the time we have stated, A. D. 538. Historians tell us but little about any regular church but the Roman church, and this has never been in an obscure state; of course the Roman is not the church in the wilderness. But they do tell us that, in the days of Justinian, emperor of Constantinople, there were many schismatics, as they were called, who opposed the power of the bishop or pope of Rome, and doings of councils in the east and west; and a large share of the latter part of Justinian's life was spent in religious broils and expelling from his kingdom these schismatics; and the code of laws which he published about A. D. 533, forbade any Christians any rights or privileges as citizens in his empire who would not acknowledge the bishop of Rome as head. And in these laws he gave the bishop power to hold courts and try all matters of faith within his kingdom. These, and other things of like import, drove all true followers of the word of God to seek a rest out of the jurisdiction of the city of nations, and, of course, became outlaws to the Roman government. Then, if we fix the beginning of the exile of the church at the same time of setting up anti-Christ, A. D. 538, then the church was in its exiled state until A. D. 1798, which would be the 1260 years. It is here worthy of remark, that the code of laws passed by Justinian were in full force in the kingdoms belonging to, or under the control of, the pope of Rome, respecting the rights and privileges of those who might differ from the Catholic faith, until the French took Rome, in 1798, and declared Italy a republic; when free toleration was given for any religious opinion or privilege whatsoever. Here, then, the church, in whatever form she might appear, was permitted to enjoy the rights and privileges of citizens, and to worship God as their conscience might dictate. This is the first time, during the 1260 years, that free toleration of religion was granted in any kingdom where the Catholic church had power; and, although Catholic princes and popes have since had rule in Italy and France, yet they have never dared, as yet, to pursue their former intolerant course of conduct towards Protestants. And it is very evident, my dear friends, that the church is now out of the wilderness; that is, if she ever was; for there never has been a time since the days of the apostles, no, nor even then, that the church, in all its several branches, has enjoyed greater privileges than for nearly forty years past. She has spread her wings over every land, and carried the news of salvation into every language in the known world. Her reapers have followed the sowers of seed, and there are handfulls of corn in the tops of all the mountains; but the harvest is short. The church has had rest as long as she has ever had since Christ left her and ascended to his Father. The dragon begins to show his anger; the trumpet begins to sound to the onset; the armies of the beast begin to muster for the battle, they are furnishing their swords for the slaughter; the kings of the earth are combining against the freedom of their subjects; the great men and nobles are riveting closer the chains of their vassals; tyrants

are braiding in firmer knots their scorpion whips for their slaves; expediency has taken the room of moral law, and anarchy has crowded order from his seat; mobs have taken the place of judges, and law is popular will; the liberty of the press is but the nod of demagogues, and the freedom of speech is called fanaticism. Division seems to be the order of the day, and our valuable institutions are tottering to their base. Be warned, then, O my friends, to seek safety under the banner of the gospel before the armies are filled up. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ,"—"The spirit of prophecy."

LECTURE XII.

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.

MATT. xxv. 1.

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

PARABLES are always given to illustrate some doctrine or subject which the speaker wishes to communicate, and in an easy or familiar manner of making his hearers or readers understand the subject, and receive a lasting impression. Nothing has so good an effect on the mind as to teach by parables moral precepts or spiritual truths. In this way we are taught, by visible things or familiar objects, to realize, in some measure, the truths and subjects presented. This was the manner Christ taught his disciples and followers, that their memories might the more easily retain, and be often refreshed, when they beheld any scene like the representation of the parable; and, in this way, they might always keep in view the important truth that is likened to the parable. A parable, rightly applied and clearly understood, gives good instruction, and is a lasting illustration of the truth. But if we apply the parable wrong, if we put on a false construction, it will serve to lead us into an error, and blind us, instead of producing light,—as Christ said of the Pharisees, he spake to them in parables, that, "seeing, they might see and not perceive, and hearing, they might hear and not understand." Men often explain parables by fancy, to suit their own notions, without any evidence but their own ingenuity; and by this means there will be as many different explanations as there are ingenious men. But I dare not trifle thus with the word of God. If we cannot, by the word of God, explain, we had better leave the same as we find it, and not attempt what must only result in guesswork at last; but follow Scripture rule, and we cannot get far from the truth. Christ has given us rules by which to explain parables, by explaining some himself. The explanation given by Christ of the parable of the tares and the wheat, is a rule that will bear in about all cases. That he has given rules, is very evident in his answer to his disciples, when they asked him concerning his parables, Mark iv. 13, "And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? How, then, will ye know all parables?" That is, if ye understand how I explain this parable, you will know how to explain all others; but if you do not understand how I explain this, you cannot explain all others. This is the rule. Christ made all the prominent parts of a parable, figures; such as the *sower*, Son of man; *good seed*, children of the kingdom; *tares*, children of the wicked one; *harvest*, end of the world; *reapers*, the angels; "As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned, so shall it be in the end of the world," &c. Here is a sample; good seed, tares, harvest, and reapers, are figures representing other things, as we have shown. "But how," say you, "shall we always know what these figures represent?" I answer, By the explanation given in other parts of the Bible. For the word of God is its own expositor, or it can be of no manner of use to us; for if we have to apply to any other rule, to explain the Bible, then the other rule would be tantamount, and have a precedence, and the Bible must fall of course. But it is not so. Then, to explain our subject, I shall,

- I. Show what is meant by the figures used in the parable.
 - II. The time to which this parable is applicable; and,
 - III. Make an application of our subject.
- I. I will explain the figures in the parable; and, 1st, "kingdom of heaven" means the gospel day, or circle

of God's government under the gospel dispensation. This I shall prove by the word of God. Matt. iii. 1, 2, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; that is, the gospel day is come." Again: "Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." Luke xvi. 16, "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached." That is, the gospel day commenced with John, since which time the gospel is preached.

"Ten virgins" means mankind in general, in a probationary state, liable to be wooed and betrothed to the Lord, under the gospel, and during the gospel day. See Isaiah lxvii. 1-5, "For as a young man marryeth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." It is evident, by the second verse, that Gentiles and Jews are both included in this prophecy.

"Five wise virgins" is a figure of believers in God, or the children of the kingdom. Psalms xlv. 13, 14, "The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle-work; the virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee." "That I might comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion." Lam. ii. 13.

"Five foolish" represents the unbelieving class of mankind, while in this probationary state, under the means of grace. This will be sufficiently proved by the following passages—Isa. xlvii. 1, "Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon: sit on the ground; there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans." Jer. xlvii. 11, "O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured." These texts prove, beyond a doubt, that the wicked class of men are called *virgins* by the Scriptures.

"Lamps" is a figure of the word of God; for that only can tell us about the New Jerusalem; that only can inform us when Christ will come again to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The word of God is the means of moral light, to light our steps through moral darkness, up to the coming of the bridegroom to receive the bride unto himself. This I shall prove by the cxix. Psalm, 105, "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path." Also, Prov. vi. 23, "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

"Oil" is a representation or emblem of faith; as oil produces light by burning, so does faith, in exercise by the fire of love, produce more light, and gives comfort in adversity, hope in darkness, love for the coming bridegroom; and the light of faith assists us to watch for his coming, and to know the time of night, and to go out to meet him: such are called the children of light, because they are believers, children of faith, "sons of oil." "Because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee," Sol. Song, i. 2. "Faith works by love." See 1 John ii. 27, "But the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." It is evident that the anointing, here and elsewhere spoken of, means faith, faith in his name, &c.

"Vessels" represent the persons or mind that believe or disbelieve in the word of God, as in 1 Thess. iv. 4, "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor." Also, 2 Tim. ii. 21, "If any man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor."

"Bridegroom" is the figurative name for Christ; as the prophet Isaiah says, "And as a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." And Christ says, "How can the children of the bride-chamber mourn, while the bridegroom is with them?" alluding to himself. This proves that Christ means himself, in person, by the bridegroom in the parable.

"The door was shut," implies the closing up of the mediatorial kingdom, and finishing the gospel period. I shall prove this by Luke xiii. 25-28, "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I

know ye not whence ye are. Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunken in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"Marriage" is the time when Christ shall come the second time without sin unto salvation; gather his elect from the four winds of heaven, where they have been scattered during the dark and cloudy day: when he comes to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe; when the bride hath made herself ready, and the marriage of the Lamb is come, then he will present her to his Father without spot or wrinkle, and there marry the bride before his Father and the holy angels; remove her into the New Jerusalem state, seat her upon the throne of his glory, where she will ever be with the Lord. When this takes place, the whole body will be present; the whole church must be there, not a member missing, not a finger out of joint. She will be perfect in beauty, all over glorious. See Rev. xix. 7-9, "Let us rejoice and be glad, and give honor to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." Daniel says, "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days." John says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." All these are at one and the same time; and how can we expect to be free from sorrow, mourning and tears, until the bridegroom comes and moves us into the beloved city? Rev. xxi. 2-4, "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them," &c.

"Midnight cry" is the watchmen, or some of them, who by the word of God discover the time as revealed, and immediately give the warning voice, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." This has been fulfilled in a most remarkable manner. One or two on every quarter of the globe have proclaimed the news, and agree in the time—Wolf, of Asia; Irwin, late of England; Mason, of Scotland; Davis, of South Carolina; and quite a number in this region are, or have been, giving the cry. And will not you all, my brethren, examine and see if these things are so, and trim your lamps and be found ready?

"Trimming the lamps." You will recollect, my friends, that the word of God is the lamp. To trim a lamp is to make it give light, more light, and clearer light. In the first place, to translate the Bible would make it give light, in all languages into which it should be translated. Then, to send to or give every family in the known world a Bible, would make the Bible give more light. And thirdly, to send out the true servants of God, who have made the Bible their study, and true teachers, who would teach the holy precepts and doctrines contained therein, and to employ many Sabbath school teachers, would in the hands of God be the means of its giving clearer light. This would be trimming the lamp; and so far as the foolish virgins assisted in translating the Scriptures, in sending them among all nations, and employing missionaries and teachers to teach mankind its principles, so far would they trim their lamp; but if they had no faith in it, their light would be darkness, and the lamp to them would go out. If the friend of the bridegroom should proclaim the approach of him whom they all expected, and should prove it ever so plain by the lamp, but having no faith, the lamp would go out; they would not be ready to enter into the marriage supper, and the door would be shut. This is undoubtedly the meaning which Christ intends to convey in this parable. I shall therefore show,

II. The time this parable is applicable to.
In the chapter previous our Savior had answered three questions which his disciples had put to him on the Mount of Olives, when they came to him privately, saying, "Tell us when shall these things be?" That is, when Jerusalem should be levelled with the ground. "And what shall be the sign of thy coming?" That is, his second coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, as he had before informed them, which is yet future. "And of the end of the world," or, as some translate it, "and of the age," to which I am perfectly willing to agree; but what age? is the question. I answer, The gospel age, or the kingdom of heaven. See 4th verse, "The gospel of

the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." "The law and the prophets were until John, since which time the kingdom of heaven is preached." The Jewish economy is nowhere called the kingdom of heaven; but this expression belongs exclusively to the gospel; and of course any age in which the gospel or kingdom of heaven is preached, can never be applied to the Jewish age. Any novice in Scripture interpretation must readily admit this. These were the questions proposed by the disciples to their divine Master, and were answered in the following manner: From the 4th to the 14th verse, inclusive, of the 24th chapter of Matthew, Christ informs his disciples of the troubles, trials, persecutions, and distress which they and his followers should suffer down to the end of the gospel age. He also informs them by what means they must suffer—by false brethren, by deceit, by wars, rumors of wars, clashing of nations, earthquakes, afflictions, death, hatred, offences, betrayals, false prophets, coldness, iniquity, famines, and pestilence, and these to the end of the gospel age. From the 15th to the 22d, inclusive, he alludes to the destruction of Jerusalem, and particularly gives his followers warning of what they shall suffer, and informs them what to do at that time: he tells them what to pray for, and how to escape from the siege, and how to avoid certain consequences which must follow this great tribulation.

From the 23d to the 28th, inclusive, he warns his disciples against the error that false teachers would promulgate, that Christ did or would come at the destruction of Jerusalem. He told them plainly to "believe it not," for his second coming would be as visible as the lightning, and then every man would be gathered to his own company; so there would be no room for deceit.

In the 29th verse he prophesies of the rise of anti-Christ, the darkness and fall of many into superstition and error, and the persecution of the true church, 30th and 31st verses. He gives a sign of his coming, the mourning of the tribes of the earth, and then speaks of his coming and what he will do. 32, Is the parable of the fig tree. 33, He enforces it by saying, "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the door." 34th and 35th verses, He gives his disciples a comfortable promise, which was to this amount, that his children should not be all destroyed from the earth. But "this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." To prove the word *generation* is so used, I will refer you to Psalm xxii. 30, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." 1 Peter ii. 9, "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation." The word *generation*, in the Scriptures, when used in the singular, I believe almost invariably means the children of one parent; as the *generation* of Adam, children of Adam; chosen *generation*, children of God; *generation* of vipers, children of the devil. So Christ, talking to his children, and instructing them only, says, "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." His kingdom shall not be destroyed nor given to another people.

36th verse, He informs his disciples that the day and hour of his coming is known only to God, has never been revealed, meaning day and hour only, whether at midnight, at cock-crowing, or in the morning.

Verses 37-44, inclusive, He informs them that his coming will be like the deluge; unexpected to the wicked, as then. He tells them the manner; that he will separate the righteous from the wicked; one shall be taken and another left. He then gives them a charge to watch, and repeats, "they know not the hour." Christ illustrates his warning by the figure of the good man of the house, and then charges them to be also ready, as the good man would, if he knew in what watch the thief would come; showing us plainly that all true believers will know near the time, as Paul says, "But ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

From 45-47, he tells us of the faithful and wise servant, who watches and gives warning of his coming, and speaks of the blessings that servant shall inherit when he comes and finds him so doing.

48-51, Christ gives us the marks of an evil servant: 1st mark, he will "say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming." He may not preach or speak against Christ's coming; no, he will only say it to himself. But he will not say he will never come; no, he will only think in his heart, "My Lord delayeth his coming." When he hears the voice of the faithful servant saying, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," he

will say nothing in public against it; no, not so bad as that. Neither will he say anything in favor of the cry; but mutter in his heart, "My Lord delayeth his coming." The second mark, "And shall begin to smite his fellow-servants." It does not say he will beat and bruise his fellow-servants, or the faithful servant who watches and cries; but he shall begin to smite, &c., meaning he will begin the persecution, set others on, and himself he will keep back, in his heart deceitful. 3d mark, "And to eat and drink with the drunken." To eat and drink with the drunken—it does not say he gets drunk; no, it only says he eats and drinks with them that are so. By this I understand he fellowships with them, and is engaged in, and employs his time, his talents, his mind, to build up some popular and worldly object, which men of the world would be pleased in promoting. He courts popular applause; he seeks to please men more than God. "The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour he is not aware of. And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom." I think we cannot be mistaken in the application of this parable. "Then," that is, at the time when the wise servants are looking for and proclaiming his coming, and when the evil servant says in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming. Then, too, when he will come, and they that are ready go in to the marriage, and the door is shut. This must mean the time when Christ comes to judgment; for he cuts off the evil servant, and appoints him his portion, and shuts the door against the foolish virgins; and when they knock, he opens not, but tells them, I know you not.

Where, then, is the millennium? say some. After the judgment sits, and not before; after the bridegroom comes, and the beloved city is completed; when Christ shall move his saints home, and live and reign with them on the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. If there could have been a millennium before Christ should come and gather his saints into one body, it must be a very imperfect one. A part of the body in heaven, a part in the earth, and the remainder under the earth; separated, divided, wounded, and torn by enemies and death, absent from our head. No, it cannot be; if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. If we are to have a temporal millennium, why did not our Savior mention it on the mount of Olives, as preceding his coming? He did not, neither has any of the apostles; but all speak of troublous times, departure from the faith, iniquity abounding, and the love of many waxing cold in the latter days. Our parable, to which we are now attending, says, at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. "At midnight;" this teaches us that at the time of his coming there will be much apathy and darkness on this subject; that is the coming of the bridegroom. The parable implies the same. "For while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." Can we not bear witness that this has been the true state of the church for a number of years past? The writers on the word of God have adopted in their creeds, that there would be a temporal millennium before Christ would come. I call it temporal, because they have all of them taught that it would be in this state of things, not in an immortal state, neither in a glorified state; and that Christians would have all kingdoms under their control; that is, in a temporal sense; and that they would be married and given in marriage, until the coming of Christ after this 1000 years, or, as some say, 360,000 years. This has been, and is yet, the prevailing opinion among our standard writers and great men. No wonder Christ says, they will say in their hearts, My Lord delayeth his coming, and that the wise and foolish are all sleeping and slumbering on this important subject. For while we look for a temporal kingdom, behold, he cometh and destroys all that is perishable, all that is temporal, and erects upon these a new heaven and a new earth, which is immortal, and that fadeth not away, eternal in the heavens. I shall now,

III. Make an application of our subject. And,

1st. The time of the fulfilment of this parable is evidently come, in part at least. The world for a number of years have been trimming their lamps, and the wise and foolish have been engaged in translating the word of God into almost every language known unto us upon the earth. Mr. Judson tells us that it has been translated into one hundred and fifty languages within thirty years; that is, three times the number of

all the translations known to us before. Then fourfold light has been shed among the nations, within the short period of the time above specified; and we are informed that a part if not all of the word of God is now given to all nations in their own language. This, surely, is setting the word of life in a conspicuous situation, that it may give light to all in the world. This has not been done by the exertions of Christians or professors only, but by the aid of all classes and societies of men. Kings have opened their coffers, and favored those engaged in the work; nobles have used their influence, and have cast into the treasury of the Lord of their abundance; rich men have bestowed of their riches; and in many cases the miser has forgot his parsimony, the poor have replenished the funds of the Lord's house, and the widow has cast in her mite. How easy to work the work of the Lord when the hearts of men are made willing by his power! But shall we forget those who have forsaken the land of their fathers, the home of their nativity, and have spent lonesome years of toil among strangers, yes, worse than strangers, among heathen idolaters, and the savages of the wilderness, in the cold regions of the north, and under the scorching rays of a vertical sun, among the suffocating sands of the desert, or in the pestilential atmosphere of India; who have risked their lives to learn a language, and prepare themselves to trim a lamp for those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death? No, we will not forget them; the prayers of thousands have ascended before the golden altar, morning and evening, on their behalf, and Israel's God has been their protector. Surely we may hope that these have oil in their lamps, who have sacrificed so much to bestow a lamp upon others. But remember, my brethren, the Lord, he is God, and let him have all the glory. This is the time, and the same time that Gabriel informed Daniel, "many should run to and fro, and knowledge should increase." This, too, is the same time when the angel flying through the midst of heaven had the everlasting gospel to preach to them who dwell upon the earth. Here are Christ's words fulfilled, where he says, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

2dly. It is plain to any diligent observer of the signs of the times, that all the societies for moral reform in our world at the present day are parts of the fulfilment of the parable, giving more light. What of our Bible societies? Are not these trimming the lamp for millions of human beings? Thirty years past, more than three fourths of the families in what we call Christian lands were without the lamp of life, and now nearly all are supplied. Many of those who sat in heathenish darkness then, are now rejoicing in the light of God's book. And much of this has been performed through the instrumentality of Bible societies, and not only through the agency of the church, but political men, men of the world, the great men, merchants of the earth, and those who trade in ships, all who live under the influence of the gospel, the "kingdom of heaven," have engaged in the work. Will not the most skeptical acknowledge that this society has succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectation of its most ardent advocates? And is not this strong circumstantial evidence that the bridegroom is near, even at the door?

3d. The missionary societies of all sects and denominations, which have been established within forty years, have as far exceeded all former exertions of this kind as the overflowing Nile does the waters of the brook Kidron. See the missionary spirit extending from east to west, and from north to south, warming the breast of the philanthropist, giving life and vigor to the cold-hearted moralist, and animating and enlivening the social circle of the pious devotee. Every nation, from India to Oregon, from Kamtschatka to New Zealand, have been visited by these wise servants (as we hope) of the cross, proclaiming "the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God," carrying the lamp, the word of God, in their hands, and oil, faith in God, in their hearts. All classes of men are engaged in this cause, from the gray hairs of old age down to the sprightly youth of ten years. Who, then, can doubt but that the virgins in this sense have and are trimming their lamps, and the bride is making herself ready? "Go ye out to meet him."

4th. The Sabbath schools and Bible classes are but a part of the fulfilment of the parable, yet clearly an evidence that the virgins are now trimming their lamps. This system of teaching the young and ignorant took its rise between forty and fifty years since, at the very time that the Christian world were praying, and ardently praying, for the coming of Christ, before that part of the Savior's prayer was forgotten, "Thy kingdom come." From a little fountain this stream

of water has become a great river, and encompassed the whole land. Every quarter of the globe is drinking at this fountain or stream of knowledge, and the youth are taught to trim their lamps. And when the bridegroom shall come, may we not reasonably hope that the thousands of the young men and young women who have assisted in giving light to others, may be found having oil in their vessels, and their lamps trimmed and burning, and they looking and waiting for the coming of their Master, that when he comes they may rise to meet him in the air, with ten thousand of their pupils, who will sing in the New Jerusalem forever and ever? Search diligently, my young friends, and see to it that ye believe in this word, "which is able to make you wise unto salvation."

5. Tract societies are of much use, and are an efficient means to help trim the lamps; like snuffers that take away the preventives to the light, so are tracts. They take away from the mind the prejudice that thousands have against reading the word of God. They remove those rooted and groundless opinions which many have that they cannot understand the Bible; they serve to excite the mind to this kind of reading; they enlighten the understanding into some scriptural truths; they are pioneers, in many instances, to conversion; they can be sent where the word of God cannot at first be received; in one word, they are the harbingers of light, the forerunners of the Bible. And in this, too, all men in this probationary state seem to be more or less engaged, from the king on the throne down to the poor peasant in the cottage, writing, printing, folding, transporting, paying, or reading, these silent little messengers of the virgins' lamp. "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps." Has not God's hand been seen in all this? Yes, glory be to him who hath disposed the hearts of men to work the work that God bids them, and to fulfil the blessed word which he hath given them. This institution took its rise about the same time with the Bible society.

6. Temperance societies. These serve one purpose in trimming the lamps and preparing the way for the virgins to go out and meet the bridegroom. Our world, twenty years ago, might be called a world of fashionable drunkards; almost all men drank of the intoxicating bowl, and thought it no harm. But when the lamp began to dart its rays around our tabernacles, it was found, by woful experience, that those who drank of the poisonous cup were totally and wholly unprepared to receive the warning voice, or hear the midnight cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." No, "they that were drunken, were drunken in the night," says the apostle. "Therefore let us watch and be sober." And Peter tells us, "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." How foolish would it have been for a drunken man to be set on a watch, or a praying man to be found drunk! Therefore, in order that men might be in a suitable frame of mind to receive instruction at the close of this dispensation, and be in a situation to listen to the midnight cry, God ordered the virgins, and they arose and trimmed their lamps; and in all human probability, thousands who would have met a drunkard's grave if this society had not arose, are now watching, with their lamps trimmed and burning, ready to meet the bridegroom at his coming. Perhaps this temperance society is the virgins' last resort. The Judge stands at the door; go ye out to meet him. This society, like the others before mentioned, is a general thing, and all sects, denominations, and classes of men are engaged in it, and it has an important influence upon all men who are in this probationary state, and who may be termed, as in our text, "virgins." This society is of later origin than the others, and seems to be a rear guard to wake up a few stragglers which the other societies could not reach. And now, drunkards, is your time; Wisdom stands at the door and knocks; let go the intoxicating bowl, be sober and hear the midnight cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." For your souls' sake drink not another draught, lest he come and find you drunken, "and that day come upon you unawares, and find you sleeping." O, be wise, ye intemperate men, for they only went in to the marriage who were found ready, "and the door was shut." "Then came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not. Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." "But the wise shall understand," says Daniel xii. 10.

And now, my Christian friends, let me inquire, Are your lamps trimmed and burning? And have you oil in your vessels? Are you prepared for the coming