

## THE MILLENNIUM.

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TEXT : And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them ; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. Rev. 20 : 4, 5.

The terms employed in the text must be so understood as to harmonize with all parts of the text, and with the Holy Scriptures generally.

1. *Thrones.* These are thrones of judgment. This is evident from the fact that it is said of those who sat upon them that judgment was given unto them. Compare Matt. 19 : 28. " And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

2. *Souls.* The persons of the righteous when they shall be raised to immortal life. It is said of them that they lived. As man, formed of the dust, after receiving the principle of natural life from his Creator, was a living soul, Gen. 2 : 7, or a living person, so the worthy characters named in

the text, after receiving the principle of immortal life from the Redeemer, and being seated with him on thrones of judgment, may be designated as the souls, or persons, of those who had lived righteously, had died, and been raised from the dead. Eight souls, meaning eight persons, were saved in Noah's ark from the waters of the flood. 1 Pet. 3 : 20.

3. *Lived*, simply means that they will be raised to a condition of life from a state of death. This appears evident from what is said of those who do not live at that time : " But the rest of the dead lived not again [were not raised from death] until the thousand years were finished."

The word millennium signifies a thousand years. The millennium of Rev. 20 is to open with the revelation of the Son of God from Heaven, the destruction of the living wicked, the resurrection of the just, and the change of the living righteous to immortal life. It is a period in which Christ will reign with the just of all ages who have suffered with him. This period is bounded at each end with a resurrection. Christ declares that " all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5 : 28, 29. And Paul testifies " that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and

unjust." Acts 24 : 15. But it is left to the Revelator to place these two resurrections one thousand years apart, one at each end of the millennium.

The popular view of this subject is that the gospel of Jesus Christ will so far control the minds and hearts of men that the whole world will finally be converted, and become holy by its influence, that wars will cease, and that this happy state will continue one thousand years ; and that during this time Christ will reign with his people spiritually.

But from the very nature of the case, the conversion of the world is an impossibility. God is the same during all time. He deals with men and nations impartially. Satan is the same, excepting that the experience of six thousand years has made him more artful in seducing men and women into sin. The fallen race is the same, only that each succeeding generation degenerates physically, mentally, and morally ; hence sinners are more easily held by him in their rebellion against God, and in their sins. This state of things will increase till the world becomes fully ripe for her final doom.

This degeneracy is seen in the metallic image of the second chapter of Daniel. Here five universal kingdoms are the subject of prophecy. Four of these pertain to the mortal state, one to the immortal. The four earthly monarchies, Babylon, Persia, Grecia, and Rome, are severally represented

by gold, silver, brass, and iron. We not only see in the symbol the depreciation of value from gold to silver, to brass, and to iron, but we also see the last divided condition of earthly governments, just before the opening glories of the immortal kingdom, represented by iron mixed with miry clay. A careful examination will convince the intelligent Bible student that the Sacred Scriptures do not teach that at any period of time all men will be converted to God.

There were but very few righteous men from Adam to the time of Moses. And the numbers of the just in the Jewish age, compared with the multitudes of the unbelieving, were very small. Neither does God's plan in the Christian age embrace the conversion of all men. The gospel is preached to all nations, and thus God visits "the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name." Acts 15 : 14. Among the finally saved will not be found all of any one generation, or all of any one nation; but some of every age and every tongue will join in the song of the Lamb : "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Rev. 5 : 9.

The dealings of the great God of justice with his people of all ages, are equal. "O house of Israel, are not my ways equal ? are not your ways unequal ?" Eze. 18 : 29. God tests all his created

intelligences impartially. He has no favorite men, no favorite nation, and no favorite age. Adam had a wise and prudent test, both in Eden, before the fall, and out of Eden, after the fall. Had he lost moral power by the fall, and had his posterity become the lawful prey of Satan? He had the experience of the temptation, fall, and his expulsion from Eden, as a lamp to guide his feet in the path of obedience and faith. And has the race gradually sunken in physical, mental, and moral power all along the way of the ages? In like ratio has the light and power of the gospel of God's dear Son increased from the fall, in the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian ages.

But the doctrine of the temporal millennium, that gives to the church of Jesus Christ a sinless period of one thousand years, in which Satan will be bound, virtually charges God with inequality in his dealings with the children of men. Of the cloud of witnesses, the worthy patriarchs and prophets, Paul says:—

“And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the

earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11: 36-40. In the name of reason and revelation we inquire, Why should God in his providence allow these to "wade through bloody seas," and millions of the holy martyrs of Jesus to suffer tortures and death by all the cruel means that wicked men and devils could invent, and then chain up Satan and pour a flood of light and glory upon the world, that will pass unborn millions up to Heaven "on flowery beds of ease"?

God's plan to convert sinners, and to save all who would obey him and believe in Jesus, has been in operation about six thousand years. A crucified and risen Saviour has been preached with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven for more than eighteen centuries; yet the world has not been converted. And the prospects of its conversion to Bible holiness never looked as doubtful as at the present time. In the forcible words of another, we would inquire:—

"And what are the present prospects of a church that has set out in all confidence to convert the world? How may those now putting on the harness boast of greater expected success than is warranted by the experience of those who have put it off after having fought the good fight? The prophets could not convert the world; are we



mightier than they? The apostles could not convert the world; are we stronger than they? The martyrs could not convert the world; can we do more than they? The church for eighteen hundred years could not convert the world; can we do it? They have preached the gospel of Christ; so can we. They have gone to earth's remotest bounds; so can we. They have saved 'some;' so can we.

"They have wept as so few believed their report; so can we. They have finished their course with joy, and the ministry they have received to testify of the gospel of the grace of God; we can do the same. Can we reasonably hope to do more? 'It would take to all eternity to bring the millennium at the rate that modern revivals progress,' said the venerable Dr. Lyman Beecher, before a ministerial convention, held close by old Plymouth rock. And what hope is there that they will progress more rapidly? Is it in the word of God? Glad would we be to find it there. Sadly we read that 'evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.'

"Has God a mightier Saviour—a more powerful Spirit? Has he another gospel which will save the world? Where is it? Is there any way to the kingdom other than that which leads through much tribulation? Is there another way to the crown besides the way of crosses? Can we reign with Him unless we first suffer in his cause?

"No doubt the world might be converted if they desired to know the Lord. And so, had all who heard received with gladness the word of God, the world might have been converted within twenty

years of the day of Pentecost. If each Christian had brought one single soul to God with each successive year, the calm splendors of the millennial era might have shone upon the declining years of the apostles of Jesus Christ. But instead of this, ages of darkness came on. The world did not repent, but the church apostatized. If the gospel were to convert the world, we should have seen tokens of it ere this. But where are such omens to be found? Shall we look at Judson, who labored ten years before one sinner yielded to the claims of the gospel? Shall we look to the dense darkness of the heathen world? Shall we look at the formalism of the professed church? Shall we look at the wide extension of infidelity? Shall we look at the abounding of iniquity and the waxing cold of love? Shall we look at a world where eighteen hundred years of toil and tears have not brought one-twentieth part of mankind even to a profession of true Christianity, and where not more than one-fifth claim for themselves the dubious title of Christian nations? Shall we look over a world in which we cannot find one nation of Christians, nor one tribe of Christians, nor one city of Christians, nor one town of Christians, nor one village of Christians, nor one hamlet of Christians, save here and there where a questionable faith has led a few, with hypocrites even in their midst, to withdraw themselves from the world, and cherish the untried virtues of secluded life? Surely, after eighteen hundred years of experiment with that system which was to convert the world, men might point to some country, to some province, to some nation, and say, Behold the commencement of a converted world.



"But will not the gospel then prove a failure? That depends upon what is to be expected of it. If the gospel was to effect the eternal salvation of all mankind, then failing to accomplish that work is a failure of the gospel. If the gospel was to convert the world, then, if it is not done, it will prove a failure. But if the gospel was preached 'to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name,' then it is not a failure. If it was given that God might in infinite mercy and love 'save some,' then it is not a failure. If it was given that every repentant sinner might have eternal life, and that every good soldier might receive a crown of glory, then it is not a failure. If it was given that an innumerable company might be redeemed out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue under heaven, then it is not a failure. If it was given that the vales and hills of Paradise restored might teem with a holy throng who shall be 'equal to the angels, and be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection,' then it is not a failure. If it was given that the elect might be brought into one great family of holy ones, then it is not a failure. And was not this its object, rather than the exaltation of a worldly church to the splendors of earthly prosperity, while beneath the theater of their easy triumph there slumber the ashes of prophets and the dust of the apostles? Are they to hold jubilee a thousand years, while the martyrs' unceasing cry, 'How long! O Lord,' goes up to God? Are they to have their songs of triumph, while the whole creation groaneth for deliverance, and while that longed-for day of the redemption of our body is postponed? Nay, verily, the hope of the one body is one hope. The

hope of the church stops not at death; it sweeps beyond earth's scenes of tempest and of storm, and reposes in the calm beamings of that Sun of Righteousness which shall glow above the bosom of Paradise regained."

The doctrine of the world's conversion and a temporal millennium being based upon false interpretations and incorrect quotations of certain portions of the Sacred Scriptures, it is proper that we should here notice those texts usually quoted to prove this doctrine, and show that they do not mean what they are said to prove:—

1. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Ps. 2:8. To the casual reader this passage may appear to prove that the heathen will be given to Christ by conversion. But the next verse shows their destruction instead of their conversion. The psalmist continues: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

2. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll until it becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth. All that our temporal millennium friends accomplish with this passage, they do by quoting it incorrectly. We will here give the text as it reads: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image

upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2: 34, 35.

If these words of the prophet do not impress the mind of the reader with the idea of utter destruction, then language fails to express the thought. The stone has nothing in common with the image. The image, a symbol of earthly governments and all wicked men, is first removed, and then the stone fills the whole earth. But if it be urged that the dashing of the heathen (Ps. 2 : 9) and the breaking of the image (Dan. 2 : 34) mean the conversion of the world, then Paul's words, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly," prove the conversion of Satan.

3. A nation shall be born in a day. Here is another incorrect quotation. Isa. 66 : 8, reads : "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." This text has no allusion to the conversion of sinners; but it evidently refers to the resurrection of the just, when the nation of

the saved shall be born, or brought from their graves, in a day, or at once, at the sounding of the last trump.

4. "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." But let it be borne in mind that this prophetic declaration is to be fulfilled in connection with other events in the period covered by the third woe, when it is also said, "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." Rev. 11 : 15, 18.

Here, again, destruction, and not conversion and preservation, is the burden of the word of the Lord by the prophet. Astonishing, that grave divines should find a converted world under the last woe of the Almighty, in connection with the manifestation of his wrath in the destruction of sinners.

5. "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." Matt. 24 : 14. Those who teach the world's conversion claim that the gospel is not only to be preached to all nations, but that every individual is to hear it, believe it, obey it, and become holy by it.

What then ? The end ? No, not until the world has enjoyed a sinless period of one thousand years. But the text does not say that every individual will even hear this gospel of the kingdom. It does not state that any one will be converted and made holy by it. And we find it far from intimating that the world will be converted, and remain sinless a thousand years.

6. "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." Jer. 31 : 34. These words from the Lord by the mouth of his prophet are in the promise of the new covenant, and relate, first, to the condition of each individual with whom the new covenant is made ; and, secondly, to the fullness of the blessings of the gospel, when all are brought into harmony with God in the everlasting state. Both ideas are embraced in the promise. But that every individual will be converted, or that all of any generation this side of the immortal state will be brought into covenant relation with God, the Scriptures do not teach.

7. "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks ; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Micah 4 : 3. See also Isa. 2 : 4. The reader will please notice that Micah 4 : 1 speaks of the exalted state of the professed church of Christ in the last days. Mountains signify earthly government. The church,

here represented by "the mountain of the house of the Lord," was to be exalted above the hills. It was to be established in the tops of the mountains.

In verses 2-5 is a statement, not of what the Lord declares would take place in the last days, but what the multitudes of popular professors, who are looking for the conversion of the world, would say. The statement commences thus: "And many nations shall come, and say." Verse 2. But the Lord speaks in verses 6 and 7, as follows: "In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted." "In that day," when many nations are prophesying peace and safety, the Lord's remnant people are driven out and afflicted.

But we have more and very decisive testimony in regard to the state of the nations in the last days. The Lord speaks by his prophet thus: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near. Let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears." Joel 3:9, 10. Instead of peace among the nations, or that they will not lift up the sword against each other in the last days, "evil shall go forth from nation to nation," and "the sword of the Lord shall devour from the one end of



the land even to the other end of the land: no flesh shall have peace." Jer. 12:12; 25:32.

This subject may appear still more clear and forcible by arranging what many nations say, and what the Lord says, side by side as follows:—

## MANY NATIONS SAY.

And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Micah 4:2, 3.

## THE LORD SAYS.

Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near. Let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about; thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Joel 3:9-12.

To this agree the words of Paul: "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them." 1 Thess. 5:2, 3. How strikingly is this saving of peace and safety fulfilled in the preaching of the temporal millennium, the conversion of the world, and the prophecy of peace among the nations; while Scripture and facts combine to show that the world is sinking lower and still lower, the wicked are waxing worse and worse, and the nations are mak-

ing far greater preparations for war than at any former period.

8. The glory of the Lord shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the sea. "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Num. 14 : 21. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain ; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isa. 11 : 9. "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Hab. 2 : 14. "Blessed are the meek ; for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5 : 5. This glorious state, however, is not brought about by the conversion of all men. It is introduced by the destruction of sinful men, the restitution of the earth to its condition when it came from the hand of the Creator, and the gift of immortality to the meek of all ages. "For evil-doers shall be cut off ; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be ; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth ; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Ps. 37 : 9-11.

9. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." This prophecy is said to be a figurative description of the condition of things during the temporal millennium. We, however, regard it as a prophetic description of the state of things after the restitution of the earth and man to their prime-

val glory. Before the fall, man was upright, and the earth and all the living creatures that God had made upon it, as viewed by the Creator, were seen to be "very good." Gen. 1 : 31.

The Scriptures do not teach the annihilation of all things by the fires of the great day, and the creation of all new things for the future state ; but they do distinctly teach the restitution of all things. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth ; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create ; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people ; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them ; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." Isa. 65 : 17-25. Thus saith the great Restorer, "Behold, I make all things new." Rev. 21 : 5. Both the prophet and the Revelator speak of the new heavens and the new earth. The prophet Isaiah is either giving a figurative description of a very happy condition of things in this mortal state, or he is portraying the literal glories of the restitution after the second advent and the resurrection of the just. To the figurative view we find serious objections :—

(a) In order that all parts of their figurative theory may harmonize, our temporal millennium friends must have in their figurative new heavens and earth figurative houses, figurative vineyards, and they must eat the figurative fruit thereof, and behold around them figurative wolves and figura-

tive lions, feeding with figurative lambs and figurative bullocks, to say nothing of the presence of figurative serpents. If it be said that the gospel is to convert all these wolves and lions and serpents, we reply, that if they are converted, they are no longer wolves and lions and serpents, and during the entire period of the millennium there will be none but figurative lambs and doves.

(b) The apostle has so clearly identified the three worlds, namely, the one before the flood, the one that now is, and the new earth which is to come, as to entirely preclude the figurative view. He says: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men." "Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Pet. 3:5-7, 13.

No fact can be more plainly stated than that the world that perished by the flood is the same as that reserved unto fire. Then will appear the new heavens and the new earth, according to the promise of God. And it is a remarkable fact that the promise referred to by the apostle is found only in Isa. 65. Thus Peter links the three worlds together. Are the first two worlds literal? So is the third. Is the new earth, mentioned by Isaiah, figurative? So are all three worlds figurative. But if they are all literal, then we see a harmony in Scripture respecting them. If they be regarded

as figurative, then we are left to the following conclusion :—

That in the days of figurative Noah, the figurative heavens and earth, being overflowed with figurative water, perished. But the figurative heavens and earth, which are now, are reserved unto figurative fire, against the figurative day of judgment and perdition of ungodly figurative men. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for figurative new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

True, the sacred writers use figures and parables. But we should believe that God in his word means just what he says, unless the connection shows good reason why a figure or parable is introduced. With this view of the Sacred Scriptures, we see spread out before us the living realities of the new earth, in all their grandeur and glory, as when Adam was lord of Eden. Before the transgression, all was purity and peace, even among the beasts which God had created. And who can say that these, with natures such as the Creator first gave them, will not be in place in the earth restored from the fall, as well as in the earth before the fall!

Having examined the principal texts quoted to prove the conversion of the world, and having shown that they do not mean what they are said to mean, we will now call attention to some of the many direct proofs that no such state of things can exist prior to the second advent.

1. The prevalence of the little horn, which is a symbol of Roman Catholicism. "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the



saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Dan. 7:21, 22. "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." Verse 18. Here it will be seen that the little horn makes war with the saints until they take the kingdom; and when they once obtain the kingdom, they hold it forever, even forever and ever. Where, then, is there room for that period of peace and triumph of the church called the temporal millennium?

2. The apostasy. In 2 Thess. 2:1-7, Paul states what would take place before the second coming of Christ. Is it the triumph of the world's conversion? No; it is the sad apostasy, the falling away, and the manifestation of the papacy, the man of sin, who will continue to the end. The apostle speaks of the manifestation and destruction of this blasphemous power in these words: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Verse 8.

3. The wicked continue with the righteous until the end of the Christian age, as illustrated by the parable of the wheat and tares. See Matt. 13:24, 30. The friends of the doctrine of the world's conversion find this parable directly in their way, and they have wearied themselves in laboring to explain it away. But, as our divine Lord, by special request, gave an explanation of it, modesty suggests that we accept his explanation. See verses 36, 43. We simply repeat: "The field is the world." "The good seed are the



children of the kingdom." "The tares are the children of the wicked one." "Let both grow together until the harvest." "The harvest is the end of the world."

4. Persecution and tribulation were to be the portion of the church of God in all ages. The apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the faithful who had lived and suffered before, of whom the world was not worthy; "they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:38-40. He also points to the future, and says: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Tim. 3:12.

5. The last days of human probation have been regarded as the favored period for the completion of the great work of converting the world. But the prophets of the Old Testament nowhere represent God as saying that the last days would be glorious. Jesus and the apostles of the New Testament never speak of the last days as a period of triumph to the church; but rather as the days of her peril, which demand especial watchfulness; the days of her mourning, and tears, and importunate prayers for deliverance. Paul describes the last days thus: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent,

fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God ; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such turn away." 2 Tim. 3 : 1-5.

6. Peter says : "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming ?" 2 Pet. 3 : 3, 4. How could these scoffers arise and deny his coming, and persecutions and perils exist in the last days, if all were converted long before his coming ?

7. The last days embrace the very last day, reaching down to the coming of the Son of man. The days just before the second advent were to be like the days of Noah and of Lot. "And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot ; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded ; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17 : 26-30.

8. Destruction, not conversion, awaits the

world at the very time when many popular professors cherish the delusive hope of the good time coming. They see no danger, and brand as fanatical alarmists those who obey the prophetic injunction, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2:1. "But," says the apostle, "when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them." 1 Thess. 5:3.

9. The way to destruction is broad, and many go in it; and the way to life is narrow, and but few find it. When one asked Jesus, "Are there few that be saved?" he answered, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13:23, 24. Again it is recorded, "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7:13, 14. The doctrine of the world's conversion, and that of universal salvation, are both directly opposed to this passage. The one has the way to life narrow at first, but growing wider, until all walk in it; while the other has the way to life always wide enough for the whole

world. Our Lord stated a great fact in this passage, which existed when spoken, ever had existed, and which would exist until the close of probation; that the way to destruction was broad, and many would go in it; and that the way to life was narrow, and few would find it.

But when the few of each successive generation, from righteous Abel to the close of probation, who have bent their lonely footsteps in the narrow path to Mount Zion, shall reach their everlasting rest, they will constitute that "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," arrayed in Heaven's purity and brightness. Not one of these had come out of that imaginary period of a converted world. No; not one. What an imposing scene! "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Rev. 7: 9, 13, 14.

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