

WILL THE CHURCH
GO THROUGH
THE GREAT TRIBULATION?

A Brief Review of
Rev. Alexander Reese's
book, "The Approaching
Advent of Christ"

BY
A. J. POLLOCK

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Author of
May Christ come at any moment?
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WILL THE CHURCH GO THROUGH THE GREAT TRIBULATION?

THE Rev. Alexander Reese's book of 328 pages—"The Approaching Advent of Christ,"—in which the Author seeks to prove that the Church of God will go through the Great Tribulation—has appeared. The Author, a Presbyterian missionary in Brazil, has spent twenty years collecting material for his book. He gives a list of authors and others quoted or referred to. They come to the amazing number of 363. A list of publications, quoted or referred to, number 246. There are subjects to the number of 130. Passages expounded number 42. Textual references run to the large number of 881. All this bespeaks amazing perseverance and research.

Mr. Reese tells us that as a young man he believed the Church would NOT go through the Great Tribulation, and might be raptured at any moment to glory. He entered a Divinity School, and found to his surprise that the saintly Head of the School once believed that the Church would **not** go through the Great Tribulation, but had changed his views, and was teaching that it would. A Presbyterian Principal could not do otherwise very well. This shook him in his belief. He studied the question afresh, and after reading Sir Robert Anderson's "**Coming Prince,**" and W. Kelly's "**Lectures on the Second Coming and Kingdom,**" he became more than ever confirmed in the view that the Church would not go through the Great Tribulation. Would that he had remained in this opinion!

Years after, alas! he reversed his opinions, and now has come out with this large volume in the attempt to prove that the Church will go through the Great Tribulation. He says of his book in the preface,

"Nor does it aim at expounding the doctrine of the Second Advent according to its natural content and implications. It is simply an examination of prophetic theories that have gained a large acceptance among Evangelical Anglicans, Fundamentalists in all the Protestant Churches, Plymouth Brethren, Keswick and similar movements, free-lance evangelists and all whose leanings are towards a realistic programme of the End." (p. xi.).

We purpose briefly answering Mr. Reese's book. To do it in the compass of a pamphlet means that in the space at our disposal we can only fasten upon the salient points in the enquiry, and leave much matter unanswered that could be replied to. Indeed, the book is so full of extracts from writers that agree with Mr. Reese's views that it is difficult in answering it to see wood for trees.

Some of Mr. Reese's authorities unfortunately do not carry confidence. He seems to have ransacked high and low for extracts favourable to his views, and cannot resist quoting them, even when he knows that he disagrees largely with their writings. For instance he writes of Dr. E. W. Bullinger as follows:—

"Into the wild dispensational theories of Dr. Bullinger it is not my intention to enter; one must draw the line somewhere in investigating the labyrinth of fads and theories." (p. 71).

"To-day he would give out a set of novelties with the recommendation, 'They are not mere sentiments or opinions. They are the subjects of Divine revelation.' To-morrow (or the day after) the novelties would be forgotten, and another worthless set given out in their place." (p. 71).

Yet Bullinger is ten times quoted in the book, mostly to condemn what he teaches, and to cast opprobrium on those whose teaching Mr. Reese disagrees with. To bracket sane and sensible writers with "wild dispensational theories," is scarcely fair. More than once or twice,

however, he quotes Bullinger as **an authority in his favour**. This sort of thing tends to weaken one's confidence in the authorities he quotes.

Professor A. S. Peake is mentioned four times as being in support of his ideas. Professor Peake was the Editor of Peake's Commentary. Dr. Graham Scroggie's comment on that production is, "Sodden with infidelity." That remark is justified up to the hilt. The writer told the late Professor Peake that if he believed what was in his Commentary, he would throw his Bible to the back of the fire as the greatest fraud that had been perpetrated on humanity.

The following Modernists are quoted as authorities: Sir G. Adam Smith, Cheyne, Bishop Gore, Driver, Dalman, Davidson. It were better to appeal to Scripture direct than to buttress up views by quoting men, who undermine the Word of God. For instance, Dr. Moffatt is mentioned, or quoted, eighteen times. Apparently even Mr. Reese has some feeling of compunction about this. He writes,

"Friends have warned me that this feature will not go down with some of my readers; they are prejudiced against Dr. Moffatt, because of his critical position on the New Testament. He is called a 'Modernist' and so on. Dr. Moffatt, I judge, would prefer to be called a 'Liberal.'" (p. xiv.).

Dr. Moffatt in the preface of his Translation of the Bible refers with approval to certain theologians, and they are all, without one exception, pronounced Modernists. What confidence can we have in any translation from such a polluted source? There may be much in it that is sound, but in loyalty to the Lord, one would refuse any help from such a quarter.

Mr. Reese's quotations are serious. We could scarcely believe our eyes when we read an extract from that

notorious critic and Modernist, Dalman. We read:—

“The Church was quite justified in refusing on its part to give currency to the title [**Son of Man**]; for in the meantime the ‘Son of Man’ had been set upon the throne of God, and was, in fact, **no longer MERELY a man**, but a ruler over heaven and earth.” (p. 253).

The heavy type and capitals in the above extract are ours. What can we say of a Christian writer quoting of our Lord the words, “**No longer MERELY a man?**” In such company Mr. Reese finds himself. Such an expression is subversive of Christianity, and undermines completely the foundations of the Christian faith. This statement is an infinitely more serious matter than a difference of opinion as to whether the Church of God will or will not go through the Great Tribulation. It is utterly blasphemous.

Mr. F. W. Pitt, in the *Advent Witness*, says of Reese’s book,

“We find that Mr. Reese not only sets one side against the other but chooses the authors who shall engage in the controversy, and selects from their writings such passages as suits his purpose. Torn thus from their context the Darbyists are made to say what Mr. Reese wants them to say and no more or less, while the anti-Darbyists without regard to the subject in question are called upon to express their views on the different side issues which shore up the main proposition.

“This is like playing a game of chess with yourself. If you are white you move black into positions where you know you can beat him.”

Certainly the large number of authorities that Mr. Reese quotes is astonishing. One would rather that he had expounded Scripture in such a clear way as to carry conviction of the truth. To come to an understanding of what Scripture says by depending on what others say is rather a weak way of arriving at the truth, and certainly beset with peril.

The Rev. F. J. Miles, in *The Friend of Russia*, points out a feature in Mr. Reese's book, which to our mind weakens it considerably. He says:—

"For years I have been exercised in mind concerning the interchange of the Greek words in the New Testament for Coming, Revelation, Manifestation, and Appearing. I therefore opened the book in a spirit of expectancy. The first hundred pages or so filled me with astonishment. It is almost incredible that any considerable number of Christians could believe in the fantastic and grotesque theories dealt with. They seemed to me to be so many 'Aunt Sallies' set up to be skittled down."

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"The writer is so thorough that it comes as a shock to find him confusing things that differ and bending things to suit his case while engaged in criticising others for doing the same, which certainly many have done."

Proof of the second of these quotations will be amply given in this pamphlet. We think it is a pity to have raked up so many silly fantastic opinions of this writer and that. It appears to us very like the trick of the lawyer with a bad case, who, to make up his deficiency, resorts to abusing the other side. To continually bring forward these strange and isolated views has the effect of unjustly bringing into disrepute the sane and Scriptural views of writers, who believe the Church will NOT go through the Great Tribulation.

Mr. Reese finds fault with Mr. William Kelly for using intemperate language in describing the views of those, who disagree with him in the exposition of Scripture. Yet he can write of servants of Christ, who have done yeoman service in the opening up of Scripture,

"The suggestion of Darby, backed by the vigorous efforts of Kelly and others, to prove from this most magnificent passage in 1 Thess. iv. that

a secret coming, a secret resurrection, and a secret rapture are portrayed, followed by the **rise and reign** of Antichrist, is amongst the sorriest in the whole history of freak exegesis." (p. 146).

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"I must leave to another place William Kelly's contortions of exegesis on the nature of the Great Tribulation, put forth with studied offensiveness." (p. 222).

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"A third artifice to evade the plain meaning of 2 Thess. i. 7 is an appeal to the tense of the verb 'come' in verse 10." (p. 215).

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"Even if the Apostle had mentioned a Rapture at 2 Thess. i. 7, Darbyists would arrange three shifts to get rid of it. This is not cruel or churlish, but the plain fact." (p. 211).

Mr. Reese states that this last strange charge of alleged lack of honesty on the part of those he calls Darbyists is "not cruel or churlish." We leave it to the reader to judge if his statement is true. He condemns them for what he **thinks** they would do to evade the plain teaching of Scripture. He hangs a man before he has committed murder.

We shall have to show that Mr. Reese fails to grasp the difference between the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Church of God, which is the body of Christ. He also fails to see what belongs to the Jew and what belongs to the Church, between the earthly calling and the heavenly calling. This introduction is necessary as preparing the reader for a careful reading of what is to follow.

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We think the best plan for our purpose is to expound the **salient** passages of Scripture bearing on the last days,

and then to examine the attack Mr. Reese makes on the position, and see if it is supported by Scripture or otherwise.

Further, will the reader make very careful note of this? If a Scripture is rightly expounded, other Scriptures, that bear on the same matter, will fall into place quite easily and naturally. On the other hand, if a Scripture is wrongly interpreted, then other Scriptures, bearing on the same matter, will have to be twisted and mangled to square with the initial misinterpretation. It is like a child's puzzle. Get a few of the pieces in their right position, each move becomes easier and easier. But let the first few pieces be wrong, the future movements of the pieces become more and more difficult, till at last hopeless.

The reader will, we are assured, see how Scripture after Scripture falls into its place as we proceed.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION."

The first Scripture we will comment upon is Revelation iii. 10—12.

"Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the HOUR of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

"Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and He shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name."

What is meant by "The word of His patience"? Higher up in the chapter the Philadelphian Church is

addressed, "Thou . . . hast kept My word" (verse 8). Clearly there is a difference, between keeping His word, which extends to every part of the word of God, the whole revealed truth of God, and keeping the word of His patience. As to "The Word of My patience," 2 Thessalonians iii. 5 throws light upon it.

"The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the PATIENCE of Christ." (R.V.)

The whole setting of the passage shows that "The word of My patience," refers to the hope of the Lord's return. Romans viii. 22—25 confirms this, waiting for "the redemption of the body," which takes place at the second coming of Christ. We are told, "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with **patience** wait for it" (verse 25).

Now here is a promise that because the word of His patience has been kept, Christ will keep His saints from the HOUR of temptation that is to come upon the whole world. The temptation refers to the whole period of trial that is coming on the earth, the things which the Apostle John saw in vision, the "things which must be hereafter" (Revelation iv. 1). These begin with the seals, and are followed by the trumpets and vials; the Great Tribulation coming in towards the end, ushering in the last half of Daniel's seventieth week. Here the saints are promised they shall be kept, not only from the Great Tribulation, but from the whole period of judgments that must visit the earth before the Son of Man comes to reign, and therefore most emphatically from the period of the Great Tribulation.

There is one word that needs to be emphasised specially in considering this important passage, that is the word, "**HOUR.**" The Revised Translation renders it,

"Because thou didst keep the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from (ek) the hour of trial, that **hour** which is to come upon the whole world."

The word, "**HOURLY**," is twice mentioned in the Revised Translation, the second time in italics, which we have reproduced in heavy type.

Now will it be believed that Mr. Reese in seeking to expound this passage practically ignores the word, "**HOURLY**," which is certainly a very important word indeed in the right understanding of this passage? Why does Mr. Reese scarcely mention this word in all the seven pages of his book in which he seeks to show that there is no promise to the Church of God to be raptured before the judgments of God fall on earth? We ask in astonishment, Why? He was bound to have examined this passage very carefully.

Mr. Reese quotes the Modernist Moffatt's translation with approval.

"Because you have kept the word of my patient endurance, **I will keep you safe through (ek) the hour of trial** which is coming upon the whole world to test the dwellers on earth."

Heavy type represents italics in the book. It is remarkable that out of over 890 times the preposition, **ek**, is found in the New Testament, only once, Galatians iii. 8, is it translated **through**, and there the sense is evidently **by**, "God would justify the heathen **through [or by]** faith." Now the utter unreliability of Moffatt's translation is clearly seen when he alters the thought of being kept **from** (taken **out of**) the hour of trial to being kept **through it** (being left **IN the trial**). The word is translated dozens and dozens of times by the word, **by**, and many times by the two words, **out of**. But to be "kept **FROM**," is not being "safe **IN**." A child can see the difference between **FROM** and **IN**.

F. W. Grant (Numerical Bible, Vol. V. p. 358) gives the true sense of the passage, however much Mr. Reese may discount Darbyist writers:

"Notice, not merely 'out of the **temptation**' but out of the **hour** of it—out of the time in which the

temptation is. To be kept out of the hour is a virtual promise of being taken to be with the Lord, and thus it follows here, 'Behold, I come quickly.' 'Quickly' is the word now. Things are hastening on to the final catastrophe, and the Lord is just about to take His people to Himself, and this intensifies the urgency of the appeal, 'Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown'."

CALLING BLACK WHITE.

Referring to the way Mr. Reese twists things to suit his purpose we think the following is a sample of the truth of Mr. Pitt's remark, which we have already quoted, that it is like playing a game of chess with yourself; if you are white, you place black pieces where you know the white can take them, and so the game is won.

Mr. Reese writes:—

"Many of the most competent Greek scholars unhesitatingly maintain that the use in Rev. iii. 10 of the preposition **ek** from **out of the midst of**—not merely **out of**—is precisely the consideration that demands the very opposite conclusion to that which Darbyists wish. According to these scholars the Greek means that Christ promised the Angel at Philadelphia preservation throughout the hour of tribulation." (p. 201).

To say that "**out of the midst of**" means to be "**safe in**" is simply not true, but the plain denial of the face value of words. If Mr. Reese can argue that black is white, what confidence can we have in anything that he says?

Let us give three or four instances in Scripture of the use of the preposition, **ek**.

"They shall gather out of (**ek**) His kingdom all things that offend . . . and shall cast them into a furnace of fire." (Matthew xiii. 41, 42).

Clearly those that offend are taken clean **out of** the kingdom, that is a transference from the Kingdom on earth to the furnace of fire, symbolic of a **place** of judgment.

"I will not blot out his name **out of** (ek) the book of life." (Revelation iii. 5).

That means, if the name were blotted out of the book of life, it would not be found there. Would Mr. Reese argue that if the name were blotted **out of** (ek) the book, it would still be found there? Yet that is exactly his reasoning.

"I will spue thee out of (ek) My mouth" (Revelation iii. 16).

To keep up the symbolic language, the passage means that what was in the Lord's mouth would be ejected from it. But this is just the opposite of Mr. Reese's contention.

To show that the Lord links up His promise, to keep His Church out of (ek) the HOUR of temptation, with His second coming, He immediately says,

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Revelation iii. 11).

Would He have said that, if it were necessary for the Church to go through the time of the seals, trumpets, vials, the rise of Antichrist, the Great Tribulation? Surely not.

THE CHURCH DESCENDS OUT OF HEAVEN.

Then further our Lord says of the overcomer,

"I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down **out of (ek)** heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name." (Revelation iii. 12).

We would ask Mr. Reese, When the Church, as seen as the Holy City, descends **out of (ek)** heaven, would it still be in heaven? Yet this is on a par with his treatment of Rev. iii. 10.

The Church in the future is seen as symbolised under the figure of a Woman and a City. "I John saw the holy **city**, new Jerusalem, coming down from God **out of (ek)** heaven, prepared as a **Bride** adorned for her husband" (Revelation xxi. 2). The Bride is spoken of as the Lamb's Wife, and is likewise described as "that Great City, the Holy Jerusalem." It is interesting that Revelation xvii. presents the doom of the false bride, and chapter xviii. of the false city—apostate Christendom in the last days.

The Holy Jerusalem descends out of **(ek)** heaven (Rev. xxi. 10), the Church seen in her administrative character in the millennial reign of Christ. In verse 2 of the same chapter, the Bride descends out of **(ek)** heaven, a symbolic figure of the Church in the eternal state as the object of eternal affection in the closest relation to the Lord.

So the Church **TWICE** descends **out of** heaven. Once when she comes to reign with Christ. And then, when the last great rebellion is ended, the heavens and earth flee away, and the new heavens and earth are brought into existence, will the church appear again **out of** heaven. But Mr. Reese will not allow the Church to go to heaven at the Rapture. If she does not do so, how can she then come **out of** heaven?

CONFUSING THE RAPTURE AND THE APPEARING.

Mr. Reese tells us:—

“Christ comes for His saints and with them at the same crisis. When He comes according to 1 Thess. iv. 13—17 and Matt. xxiv. 31, He is on His way to earth to establish His Messianic Kingdom.

“But before the blow falls upon the ungodly, the Elect are gathered from one end of heaven to the other to meet the approaching Lord. They meet the Lord in the air and follow in His train.” (p. 237).

Here Mr. Reese confuses the Rapture and the Appearing. He teaches that the saints will be caught up to the air, will not pass into heaven, but immediately follow in the train of the Lord to earth. Who told Mr. Reese that the Rapture and the Coming of the Lord to reign on the earth are to occur without a break? Certainly the Bible does not. He does not see that 1 Thessalonians iv. 13—17, and Matthew xxiv. 31 refer to two different events. The former points to the Rapture, the hope of the Church. The latter points to Christ's appearing on earth to reign, which in this passage specially applies to the Jews, waiting for the Coming Kingdom, embracing those saved among the nations as set forth in Matthew xxiv. 14. These two events are related but **distinct**.

Further, if the Church is to descend “**out of**” (**ek**) heaven, then she must have been **IN** Heaven to come **OUT**. What becomes of Mr. Reese's statement in this connection? But we have further Scriptural proof.

We said that when once a Scripture is rightly interpreted, other Scriptures, bearing on the same subject, fall naturally and easily into line. So we read in John xiv. 2, 3,

"In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

"And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Here the Lord tells His disciples that He is going to the Father's house to prepare a PLACE for His own, that He will come again and receive them to Himself, that where He is, there they may be. Is He to prepare a PLACE, and not bring them to that PLACE? But Mr. Reese does not agree with this, for, according to him, the saints rise to the air, meet the Coming One, and immediately return to earth in His train.

In Revelation xix. 11—21 we get the Lord Himself intervening personally in the affairs of earth when He comes out of (ek) heaven riding on a white horse—He, who is called Faithful and True, the Word of God, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Who then are the armies that follow Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen clean and white? Surely the saints of God. Who else will follow in this Holy War? Does not Jude confirm this, when he gives us in his spirited description of the horror of apostasy in the last days, a prophecy of Enoch, seventh from Adam, a prophecy heard doubtless by the very progenitor of the human race, an oral prophecy in Old Testament times, of which we should have known nothing, if Jude had not been inspired to put it on record:—

"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints." (Jude 14).

They come **out** of heaven. Even Mr. Reese, we fancy, would agree that in the train of the Coming One, the saints would be found. Indeed this is what he distinctly says, though he denies that they will get as far as heaven.

And when we come to the history of Enoch we find it illustrates very beautifully the truth. He knew the deluge was coming, the great tribulation of Old Testament times, when all but those in the Ark would be swept away in the deluge of waters. In the naming of his son, Methuselah, he showed that he knew that the flood was coming. The name, Methuselah, means, **in the year that he dies, it (the flood) shall come**, and Methuselah died the year the deluge came, but before it burst. Enoch the saint, who prophesied the coming storm, was translated to heaven that he should not see death, or the deluge, just as the Church will be translated to heaven before the judgment bursts. We cannot build doctrine on Old Testament history, but we are assured such as the above is intended to be an illustration of the Church being raptured to heaven before the storm of judgment bursts, a truth we get in the New Testament.

TWO INSTANCES OF FAULTY LOGIC.

Here are two instances of as faulty logic as you can find.

Quoting John xvii. 15, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from (ek) the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from (ek) the evil one" (R.V.), Mr. Reese says,

"Here we meet with the same construction 'to keep from or out of,' and a little consideration will show how fatal the text is to those who dogmatically maintain that the preposition in Rev. iii. 10 necessarily demands a rapture out of the world to escape the trial; for we find the Church kept from the Evil one, whilst it is expressly asserted that she must remain in the world." (p. 203).

In this text, John xvii. 15, it clearly states that the Lord's own are not to be taken out of the world, but

kept from the evil in it. They are to be preserved from the evil though still in the world. This is as plain as can be. But in Revelation iii. 10 the Church is to be kept out of the **HOUR** of the temptation, a very different thing. If the Scripture had meant to convey that the saints of God would be preserved in and through the trial, but kept from it in a **MORAL** sense, then that meaning, doubtless, would have been made plain. The logic of Mr. Reese's reasoning is faulty. We know things that are both equal to the same thing are equal to each other. But John xvii. 15 is not equal to Revelation iii. 10. In the former case it is a question of **MORAL preservation**; in the latter of a **TIME removal**. The two things differ widely, and therefore cannot be equal to each other in the way of illustration. Our author weakens his case by such sophistry.

Again Mr. Reese ventures on faulty logic. He says,

"We are told that the Sun-clad Woman flees to the wilderness, and is there protected by God from precisely the hour of the last Great Tribulation—'a thousand and two hundred and three-score days' (Rev. xii. 6, 14). Not all the power of the Dragon can avail to reach or touch her. Not a word is said about her being raptured out of the world, yet the Woman is untouched by the final persecution of Antichrist" (p. 200).

Here again is an instance of faulty reasoning. The Scripture plainly tells us the woman (symbolic of Israel) flees into a **PLACE on this earth** at the time of the Tribulation for 1,260 days (equals three and a half years), most evidently the last half-week of Daniel's seventieth week. But in Revelation iii. 10, we must repeat, the Church is to be kept out of the **HOUR** of temptation that is to come upon all the world. A **PLACE AND AN HOUR** are not equal to each other, so Mr. Reese's illustration again fails.

Mr. Reese says,

"Kelly says that 'any geographical refuge' is vain, for the tribulation 'will befall the whole

habitable world' (**Christ's Coming Again**, p. 86). But of course he forgets or avoids Rev. xii. 14, which shows that his inference from iii. 10 is false." (p. 200).

But is this so? Let us have fair play. Examine Revelation xii., and see if the woman is "**UNTOUCHED** by the final persecution under Antichrist." We read,

"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time [three and a half years], from the face of the serpent.

"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

"And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

"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." (Revelation xii. 14—17).

If such tribulation came to the country in which one lived, as to be unsupportable, and one was forced to give up home and belongings and migrate into some wilderness, one might get a measure of relief, but would be constantly reminded of the sad condition of things, and would continually suffer privation because of it.

Only by a providential happening such as the earth opening her mouth is this woman preserved. We think that Mr. Kelly was warranted in his exposition on this point. The woman would escape the full brunt of the tribulation, but suffer considerably!

Again Mr. Reese's logic is faulty. He makes the mistake between a **PLACE** and an **HOUR**. Mr. Kelly

says that the whole world experiences the tribulation, and this is what Revelation iii. 10 clearly says. If on earth there is no escape from the HOUR of the world-wide temptation,

HOW CAN CHRIST'S PROMISE BE FULFILLED?

We ask a pointed question. If the Church is to be kept out of the HOUR of temptation, and that is world-wide, how can the promise to be kept out of it be fulfilled? As long as we are in this world we are in a time condition. We carry our watches, and consult the hour continually. How then can the Church be kept out of this HOUR? **By one way, and ONLY one.** The Church must be taken **out of** the world where there is no escape from the HOUR of trial, and put into eternity, and that surely will take place at the Second Coming of Christ. There is no other way. This is the promise of our Lord.

Further, after John has described "the things that are," as seen in the addresses to the seven Churches, he is bidden to "Come up hither, and I will shew thee things that must be hereafter" (Revelation iv. 1), that is in a vision he was caught up to heaven. Is this not a significant illustration of the Rapture of the Church?

THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR.

We said just now that Scriptures fall naturally into their places when previous Scriptures bearing on the same point have been rightly expounded. The following is another instance of this.

The last chapter of the Old Testament gives the promise to those, who fear the Lord, that the **SUN** of righteousness will arise with healing in His wings. This is the hope of Israel. Israel's hope in the Old Testament never goes beyond the personal reign of the Lord as the Messiah on the earth.

When we come to the last chapter of the New Testament we hear the Lord saying, "I am . . . the bright and morning **STAR**" (verse 16). This is distinctly linked up with the Rapture, for the next verse says, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come," and verse 20 says, "Surely I come quickly." This is the hope of the Church.

In symbolic language the hope of Israel, **CHRIST HIMSELF, AS THEIR MESSIAH**, is presented as the **SUN** of righteousness; the hope of the Church, as the bright and morning **STAR**. The **SUN** does not appear **immediately** after the morning **STAR** is seen. There is an interval between them. The morning **STAR** shines for a time in the darkness of the night, before it is eclipsed by the rising **SUN**.

The writer well remembers rising early one morning when on a steamer between the Shetland and Orkney Islands. The light was sufficiently strong to fade out of the sky every star but one. There shone the brilliant morning star high in the heavens. On the horizon were the horns of yellow light shooting up, the prelude of the rising of the sun. It is just this simile the Scripture uses.

This certainly supports the view that the Church will be raptured to heaven sometime before the Lord comes to earth to reign. In fact the whole scheme of Scripture does so.

But Mr. Reese tells us there will be no interval, that the saints will be raptured to the air, will not then enter heaven, but immediately return to earth. But Scripture teaches otherwise.

THREE UNDISPUTED TEXTS.

Mr. Reese tells us,

"Now concerning the Rapture there are only three undisputed texts in the Bible that deal with it, namely: 1 Thess. iv. 17, 2 Thess. ii. 1, and John xiv. 3." (p. 34).

We will now consider 1 Thessalonians iv. 13—18, the first of the three undisputed Scriptures that Mr. Reese tells us deal with the Rapture. This is a unique Scripture, for it is the only place, where the details, as to how the Rapture is effected, are given. The Thessalonian saints were sorrowing over those of their number, who had fallen asleep. Their expectation of the Lord's coming was so keen that they believed their brethren, who had died, would miss the blessing of the Lord's coming. This Scripture shows on the contrary that the sleeping saints will experience first the power of that coming, and that they will be raised. Then, and not before, the living saints will be changed, and all—raised and living—caught up to be with the Lord. There is not an indication that in meeting the Coming One, the Church will return in His train **immediately** to earth. On the contrary it says, "So shall we ever be with the Lord" (verse 17). This Scripture clearly supports the truth that the Church will be caught up to be with the Lord in heaven.

Mr. Reese says,

"It may be asserted with all boldness that the Rapture was not given in 1 Thess. iv. 'as a new revelation'." (p. 141).

It needs indeed "all boldness" to make this assertion. It is true the Lord announced in John xiv. 1—3, that He would come again for His own. But nothing was said as to the sleeping saints. Not till Paul's inspired records are given, do we get the "new revelation" as

to the exact **details** of the coming in relation to the sleeping saints and the living saints. Indeed in a kindred passage, 1 Corinthians xv. 51—56, it begins with the words, "Behold I shew you a **mystery**," a "new revelation," not known before. There certainly was largely an element of "a new revelation" in 1 Thessalonians iv. Mr. Reese does not allow for this in his sweeping remark, and he forgets, "Behold I show you a **mystery**" in 1 Corinthians xv. 51. He is so indignant with what many intelligent, honest, sober expositors of Scripture believe on these matters that he speaks "of the Rapture craze, fathered by theorists" (p. 142).

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We turn to 2 Thessalonians ii. 1, the second of the three undisputed Scriptures that, Mr. Reese tells us, deal with the Rapture.

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him."

Again this Scripture falls into its place beautifully. It does not beseech us by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and our appearing **WITH** Him, but by our gathering together **UNTO** Him. Does this not indicate, not our immediate return **WITH** the Lord, but our being gathered **UNTO** Him in the glory, to the place prepared in the Father's house of John xiv. 3? How the Scriptures dovetail into each other in blessed confirmation of the truth.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND APPEARING.

Mr. Reese says,

"It will be shown before we have finished with strange theories, that the Rapture, so far from being 'spoken of directly once and only once, and never repeated' was so spoken of more than once, and was often repeated." (p. 142).

Then in a footnote he gives us a list of seven Scriptures in support of the above. In these he sees no difference between the Rapture and the Appearing. By Rapture we mean the **catching up** of the saints to the air; by Appearing, their **coming with** their Lord to reign. In only ONE of the seven Scriptures he brings forward as teaching the Rapture is the Rapture alluded to. We briefly examine them in proof of this assertion.

(1) John xiv. 3 certainly refers to the Rapture, and is the only ONE of the seven that does.

(2) Matt. xiii. 30 refers to the harvest at the end of the age. We find that the tares are dealt with FIRST, then the wheat is gathered into the Lord's barn. When the end of the age comes, the Lord will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend. May that not be illustrated by the sheep and the goats—the goats going into everlasting punishment; the sheep going into life eternal? This passage has nothing to do with Rapture, but will take place just before the Kingdom is set up in manifested glory on earth.

(3) Matt. xxiv. 31, 40—41. Plainly no Rapture is here alluded to. It is the coming of the Lord to reign in manifested power on the earth. We will deal with this under the heading of Luke xvii. 34—35, which deals with the same incident.

(4) Mark xiii. 27. There is no Rapture here. Here we find the Lord sending His angels to gather His elect from the four quarters of the earth. But in 1 Thessalonians iv., the Lord HIMSELF descends from heaven with a shout, and the dead rise and the living are changed; and as 1 Corinthians xv. tells us, it will all take place in the twinkling of an eye. The two parts of the Coming are distinct. But Mr. Reese fails to observe this.

(5) Luke xvii. 34—35. This is the same incident as Matt. xxiv. 40—41. We had better give Mr. Reese's version of this.

ONE TAKEN AND THE OTHER LEFT.

He says:—

"I tell you in that night there shall be two men in one bed: the one shall be **taken** (**paralēmphthēsetai**; taken home, or received), and the other **left** (**aphēthēsetai**, left **alone**, left unprotected). Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be **taken** (taken **home**, received), and the other **left** (left **alone**, left unprotected). Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be **taken** (taken **home**, received), and the other left (left **alone**, left unprotected). (Luke xvii. 34—37). (p. 213).

What right has Mr. Reese to say that **paralēmphthēsetai** means taken **home**? The word, **taken**, is the ordinary word for taken. Other words in some passages may bring in the thought of home, but it is not in this passage remotely. For instance, Matthew iv. 5 says, "Then the devil **taketh** Him." He certainly did not take Him **home**. Matthew xxvii. 27 says, "The soldiers of the governor **took** Jesus into the common hall." He was not taken **home**.

What right has Mr. Reese to say that **aphethēsetai** means "left **alone**, left unprotected?" It is just the ordinary word for leave. John iv. 3 says, "He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee." Judaea was not left **alone** and unprotected. John xiv. 27 says, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." The disciples were not left **alone** and unprotected when they had the Lord's peace as their portion. Of course there can be instances where people are left **alone** and unprotected, but the word **leave** in itself does not convey that idea. It would need added words to convey that thought.

But here is a case where it looks as if Mr. Reese has given a meaning to words to suit **his** own interpretation! It is just what we have said more than once. Get a wrong interpretation, and you have to twist and mangle and accommodate other texts bearing on the subject. What confidence can we have in expositions that are given to suit the ideas of the expositor?

And when we examine Luke xvii. 20—37, we find it takes up the details of the Lord coming to this earth to reign, and does not mention the catching up of the saints to the air, the Rapture, at all.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS DEAD AGAINST MR. REESE.

The illustrations that the Lord gives are right against Mr. Reese's interpretation. We have the illustration of Noah and the flood. The antediluvian world was **TAKEN for judgment**. Noah was **LEFT for blessing**. The antediluvians were not "taken home or received," but drowned. Noah was not left "**alone**, left unprotected," but found in a renewed earth.

The inhabitants of Sodom were **TAKEN for judgment**, Lot, was **LEFT for blessing**. The inhabitants of

Sodom were not "taken home and received," but overwhelmed by fire and brimstone. Lot was not "left alone, left unprotected." Lot was taken **out of** Sodom before their Great Tribulation burst.

Finally it says, "Wheresoever the body **is**, thither will the eagles be gathered together" (verse 37). There lies the stinking putrid body. The eagles, the scavengers of the air, come and pick the flesh off the bones, and carry away their horrid meal. So will it be in the last days. Christ will take out of His kingdom all things that offend, they shall be **TAKEN away in judgment**; the righteous will be **LEFT for blessing**. So in Matthew xxv. 46 we find the goats going away into everlasting punishment, **TAKEN away in judgment**, not "taken **home** and protected" but to everlasting punishment. The righteous go into life eternal, that is they are **LEFT for blessing** on the renewed earth, for the millennial reign of Christ, a pledge of their everlasting blessing. They are not "left **alone**, left unprotected." Thus Scripture does not leave Mr. Reese a leg to stand upon.

It is singular how Mr. Reese persists in reading meanings into words that are foreign to them. He says:—

"Darby, in one of the few instance where he allowed private views to influence (and mar) his admirable, literal translation, translated **paralambanō** in Luke xvii. 34—5 by **seize**. The use of this word in the N.T. is absolutely opposed to this: it is a good word; a word used exclusively in the sense of 'take away with' or 'receive,' or 'take **home**.'" (p. 215).

Luke xvii. 34—35 reads, "One shall be taken [**paralambanō**] and the other left." Now is this word absolutely opposed to the translation, **seize**? It is always "a good word," says Mr. Reese. He praises "the famous Greek lexicon compiled by Liddel and Scott" (p. 150). What meaning does this lexicon give to **paralambanō**? "To receive from another, to succeed to, to take possession of, to take in pledge, to **take by force**, **SEIZE**

FORCIBLY, to take upon oneself, undertake," etc. So much for Mr. Reese's explanation of the word. Now we will give him two or three verses where the word, **paralambanō**, is used in anything but a good connection.

"Then the Devil taketh [**paralambanō**] Him."
(Matthew iv. 5).

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"Again, the Devil taketh [**paralambanō**] Him."
(Matthew iv. 8).

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"Then goeth he, and taketh [**paralambanō**]
with himself seven other spirits more wicked than
himself." (Matthew xii. 45).

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"And they took [**paralambanō**] Jesus, and led
Him away." (John xix. 16).

The fact is Mr. Reese apparently thinks that modifying words at his own pleasure proves what the word by itself means. If we did this with the above Scriptures, we should say dogmatically that the word has only a bad meaning, that would be as mistaken as when Mr. Reese says dogmatically it has only a good meaning. It is the ordinary work for **take**, and it depends upon modifying words, whether the **taking** is for good or evil. One would have thought that twenty years of preparation on the part of Mr. Reese was sufficient time for him to avoid making such egregious blunders. In fact to pursue all he tells us of this nature would extend this pamphlet to the size of a volume.

THE SIMPLE AND OBVIOUS.

Mr. Reese explains away the dispensational teaching of our Lord in Matthew xxv. 31—46. He says:—

"Darbyists . . . revel in the complicated, the uncommon, and the marvellous. An explanation that is far-fetched and beneath the surface takes precedence over one that is simple, obvious and pedestrian. We meet it everywhere—in the Gospels, the Epistles, the Apocalypse . . . So also with the 'Parable' of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew xxv. 31—46; for one who comes to it to drink deeper of the Saviour's spirit of philanthropy towards the hungry, the sick, the ill-clad, and the imprisoned, a thousand come to it as a problem in dispensationalism; and we all want to fit it into our scheme of the End, and especially to 'dish' the foes of Chiliasm."* (p. 296).

In answer to this we say that this passage—Matthew xxv. 31—46—is not a parable. There is a touch of the symbolic in it, when it describes those who receive the Gospel of the Kingdom as "sheep," and those, who refuse it, as "goats." It is plain straight-forward teaching. There is no need here to seek for the "far-fetched." Everything is "simple and obvious and pedestrian." The fact is there is no room for the judgment of the nations upon earth in the scheme of Mr. Reese. Therefore he brushes aside this incident as having nothing to do with the End of the Dispensation, looks on it as simply giving moral instruction, setting forth kindness to "the hungry, the sick, the ill-clad, and the imprisoned." Really Mr. Reese seems to refuse to see the obvious, if it does not fit in with his scheme. It certainly fits in with all we have been seeking to present as the plain honest meaning of Scripture.

Let any Christian, who is prepared to believe the plain surface teaching of this passage, read it as it stands,

*Chiliasm is the teaching that Christ will reign on the earth for one thousand years—the Millennium.

and he will see that it tells us when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, He will gather all nations before His judgment seat. Then He will separate those who have received the Gospel of the Kingdom (the sheep), from those who have refused it (the goats). Very touchingly He shows how conduct towards the Lord's brethren in their hour of tribulation is conduct towards Himself. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it UNTO ME." Finally the doom of the rejectors of the Gospel of the Kingdom (the goats), and the blessing of the righteous (the sheep) is given. Surely Mr. Reese must see that this is not a parable, and a mere incitement to philanthropy, but has plain prophetic teaching.

One can understand somewhat Mr. Reese's position. He is an accredited minister of a denomination, which is generally post-millennial in doctrine, and believes in one general resurrection (in spite of Revelation xx. 5, 7 and 12), and is leavened with Modernism. His position in that body might be untenable, if he taught that the Church might be raptured to glory at any moment. We have known more than one minister, who was forced to break his connection with the body he was connected with because he held such views.

(6) Rev. xx. 4. Again there is not a word about the Rapture. Those alluded to in this passage are already set for judgment in connection with the earth. They are seen sitting on thrones.

(7) Rev. xiv. 16. There is nothing whatever about the Rapture in this passage. The harvest is a harvest of blessing on the earth; the vintage that follows speaks of judgment.

So much for seven passages that speak of the Rapture. We have seen that six out of the seven do not allude to the Rapture in any way.

IS THE WORD *PAROUSIA*, KINGLY?

On the same page as these seven passages are given, we have another instance of Mr. Reese imparting a meaning into an ordinary word that it does not bear. This added meaning he uses as strengthening his argument. We refer to the word, **parousia**, generally translated **coming**. He speaks of "the kingly word, Parousia." Why **kingly**? It is the ordinary word for **coming**. It is used for "the coming of Stephanas" (1 Corinthians xvi. 17); for "the coming of Titus" (2 Corinthians vii. 6). It is used in the passage, "His [Paul's] bodily **presence** is weak" (2 Corinthians x. 10). It refers to the Antichrist, "whose **coming** is after the working of Satan" (2 Thessalonians ii. 9).

Of course if a King comes the word, **parousia**, is used just as it is when a Stephanas or a Titus arrives.

"THE DAY OF CHRIST" AND "THE DAY OF THE LORD."

But we have not done with 2 Thessalonians ii. There are two expressions in Scripture, "The Day of the Lord" and "The Day of Christ." There is a difference between them. The Day of Christ refers to the Day when Christ shall give character to everything. It is connected with the thought of **blessing**. The Day of the Lord is connected with **judgment**. Now is man's day, but, when the Church is raptured to glory, the Day of the Lord—the Day of Judgment—will begin. We will quote a few Scriptures to prove what we say.

"That ye may be **blameless** in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians i. 8).

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"That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Corinthians v. 5).

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians i. 6).

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"That ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ." (Philippians i. 10).

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"That I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain." (Philippians ii. 16).

It will be observed that in all these passages they refer to the Lord's people and to a time of blessing. It will indeed be the Day of Christ when He raptures His own to glory, and later when "He shall speak peace unto the heathen: and His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (Zechariah ix. 10).

We quote now a few texts referring to "the Day of the Lord." The Jews knew and were familiar with the expression, "The Day of the Lord." "The Day of Christ" is only known in the New Testament.

"Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty." (Isaiah xiii. 6).

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"Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand." (Joel i. 15).

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"Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh." (Joel ii. 1).

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"Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath." (Zephaniah i. 18).

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"The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." (1 Thessalonians v. 2).

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in which the heaven shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (2 Peter iii. 10).

It will be readily seen that the Day of the Lord is connected with judgment and wrath, and the winding up of things, till evil is confined once and forever in the lake of fire (Revelation xxi. 8).

Let us quote 2 Thessalonians ii. 1, 2).

"Now we beseech you, brethren. touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together UNTO HIM; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that **THE DAY OF THE LORD** is **now** present." (R.V.).

In the Authorised Version, we have "**The Day of CHRIST**"; in the Revised Translation, we have "**The Day of the LORD**." J. N. Darby's New Translation gives, "As that the **Day of the LORD** is present." Mr. Reese comments on this alteration, and does not question it, and it certainly falls into line with the Scriptures we have just quoted, as showing that "The Day of the Lord" is a day of judgment. Evidently from 2 Thessalonians ii., it was dreaded, and well it might be, for we are told that the apostasy of Christendom, more frightful in bitter consequence than we can faintly imagine, and the rise of that sinister Man of Sin, the Antichrist, must take place before that day comes.

Then we are told:—

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he [**the Antichrist**] might be revealed in his time.

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already

work: only He who now letteth [**hindereth**] **will** let [**hinder**] until He be taken out of the way." (2 Thessalonians ii. 6, 7).

This passage tells us there is some POWER in this world, sufficient to restrain the whole tide of iniquity, till in the ways of God this influence is removed. This influence is connected with a PERSON. Who is that Person?

Mr. Reese says:—

"There is agreement on three points:—

1. That an impersonal **influence** is holding back the Man of Sin, commonly identified with Antichrist.
2. That a **person** is also holding back his arrival.
3. That with the removal of this influence and this person the Antichrist would be revealed."

What is that influence? Who is the person?" (p. 245).

First of all, there is no such thing as "an IMPERSONAL **influence**." Influence is the result of personality, whether it be of men, or, in the last resource, of God.

Second, Mr. Reese allows that this influence is wielded by a **person**. This is clearly stated in the passage, "HE who letteth" (**hindereth**).

He goes on to say:—

"Almost all Darbyists reply, 'The Holy Spirit in the Church; with His removal at the Rapture of the Church (1 Thess. iv. 17) Antichrist will be revealed.' To this it is to be replied:—This is ingenious, but it is mere conjecture, and precarious at that." (p. 245).

What then does Mr. Reese say this "impersonal **influence** is? An influence apart from a person is an impossibility. Who then is this person? How can a **person** come in, if the influence is impersonal, that is, not personal? Mr. Reese says:—

"The oldest and best interpretation is that Paul hesitated to set down in words what he meant, because he had in mind the Roman Empire. The impersonal influence was the magnificent system of law and justice throughout the Roman world; this held lawlessness and the Man of lawlessness in check. Then the line of emperors, in spite of wicked individuals, had the same influence." (p. 246).

We reply in his own words, "This is ingenious, but it is a mere conjecture, precarious at that." Mr. Reese tells us there is "an impersonal **influence**." No government is that. Government is largely influence by the rulers and leading statesmen of the countries in question. Next Mr. Reese tells us that a **person** is holding back the arrival of the Antichrist. **But he does not mention a PERSON at all**, but brings forward a line of Roman Emperors. Why does he not name a particular **person**, when he tells us all are agreed as to this?

Next, this influence must last from the time that Paul wrote till Antichrist appears on the scene. Where is the Roman Empire to-day? Where was it in the Middle Ages, in the day when Napoleon overran Italy? Mr. Reese's contention demands a **continuous** influence from Paul's day to this and on, and the Roman Empire does not furnish this.

Then did this "magnificent system of law and justice" hold back the tide of lawlessness? We know that Rome became enervated, debauched, and corrupt, at the end there were more slaves by far than freemen; the emperors, monsters of debauchery and wickedness, claiming divine honours, as the Antichrist will do in the

last days. We know that the Huns and Goths smashed up the Roman Empire. In the words of Scripture, "I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death" (Revelation xiii. 3).

Mr. Reese tells us that the Roman Empire was swept away, not to be revived, that this was foretold by Paul and John, following Daniel vii. If this be so, how does he think that the Roman Empire is acting at the present moment as a restraining "impersonal influence?" His ingenious conjecture is indeed precarious when he undermines his own foundations.

We believe the restraining influence is personal, and that Person is the Holy Spirit. To begin with "the magnificent system of law and justice" never was on the side of Christianity. Indeed persecution after persecution against the Christians broke out. Was the Roman Empire the restraining influence when the Coliseum of Rome, built by 30,000 Jews taken captive by Titus at the siege of Jerusalem, holding 80,000 people, echoed with the cry, "Throw the Christians to the lions?" Was it witnessed by 575 miles of amazing Catacombs at Rome, where the Christians were driven underground to worship and to bury their dead to the number, it is said, of 4,000,000?

No; there must be a **personal** influence, a Person, who is mighty enough to hinder the working of the mystery of iniquity. Who can wield that power? He must be omnipresent, he must abide. Generation may succeed generation, but this influence, this Person must abide. Is it ingenious, is it conjectural to be guided by what Scripture says to the only sane, sensible conclusion that the only Person, who can possibly answer to the description given is none less than a Divine Person, the Holy Spirit?

Scripture confirms this thought. It is true that the Holy Spirit was sent from a glorified Christ in heaven in special relation to this world and to God's people in

this dispensation. When He came His mission was, and still is, to reprove, to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John xvi. 8—11). He came to indwell the believers and to unite them to Christ in glory and to each other on earth, forming the one body of Christ. "Greater is He [**the Holy Spirit**] that is in you, than he [**Satan**] that is in the world" (1 John iv. 4).

Seeing the Spirit has come in a special way to be strength and help and unity to the Lord's people in this dispensation, is it any wonder that when the Church is raptured to glory the Holy Spirit too will be removed from the earth in the special way that He has been here since the day of Pentecost? We can therefore understand how the Spirit and the Bride (the Church) are linked up together in Scripture in connection with the Rapture. We read, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come" (Revelation xxii. 17). When the Bride says, "Come," to the Lord, it is with the desire to be with Him in the glory. When the Spirit says, "Come," surely it means that He will depart at the same time as the Bride (the Church). It is not the Church saying Come by the Spirit, though doubtless it is by the Spirit, but the Spirit says, **Come** and the Bride says **Come**.

The nameless servant of Abraham, type of the Holy Spirit, went to the distant land to seek a bride for Isaac. The servant did not allow Rebekah to journey to Isaac alone, but went every step of the homeward journey. His mission was over in that connection. So surely will the Holy Spirit present the Bride to Christ at the Rapture. Of course the Spirit will continue to operate in this world, after His removal as indwelling the church which is taken to glory. Just as He operated in Old Testament times, so will He operate in the days to come.

Now in 2 Thessalonians we see that this influence, this Person, hinders evil in the world, was hindering it when Paul wrote, prophesying it would continue to hinder till its removal opens the way for the Antichrist

to arrive upon the scene. In the wisdom of God this is so, in view of the development of evil in the last days, so that judgment may bring things to a head in view of the advent of our Lord to reign upon the earth.

Is the assertion of this ingenious, conjectural and precarious as Mr. Reese suggests, or is it a fact that the only influence, the only Power, who could take up such a stupendous task, and abide down the centuries to the coming of Antichrist is the Holy Spirit, who is God as the Father is God, and the Son is God? To that question there is only one plain answer. No other person **is sufficient for such a work.**

TWO TRIBULATIONS.

In 2 Thessalonians i. 4—10 we have a passage that fits in with all we have been advancing. We read:—

“We ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and TRIBULATIONS [*thlipsis*] that ye endure:

Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which ye also suffer:

Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense TRIBULATION [*thlipsis*] to them that TROUBLE [*thlibō*] you;

And to you who are TROUBLED [*thlibō*] rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels.”

In this passage we read of two tribulations—the tribulation that the believer passes through in this dispensation, and the tribulation that the world will pass through when the Day of the Lord begins. It is helpful to see the difference between the source and character of these tribulations.

That believers have passed through sore trials Peter bears witness to when he writes of **"THE FIERY TRIAL which is to try you"** (1 Peter iv. 12). "Throw the Christians to the lions," the Inquisition of Spain, the fires of Smithfield, the present condition of Christians in Germany and Russia, suffice to tell us that Christians have had to bear trial all down the ages.

What is the source and character of these tribulations?

The Christian's tribulation comes from SATAN.

The tribulation, that is to come, will come from GOD.

The Christian's tribulation comes because of **FAITHFULNESS to God**, of witness to **the Lord Jesus Christ**.

The tribulation, that is to come, will come because of man's **REJECTION of God**, of Christ, of Christianity in every way.

The two tribulations are diametrically different from each other in source and character.

1 Thessalonians distinctly says that the tribulation, that is to come, will come, as retribution upon those, who have persecuted God's people, upon "them that trouble you," as Scripture phrases it.

When that time comes, **"REST"** is to be the portion of the Christians of this dispensation; whilst **"TRIBULATION"** will be the portion of the world, of troublers.

But, says Mr. Reese, there will be no rest for the Church of God, for she is to go through the awful trials of the Great Tribulation. We quote the passage that speaks of **TRIBULATION** for the world, of **REST** for the Christian.

"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to **recompense** **TRIBULATION** to them that trouble you;

And to you who are troubled REST with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels'' (2 Thessalonians i. 6, 7).

No, says Mr. Reese, there is NO REST. The Tribulation, he says, has to be faced with all its horrors by the Church of God. We prefer to believe what the Word of God plainly teaches. The only way REST can be the portion of the believer in that day is by being taken to be with the Lord at the Rapture.

There have been horrors in this sad world, but nothing like what is to come. Psalm xlv. 2 gives a graphic and blood-curdling description of what is to come, mountains cast into the midst of the sea, that is, all ordered government swallowed up by anarchy, something like the French revolution, when heads fell by the hundreds into the basket of the guillotine, when no man's life was safe.

One can understand Christians suffering a tribulation that comes from SATAN, but for them to undergo one that comes from GOD, is contrary to God's word which tells us that the reward of keeping the word of Christ's patience is that the Church is to be kept out of (ek) the HOUR of the coming world-tribulation. How one Scripture fits into another in a most confirmatory way!

Suppose a father with ten children instructs them how to behave in his absence. Seven of them determine to kick over the traces, and do what they like. Three children determine to carry out their father's will. The seven children make the life of the three children almost unbearable. The father returns home. He learns of the insubordination of the seven children and the fidelity of the other three. He determines to chastise the erring children. What would the three have thought if they had endured the persecution of the seven in their father's absence, and then were chastised severely with them? Would this be righteous? And yet what Mr. Reese teaches is on a par with this.

Then further 2 Thessalonians ii. 3 tells us,

"Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day **shall not come**, except there come a falling away (Greek, **apostasias**, apostasy), and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

Now it is not the world at large in its godlessness that will apostatize. It will be that which professes the name of Christ. Is it possible for the Church of God with its millions of true believers to apostatize? We must surely answer in the negative, or else admit that the indwelling Holy Spirit, the Seal of God, is not able to keep that which is committed to Him, and has altogether failed in His mission.

If the Church of God is on earth when the Man of Sin appears, it will mean that the Church has apostatized. But that cannot be. One can understand that if all true believers are raptured to Heaven, and that merely empty professors, worldly Christians, Modernists, are left, that it will be easy, when once the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit is removed, as our chapter states, and, the presence of godly Christians on earth is no longer a fact, for the apostasy to take place.

That there may be no mistake as to the meaning of apostasy we quote two of Mr. Reese's authorities, who both taught that the Church would go through the Great Tribulation.

"That part of the earth, therefore, which hitherto has been and will be the spring and pivot of the world's energies, will become utterly APOSTATE. It will utterly reject God as revealed in Christ: God as the Jehovah of Israel: and God as the Creator." (B. W. Newton).

"Not merely bad times in the Church, such as coldness, deadness, lukewarmness, lifelessness, but the APOSTACY. Now what is the apostacy? En-

tire rejection of everything that is divine; the fulfilment of the second Psalm—'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us'; let us have neither God, Christ, or anything divine: the setting up themselves, the denying everything that is divine, the rejecting even the **form** of godliness, this is the Apostacy referred to . . . this has not been fulfilled in Popery. It is **anti-Christian** altogether." (George Muller).

With these definitions we are in full accord.

In examining this portion of God's word, we can only feel that if Mr. Reese would face Scripture as it stands he would return once more to his early belief. Scripture after Scripture only makes his position more difficult and untenable. Mr. Reese says,

"According to Darby and his followers, the Great Tribulation is the wrath of **God** against the Jewish people for their rejection of **Christ**. According to Scripture, it is the **Devil's** wrath against the saints for their rejection of **Antichrist**, and adherence to Christ. Let the reader once see the Scripture truth on this point, and the whole Darbyist case will be exposed as a campaign of assumptions, mis-statements, and sentiment." (p. 284).

The assumptions and mis-statements are Mr. Reese's, little as he realizes it. What is the meaning of "the **HOUR** of temptation, which shall come upon all the world [not merely the land of Israel] (Revelation iii. 10), the last and most frightful part of which is the Great Tribulation? It is the unfolding of judgment as set forth in the seals, trumpets and vials, as prophesied from Revelation iv. to xx. 3.

We ask, Where do these judgments come from? Who breaks the seven-sealed book? Does Satan? Surely it is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, as a Lamb that had been slain, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only One who can break these seven seals of judgment. Who sound the seven trumpets that bespeak the wrath of heaven being poured out upon this earth? Does Satan? Surely not, **the angels of GOD** sound the trumpets. Who pour out

the seven vials, setting forth more intensive woes upon this earth? Is it Satan? Surely not, they are the seven angels of GOD. Whose is the army that shall fight at the battle of Armageddon? Satan and his hosts shall be on one side, but who is the Victor? Surely the One, who comes out of Heaven, followed by the armies of heaven? What is His name? Faithful and True, the Name that no man knows but He Himself, the Word of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And these judgments will not close till the Great Tribulation ends, and the Son of Man is triumphant over His enemies. That time of trouble then **includes** the period of the Great Tribulation.

A TRIBULATION WITHIN A TRIBULATION.

We need to see clearly that there is a tribulation within a tribulation. When the judgments of Heaven fall, men will wreak their rage on the people of God.

We know from Matthew xxiv. 14,

"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 result of the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom among the nations will be seen in the treatment of the messengers, whom the Lord's calls, "My brethren," (Matthew xxv. 40 and 45), resulting in everlasting punishment, or entering into eternal life.

It is easy to put up "men of straw" and knock them down with a great show of rhetorical valour. For instance, Mr. Reese bursts out as follows, alluding to "Darby, Kelly and a thousand laymen," he writes:—

"Their exegesis, instead of adhering to the main emphasis of Scripture, and basing itself on care-

ful and obvious deductions from clear texts, was shot to pieces by idle speculation, by the adoption of innovations like the secret Rapture, and the prodigious missionary tour of the world in 1,260 days, by an army of half-converted Jews, still in their sins. Preachers without life, without forgiveness, and without the Holy Ghost in the soul, will do in 1,260 days what the whole Christian Church has been unable to do in 1,900 years—evangelize the world, and convert the 'overwhelming majority' of the inhabitants of the world to God." (p. 269).

Mr. Reese overstates his case very shockingly here. He certainly has drawn on his imagination. To make false charges is a serious matter. He speaks of **half-converted Jews**, and then contradicts himself by saying that they have **no** life, **no** forgiveness, **no** Holy Ghost. How can they be even half-converted? We challenge Mr. Reese to show a line from the writing of Mr. Darby or Mr. Kelly, that tells us that Jews with **no** life, **no** forgiveness, **no** Holy Ghost, are the preachers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and called "My brethren (Matthew xxv. 40 and 45).

THE LATTER HALF OF DANIEL'S SEVENTIETH WEEK.

Then why fix on 1,260 days, that is the three and a half years of the Great Tribulation? The fact is, there is need to see when the three and a half years begin. The seals, trumpets and vials up to the sixth of the two last series take up a period whose duration is not stated in Scripture. Judgment is God's strange work. We know "a short work will the Lord make upon the earth" (Romans ix. 28).

But when the first beast of Revelation xiii, the head of the **revived** Roman Empire, makes a treaty with the second **beast** of Revelation xiii, the Antichrist in the Land of Israel, that will inaugurate Daniel's seventieth

week, and the godly will **then** know from Scripture that tribulation will cease at the end of that period, and the glorious reign of Christ will begin.

We read of the Prince that shall come, a prince of the people—the Romans—that was to destroy the city and the sanctuary—a prophecy which was fulfilled when Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70. When he comes he will make a treaty with Antichrist in the Land of Israel for seven years—Daniel's seventieth week. In the middle of the week, that is three and a half years before the end, the Great Tribulation will break out. He will cause "the Sacrifice and Oblation to cease" (Daniel ix. 27). Then "the abomination of desolation" will stand in the holy place, the Temple at Jerusalem, and God's judgments, as well as Satan's wrath will burst forth. It begins "The Great Tribulation," "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah xxx. 7), "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation **even** to that same time" (Daniel xii. 1). Then, and not till then, will anyone know how long it will be till the end comes. The Lord shall bring judgments to an end, and introduce His blessed reign of peace, the golden dream of the ages.

THE TWO BEASTS OF REVELATION XIII.

Further, Mr. Reese confounds the two beasts of Revelation xiii. He tells us:—

"Out of the restless sea of nations, Antichrist, at the head of an ancient kingdom [**not the Land of Israel according to Mr. Reese**], is called up from the Abyss to fulfil his course (cf. xi. 7). Wounded, apparently unto death, in a campaign against the saints, his miraculous and satanic healing evokes the wonder of the world." (xiii. 3, 12, 14)." (p. 285).

Nebuchadnezzar's dream tells of the great image, setting forth prophetically the four great world-empires of his-

tory, embracing "the Times of the Gentiles"—first the Babylonian, then Medo-Persian, followed by the Grecian, and finally by the Roman Empire. That the Roman Empire will be revived, and play a great part in the last days, is seen in the deadly wound being healed, and that it will go on to the last days is seen in that the Stone cut out without hands, smites the feet of the image, and destroys it, the Stone becoming a great mountain, and filling the whole earth. Luke xx. 18 speaks of the Stone, that "on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

On the other hand we find from Daniel xi. 36—45, that Antichrist will be a Jew. We read,

"Neither shall he regard the God of his Fathers, nor the desire of women [**probably this refers to the Lord, the angel said to Mary, 'Blessed art thou among women'**—Luke i. 28], nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all."
(Daniel xi. 37).

The chapter goes on to state that his dominion is in the Land of Israel, and that in the last days the King of the North (Assyria—probably the Turk), and the King of the South (Egypt) will attack him. 2 Thessalonians ii. supports this for it clearly states that the Antichrist will be worshipped in the Temple of God at JERUSALEM. It is the second beast—the Antichrist—that comes out of the earth, the ordered condition of things, who will cause all to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. The very word Antichrist lends itself to the title, False Prophet. He is called the Son of Perdition, the Man of Sin, the King (Daniel xi. 36), the False Prophet, the Antichrist. The first beast that arises out of the sea will be the Roman Empire, the head of which in the last days will be a political and military Dictator, the like of which we are getting accustomed to in these days. The second beast will be the Antichrist. Mr. Reese makes the mistake of identifying the first beast as Antichrist.

WHO ARE THE ELECT?

It appears that to speak of the Jewish remnant in the future day as the **elect** arouses the wrath of Mr. Reese. We give a lengthy extract to show how he pours scorn and contempt on those, who do not think that the **elect** in the last days refer to the Church going through the Great Tribulation. We read:—

“We meet this word **Elect** frequently in the sermon of our Lord’s on the Last Things; and there cannot be any doubt that they are in the thick of the last great struggle. But Darbyists intervene sharply to tell us that we err: the **Elect** in the Epistles are the Church; in Matt. xxiv. the ‘lost tribes’ and the Remnant of Jews in the End-time. And the proof of this? Only their own strange interpretation of Matt. xxiv. Their system requires it; therefore it must be so: in the Epistles it means people who know and love the Saviour, and aim at being filled with His Spirit. In the Gospels, a people ignorant of the first principles of Christ, ignorant of redemption, devoid of the Spirit, guided by select beatitudes and other snippets from the Sermon on the Mount, and by the Imprecatory Psalms; fulfilling Matt. xxviii. 18—20 in 1,260 days; converting countless multitudes of the heathen to Christ during the absence of the Holy Spirit, yet, though preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom whose very essence is ‘righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost,’ they invoke terrible curses upon their enemies, and enemies’ children. **Elect** indeed! To refute such supreme rubbish requires either a volume or a page.” (pp. 206, 7).

We challenge Mr. Reese to say where Mr. Darby, or Mr. Kelly, or any sane writer on prophetic truth presented such a ridiculous and contradictory description of the Jewish remnant in the day to come. He does not get this description save from his own imagination in his zeal to ridicule those from whom he differs. It is the old trick of the counsel, having a bad case, seeking to make up for this by violent abuse of the other side.

Let us calmly look at what Scripture says on the subject. Israel was called **elect**. We read:—

“Jacob My servant’s sake, and Israel Mine **elect**.” (Isaiah xlv. 4).

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“And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of My mountains: and Mine **elect** shall inherit it, and My servants shall dwell there.” (Isaiah lxxv. 9).

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“Mine **elect** shall long enjoy the work of their hands.” (Isaiah lxxv. 22).

The saints in the present Dispensation are called the **elect**.

“Put on therefore, as the **elect** of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, etc.” (Colossians iii. 12).

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“Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s **elect**.” (Titus i. 1).

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“**Elect** according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father,” etc. (1 Peter i. 2).

Now let us see what Matthew xxiv. teaches plainly. First of all note the Jewish setting of the chapter. The scene is laid in Palestine. The crisis is reached when the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel, the prophet, is set up in the Temple. The remnant are directed to pray that their flight shall not be on the sabbath, the **Jewish** day of rest, nor in the inclemency of winter, and woe to them that are with child. Flight has to be instantaneous. Not a moment is to be lost. The man on the housetop must not stop to possess himself of anything in the house, however prized; if a man is

working in the fields, he must not return home to get his clothes. Flight, instant flight, is the imperative need of the moment. Besides that, everything must give place.

What a terrible time it is going to be! It is clear that the scene is set in Palestine, and centres in Jerusalem and the Temple. It is good that instructions are thus given.

But if the Church of God is scattered over the face of the earth, where are the instructions given to them how to conduct themselves? There are none. Mr. Reese cannot show us any. Why? Because the Church will not go through the Great Tribulation. The silence of Scripture is to be carefully noted in this connection.

Then further we read:—

“He [**the Son of Man**] shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” (verse 31).

Notice the procedure. The angels sent forth, the sound of the trumpet, the gathering of the **elect** from the four quarters of the earth. Turn now to the admitted account of the Rapture of the Church.

“The Lord **HIMSELF** shall descend from heaven a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians iv. 16, 17).

It will be seen at once that these Scriptures refer to quite different events. In the one case **THE ANGELS** gather the **elect**. In the other **THE LORD HIMSELF** comes into the air. In the one case there is the great sound of a trumpet. In the other there is the shout of the Lord, the voice of the archangel, the trump of God. In the one case there is the gathering of the **elect** from

the four winds. It does not stress that this is done in a moment. In the other case it happens "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump" (1 Corinthians xv. 52). In the one, the **elect** are gathered together ON THE EARTH. In the other the meeting is IN THE AIR.

Then the illustrations that are given by our Lord in Matthew xxiv. are dead against Mr. Reese's exegesis. He says that those taken are taken for blessing and those left are left for judgment. Was not Noah left on the earth for blessing, and the antediluvians taken away in judgment. A parallel passage—Luke xvii. 20—37—speaks of Lot. He was preserved for blessing; the inhabitants of Sodom were swept away in judgment.

And yet Mr. Reese calls this "supreme rubbish." We think it is the plain teaching of Holy Scripture. Yet Mr. Reese tells us that these are

"theories that are blighting Bible study and Christian fellowship all over the world: theories and **traditions** that have cursed the movement from the beginning." (p. 116).

The opposite of this is our experience. There is nothing so helpful and cheering as these grand truths as to the Lord's Coming.

WILL THE RAPTURE BE SECRET?

Mr. Reese again and again pours scorn on the idea that the Rapture will be **secret**. He writes,

"The Secret Coming is so very secret, that John passes it over in silence." (p. 89).

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"The suggestion of Darby, backed by the vigorous efforts of Kelly and others, to prove from this most magnificent passage in 1 Thess. iv. that a secret coming, a secret resurrection, and a secret rapture are portrayed, followed by the **rise and reign** of Antichrist, is amongst the sorriest in the whole history of freak exegesis." (p. 146).

We can understand, if Mr. Reese teaches that the Rapture and the Coming to reign on the earth are two parts of one crisis, the one immediately following the other, that such a coming could not be secret. There would be the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and every eye seeing Him, and all kindreds of the earth wailing because of Him. That coming cannot be secret, though the sign of the Son of Man in heaven will come without warning as to the day or the hour. Indeed the coming of the Lord to reign on the earth is spoken of as coming like a thief. A thief does not write a letter the day before he comes on his nefarious errand, and tell you when he is coming, or that he is coming at all. His success lies in secrecy.

But in the case of the Rapture of the saints we know there will be no notice given to them, or to the world, that it will take place on a certain day and hour when all may expect it.

That is all that is meant by **secret** Rapture. It is most evident that when the Church is raptured to heaven, the **effect** of the removal of the saints from the earth cannot be **secret**, but will be manifest at once in the translation of multitudes of the saints. Of course Mr.

Reese's teaching that the Rapture and the Appearing form a crisis at the same time, it would follow that there must be a public **manifestation** of the Lord and His own. But as we have seen, this is not what Scripture teaches. But when the time comes for the fulfilment of Enoch's prophecy—"Behold, the Lord cometh WITH ten thousands of His saints" (Jude 14)—then there will be a public manifestation. But at the Rapture, in a moment without any warning as to day or hour, in the twinkling of an eye, the saints will be rapt to glory.

We are inclined to think that after all Mr. Reese himself believes in a **secret** Rapture in the sense that there is no notice will be given as to the day and the hour. It will come as a blessed and happy surprise, but the **results** will not be secret.

Whether the world will hear the assembling shout of our Lord, the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God, we are not told, and there we must leave it.

We have instances in Scripture of men hearing sounds and not understanding them. We read at the conversion of Saul of Tarsus,

"They that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of Him that spake to me." (Acts xxii. 9).

Comparing this with Acts ix. 7. we gather that what is meant is that the men heard the voice, but it could be said that they did not hear the voice in that it conveyed nothing intelligible to them.

Again we read:—

"Father, glorify Thy Name. Then came there a voice from heaven, **saying**, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

The people, therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to Him." (John xii. 28, 29).

Evidently a sound was heard, but nothing intelligible to the bystanders. Whether the world will hear the summoning shout matters little. If they hear anything it will evidently not be intelligible. That is all that is meant by being **secret**, and I imagine that Mr. Reese would agree with this. He has put up a man of straw and valiantly knocked him down.

THE LAST DAY.

Mr. Reese is very great on pressing the last day as the end of the present age. He quotes Dr. Bullinger with approval as an authority, though he speaks scathingly of his "labyrinth of prophetic fads and theories." He writes:—

"The true sense of the phrase 'the last day' is also given by Bullinger in his **Apocalypse**: 'Martha expressed her belief in the resurrection at the last day (John xi. 24); i.e., the last day at the end of the present age, and immediately before the introduction of the new age of the thousand years.'" (p. 53).

He also writes:—

"Writing in the London **Christian** (October 17th, 1907), Dr. W. H. Griffith Thomas remarked on Matt. xxiv. 14: 'I cannot find the word **end** is anywhere applied to the coming of the Lord for His people.' And another scholarly Anglican writes: 'As regards the word **end**—'And then shall the end come.' This is not the coming of Christ; that event is nowhere called the **End** . . . I propose to show that not fewer than five texts in the Epistles associate 'the End' (**telos**) with the Christian hope; and if one text is enough to 'hang the universe on' in William Kelly's day, he would be the first to agree that five will stand the expanding universe of Einstein, Lord Rutherford, and Sir James Jeans, and should suffice to support a biblical doctrine.'" (p. 121).

Let us examine briefly these five texts:—

(a) (1 Corinthians i. 7—8): Waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall also confirm you unto the end (*telos*) that ye may be unproveable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. (R.V.).

Here most evidently the end is the end of responsible life for the Christian on the earth.

Mr. Reese seems to put a great reliance on the Greek word for end (*telos*), as if it must mean the very end of this dispensation. The following Scripture shows that it can be applied to the end of this life.

“What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the END (*telos*) of those things is death.” (Romans vi. 21).

Another Scripture shows that the end may be numbered by HOURS.

“But Peter followed Him afar off unto the high priest’s palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the END (*telos*).” (Matthew xxvi. 58).

The second of the five Scriptures is,

(b) (Hebrews iii. 6): “If we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end.” (R.V.).

There again it must mean the end of life, for, surely it is down here, we have to hold fast and cherish our hope. The third Scripture is,

(c) (Hebrews iii. 14): We are become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.” (R.V.).

It is down here in this world of contrariety that the believer has to hold fast. Here again it is most evidently the end of responsible life on this earth.

The fourth Scripture is

(d) (Hebrews vi. 11): "Shew the same diligence unto the fulness of hope even to the end." (R.V.).

Surely the saints who die, who are not on this earth, do not need this exhortation to diligence till the Great Tribulation on earth is over and the Church raptured to heaven, no, not to heaven, according to Mr. Reese, but to meet the Lord, and immediately return with Him to the earth. The end in Hebrews vi. 11, is clearly the end of responsible life down here.

The fifth Scripture is,

(e) (Revelation ii. 26): And He that overcometh, and he that keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations." (R.V.).

The saints are not overcomers, save in this life. Thank God, there will be nothing to overcome in the glory. The end here, as in all five Scriptures, is the responsible life in this world.

Mr. Reese quotes authorities, giving a different exposition of these passages, but seeing he has Modernist authorities in some cases, we are not much impressed by them.

The plain surface meaning of these passages is sufficient for any who wish to know what Scripture teaches.

THE CLASH OF TWO DISPENSATIONS.

It is interesting how the contemplation of the Church going through the Great Tribulation only brings up one difficulty after another. We read,

“God is not **the** author of confusion.” (1 Corinthians xiv. 33).

What confusion it would be if the Christian evangelist were preaching the Gospel **of the grace of God**, and the Jewish evangelist—“these My brethren” (Matthew xxv. 40)—were preaching the Gospel **of the Kingdom**. There must be some real reason why the Gospel of the Kingdom, preached by John the Baptist, by our Lord and His disciples in His lifetime, should be the Gospel to be preached in a future day.

The preaching of the Christian evangelist brings his converts into the Church of God, the preaching of the Jewish evangelist will bring his hearers into the Kingdom of God on earth. The preaching of the Christian evangelist presents a heavenly hope; the preaching of the Jewish evangelist will present an earthly hope. There is never a mixing of dispensations in the Scriptures, and this is another evident proof that the Church will not go through the Great Tribulation.

THE FOUR AND TWENTY ELDERS.

Mr. Reese has great difficulty in locating the twenty-four elders that are seen sitting on seats round the throne in heaven, arrayed with white raiment, and crowns of gold on their heads (Revelation iv. 4). He says:—

“There is absolutely no evidence that these twenty-four Elders are human beings at all, or have any connection with the redeemed. A careful consideration of all the passages where they are mentioned will warrant the following conclusions:—

(i) They are glorious heavenly beings taking the lead in the praise and worship of God.

(ii) They celebrate with joy each crisis in the onward march of events to the consummation of the Kingdom.

(iii.) They seem never to have known the experience of conflict, sin, pardon and victory; yet they rejoice over the blessedness of those who have, and give glory to God for His grace in the victory of those who overcome.

(iv.) They distinctly disassociate themselves from the prophets, saints, and godly of ages past who rise in the resurrection at the Last Trumpet, and are rewarded. This passage indicates that they have not known death or service on earth.

(v.) Acting as assessors prior to the great consummation, they disappear from the scene when the new assessors—the great multitude of the heavenly redeemed—sit down on thrones and exercise judgment with the Lord Jesus at His coming. See xx. 4; 1 Cor. vi. 2; iv. 8; Matt. xix. 28.

“In view of these considerations, we are warranted in concluding that these twenty-four Elders are not redeemed beings.” (pp. 92. 93).

Mr. Reese builds his contention largely on the altered version of Revelation v. 9, 10. In the Authorised Version it reads:—

“Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed US to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made US unto our God kings and priests: and WE shall reign on the earth.”

In the Revised Version and other translations, including Mr. Darby's, the words printed in capital letters are left out. This, Mr. Reese thinks, completely sweeps away any ground for thinking that the Twenty-four Elders symbolize the heavenly redeemed.

But is this so? It is a dangerous thing to reason from a negative, as Mr. Reese does here. If the Elders had sung the song as given in the Authorised Version with "US," and "WE," they would have celebrated a redemption that only included themselves. But in the form in which it is given in the Revised Version, it makes a general statement of magnificent sweep as to the redemption that the Lamb has made, affecting every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. But that does not necessarily exclude themselves. They link up the Lamb's ability to open the book of judgment with His atoning work, and this is done throughout the Book.

Mr. Reese says, "They seem never to have known the experience of conflict, sin, pardon and victory." On the other hand this may have been true of them, they may have had experience of conflict, etc. Is there anything to negative this, or prove it on the other hand. We notice the four and twenty elders sit on thrones, are clothed in white raiment, and on their heads were crowns of gold.

First of all, we read of angels being clad in white raiment, but we never read of their sitting on thrones, or wearing crowns. Sitting on thrones speaks of reigning. That is never said of angels or archangels, but only of the redeemed. The word, throne, is mentioned over sixty times in the New Testament, and six times translated **seat**. "And round about the throne (**thronos**) were four and twenty seats (**thronos**)." This word, throne, is always connected with reigning. This clearly points to the redeemed.

We are supported in this view as we remember Scripture. The twelve apostles were told they should sit on twelve thrones judging the children of Israel (Matthew xix. 28); that the saints will judge the world and angels (1 Corinthians vi. 2, 3). There is no wonder that we see this indicated in heaven when the seven-sealed Book of judgment is opened by the Lamb, and the four and twenty Elders are seen sitting on thrones.

But further. These four and twenty elders are seen wearing crowns. Now crowns are never said to be worn by angels. Mr. Reese invents a nondescript set of beings whom he calls "glorious heavenly beings," neither, according to him, being angels, or the redeemed of earth, but a set of beings that are unknown in Scripture.

There are two words for "crown" in the Greek. "Diadēma," from which we get our English word, **Diadem**, represents the crown of the monarch. The word only occurs in Revelation three times, and it is seen that the **ONLY** rightful Wearer of that crown is the Lamb that was slain. "On His head were many crowns (**diadēma**)" (Revelation xix. 12).

The other word is "**Stephanos**," occurring eighteen times in the New Testament. Liddell and Scott's **Lexicon** gives the meaning:—

"A crown, wreath, the conqueror's wreath at the public games, crown of victory. These crowns were of leaves, viz., of **wild thyme** at the Olympic games, **laurel** at the Pythian; **parsley** at the Nemean; **ivy** at the Isthmian."

Have we any intimation that the redeemed shall wear a crown, not the monarch's crown, but one that answers to the victor's crown won in conflict? We read in Scripture,

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a **CROWN** (**stephanos**) of righteousness." (2 Timothy iv. 8).

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"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive a **CROWN** (**stephanos**) of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." (James i. 12).

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"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a **CROWN** (**stephanos**) of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Peter v. 4).

This is in evident contrast to the laurel, ivy, and parsley leaves, which would begin to fade as soon as they were placed as chaplets on the heads of the victors in the games.

So we see that the redeemed may wear crowns. Then finally the four and twenty Elders are wearing white raiment. The angels are seen as wearing white raiment. In their case it must set forth their unfallen condition of purity. But the Church, under the figure of the Lamb's wife, is seen in Revelation xix. 8, as thus arrayed:—

“To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness (**righteousnesses**. N.Tr.) of the saints.”

In contrast to the angels, this fine linen sets forth all the effect of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the saints, which Scripture loves to notice as the product of divine work in them.

When we find (1) the promise of reigning, (2) of crowns of reward, (3) of “fine linen clean and white,” we have three marks that clearly identify the four and twenty Elders as symbolically setting forth the saints.

Why four and twenty? We know that twelve is the great administrative number in Scripture and prominent in the symbols of Revelation. The city 12,000 furlongs; having twelve foundations; twelve apostles of the Lamb identified with its foundations; the foundations garnished with twelve manner of precious stones; the gates being twelve pearls; the wall being one hundred and forty-four—the square of twelve—cubits high—all sets forth the great idea of administration—the Church in her administrative character in the Millennium.

Everything points out that the four and twenty Elders are the saints raised at the Rapture, twelve standing for the Old Testament saints and twelve for the New Testa-

ment saints, "they that are Christ's at His coming" (1 Corinthians xv. 23). Their proximity to the throne, their intelligence in following the development of God's ways in judgment, their worship—all tend to strengthen the belief that they are the saints of God, raised and changed at the Rapture. Their proximity to the throne is most significant, for who has a nearer place of honour and privilege with the Lord than His saints.

And yet Mr. Reese can say,

"Therefore when John came to describe the vision he had in heaven should we be surprised to find twenty-four 'thrones,' occupied by angelic lords, who are yet in subjection to Christ? Indeed, we should rather be surprised, in view of other Scriptures, if he failed to mention them." (p. 94).

For our part in the light of the Scriptures we have adduced, we should be surprised if the twenty-four Elders were any other than the Raptured saints, especially as it falls in with our examination of Scripture as a whole, as it affects these truths.

"THE UNDENIABLE FACT" DENIED.

Mr. Reese says:—

"The undeniable fact is that this 'any-moment' view of Christ's Return only originated about 1830, when Darby gave forth at the same time the mistaken theory of the secret Coming and Rapture." (p. 227).

The answer to this is: Mr. Darby drew attention to the teaching of Scripture that goes back to A.D. 33—96. He appealed to the Scriptures, and that appeal still remains.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

There is much, very much, that we could comment on in this attempt to undermine the teaching of many of the Lord's servants, men of spiritual discernment and scholarly attainments, whose ministry written and oral is being used to the cheer and refreshment of thousands of the Lord's people. We think it safe to say no Modernist believes in the any-moment Rapture of the saints, whilst on the other side we have Modernists of all shades uniting in rejecting this blessed truth. We think we have pointed out enough in Mr. Reese's book to show he has not proved that the Church will go through the Great Tribulation.

It is extraordinary how Mr. Reese has his fling at those he is pleased to call Darbyists. He speak of them as revelling "in the complicated, the uncommon, and the marvellous." He gives an example of this that certainly undermines our confidence in him as an expositor of Scripture. He writes:—

"The ordinary interpretation of the Parable of the Good Samaritan, with its lesson of neighbourly concern and loving service for the wreckage of society, was too prosaic and humdrum; the presence of a Levite and a Priest passing coldly by on the other side, was too great a temptation for Evangelicals to miss; they must make the Parable say that Sacerdotalism cannot save, and that the Good Samaritan typifies the Saviour, who can. Sound truths these—but not taught and not implied in the Parable." (p. 296).

To drag this in, which is irrelevant for the purpose of the book, makes it look like an ill-natured attack on brethren, who believe that Scripture does not warrant any man taking the title reverend, and receiving an ordination, that is of men, and not of God. Is there not a touch of scorn when **he** writes of "a thousand laymen?" (p. 269). There never was a more beautiful and obvious teaching of the things that Mr.

Reese tells us were not taught in this parable. That he fails to see it, we cannot help, but to our mind, and in that of thousands of God's gifted servants, the parable sets forth most beautifully

THE GREAT NEIGHBOUR,

who was called a Samaritan in derision by His enemies—the Great Neighbour, who come where we were in our sins, and expiated our sins in His atoning death on the Cross of Calvary.

It is no pleasure to have to review adversely the teaching of any servant of Christ. It is, with us, a question of the truth. "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth" (2 Corinthians xiii. 8). May the truth prevail in the minds of each one, who reads this presentation of the cheering truth that the Church will not go through the Great Tribulation. We crave the Lord's blessing for each reader.

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