John Nelson Darby: Precious Truths Revived and Defended

Volume One

Revival of Truth

1826 - 1845

Second edition, augmented

An historical review including exposures of past and present calumnies employed in attempts to discredit these truths.

R. A. Huebner

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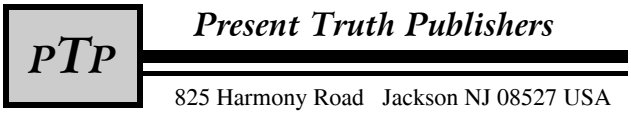

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The second acknowledgment is due Dr. David Brady, emeritus Curator of the Christian Brethren Archive located at the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, England. He has supplied me with numerous papers, including the *Fry MS* sometimes called "Newton's Memoirs." [1] Also, on occasion he has been able to supply me with an answer to a question on relevant history.

The unpublished notes, *Matthew 18:20*, by F. Gill, were of special importance by directing attention to several items critical to properly dating the earliest events we will consider in this book. Attention will be drawn to his observations at several points.

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* * * * *

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Henry M. Sibthorpe, for permission to use materials in the "Sibthorpe Collection," transferred in 2003 from an archive of Dr. W. Oweneel in Holland {where "These are on Loan"} to the Christian Brethren Archive of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, England. In a letter to me dated Sept. 3, 1985, Henry M. Sibthorpe wrote:

> The Collection of letters and personal papers as well as his {J. N. Darby's} Bible and the Griesbach New Testament was passed in the Will of Major Humphry to my mother's father, Mr. William H. Sarra of Reduth. These are in my possession willed to me by my Mother who received them on the death of my Grandfather.

---

1. The *Fry MS* refers to handwritten notes which had been in the possession of C. E. Fry. His father compiled them from written material by F. W. Wyatt who had written down reminiscences of B. W. Newton in his old age. (B. R. Wilson, ed., *Patterns of Sectarianism*, London: Heinemann, p. 214). The source herein designated as the *Fry MS* comprises 444 handwritten sheets.

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Preface

Material in braces { } has been added by myself.

The Purpose of this Book

The present volume you are reading (vol. 1 of 3) is about the reviving of truth -- in particular, truth with which the name of J. N. Darby is inextricably and prominently attached; and thus much will, of course, be necessarily said about the servant through whom the Lord so worked. My objective in writing this book has not been to produce a thesis, though this book has a thesis; nor is this book a biography, thought it contains much biographical material. Rather, this book is an expression of appreciation of truth recovered to God's people, and brought into prominence in the 1800s; and at the same time it is a vindication of that truth and the Lord's servant through whom it was recovered from the stigmatizing calumnies brought against him in order to discredit these truths.

J. N. Darby has been the object of the most bitter calumny and animus. It is a disgusting, fleshly, and unholy polemic to blacken a man personally so that people will not listen to him. Thus, the integrity of J. N. Darby has long been under attack regarding his statements -- in this case, about his having been taught of God, directly from His Word. It was his principle not to defend himself against personal attack, as often happened in his life. Such personal attack continues to this very day by some who dislike the teachings recovered to the saints through his instrumentality. In view of the increase in these personal attacks on him during the last 30 years, I deem it a great privilege to document the history of the revival of these truths and also to put to rest, for some readers at least, numerous calumnies regarding the servant of the Lord through whom these truths were revived.

The three volumes are divided into three parts. Volume 1 covers 1826-1845 which I have designated as the period of the basic recovery of truth -- though in reality this was accomplished by 1835, its foundation being understood in Dec. 1826 - Jan. (or Feb.) 1827. Volume 2 covers 1845-1850 and is occupied with the maintenance of the revived truth. Volume 3, 1850-1866, deals with the controversy on the sufferings of Christ and also notices some personalia concerning J. N. Darby, some of which has been placed in appendices in this present volume.

J. N. Darby

While this book is not a biography of J. N. Darby (JND) the reader might appreciate a few biographical notes at the beginning. W. G. Turner wrote:

> John Nelson Darby was born at Westminster, in his father's London house, on November 18, 1800. He was the youngest son of John Darby, of Markley, Sussex, and of Leap Castle, King's County, Ireland. His mother was of the Vaughan family, well known in Wales, whilst on his father's side he was of Norman extraction. His uncle, Admiral Sir Henry Darby, commanded the Bellerophon in the Battle of the Nile, and Lord Nelson, to the delight of the parents, was sponsor for their youngest son; hence the second Christian name given in compliment to England's naval hero. He received his early education at Westminster School; the years, however, spent by him at the famous school were very uneventful and give no promise of the future that lay before the lad . . .
>
> It was in boyhood that the greatest misfortune that can befall a child happened to him in his mother's death; [2] and the impression made upon him was very deep; so much so that, in spite of a stormy ecclesiastical career, the tender memory which he cherished in his heart of her sometimes found expression on unexpected occasions. When fifty years of age, he writes of her as follows; "I have long, I suppose, looked at the portrait of my mother, who watched over my tender years with that care which only a mother knows how to bestow. I can just form some imperfect thought of her looks, for I was early bereft of her; [3] but her eye fixed upon me that tender love which had me for its heart's object -- which could win when I could know little else -- which had my confidence before I knew what confidence was -- by which I learnt to love, because I felt I was loved, was the object of that love which had its joy in serving me -- which I took for granted must be; for I had never known ought else. All that which I had learnt, but which was treasured in my heart and formed part of my nature, was linked with the features which hung before my gaze. That was my mother's picture. I recalled her, no longer sensibly present, to my heart."
>
> After leaving school young Darby, at the age of fifteen, matriculated at Trinity College, Dublin, and thus visited for the first time the land and people with which his family had been closely identified from before the Reformation. Here he made rapid strides, becoming Classical Gold Medalist on the shorter time of a Fellow-Commoner for his degree in his nineteenth year. [4] He first entered the legal profession and was called to the Irish Bar; but being converted to God, he from conscientious motives abandoned it. This was a great disappointment to many, to none more than to his brother-in-law, the Lord, Chief Justice of Ireland (then Sergeant Pennefather), [5] who hoped not only for his rise to the highest honors in the profession, but that his penetrating and generalizing genius would have done much to reduce the legal chaos to order.
>
> From the age of eighteen until he was twenty-five Mr.

---

2. See next footnote.
3. {His mother, Anne, died in 1847, according to a genealogical list quoted in Appendix 5. "Bereft of her" must refer to something other than her death.}
4. He also studied law. "He was admitted . . . to Lincoln's Inn in November 1819; to King's Inn, Dublin, during Hilary 1822; and to the Irish Bar in January 1822" (Grayson Carter, *Anglican Evangelical, Protestant Secessions from the Via Media*, c.1800-1850, p. 211).
5. {His name was Edward Pennefather, and he had married J. N. Darby's older sister, Susannah. "The Pennefathers lived at Temple Carig, Delgany, Co. Wicklow, and at 20 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin" *(ibid.*, p. 211, note 73 (2001). See also p. 232.}

Darby underwent much spiritual exercise. Speaking to the late Mr. William Kelly many years after on the subject of the possibility of real conversion before the peace of conversion, Mr. Darby said that for these seven years he practically lived in the 88th Psalm, his only ray of light being in the opening words, "O Lord God of my salvation." To very few is it given to be thus exercised in soul; but the depth and reality of this initial spiritual experience gave tone and stability to his life-long witness.

With the ardor of a consciously reconciled soul he now desired a sphere of life-work wherein to serve God. With this object the sought admission to holy orders, and was ordained deacon by Archbishop Magee in 1825. He was appointed to the curacy of a large and straggling parish in County Wicklow, and having now a congenial sphere of labor and scope for his energies, he threw himself heartily into all its varied duties. He was earnest and diligent in his ministrations, strict in his personal walk and churchmanship, endeared to the poor by his devotedness, and exercised a generally beneficial influence over the whole locality, where he spent his patrimony in schools and charity.

Mr. Darby would no doubt have settled here amongst the Wicklow mountains quite contentedly, but God was fashioning him for a wide sphere of greater usefulness, to be entered upon in His own good times. Meanwhile a year had swiftly rolled by and Mr. Darby went up to the city to receive the priest's orders at the hands of the Archbishop, which should quality him to perform all the duties of his office.

His mind on the very day of his ordination was disturbed as to his position in the Established Church, but he returned to his parish and became specially active in the Home Mission of that day, which was greatly blessed in the conversion of Roman Catholics (at one time five hundred in a week) all over Ireland.

In the discharge of his duties he met with an accident, injuring his foot, and had to go to Dublin for care and treatment; there he made some friends, of whom we shall hear later. Upon returning to his parish, he found to his sorrow and surprise that the Home Mission work had been brought practically to a standstill by a Pastoral letter of Archbishop Magee, requiring the converts to take an oath of allegiance to the King. The converts were just the persons who least needed such a guarantee of their loyalty, and on inquiring Romanists it had the most repellent effect, for it seemed to them a question between the Pope and the King, and not of Christ at all. Mr. Darby could not stand this, and vigorously protested against it. But Erastianism prevailed, and the qualms and increasingly serious doubts which had perturbed him before, now clamored for a decision. He would not disobey his diocesan, but he believed it a dishonor to Christ's ministry and Church to create a religious police for currying favor with the Government. He had already for conscience sake relinquished one lucrative profession, and now abandoned another position of influence and dignity, as being, to him at any rate, untenable because unscriptural, and derogatory to the glory of Christ. [6]

This brings us a little beyond 1826, near the end of which he suffered a leg injury that laid him aside in isolation during Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827. What he learned from the Word of God during this period will occupy us in some detail subsequently. It led to his withdrawal from the Church of England in mid-1827 and to the commencement of the breaking of bread near the end of 1827. Concerning this, W. Kelly wrote:

Some six and thirty or more years ago, a few Christians were led to feel much the worldly, and abnormal state of Christendom. One of them was of Romanist parentage, the others were Anglicans. They prayed, they mourned over the low condition of themselves and their brethren at large, they searched the Word of God. They knew it was evil to worship God unscripturally; they saw it was right to meet and break bread, as disciples of the Lord and in dependence on the Holy Ghost. Pretending to nothing of their own, in conscious feebleness, but most happy in the discovery of their liberty in Christ to remember Him and build up each other, they welcomed in His name every saint, joining with them in any service where it could be with a good conscience, but refusing to own whatever they believed to be contrary to Scripture. On one ex-clergyman (who above the rest realized the ruin of the Christian profession, and was led out into much prayer, fasting, and humiliation about it before God,) special honor was put of the Lord; for He was pleased through him to revive, from the Scriptures, the mystery of Christ and the Church, the true character of our hope in the Lord's coming, the personal presence and operations of the Holy Ghost in the Church and the Christian, with a vast body of corollaries dependant on those grand truths, which re-acted on the gospel itself and set the salvation of God in a far clearer light.

Thus much I may say the more freely, inasmuch as I had not the honor of being a pioneer in the holy testimony of that early hour. [7]

Notice that W. Kelly named a number of lines of truth that were revived through the instrumentality of JND. These truths had been lost to the church and are not really found in the writings of the so-called "apostolic fathers" (though found in the Word of God), so quickly did departure take place from apostolic times. These revived truths have had a great impact in Christendom, parts of these revived truths being found today in numerous denominations.

In a letter by W. Kelly dated Feb. 22, 1901, we find his estimate of JND:

The late Mr. Darby was a highly educated as he was extremely able man, of rare attainments in almost all branches of knowledge, of pre-eminent logical power, of moral and metaphysical analysts hard to match, to say nothing of his linguistic skill ancient and modern. He was educated at one of the greatest (not the most fashionable) of English Public Schools. This was just what he doubted to be "well directed," as I know from himself, though I cannot say whether or not he included Trinity College, Dublin. If so, he would on the same ground so judge of Cambridge and Oxford, and would have spurned London University (long after his day). He felt that public schools trained lads for the world with little or no fear of God. Whether he meant more I am unable to say. But what characterized our honored brother as a saint and servant was a deeper insight

6. *John Nelson Darby*, pp. 14-17, sec. ed., 1926.

7. *God's Principle of Unity*, p. 19.

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into God's mind in Scripture than any other I ever knew or heard of in any age since the apostles, approached: such was his spiritual power of bringing in Christ to decide questions great or small. None of his works are or were popular. His greatest single work is the *Synopsis*; his ablest critique the examining of {B. W.} Newton's *Thoughts on the Apocalypse* (Prophetic 3), and his chef d'oeuvre (in his own judgment) a pamphlet -- *The Righteousness of God* with 1 Pet. 2:24 in reply to Bonar. He is occasionally grand, here and there, but often obscure; and so entirely above ordinary readers as to be with difficulty understood. One cannot therefore say much of his style. As he said to me, Kelly, you write: I only think on paper. I am a miner, and bring the precious ore to surface, which others coin. He was unaffectedly original, but rather disdained literary polish.

The State of the Church When the Reviving of Truth Began

Concerning the state of the church at the time of the reviving of these precious truths, W. Kelly wrote:

> Evangelical men were at a manifestly low ebb, even the most devoted of them betraying their ignorance of church or even Christian privilege by periodical gatherings for prayer that the Holy Spirit might be once more shed on souls, and meanwhile eagerly forming societies to do thus anomalously the work which was the common responsibility of God's church. There was no real faith in the presence of the Spirit, no looking for His free action in the assembly, no expression of the one body of Christ, nor even sense of the church's ruin-state, any more than really waiting for God's Son from heaven. There was not even the consciousness of the true deliverance and heavenly associations of the Christian. The evangelical revival, whether of Wesley or of Whitfield, or outside the borders of either, was a pious reaction, which insisted on the new birth and earnestness on behalf of perishing souls, from the cold ethics and formality, if not deism, of the century before. But the calling and the inheritance of saints, the purposes of God for the glory of God in Christ, never fully dawned on evangelical hearts, any more than on Puritans, or even the Reformers that preceded. It is needless to say that it would be vain to look for aught better, or as good, in the middle ages, or among the Fathers. Even redemption in any adequate conception of it had quickly faded away, before men had to contend for the truth of Christ's person or the Holy Ghost. Nobody doubts that grace saved all through; but for more than a dozen centuries where is there a single sentence which proclaims salvation as the apostles once taught and all saints enjoyed?
>
> In such circumstances as these who can wonder that the privileges, either of the individual Christian or of Christ's body the church, were unknown? Hard and narrow Calvinism since the sixteenth century maintained a measure of solid footing for the saint sorely tried under law. Active, warm-hearted Arminianism, when it did not lapse into Arianism, went out in zeal personally, and in service of others, but with a minimum of truth, without which one could hardly be saved. Man and the world were unjudged. The assembly of God united to Christ, and the scene of the Spirit's free activity according to the word as a present thing, and even Christian standing, were ignored, the future glories of Christ, as well as the actual bearing of His exaltation, being not at all understood.
>
> The horrors of infidelity, both in its multitudinous excesses and in its rising to a head of despotic self-will, made the Bible, then going forth in active circulation beyond example, dearer to the children of God, whose consciences began to be searched as to their state and ways by the coming of the Lord, which now became more distinctly, practically, and urgently pressed. The family likeness on a small scale, first to the apostasy, next to the man of sin and son of perdition, could not but arouse thoughtful souls to the still more awful evils disclosed in 2 Thess. 2 which are to call down the Lord's personal judgment at His appearing. Hence was felt increasingly the imperious call to be ready for the Lord when He comes for His own, that they may go in with Him to the marriage feast. Resting on Him and His redemption, they had the oil in their vessels. But had they not departed from the original call to quit "the camp," to love not the world nor the things that are in the world? Had they not, in ceasing to go out to meet the Bridegroom, turned in here or there to slumber or sleep? Had they not, on the one hand, failed to resist evil in the church, and, on the other, adopted ways of their own to escape what was gross, with little heed to Christ's will and glory? If He was coming as they hoped, they knew not how soon, it behoved them to be found honoring the word and Spirit of God. They could not but feel that the church was fallen and broken irremediably as a whole: the great eastern and western bodies swamped by idolatry and plain evils, both doctrinal and practical: the lesser Protestant systems, either enslaved to the state, or settled on their differences without a thought of unity, save invisibly or in heaven.
>
> The ruin was complete; but had faith no resource? Was there no provision for the faithful in a state so sinful and hopelessly awry? Had the blessed Lord not foreseen and revealed His will in view of it? They must cease to do evil if they would learn to do well. Obedience is the saving principle that never fails in Old Testament or New, for Jew or Christian. The word made it clear that, whatever the wreck of outward manifestation, there is one body and one Spirit, even as there is one hope of our calling. These abide unchangeably for such as believe. Were the saints content to fall back on the imperishable blessings of the church, clearing themselves from all compromise of the truth, and owning the fidelity of the Lord to His own word? The Spirit, beyond doubt, was sent down to abide in and with the saints for ever. He will be poured out afresh on all flesh for the kingdom by and by; but He had not forsaken, and never can, the church, any more than the cloud of divine presence left Israel, yea disobedient and guilty Israel, all the wilderness through. [8]

JND, Truth, and the "Brethren"

The truth revived by JND in the 19th century is commonly connected with the "Brethren." Who, or what are they? Well, Andrew Miller wrote a book, "*The Brethren": (commonly so-called). A Brief Sketch of Their Origin, Progress and*

8. *The Bible Treasury* 17:205.

Testimony. [9] He said there were some objections to the title "The Brethren," and my copy has the following insert:

NOTE

> Some have raised objections to the title "The Brethren," as giving the idea of a sect; others as arrogating to a particular community that which is equally true of all Christians. Such thoughts never occurred to me while writing the book, and were not suggested by those to whom I spoke of it. Expressions such as "the writings of Brethren," "the meetings of Brethren," &c., are in common use among themselves; which simply mean a convenient designation, and one which cannot be misunderstood. In no other sense is it used here. To be obliged to make use of a *description* instead of a *name* would greatly encumber the style and embarrass the writer. A. M.

In a letter, dated Nov. 1879, J. N. Darby wrote:

> As to the danger of slipping into sectarianism, that is, making ourselves a body apart, I recognize it fully; but it has through mercy received a rude shock. The printed list of meetings tended to it, for evil slips in unintentionally, and for this reason I never would have anything to say to it, though very convenient, and done with this view. M.'s book, which I never heard of till three days ago, strange to say, had from what I hear of it (I have never seen it) the same tendency; but human nature is always disposed to say "we" if it cannot say "I." "He followeth not with us." While in separation from the camp, I am as decided as possible. But I never in my life asked any one to come among brethren. [10]

Adalbert P. Cecil, a lord in England, gave up social position to follow Christ in His rejection. He had this to say, in view of the indicators of the coming first major division among the so-called "exclusives" and the publication of Andrew Miller's book:

Date about 1879 or 1880.

> BRETHREN,
>
> Suffer a word of exhortation! The Lord has a controversy with us! At the very moment when we are calling ourselves "The Brethren," and speaking of our origin, progress, and testimony, the Lord is shaking us to our very center. I am afraid many of us have no higher thought, corporately, than that we belong to the Brethren, who began fifty years ago, and when we compare such a thought with Scripture we cannot find it, except as 1 Cor. 1. shows it to be, a wretched sectarian thought -- human wisdom which needs to be judged by the cross. In our conversation together we talk lightly of the sectarian name, Plymouth Brethren, put upon us, and soon, I am afraid, we shall go further and accept it, as a matter of little consequence -- it is only a name! Suffice it to say that 1 Cor. 1. utterly condemns it; it strikes at the root of the fundamentals of Christianity, and is a copy of the human wisdom of the Greek philosophers (see chaps. 1 and 2 of 1st Corinthians). It strikes at the root of the true nature of the Church as shown forth in chap. 3. Of God we are in Christ Jesus, who of Him is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30). We do not belong to a teacher or a company of teachers, however blessed, but we belong to the Temple of God, and the Holy Spirit of God dwells in it. We are not "The Brethren" (called Plymouth Brethren by sectarians and the world in reproach) who had their origin fifty years ago; but we are "Brethren" amongst the many brethren of God's large family which existed before; who, by God's grace have been delivered from the Church's Babylonish captivity of many years, and have returned to the original ground, seated in heavenly places in Christ, to confess the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as the source of unity, the God and Father of the whole family of God scattered or gathered (Eph. 1:1-18); to confess Christ as the Head of His Body (Eph. 1:19-23; 2:1-18); and to confess the Holy Ghost as the Builder and Inhabitant of the house of God (Eph. 2:19-22). Our origin is not of teachers, however blessed and owned of God, who were used mightily of Him fifty years ago to revive truths long buried amidst the rubbish of the professing Church, but of the God who called Peter, Andrew, and John by his sovereign grace (John 1); who delivered Christ up to death for our offenses, and raised Him for our justification (Rom. 4:25); and who afterwards called Saul of Tarsus from the glory, delivered him out of the Jewish and Gentile world which had rejected Christ, and sent him forth from the glory as one united to Christ, to bear witness of His glory and of the union of the saints with Him as His body and bride. Our position is not in a body that had its origin fifty years ago, but in the Christ who, after telling Mary the new relationship formed in the words, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (John 20:17-20), came into the midst of His assembled brethren, and breathed the peace upon them which He had made for them when He died on the cross, and of which He gave a proof to them in His wounded hands and side. We are in the Christ who breathed peace the second time upon them, as the Son sent from the Father, breathing into them His own life of resurrection, thus connecting them with Himself as the risen Head of the new creation. We are in the Christ who, after this, ascended up on High as man, and sent down the Holy Ghost, as the promise of the Father, to dwell in them. So that now the new fully-established family of God could each, individually and mutually, cry, "Abba, Father!" (John 20:19-22; Acts 1:4).
>
> At the same time the Holy Ghost baptized them all into one body, and builded them together to be His habitation on earth. Such is our origin, such is our position! To this family, and to this body, and to this house alone do we belong, and to this we are called to bear testimony, as well as to the One who is the God and Father of it. Oh, noble origin! oh, high descent! Brethren, forget it not; let no man take your crown!
>
> The progress of the Church of God I trust you know well, I need not dwell on it. It spread wonderfully, but, alas! as it spread it declined. Zealous about putting away evil, alas! it left its first love, and the candlestick was threatened to be removed. The evil, stayed for awhile by persecution, broke out afresh in the Church getting joined to the world, by the hired leaders of Christendom. An evil system then sprang up in the very midst of the House of God, teaching idolatry -- Babylonish captivity spread over the Church. The truth of the real unity of the body of Christ, and the coming of the Lord, was lost, and all was midnight darkness. The cry of the Reformation sounded and there was a partial coming out, but again lapsing into a

9. London: G. Morrish, no date. Notice of its publication is found in the Sept. 1879 issue of *The Bible Treasury* 12:304.
10. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:49.

name to live and moral death reigning over the profession. Then the Holy and True One's voice was heard, and a remnant of the sheep followed, and returned to Christ alone. But, brethren, remember, it was a remnant coming back, and not the whole. We are "brethren," a returned remnant come back to Christ, but not "the brethren," much less "Plymouth Brethren," as a new body. Such has been the sad history of "the brethren" and of the House of God. And remember that there is a sad future before the House of God. Laodicean lukewarmness is to follow, and to run on parallel with Philadelphian true-heartedness to Christ till He comes. What is the great distinguishing mark between the two circles? It is thus with Philadelphians; Christ is all, and His Word; with Laodiceans, "the brethren" are all, as they say, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." There is such a thing as an ugly corporate I, which needs judging by 1 Cor. 1, as well as the individual I, the old man of Romans.

Oh, then, let your testimony be simply Christ and His Word, leaving nothing out, not neglecting Peter's testimony about the rejected Jesus, now exalted, and going to sit on David's throne, made Lord and Christ, in the meantime, giving salvation and remission of sins (see Acts 2:30-38; 4:10-12; 5:30-32); and this establishing the kingdom of heaven in its present shape; holding fast Paul's testimony, as blessedly many of you do, proclaiming an opened heaven, the Second Man seated there, righteousness and the Spirit ministered from thence, and the Holy Ghost come down uniting believers to Christ in heaven, and to one another on earth, with the blessed hope of the return of the Son of God from heaven, the Bridegroom of His Church, to introduce her into the Father's house before the judgments, and then to return with Him to reign over the restored earth. Brethren, let us not talk of our testimony, but proclaim it as the testimony of God, and we shall continue to have the Holy and the True One's smile. The love of the brethren, Philadelphia, will really reign in our midst, and towards all the scattered brethren; we shall continue to get the open door which no man can shut . . . Philadelphia will cease to exist on the earth when the Lord Jesus Christ returns (see Rev. 3:10). Oh! hold fast the name of Christ; don't let a false, presumptuous name be put upon you. The beautiful name of Christ the Holy One and True is sufficient, who is not ashamed to call us "His brethren" -- but, remember! amongst many other scattered ones, as much "brethren" as ourselves, though not manifesting it together. Again I say, suffer the word of exhortation, and may the faithful God lift up the light of His countenance who hath called us unto the fellowship of His Son. Such is our origin, which, if we are a true witness, we shall bear witness to; such has been the progress of the Church to which we belong, and such is its testimony. But we are only 'brethren' (amongst many others who are scattered) who have returned to Christ, and bear with the whole, and that will bring every brother, scattered or gathered, "the brethren," to glory. [11]

11. Cited in *Fellowship*, 1927, pp. 244-247, edited by R. Elliot.

The Revival of Truth

1826 - 1845

The leader of the pilgrims sailing on the Mayflower to the "new world" said, in a farewell speech:

> If God reveal anything to you by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it as ever you were ready to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am verily persuaded, the Lord has yet more truth to break forth out of His holy word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion and will go at present no further than the instruments of the reformation. . . . The Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented, for though they were burning and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God, but were they now living, would be as willing to embrace further light as that which they first received. I beseech you remember, it is an article of your church covenant, that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written word of God. . . . [12]

Part 1 (Volume 1) covers the era of recovery of truth selected as the years from 1826 to 1845. This is an arbitrary convenience on my part for division of the subject matter into several volumes. 1844-1845 marked the time J. N. Darby began to respond to some who were actively undermining the recovered truth while remaining in fellowship with him. Moreover, the basic foundation of the revival of truth was learned by him in solitude during Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 when laid aside due to an injury, as we shall see in Sections 1 and 2. If J. N. Darby was specifying the general era of recovery, he would have preferred the dates 1826-1835; for, writing in his notebooks on Oct. 18, 1865, he wrote:

> I have been very profoundly moved in seeing, on reading over old tracts (some quite forgotten), for the desired publication, all the principles, on which the fate of the world and the church now turns, brought out thirty to thirty-nine years ago. God was in it in a way I did not know, though I felt it personally to be God's truth. But, what a solemn thing! but then it has made me feel the responsibility of bringing it all out, systematically, before the professing church; before it only came out occasionally as particular truths pressed. But the main point is the truth itself then coming out; what progress in disruption has been made since! [13]

12. Quoted by Daniel Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Portsmouth, N. H., 1817, vol. 2, p. 146.
13. *Notes and Comments* 1:1.

Section 1

The "First Germing" of the Revived Truth in the Soul of J. N. Darby

Section 1 considers the occasion when exercises in J. N. Darby's soul prepared him for the time when God laid him aside from active service for several months. In a period of quiet convalescence his soul apprehended truths that had been lost to the church.

What was Troubling J. N. Darby in 1826/1827?

Introduction

At the age of fifteen J. N. Darby went to Trinity College, Dublin and obtained his degree at nineteen. He was about 20 or 21 years of age when he was "converted," i.e., quickened, but had not experienced the deliverance spoken of in Rom. 7. JND referred to this period in his life several times:

> In my own case, I went through deep exercise of soul before there was a trace of peace, and it was not until after six or seven years that I was delivered. [14]

> When I came to understand that I was united to Christ in Heaven {during a period of convalescence from an injury -- Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827}, and that consequently, my place before God was represented by His own, I was forced to the conclusion that it was no longer a question with God of this wretched "I" which had wearied me during six or seven years, in presence of the requirements of the law. [15]

He had gone through a severe trial of soul with his conscience under law. This means that his soul was seeking acceptance with God upon the basis of performance rather than resting fully upon the Person and work of Christ for the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, i.e., the knowledge of being in the forgiven position. He wrote:

> . . . I fasted in Lent so as to be weak in body at the end of it; ate no meat on weekdays -- nothing till evening on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, then a little bread or nothing; observed strictly the weekly fasts, too. I went to my clergyman always if I wished to take the sacrament, that he might judge of the matter. I held apostolic succession fully, and the channels of grace to be there only. I held thus Luther and Calvin and their followers to be outside. I was not their judge, but I left them to the uncovenanted mercies of God. I searched with earnest diligence into the evidences of apostolic succession in England, and just saved the validity for myself and my conscience. The union of church and state I held to be Babylonish, that the church ought to govern itself, and that she was in bondage but was the church.
>
> I would guard this part of what I say. I still think fasting

14. *Letters* 2:310. So also *Notes and Jottings*, p. 304. We will see later that his "deliverance" occurred during the period of convalescence from an injury, Dec. 1826 - Jan. (or Feb.) Some say the convalescence period was Dec.1827- Jan. (Or Feb.) 1828. However, if JND was quickened in June or July 1820, seven years would bring us to mid-1827, not to a convalescent period of Dec. 1827 - Jan. 1828.

If JND was quickened in June or July 1821, six years would bring us to July 1827, and that is still half way between the two proposed epochs of his convalescence.

If JND was quickened in June or July 1821, seven years would bring us a half year beyond the Dec. 1827 - Jan. 1828 epoch.

If JND was quickened in June or July 1821, there was an interval of six years and six, or seven, or eight months, to get to the Dec. 1827 - Jan. (Or Feb.) 1828 dates for the convalescence period.

Since that conclusion rests on an assumptions, kindly allow me to make an assumption: he was quickened in June or July 1820 and there was an interval of six years and six, or seven, months between then and his deliverance. That brings us to Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 as the time of his deliverance.

Of course, I expect that the reader will say that nothing is *proved* by this concerning the validity of either a Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 or a Dec. 1827 - Jan. 1828 convalescent period. Yes, that is exactly my point.

15. *Letters* 3:298; See also *Letters* 2:232; *Notes and Jottings*, p. 304; *Collected Writings* 1:36

> a useful thing in its place, if spiritually used. [16]

He remarked:

> The principle of which you speak . . . is *monasticism*, where that is sincere. I gave way to it at the beginning of my conversion. I said to myself, If I fast two days, three would be better, seven better still. Then that would not do to go on, but I pursued the system long enough. It led to nothing, except the discovery of one's own powerlessness. I took Romans 6, and wondered at it, but I understood nothing of it. One cannot put the flesh to death, except by killing oneself. It is as dead and risen with Christ that we mortify our *members* (the apostle will not allow that we live in these things) which are upon the earth; and, in order to do it, we must have not only life, but deliverance by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit dwelling in us -- we must be set free. "If ye then be risen . . . mortify therefore," etc. (Col. 3). [17]

His exercise of soul led him away from the practice of law into the clergy.

> I was a lawyer; but feeling that, if the Son of God gave Himself for me I owed myself entirely to Him, and that the so-called christian world was characterized by deep ingratitude towards Him, I longed for complete devotedness to the work of the Lord; my chief thought was to get round amongst the poor Catholics of Ireland. I was induced to be ordained. I did not feel drawn to take up a regular post, but, being young in the faith and not yet knowing deliverance, I was governed by the feeling of duty towards Christ, rather than by the consciousness that *He* had done *all* and that I was redeemed and saved; consequently it was easy to follow the advice of those who were more advanced than myself in the christian world.
>
> As soon as I was ordained, I went amongst the poor Irish mountaineers, in a wild and uncultivated district, where I remained two years and three months, working as best I could. [18]

This brings us to the era which we shall examine.

His Work Among the Irish Mountaineers

Before Dec. 1826 J. N. Darby (JND) had not found deliverance (Rom. 7:24). He had been working among poor mountaineers in Ireland at that time and said:

> . . . but going from cabin to cabin to speak of Christ, and with souls, these thoughts sprang up, and if I sought to quote a text to myself it seemed a shadow and not real. I ought never to have been there, but do not think that this was the cause, but simply that I was not set free according to Romans 8. [19]
>
> I preached nothing but Christ, and had not peace, and had no business to be in any public ministry. [20]

On Aug. 7, 1825 JND was ordained deacon [21] and on Feb. 19, 1826 he was ordained priest in the Anglican Church. Perhaps the following remarks apply particularly subsequently to this:

> I felt, however, that the style of work was not in agreement with what I read in the Bible concerning the Church and Christianity; nor did it correspond with the effect of the action of the Spirit of God. These considerations pressed upon me from a scriptural and practical point of view; while seeking assiduously to fulfil the duties of the ministry confided to me, working day and night amongst the people, who were almost as wild as the mountains they inhabited. [22]

The Archbishop's Charge

J. G. Bellett has told the story of the charge made by Archbishop Magee of the Church of Ireland to his clergy on Oct. 10, 1826:

> It was in the year 1827 {sic; 1826} [23] that the late Archbishop of Dublin, in a charge delivered to the clergy of his diocese, recommended that a petition should go up to the legislature seeking for increased protection for them in the discharge of their ministerial duties as the teachers of religion in these lands.
>
> John Darby was then a curate in the county Wicklow, and often did I visit in his mountain parish. This charge of his Diocesan greatly moved him; he could not understand the common Christianity of such a principle, as it assumed that the ministers in doing their business as witnesses against the world for a rejected Jesus should, on meeting the resistance of the enemy, turn round and seek security from the world. This greatly offended him. He printed his objections to such a principle in a pretty large pamphlet, and without publishing it or putting it on sale, sent copies of it to all the clergy in the diocese. All this had a very decided influence on his mind, for I remember him at one time as a very exact churchman, as I may speak, but it was evident that his mind had now received a shock, and it was never again what it had been; however, he continued in his mountain curacy, at times as a clergyman visiting distant parts of the county, either to preach sermons or to speak at some meeting of the religious societies. [24]

A prefatory note added to JND's paper, cited below, some 38 years later says:

> It was sent privately to the Archbishop and Clergy,

16. *Collected Writings* 18:156; see also 27:92 and *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:90.
17. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:429, 430.
18. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:297.
19. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:453, 454.
20. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:376.
21. Having been misled by J. H. Stokes, *The Contemporary Review*, "John Nelson Darby," 1885, p. 536, concerning the date, I have corrected this date from Feb. 1825 in accordance with T. C. F. Stunt's finding an ordination certificate in what has been called the "Sibthorpe Collection," dated Aug. 7, 1825.
22. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:297, 298.
23. J. G. Bellett's erroneous dates in *Interesting Reminiscences* will be discussed later.
24. *Interesting Reminiscences* . . ., pp. 2, 3.

> having been written some time before it was printed, and withheld, from anxiety as to the justness of the step; the course of the Archbishop and Clergy, with which I had from circumstances nothing personally to do, having greatly tried my spirit, and I was about twenty-six years old at the utmost, when it was written. I may mention that just at that time the Roman Catholics were becoming Protestants at the rate of 600 to 800 a week. The Archbishop (Magee) imposed, within the limits of his jurisdiction, the oaths of allegiance and supremacy; and the work everywhere instantly ceased. I remember Mr. R. Daly, since a prelate of the Establishment, saying to me after receiving it, You ought to become a Dissenter. I said, No; you have got into the wrong, and you want to put me there -- but that you will not do. I attach no importance to the paper, which I have never read since, but as the first germing of the truth which has since developed in the church of God. [25]

Regarding his reference to his age, note that he was born on Nov. 18, 1800 and so turned 26 on Nov. 18, 1826. In the next chapter we will find that in connection with an accident he experienced, he had a two month period of solitude in Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827, a period during which he was taught much from the Word of God. The paper responding to Dr. Magee's charge was printed in 1827, though "not published" [26] until after this period of solitude. It was on Oct. 10, 1826 that the charge was delivered and it is likely that in, say, Nov. 1826, JND wrote the reply. In the prefatory note to his reply he stated that it had "been written some time before it was printed" he having withheld it "from anxiety as to the justness of the step." It would not be surprising if what he learned in the period of solitude, which soon followed the delivery of Dr. Magee's charge, emboldened him to print it. In any case, it is probably correct that this paper reflects his understanding prior to that important period of solitude.

The First Germing of the Truth

Here then, in his own words, is some of what JND later called "**the first germing of the truth which has since developed in the church of God**" (see the end of the note cited above):

> We have the following public acts -- a Charge from the Metropolitan, stating the ground on which the Church stands, and then Petitions forwarded by the instrumentality of the hierarchy, seeking the exercise of civil authority for the protection of that Church as a body in this country. To these I beg attention. It is to be remarked that the Charge is stated to be published at the request of the Clergy, and the Petition is signed by a numerous body of them to say the least, and ostensibly is the act of them as a body interested in the cause of true religion in this country. As there are, thank God! many in the orders of the Church of Ireland who are zealous ministers of divine truth, and as they might seem included in the above general body, it is to them that I particularly address myself. I am not going to discuss the merits of the Archbishop's Charge at all. I purposely decline it. My business is with the principles contained and expounded in it. It amounts to a claim on behalf of the Established Church to protection from the civil Sovereign, founded on these two positions -- that the civil Sovereign is bound and has accordingly the right to choose the best religion for his people, and that the Established Church has every character on which such a choice ought to depend; but, in doing this, the Charge gives a statement of the foundation, nature, and office of the Church, in the principles of which no clergyman zealous in his office as a minister of the Church of Christ, could, I submit, acquiesce.
>
> What is the Church of Christ in its purpose and perfection? And our Lord has taught us to ascribe whatever is inconsistent with this to the hand of an enemy. It is a congregation of souls redeemed out of "this naughty world" by God manifest in the flesh, a people purified to Himself by Christ, purified in the heart by faith, knit together, by the bond of this common faith in Him, to Him their Head sitting at the right hand of the Father, having consequently their conversation (*commonwealth*) in heaven, from whence they look for the Savior, the Lord of glory; Phil. 3:20. As a body, therefore, they belong to heaven; *there* is their portion in the restitution of all things, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. On earth they are, as a people, necessarily subordinate; they are nothing and nobody; their King is in heaven, their interests and constitution heavenly. "My kingdom is not of this world: if it were, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." As such, consequently, they have no power. The result is that they are formed into a spiritual community; they are raised, by their Head and center and source of hope and object of allegiance being in heaven, to be heavenly. They are delivered in spirit out of this present evil world, and become heavenly, spiritual in their connections, interests, thoughts, and prospects; while their habits on earth are those, by necessary consequence, of pilgrims and strangers, adorning (by consistent humility, gentleness, patience, and kindness) the grace of which they have been made partakers, through faith which works by love, while they avow and are in their own persons witnesses of the divine dominion. Their personal and common delights are correspondent, and their activities flow from this spring and have their motive and their order in the interests of this kingdom of divine love and grace. [27]

This will give the reader some idea of the character of this germing of truth in his soul. It does not follow from his thoughts concerning state protection that he thought of joining the non-conformists ("dissenters") to the state-supported Church of England. That he also rejected, as we can see from his reply to R. Daly in a citation above.

We shall now turn to the period of solitude (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827). The Lord had graciously exercised him through Dr. Magee's charge and then in His gracious ways set him in solitude for about two months in order that he might undistractedly advance in the teachings of Scripture.

25. *Collected Writings* 1:1. Cp. 20:288.
26. *Collected Writings* 1:1.
27. *Collected Writings* 1:4-6.

Section 2

Learning from God in Solitude

J. N. Darby's Accident and Convalescence (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827)

Section two surveys the spiritual gains that J. N. Darby experienced as the result of his spiritual exercises and study of the Word of God while being laid aside from active service during Dec. 1826 and Jan. 1827, and perhaps into Feb. also. In that period he understood that there would be a change of dispensation after the church; and he learned his place in Christ as one of God's heavenly people. Coupled with this he saw that he should wait for Christ as an immediate expectation, i.e, that Christ might come at any time.

His State as Quickened but Before Deliverance

It seems that it was in mid-1820 that he was born anew, i.e., quickened. Concerning holding orthodox doctrine before he had come to understand the heavenly truth, he wrote:

> As regards the gospel, I had no difficulty as to its received dogmas. The three persons in one God, the divinity {deity} of Jesus, His work of atonement on the cross, His resurrection, His session at the right hand of God, were truths which, understood as orthodox doctrines, had long been a living reality in my soul. [28]

But while that was so, he was not delivered from the law of sin and death working in his conscience, and he engaged in ascetic practices, etc., with belief in apostolic succession as a channel of grace, found in the Church of England, etc. [29]

But in his remarks upon what he saw during the convalescence period, he spoke more about what is involved in union with Christ, including the Lord's coming for him without any intervening events, and dispensational truth. While an ascetic and viewing apostolic succession as the channel of grace in the Church of England, he did not see such things; namely, what constitutes the true foundation of the church/Israel distinction,. In this period (1820-1826) his practical relationship with God was that his conscience was under the law as described in Rom. 7:7-24. Keeping in mind that we are considering the state of the conscience in one's relationship to God, that is a state in which a person is under the law of sin and death (Rom. 7:23; 8:2), not the one described in Rom. 8:2 as set free from that law. Such a state shows that one is not in the liberty spoken of in 2 Cor. 3:17, 18. The returning prodigal son illustrates such a state from the time he came to himself and arose to go to his father until the father fell on his neck and covered him with kisses and brought him into the house. While the son was on the journey he had the spirit of a hired servant and was not in the liberty of sonship. Such was the character of the asceticism in which JND engaged. It was "I" and not "Christ." Listen to what he said about it:

> When I came to understand that I was united to Christ in heaven, and that, consequently, my place before God was represented by His own, I was forced to the conclusion that it was no longer a question with God of this wretched "I" which had wearied me during six or seven years, in presence of the requirements of the law. [30]

Read Rom. 7:7-24 and count how many times "I" is used! Asceticism (and I am speaking of the practice of souls who in conscience are under the law and working on "I" to be acceptable to God) and grace, stand in mutual opposition.

JND's life-style subsequent to this ascetic period might appear on the surface, to some of his opposers, to have been asceticism, but he practiced a very simple, self-denying life to please his Lord and to freely gain access to 'lowly' persons. He lived simply, and it would be well if his critics did likewise instead of looking for fault in this.

28. *Letters* 3:298-299.
29. *Collected Writings* 18:156.
30. *Letters* 3:298.

The Ascendency of the Word of God

Less than two months after Dr. Magee delivered his charge to his clergy on Oct. 10, 1826, God laid JND aside through an accident and moved him to read, among whatever else, the book of Acts, Isaiah 32 and other Scriptures.

> As soon as I was ordained, I went among the poor Irish mountainers . . . where I remained two years and three months . . .
>
> An accident happened which laid me aside for a time; my horse was frightened and had thrown me against a door-post. During my solitude, conflicting thoughts increased; but much exercise of soul had the effect of causing the scriptures to gain complete ascendancy over me. I had always owned them to be the word of God. [31]

I take it that his words "laid me aside for a time" refers to a time during the period of two years and three months; namely Dec. 1826 - Jan. (or Feb.) 1827. The ellipsis placed in the quotation of the letter helps to make that clear. That the accident occurred during that period of 27 months is the natural reading of this matter. He was laid aside for a time during that 27 month period of service.

A long time ago, F. Gill pointed out that there is evidence that this accident occurred during Dec. 1826. [32] He called attention to the fact that J. G. Bellett wrote a letter (to his brother George) dated Jan. 31, 1827 in which he said:

> I hope on Friday to see John Darby. You will be grieved to hear that he has been laid up for nearly two months from a hurt in his knee. His poor people at Calary miss him sadly. [33]

The reference to the "poor people at Calary miss him sadly" also points to the fact that the accident happened *during* the two years and three months period when he went among the poor Irish mountaineers, and not after he had left that ministry. [34]

The period of convalescence (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827) was the time of great accession of truth to the soul of JND.

He Saw the Truths of Deliverance and Union

In the period of convalescence found deliverance (Rom. 7:24). He had been *quickened* before this period (thus having had the "inner man," Rom 7:22) but he could not say that he had no more conscience of sins (Heb. 10:22) as affecting his standing before God. He had neither peace in believing (Rom. 15:13) nor Christian liberty (2 Cor. 3:17, 18). He was captive to the law of sin (Rom. 7:23). Having been for many years in the state described in Rom. 7:7-24, he now learned Christ as the Deliverer (Rom. 7:24) from this standing and state and was set free by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2). [35] Thus, he was brought into the standing and state of Rom. 8, though the flesh remains (Rom. 7:25) incorrigible as ever (Rom. 8:7). This *deliverance* had a profound effect upon him. Some 50 years later he wrote:

> You must be aware that the teaching that Romans 7 is not the Christian state, but that chapter 8 is, has been taught, as I have myself earnestly insisted on it now near fifty years, only I trust with increasing clearness. [36]

As a result, the character of his preaching changed.

> When I came to understand that I was united to Christ in heaven, and that, consequently, my place before God was represented by His own, I was forced to the conclusion that it was no longer a question with God of this wretched "I" which had wearied me during six or seven years, in presence of the requirements of the law. It then became clear to me that the church of God, as He considers it, was composed only of those who were so united to Christ, whereas Christendom, as seen externally, was really the world, and could not be considered as "the church," save as regards the responsibility attaching to the position which it professed to occupy -- a very important thing in its place. At the same time, I saw that the Christian, having his place in Christ in heaven, ***has nothing to wait for save the coming of the Saviour***, [37] in order to be set, in fact, in the glory which is already his portion "in Christ" . . .
>
> The practical difference in my preaching, when once I began to preach again, was as follows: When a parson, I had preached that sin had created a great gulf between us and God, and that Christ alone was able to bridge it over; now, I preached that He *had* already finished His work. The necessity of regeneration, which was always a part of my teaching, became connected more with Christ, the last Adam, and I understand better that it was a real life, entirely new, communicated by the power of the Holy Spirit; but, as I have said, more in connection with the person of Christ and the power of His resurrection, combining the power of a life victorious over death, with a new position for men before God. This is what I understand by 'deliverance.' [38]
>
> We began to meet in Dublin, Ireland, 1827-28. It was not

31. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:298.
32. *Matthew 18:20*, p. 109, note 10.
33. Dated and cited in *Recollections of J. G. Bellett*, p. 27.
34. If one views the time of convalescence as occurring *after* the two years and three months period, he will have to take it that the convalescence happened in Dec. 1827 - Jan. 1828, and shift the 1827 events depicted on the chart in Section 3 by one year. He will have to re-date the Jan. 31, 1827 letter by J. G. Bellett to Jan. 31, 1828, as well as adjust other things.
35. Rom. 7 and quickening, new birth, and deliverance is examined in detail in *From New Birth to New Creation*, available from the publisher. Lack of understanding JND's teaching on these subjects leads to wrong notions, or misunderstanding, concerning the quickening in 1820 and the deliverance in the Dec. 1827 - Jan. 1827 epoch. This may be seen in Ronald M. Henzel, *Darby, Dualism and the Decline of Dispensationalism*, Tuscon, Fenestra, p. 73, 2003. However, he does point to what he calls JND's "dualism" (the heavenly/earthly -- church/Israel -- distinction is at the base of JND's teachings). I do not think that he perceived that the initial step was that JND saw that **Christ's place was his place** and that this is the starting point of what opened up to JND's understanding, including the "dualism" of which he speaks.
36. *Collected Writings* 23:212. See also *Letters* 3:147.
37. Emphasis added. This is an expectation of Christ with no intermediate events. Below, we will see that he understood that Christ would come for him before the opening of the events in Rev. 4-20.
38. *Letters* 3:298, 299. This letter to Prof. Tholuck was never sent. See N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:43.

> dissatisfaction with the apostolic succession of the English national episcopal body. I had found peace to my own soul by finding my oneness with Christ, that it was no longer myself as in the flesh before God, but that I was in Christ, accepted in the Beloved, and sitting in heavenly places in Him. This led me directly to the apprehension of what the true church of God was, those that were united to Christ in heaven: I at once felt that the parish was not that. The tract I then published [39] was no attack upon anybody, but upon the unity of the church of Christ. When I looked around to find this unity I found it nowhere: if I joined one set of Christians I did not belong to another. The church, God's church was broken up, and the members scattered among various self-formed bodies. I found membership in scripture was not membership of a voluntary association on earth, but membership of Christ, a hand, a foot, &c. . . . [40]

He also remarked:

> What set me free in 1827 is still the theme on which my soul dwells, with, I trust, much deeper sense of its importance . . . [41]

Somewhere he said that the Lord specially blessed his ministry on the matter of deliverance (Rom. 7).

He Saw That Christ's Place Was His Place

Because of its importance, his statement that during his convalescence JND saw that Christ's place was his place will be repeated again under this heading:

> When I came to understand that I was united to Christ in heaven, and that, consequently, my place before God was represented by His own . . . [42]

> . . . I was in Christ, accepted in the Beloved, and sitting in heavenly places in Him. This led me directly to the apprehension of what the true church of God was, those that were united to Christ in heaven . . . [43]

This mind-prostrating truth of God's grace displayed in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus was what came before the vision of his soul. Union with Christ in heaven means that Christ's place (as man) before our God and father, is our place before our God and Father. This is what it means to be "in Christ." Christ's place before the Father is the measure of my place. In Eph. 1:6 we read:

> . . . he has taken us into favour in the Beloved.

Yes, Christ's place is my place before the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We enter into this favor *in the Beloved*. Christ, the Beloved, has entered into a place, *as man*, before our God and Father consequent on finishing the work given Him to do, and being "raised up from among [the] dead by the glory of the Father" (Rom. 6:4), and entering that place. All that animated the Father morally ("the glory of the Father") was in action in raising Christ from among the dead. The place Christ entered, as man, before the Father is now our place -- "*in the Beloved*." He, the Beloved, is the measure of our place before our God and Father. It is one and the same place. It is a "spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). What is meant by "the heavenlies" is the special and exclusive sphere that saints in Christ now have above, and shall forever have, before our God and Father; and only of such can it be said: "made [us] sit down together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). That is the sphere of the special, distinguishing blessings that the Christian has, called in Eph. 1:3, "spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ." There are other spiritual blessings not of this *special class* which alone are *"in the heavenlies in Christ*." [44] So JND came to a great turning point when this was opened to his soul. Since this was true of him, he knew that it is true of all believers now. He saw that this was the position of those composing the true church.

And *that*, by the teaching of the Spirit, caused him to see the Christian's proper hope. He saw that he ought to be waiting for Christ, without any intervening events, to take him there above.

Of course, seeing that Christ's place before the Father was his place includes the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, i.e., that one is in a forgiven position before God, judicially speaking. It involves the truth of having died with Christ, and other truths. This JND touched on in his letter to Prof. Tholuck.

Let me emphasize that this heavenly truth is true of saints now. It certainly was not true of OT saints. It is distinctive, heavenly truth. It is true of those seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, which OT saints were not (if you believe otherwise, produce the Scripture that states so). Neither does Scripture state that Israel will be seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (if you believe otherwise, produce the Scriptures that state otherwise). Here we have basis for the heavenly/earthly distinction. God has one purpose; that is to

39. "Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ," *Collected Writings* 1:20 (1828).
40. *Letters* 1:515.
41. *Letters* 2:499.
42. *Letters* 3:298.
43. *Letters* 1:515.

44. All saints are born anew, are saints, are just persons. There are some common spiritual blessings for all saints, but there is a distinct class of blessings called "spiritual blessing *in the heavenlies* in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). Among these is that Christ's place before our God and Father is the Christian's place; and that the Christian is seated "in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). When, say, advocates of covenant theology speak of being one with Christ, when they speak of union with Christ, obviously they do not apprehend the meaning and bearing of such things in the same way that JND did. How often have Christians used Scripture expressions in conversation and were not really speaking of the same thing, though the expressions were the same. In John 8:43 an important fact is brought before us. And while the Lord spoke this to unbelievers, there is a principle in His words applicable to what I have just said:

> Why do ye not know my speech? Because ye cannot hear my word.

As JND said somewhere, one must know the thing to understand the words. And with Christians this is often the case; they do not know the thing, and do not understand the bearing of the words. This is case with the words, "taken us into favor in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6), as "in Christ," and as in "made [us] sit down together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6).

glorify Himself in Christ, manifesting that glory in two spheres, the heavenly and the earthly -- and the special display of this two-fold glory in Christ was a mystery, hidden from the prophets [45] and will be manifested in the millennium:

> . . . having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to the good pleasure which he purposed in himself for [the] administration of the fulness of times; to head up all things in the heavens and the things upon the earth (Eph. 1:9, 10).

It was the heavenly side that opened to him first and then the earthly side. We will consider his seeing the earthly side shortly after.

He Saw that the Church Was Heavenly

Because of its importance, his statement that during his convalescence JND saw what the true church was is repeated again under this heading:

> . . . I was in Christ, accepted in the Beloved, and sitting in heavenly places in Him. This led me directly to the apprehension of what the true church of God was, those that were united to Christ in heaven . . . [46]

Note the order of apprehension. He saw that Christ's place was his place and this led him directly to what it was that constituted the church to be the church. It is clear that he saw that the church was heavenly, as each Christian is heavenly. This stands necessarily in contrast with Israel, which is earthly. We see, then, that seeing that Christ's place was his place led him to the heavenly church / earthly Israel distinction. We are heavenly in God's sight:

> . . . and such as the heavenly [one], such also the heavenly [ones] (1 Cor. 15:48). [47]

What we have considered so far entails the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, which he also saw in connection with what we have just considered. But we will notice that matter in detail below, after considering a few other points.

He Saw Dispensational Truth

Seeing that Christ's place was his place before the Father, and that the true church was heavenly, he saw Israel's earthly place in the purpose of God. So, connected with the heavenly of truth, he saw from Isaiah 32 that there was a different dispensation coming; and it followed, from what he was learning about the church and the immense change in the coming dispensation, that *Israel and the Church were distinct*. He wrote:

> In my retreat, the 32nd chapter of Isaiah taught me clearly, on God's behalf, that there was still an economy to come, of His ordering; a state of things in no way established as yet. The consciousness of my union with Christ had given me the present heavenly portion of the glory, whereas this chapter clearly sets forth the corresponding earthly part. I was not able to put these things in their respective places or arrange them in order, as I can now; but the truths themselves were then revealed of God, through the action of His Spirit, by reading His word. [48]
>
> But I must, though without comment, direct attention to chapter 32 of the same prophet; which I do the rather, because it was in this the Lord was pleased, without man's teaching, first to open my eyes on this subject, that I might learn His will throughout -- not by the first blessed truths stated in it, but the latter part, when there shall be a complete change in the dispensation, the wilderness becoming the fruitful field of God's fruit and glory, and that which has been so, being counted a forest, at a time when the Lord's judgments should come down, even great hail, upon this forest; and the city, even of pride, be utterly abased. That the Spirit's pouring out upon the Jews, and their substitution for the Gentile church, become a forest, is here adverted to, is evident from the connection of the previous verses. [49]

Since he learned that there would be a change in dispensation, the implication seems to be that previously he held what we call amillennialism, or Augustinian amillennialism. It seems to me that if he had held historicist pre-millennial views he would have been expecting a millennium.

He Saw God's Provision for the Present Period

Truth is not given in God's Word to exercise the intellect. Truth enters the soul (its dwelling place) through the conscience, as may be seen in our Lord's dealing with the woman in John 4. If it merely is in the mind we have not really appropriated it. (Hence all the intellectualism found in the profession of Christianity.) Following, we see that the truth exercised JND in his practice of Christianity.

> What was to be done? I saw in that word the coming of Christ to take the church to Himself in glory. I saw there the cross, the divine basis of salvation, which should

45. The OT prophets foresaw the future glory of Israel, on the earth. "The mystery of his will" brings in the heavenly side, involving the church as a heavenly body, and this was not spoken of by the prophets. See Rom. 16:25, 26; Col. 1:24-27; Eph. 3:9-11).

46. *Letters* 1:515.

47. The Christian is looked at in a number of ways in Scripture. In Ephesians he is viewed as seated in the heavenlies. In Hebrews the saints are viewed as in the wilderness, and therefore have a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1) and enter the holiest above by a new and living way (Heb. 10:19), for the vail is rent. In the millennium there will be no vail in the millennial temple, but it will have two-leaved doors, with the sons of Zadok in a special place of priestly ministry (in fulfillment of the covenant with Phinehas). These things show a higher access for the new Israel under the new covenant, but not at all like our entry as priests into the sanctuary above where Christ is the minister of the holy places (Heb. 8:1, 2), and where He sings in the midst of the assembly (Heb. 12). In keeping with the revelation of the mystery, Christ's present high-priesthood was unforeseen by the prophets. It is not the carrying out of the Melchizedec priesthood for Christ shall do that when he is priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:12, 13).

48. *Letters* 3:299. He is not referring to a revelation of new truth but God's graciously, by the action of the Spirit, teaching him these things found in the Word of God.

49. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 2:108.

impress its own character on the Christian and on the church in view of the Lord's coming; and also that meanwhile the Holy Spirit was given to be the source of the unity of the church, as well as the spring of its activity, and indeed of all christian energy.

As regards the gospel, I had no difficulty as to its received dogmas . . .

The blood of Jesus has removed every spot from the believer; every trace of sin, according to God's own purity. In virtue of His blood-shedding, the only possible propitiation, we may now invite all men to come to God, as God of love, who, for this object, has given His only Son. The presence of the Holy Ghost, sent from heaven to abide in the believer as the "unction," the "seal," and the "earnest of our inheritance," as well as being in the church, the power which unites it in one body and distributes gifts to the members according to His will; these truths developed largely and assumed great importance in my eyes. With this last truth was connected the question of ministry. From whence came this ministry? According to the Bible, it clearly came from God by the free and powerful action of the Holy Ghost. [50]

He Saw The Fall of the Church

Connected with what came before his soul from the Word of God concerning the heavenly character of the true church, how did the church answer to all this in practice? Was the church showing that it is heavenly? Was it really expressing the truth of God in practice? The book of Acts was carefully read and he saw the proper place of *gift* and that clerisy was not of God. He saw that the church, viewed in responsible testimony, was fallen:

The careful reading of the Acts afforded me a practical picture of the early church, which made me feel deeply the contrast with its actual present state, though still as ever, beloved by God. At that time I had to use crutches when moving about, so that I had no longer any opportunity for making known my convictions in public; moreover, as the state of my health did not allow me to attend worship, I was compelled to remain away. It seemed to me that the good hand of God had thus come to my help, hiding my spiritual weakness under physical incapacity. In the meanwhile, there grew up in my heart the conviction that what Christianity had accomplished in the world in no way answered to the needs of a soul burdened with the sense of what God's holy governmental dealing was intended to effect . . .

I said to myself: "If the Apostle Paul were to come here now, he would not, according to the established system {i.e., the Church of England}, be even allowed to preach, not being legally ordained; but if a worker of Satan, who, by his doctrine, denied the Saviour, came here, he could freely preach, and my christian friend would be obliged to consider him as a fellow-laborer; whereas he would be unable to recognize the most powerful instrument of the Spirit of God, however much blessed in his work of leading multitudes of souls to the Lord, if he had not been ordained according to the system." . . . This is not mere abuse, such as may be found everywhere; it is the *principle* of the system that is at fault. Ministry is of the Spirit. There are some, amongst the clergy, who are ministers by the Spirit, but the system is founded on an opposite principle; consequently it seemed impossible to remain in it any longer. [51]

Important to a right apprehension of dispensational truth and of ages is that each age ends in failure -- and that the present period is no exception. In 1827 JND understood the fall of the church. It appears that he had written an early paper on this subject which was not published. There is an intriguing reference to this. B. W. Newton remarked that when F. W. Newman [52] returned from Ireland:

Newman also gave me Darby's book on the Fall of the Church, written in his usual involved style and also the subject involved. [53]

This indicates that in 1827 JND understood something about "the ruin of the Church" -- speaking of *the church as viewed in responsible testimony*. We will consider more of this doctrine in volume 2.

I suggest that JND made a reference to this (lost) book when discussing the failure of the economies and the failure of the church. Speaking of a partial re-establishment of the Mosaic economy after the captivity of the Jews, he said:

I remember having presented the Reformation as having a certain analogy with this event in a little paper which I published in 1827. [54]

There is another statement by JND that also bears on this, he speaking of the future apostasy of the church (which results from the fall and ruin of the church):

As for myself, I believe that this apostasy, in its public and formal manifestation, is future. This is what I have thought since 1827. [55]

These statements are helpful in establishing the 1826-1827 chronology. Understanding the fall and ruin of the church (as viewed in responsible testimony), and that there will come a formal apostasy in the future, shows that in 1827 he understood important matters of what we call dispensational truth. It is evidence that the period of convalesce (and "deliverance") preceded the publication of that paper in 1827. The period of convalescence was Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827.

Regarding the earliest period, B. W. Newton reminisced:

The only person who had any apprehension of all this ruin

50. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:299, 300.

51. *Letters* 3:298, 300. See also 1:515.

52. F. W. Newman had been hired by Edward Pennefather (JND's brother-in-law) to tutor his children. He came to Ireland in Sept. 1827 and returned to England in 1828.

Regarding this early date for something written by JND, in 1865 he wrote:

____ wanted to publish a series of my papers, and I had to look over them. And I found tracts I had wholly forgotten, written thirty-three to thirty-eight years ago . . . (*Letters* 1:406).

Note that 1865 - 38 = 1827.

53. *Fry MS*, p. 235.

54. *Collected Writings* 4:298.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 295, 296.

> was Darby; and I felt it too, *that* was why I so clung to him. [56]

Of course, it is one thing to note the gross disorder in the Christian testimony on earth, and another to enter into the understanding of it with the spiritual intelligence with which JND understood it at this point in time. In a letter dated Sept. 24, 1846, JND wrote:

> For my part, when I found all in ruin around me, my comfort was that, where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, there He would be. [57]

It was in late 1827 that he began to meet with three others to break bread on this basis (Matt. 18:20), *at his suggestion*. He understood the ruin before he began to break bread near the end of 1827.

He Saw the Daily Expectation of Christ

CHRIST EXPECTED DAILY - WITHOUT INTERMEDIATE EVENTS

During his convalescence JND learned that **he ought daily to expect his Lord's return**. Here is his account:

> . . . I saw that the Christian, having his place in Christ in heaven, **has nothing to wait for**, save the coming of the Saviour, in order to be set, in fact, in the glory which is already his portion "in Christ." [58]
>
> The coming of the Lord was the other truth which was brought to my mind from the word, as that which, if sitting in heavenly places in Christ, was **alone** to be waited for, that I might sit in heavenly places with Him. Isaiah 32 brought me to the earthly consequences of the same truth, though other passages might seem perhaps more striking to me now; but I saw an evident change of dispensation in that chapter, when the Spirit would be poured out on the Jewish nation, and a king reign in righteousness. [59]

I have emphasized these words of JND because I have learned that not everyone reading JND's statements above, quoted in the 1991 edition of this book, saw that JND stated that there were **no intermediate events** between when he understood this and the coming of the Lord. Actually, I think that there are persons who ***will not see***.

JND's apprehension of truth was immeasurably in advance of what Edward Irving was propounding, for whatever his words, E. Irving saw himself in an era of prophecy being fulfilled and that there were intermediate events that needed to take place before Christ would come. Even placing JND's words into 1828 does not change JND's expectation, nor does it change that others viewed themselves in an era of unfolding prophetic events in 1828.

Thus during Dec. 1826/Jan. 1827 JND learned that *he ought daily to expect the Lord*. What do these words mean as JND used them? He meant that there were no intervening events that had to take place before the Lord would come for His own: "I saw that the Christian . . . has nothing to wait for, save the coming of the Savior . . ." Again, ". . . as that which . . . alone was to be waited for . . ." That was the heavenly side, for Isa. 32 brought before him the earthly side of things.

F. W. NEWMAN LEARNED THE DAILY EXPECTATION OF CHRIST, WITHOUT INTERMEDIATE EVENTS, FROM J. N. DARBY IN 1827

F. W. Newman was in Ireland (Dublin) during 1827/1828. [60] There he was tutor in the family of Edward Pennefather [61] for 15 months. He replaced Joseph Charles Philpot (1802-1869) as tutor, who had fallen in love with a daughter of E. Pennefather (Anne), a romance which was squelched by the father, and his tutoring term of employment soon ended. [62] But before that:

> While resident at the Pennefathers' and through Darby's

56. *Fry MS*, p. 243. In the *Harvester*, May 1986, T. C. F. Stunt, "A Comprehensive History," p. 78, says that B. W. Newton and H. Borlase "may have well influenced Darby more than he realized in the idea of the ruin of the Church." If, in 1827 (1828 at the latest), JND wrote "a book on the Fall of the Church," then the above notion is not true; which is confirmed by B. W. Newton's remark, "I felt it too."

In 1840, JND wrote:

> As to the ruin of the church, the theory came for me after the consciousness of it, and even now, the theory is but a small thing to my mind . . . (*Letters* 1:42).

57. *Letters* 1:113.
58. *Letters* 3:298.
59. *Letters* 1:515, 516.

60. ". . . in 1827 I went to Ireland . . . In the Autumn of 1828 I returned to Oxford . . ." F. W. Newman, *Contributions Chiefly to the Early History of the Late Cardinal Newman*, pp. 21 and 24. "In Dublin (1827-8) . . .," *ibid.*, p. 62.

61. The *National Dictionary of Biography* (British), article "Pennefather, Edward," says:

> By his marriage with Susan {or Susannah}, eldest daughter of John Darby, esq., of Markley, Sussex, and Leap Castle, King's County, he {Edward pennefather} had four sons and six daughters. The eldest son, Edward (*b.* 1809), was called to the Irish bar in 1834, and became Q.C. in 1858. The fourth, Richard Theodore (*d.* 1864), was auditor of Ceylon. The second daughter, Ellen, married Thomas O'Brien, bishop of Ossory and Ferns; and Dorothea, the sixth daughter, was the wife of James Thomas, fourth earl of Courtown.

62. The story is recounted in J. H. Philpot, *The Seceders, The Story of J. C. Philpot and William Tiptaft*, London: Banner of truth Trust, a rearrangement and extract from the large, two vol. ed.

> He was hired in the Autumn of 1825, while residing at Oxford, to tutor two of E. Pennefather's sons in preparation to their going to the University. In the spiring of 1827 he fell in love with the daughter, Anne, who reciprocated his love, but who was sent away; and when the term of employment ended, the broken-hearted tutor took his leave of the Pennefather household. It is a sad story. Over four years later she married a person of wealth, but died about six years after that. He did not marry while she lived (pp. 40-42). He became a clergyman of the Church of England but in 1835 he left it because of "Her errors and corruptions, as well as her utter contrariety to a Gospel Church . . ." (p. 185). He joined those who latter became known as Gospel Standard Baptists.
>
> As to J. C. Philpot's soul, it was in the early spring of 1827 that the Lord, "in and under that affliction . . . was pleased . . . to begin His work of grace in my soul . . ." (p. 39). It is kept secret in this book, as well as in *Memoirs and Letters of Joseph Charles Philpott* that the instrument used of God was J. N. Darby.

> influence, Philpot underwent a classic evangelical conversion experience. [63]

Likely, it was J. C. Philpot that authored the 1842 article on "the brethren" found in Appendix 4.

F. W. Newman was a friend of JND in the years 1827 - 1830, but became an Arian. His comments, written after he had thus denied the Trinity, testify the fact that both JND and he had learned the daily expectation of Christ. This corroborates what JND said about holding the daily expectation (no intervening events, as we saw above) in 1827. F. W. Newman would not have a partisan motive to lie about it, and thus it is difficult to see how anyone can deny his testimony. Part of what is quoted below took place in 1827. [64] Another point can be fixed and that is F. W. Newman's autumn visit to Oxford in 1828, a date which is documented below in the quotation. Therefore what is here transcribed from him took place before then. There are indications of some of his confusion as to details of prophetic truth. He wrote:

> . . . He {JND} had practically given up all reading except that of the Bible; and no small part of his movement towards me soon took the form of dissuasion from all other voluntary study.
>
> In fact, I had myself more and more concentrated my religious reading on this one book: still, I could not help feeling the value of a cultivated mind. Against this, my new eccentric friend, (himself having enjoyed no mean advantages of cultivation,) directed his keenest attacks. I remember once saying to him, in defense of worldly station, -- "To desire to be rich is unchristian and absurd; but if I were the father of children, I should wish to be rich enough to secure them a good education." He replied: "If I had children, I would as soon see them break stones on the road, as do any thing else, if only I could secure to them the Gospel and the grace of God." I was unable to say Amen, but I admired his unflinching consistency; -- for now, as always, all he said was based on texts aptly quoted and logically enforced. He more and more made me ashamed of Political Economy and Moral Philosophy, and all Science; all of which ought to be "counted dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord." For the first time in my life I saw a man earnestly turning into reality the principles which others confessed with their lips only. That the words of the New Testament contained the highest truth accessible to man, -- truth not to be taken from nor added to, -- all good men (as I thought) confessed: never before had I seen a man so resolved that no word of it should be a dead letter to him. I once said: "But do you really think that no part of the New Testament may have been temporary in its object? for instance, what should we have lost, if St. Paul had never written the verse, "The cloak which I have left at Troas, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments." He answered with the greatest promptitude: "I should certainly have lost something; for that is exactly the verse which alone saved me from selling my little library. No! every word, depend upon it, is from the Spirit, and is for eternal service" . . .
>
> In spite of the strong revulsion which I felt against some of the peculiarities of this remarkable man, I for the first time in my life found myself under the dominion of a superior. [65] When I remember, how even those bowed down before him, who had been to him in the place of parents, -- accomplished and experienced minds, -- I cease to wonder in the retrospect, that he riveted me in such bondage. Henceforth I began to ask: what will *he* say to this and that? In *his* reply I always expected to find a higher portion of God's Spirit, than in any I could frame for myself. In order to learn divine truth, it became to me a surer process to consult him, than to search for myself and wait upon God: and gradually, (as I afterwards discerned,) my religious thought had merged into the mere process of developing fearlessly into results of his principles, without any deeper examining of my foundations. Indeed, but for a few weaknesses which warned me that he might err, I could have accepted him as an apostle commissioned to reveal the mind of God.
>
> In his after-course (which I may not indicate) this gentleman has every where displayed a wonderful power of bending other minds to his own, and even stamping upon them the tones of his voice and all sorts of slavish imitation. Over the general results of his action I have long deeply mourned, as blunting his natural tenderness and sacrificing his wisdom to the Letter, [66] dwarfing men's understandings, contracting their hearts, crushing their moral sensibilities, and setting those at variance who ought to love: yet oh ! how specious was it in the beginning! he *only* wanted men "to submit their understandings *to God*," that is, to the Bible, that is, to his interpretation! From seeing his action and influence I have learnt, that if it be dangerous to a young man (as it assuredly is) to have *no* superior mind to which he may look up with confiding reverence, it may be even more dangerous to think that he has found such a mind: for he who is most logically consistent, though to a one-sided theory, and most ready to sacrifice self to that

63. Grayson Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals*, p. 232. JND refers to this in *Letters* 3:167.

64. "While I was at Oxford and we were friends, F. W. Newman went to Ireland (1827) and there made acquaintance of John Darby," *Fry MS*, p. 61.

65. {F. W. Newman had an exceptionally bright mind. At Oxford, he took two "firsts," one in mathematics and one in classics. T.C. F. Stunt has noted that this only occurred once before, when Sir Robert Peel took his degree. For F. W. Newman, "Convocation rose to honour his success" *(From Awakening to Secession*, p. 202).

Concerning the brothers, J. H. Newman and F. W. Newman, J. C. Philpot wrote:

> They were both men of the most powerful intellect, refined and cultivated to the highest point by the most indefatigable study, and were distinguished ornaments of the famous University to which they belonged (The *Seceeders,* p. 35).

It is interesting that F. W. Newman thought JND a "superior."}

66. {There are Christians who use 2 Cor. 3:6 in the same way as this Arian: as if "letter" means the text of Scripture. It lies right on the surface of 2 Cor. 3 that the "letter" refers to the law on "stone tables" (v. 3). It is called "the ministry of death, in letters, graven in stone" (v. 7) and "the ministry of condemnation" (v. 9). That worldly Christians should so pervert what is self-evident when a text of Scripture is brought before them to exercise their conscience, is as deplorable as it is sad, and but manifests what the state of soul is. In an Arian it is quite understandable -- but *all* flesh is as grass. If a faithful Christian merely means that the text should not be without the Spirit, that is quite right, but that is the way to express it; not, that the letter kills.}

theory, seems to ardent youth the most assuredly trustworthy guide. Such was Ignatius Loyola in his day . . . {so speaks an Arian}.

When I had returned to Oxford {autumn of 1828 [67]}, I induced the Irish clergyman to visit the University, and introduced him to many of my equals in age, and juniors. Most striking was it to see how instantaneously he assumed the place of universal father-confessor, as if he had been a known and long-trusted friend. His insight into character, and tenderness pervading his austerity, so opened young men's hearts, that day after day there was no end of secret closetings with him . . . [68]

My study of the New Testament at this time had made it impossible for me to overlook that the apostles held it to be a duty of all disciples to expect a near and sudden destruction of the earth by fire, and constantly to be expecting the return of the Lord from heaven. It was easy to reply, that "experience disproved" this expectation; but to this an answer was ready provided in Peter's 2nd epistle, which forewarns us that we shall be taunted by the unbelieving with this objection, but bids us, *nevertheless*, continue to look out for the speedy fulfillment of this great event. In short, the case stood thus; -- If it was not too soon 1800 years ago to stand in daily expectation of it, it is not too soon now: to say that it is too late, is not merely to impute error to the apostles, on a matter which they made of first-rate moral importance, but is to say, that those whom Peter calls "ungodly scoffers, walking after their own lusts" -- were right, and he was wrong, on the very point for which he thus vituperated them.

The importance of this doctrine is, that it totally forbids all working for earthly objects distant in time: and here the Irish clergyman threw into the same scale the entire weight of his character . . .

I found a wonderful dullness in many persons on this important subject. Wholly careless to ask what was the true apostolic doctrine, they insisted that "Death is to us *practically* the coming of the Lord," and were amazed at my seeing so much emphasis in the other view. This comes of the abominable selfishness preached as religion. If I were to labor at some useful work for ten years, -- say, at clearing forest land, laying out a farm, and building a house, --and were then to die, I should leave my work to my successors, and it would not be lost. Some men work for higher, some for lower, earthly ends; ("in a great house there are many vessels, &c.";) but all the results are valuable, if there is a chance of transmitting them to those who follow us. But if all is to be very shortly burnt up, it is then folly to exert ourselves for such objects. To the dead man, (it is said,) the cases are but one. This is to the purpose, if self absorbs all our heart; away from the purpose, if we are to work for unselfish ends.

Nothing can be clearer, than that the New Testament is entirely pervaded by the doctrine, -- sometimes explicitly stated, sometimes unceremoniously assumed, -- that earthly things are very speedily to come to an end, and *therefore* are not worthy of our high affections and deep interest. Hence, when thoroughly imbued with this persuasion, I looked with mournful pity on a great mind wasting its energies on any distant aim of this earth. For a statesman to talk about providing for future generations, sounded to me as a melancholy avowal of unbelief. To devote good talents to write history or investigate nature, was simple waste: for at the Lord's coming, history and science would no longer be learned by these feeble appliances of ours. Thus an inevitable deduction from the doctrine of the apostles, was, that "we must work for speedy results only." *Vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam*. I *then* accepted the doctrine, in profound obedience to the absolutely infallible system of precepts. I *now* see that the falsity and mischief of the doctrine is one of the very many disproofs of the assumed, but unverified infallibility. However, the hold which the apostolic belief then took of me, subjected my conscience to the exhortations of the Irish clergyman, whenever he inculcated that the highest Christian must necessarily decline the pursuit of science, knowledge, art, history, -- except so far as any of these things might be made useful tools for immediate spiritual results. [69]

He saw at this point, whatever his Arian sympathies a few years later, [70] that:

1. the NT inculcated the "daily expectation" -- ***notice that it was the expectation of no intermediate events*** -- and,
2. that his testimony is that JND held this also -- no intermediate events to be expected -- in 1827!

Allow me to repeat a little of what F. W. Newman said:

67. ". . . in 1827 I went to Ireland . . . In the Autumn of 1828 I returned to Oxford . . ." (F. W. Newman, *Contributions Chiefly to the Early History of the Late Cardinal Newman*, pp. 21 and 24). "In Dublin (1827-8) . . ." (*ibid.*, p. 62). B. W. Newton reminisced, "After a while J. N. Darby came through Oxford & Newman wanted much to introduce him to me" (*Fry MS*, p. 61).

68. F. W. Newman, *Phases of Faith*, pp. 19-28.

69. F. W. Newman, *Phases of Faith*, pp. 21, 22. He did not change his mind concerning the teaching of the New Testament regarding regarding the Christian and the world. Later in his book he wrote:

> Those who stick closest to the Scriptures do not shrink from saying, that "it is not worth trying to mend the world," and stigmatize as "political and worldly" such as pursue the opposite course. Undoubtedly, if we are to expect our master at cockcrowing, we shall not study the permanent improvement of this transitory scene. To teach the certain speedy destruction of earthly things, *as the New Testament does*, is to cut the sinews of all earthly progress; to declare war against Intellect and Imagination, against Industrial and Social advancement (p. 136).

Of course the New Testament puts the Christian in that posture, though many refuse it.

70. He had gone on a mission to Baghdad with some others in 1830 to join A. N. Groves' group, which had left England in 1829. One of the missionaries returned and reported that on the way F. W. Newman began to try to persuade them of wrong teaching concerning the person of Christ (Arianism). He returned to England in 1833 and was opposed by JND. An account of this is found in Appendix 1.

> My study of the New Testament at this time had made it impossible for me to overlook that the apostles held it to be a duty of all disciples to expect a near and sudden destruction of the earth by fire, and constantly to be expecting the return of the Lord from heaven. It was easy to reply, that "experience disproved" this expectation; but to this an answer was ready provided in Peter's 2nd epistle, which forewarns us that we shall be taunted by the unbelieving with this objection, but bids us, *nevertheless*, continue to look out for the speedy fulfillment of this great event. In short, the case stood thus; -- If it was not too soon 1800 years ago to stand in daily expectation of it, it is not too soon now: to say that it is too late, is not merely to impute error to the apostles, on a matter which they made of first-rate moral importance . . .

It may be distasteful to some to acknowledge that JND held the any moment expectation in 1827 (or even if it be 1828) but persons of better judgment will not agree with them.

Here we have clear confirmation of what JND said, "I saw that the Christian . . . has nothing to wait for, save the coming of the Saviour . . ." Again, ". . . as that which . . . alone was to be waited for . . ." That was the heavenly side, for Isa. 32 brought before him the earthly side of things.

The testimony of the Arian, F. W. Newman, [71] is that both he and JND held, in 1827, the expectation of Christ's coming without there being any intermediate events. This testimony ought not to be ignored.

Concerning F. W. Newman's seeing J. N. Darby in 1827, there is an Excursus at the end of Chapter 3.2 that discusses this, which might be read at this point.

From all we have considered so far we can see that in 1827, JND, apart from others, had advanced considerably in truth and was in the good of the any moment expectation -- no intervening events. The groundwork for the development of understanding dispensational truth was laid.

JND DID NOT LEARN THE DAILY EXPECTATION FROM, OR THROUGH, J. G. BELLETT

J. G. Bellett had written a letter to his brother George Bellett on Jan. 31, 1827 that he was going to see JND shortly. It reads:

> I hope on Friday to see John Darby. You will be grieved to hear that he has been laid up for nearly two months from a hurt in his knee. His poor people at Calary miss him sadly. [72]

From F. W. Newman we learned that he and JND held to a daily expectation of Christ before late 1827. From B. W. Newton we learned that F. W. Newman met JND in 1827; and we saw that they both held the daily expectation of Christ -- no intervening events expected. To this we add the evidence from J. G. Bellett. Regarding this period, he reminisced many years later:

> In the beginning of 1828 {1827} [73] I had occasion to go to London, and then I met in private and heard in public those who were warm and alive on prophetic truth, having had their minds freshly illuminated by it.
>
> In my letters to J. N. D. at this time, I told him I had been hearing things that he and I had never yet talked of, and I further told him on my return to Dublin what they were. Full of this subject as I then was, I found him quite prepared for it also, and his mind and soul had traveled rapidly in the direction which had thus been given to it. [74]

This indicates that he had not written in his letters to JND what was being taught in London. And, his words that the mind and soul of JND "had traveled" indicates that this traveling had taken place before he spoke to JND and told him what was being taught in London. The direction given to JND's mind and soul had taken place before J. G. Bellett's visit shortly after Jan. 31, 1827. It took place during the previous period of JND's solitude (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827). JND was "quite prepared" for what J. G. Bellett told him; and, as a matter of fact, JND was *very considerably* beyond E. Irving in London, who thought he was living in a period of prophecies being fulfilled. [75]

JND mentioned J. G. Bellett's visit in a most interesting comment:

> Isaiah 32 it was that taught me about the new dispensation. [76] I saw there would be a David reign, **and**

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71. In B. W. Newton's reminiscences we read this concerning F. W. Newman.

> He left Oxford and got £400 a year as private tutor in Ireland where he became acquainted with Darby and with prophetic Truth {i.e., at Edward Pennefathers house}. After a while he returned to Oxford and sought to interest me in prophecy but did not succeed at first. "Now Newton, you don't see these things at all." "No, I don't. It is sufficient for me to attend to the preaching of the Gospel." "Well then, will you lend me your rooms?" So I did that, and a few friends were invited. There were three meetings at first; and I of course attended but took no part. The subjects were, 1) Is there any reason to believe the conversion of the world will be effected by the preaching of the Gospel? 2) Babylon, and 3) Antichrist. By means of these I saw there was more in Scripture than I thought. Soon after he left Oxford again (*Fry MS*, pp. 240, 241).

72. *Recollections of J. G. Bellett*, p. 27.

73. F. Gill has called attention to the date (Jan. 31, 1827) of the above letter by J. G. Bellett as giving a definite reference point that enables us to correct the erroneous dates in a letter of reminiscences by J. G. Bellett (*Matthew 18:20*, pp. 109, 110).Based on this dated letter (and some additional facts) I will insert corrected dates in braces { } whenever referring to J. G. Bellett's reminiscence.

74. *Interesting Reminiscences* . . ., p. 3.

75. Here is the way in which E. R. Sandeen represented J. G. Bellett's bringing the news to JND:

> J. G. Bellett . . . stated that he brought news of the London prophetic revival to Darby at about this time *and that the news influenced Darby's views (The Roots of Fundamentalism*, p. 32, note 54).

What I have emphasized is not borne out by J. G. Bellett's words. This is one of many illustrations that the representations made concerning JND by those opposed to his teachings often cannot be trusted.

76. This seems to indicate that JND was not a premillennialist historicist before, but perhaps amillennial, or perhaps postmillennial in view. However, this is not to suggest that he became a premillennial historicist -- though he believed there was an *application* of such a view, though not the

(continued...)

> **did not know whether the church might not be removed before forty years' time**. [77] At that time I was ill with my knee. It gave me peace to see what the church was. I saw that I, poor, wretched, and sinful J. N. D., knowing too much yet not enough about myself, was left behind {i.e., viewed as "in the flesh"}, and let go {i.e., the "deliverance" of which he speaks elsewhere}, but I was united to Christ in heaven. Then what was I waiting for? {reader, answer the question!}. J. G. B. came up and said they were teaching some new thing in England. 'I have it!' I said. [78]

With the testimonies of F. W. Newman, B. W. Newton and the dated letter of J. G. Bellett, besides all the references to this period of time in JND's writings, I suggest that the integrity of JND and his statements of what occurred regarding his advance in truth, concerning the church and the expectation of Christ -- with no intervening events to be expected -- during Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 -- is fully vindicated. With that fixed point of reference, Jan. 31, 1827, the events of the year 1827 can be ascertained. Thus it was not until after this period of "solitude" during which JND's injury was recovering, that he found out what was going on in London, but he had already understood those truths upon which the pre-tribulation rapture, i.e., the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, hinges. It is remarkable that he

> . . . saw there would be a David reign, and did not know whether the Church might not be removed before forty years' time.

That would certainly leave time for various events to transpire after the rapture. There is no Scripture that says that Daniel's 70th week opens the day after the rapture. It may well be that there will be some space of time between the rapture and the opening of that prophetic week.

In his letter to Prof. Tholuck he wrote:

> At the same time, I saw that the Christian, having his place in Christ in heaven, has nothing to wait for save the coming of the Savior in order to be set free, in fact, in the glory which is already his portion "in Christ." [79]

In JND's mind, ***there were no intervening events*** to be expected. Christians often use similar words and expressions and mean things that greatly differ. Take, as an example, the abuse of the words "born again." Professed Christians use the same expression and mean quite different things. So is it with expressions about the church and about prophecy. Thus was it with other students of prophecy at that time, using similar expressions but carrying different meanings according to the person using them.

In a short article titled "EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS," in *The Bible Treasury* for July 1, 1857, we find the following, and though unsigned, I suppose it cannot be by any other than JND:

> It is thirty years ago and more since I first saw the doctrine of the second coming of the Lord. I saw it as the only solution of a thousand and one difficulties which man's mind had created, by attempting to limit the predictions about a glorified Messiah down to the range and circumstances of earth, while in man's hand and responsibility. It threw heavenly hopes and promises open, and also gave consistency to God's past and future dealings with the earth.

Later we shall see that JND separated from the church of England in mid-1827 and began breaking bread with three others, *at his suggestion*, towards the end of 1827.

As we proceed we will more fully see how superficial, if not actually an expression of hostility, are statements such as:

> From Irving, then, Darby derived his prophetical system . . . [80]

The Sine Qua Non of Dispensational Truth?

WHAT IS THE SINE QUA NON OF THE TRUTH RECOVERED THROUGH J. N. DARBY?

A recent analysis of C. I. Scofield's and L. S. Chafer's dispensational views, from a covenant theology advocate, says:

> The Darbyist church/Israel distinction constitutes the one great organizing principle of classical dispensationalism. The metaphysical and historical distinction between the church and Israel is the axle upon which the theology of Darby, Scofield, and Chafer rides. It is the one great absolutely necessary or essential element of the system. The Darbyist metaphysical distinction between Israel and the church is the *sine qua non* of classical dispensational theology. [81]

There is something that may be said in favor of this, but the reader should bear in mind that JND saw that he was **"in Christ" and consequently *Christ's place was his place***. Christ's place was the measure of his place before the Father. Allow me to repeat what has been quoted before:

> When I came to understand that I was united to Christ in heaven, and that, consequently, my place before God was represented by His own, I was forced to the conclusion that it was no longer a question with God of this wretched "I" which had wearied me during six or seven years, in presence of the requirements of the law. It then became clear to me that the church of God, as He considers it, was composed only of those who were so united to Christ, whereas Christendom, as seen externally, was really the world, and could not be considered as "the church," save as regards the responsibility attaching to the position which it professed to occupy -- a very important thing in its place. [82]

76. (...continued)
true *interpretation* of Revelation.
77. {That is, forty years before the millennial reign commenced.}
78. *The Bible Treasury* 12:352.
79. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:298.

80. J. H. Stokes (Irish ecclesiastical historian), *The Contemporary Review* 1885, p. 545. This is a typical error in this (not to be trusted) article.
81. Michael Williams, *This World is not My Home, The Origins and Development of Dispensationalism*, Scotland, Christian Focus Publications, p. 90, 2003. Dr. Williams is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, MO, USA.
82. Ronald M. Henzel wrote:

> Whenever it was that Darby's dualism came to occupy the central

(continued...)

> At the same time, I saw that the Christian, having his place in Christ in heaven, has nothing to wait for save the coming of the Saviour, in order to be set, in fact, in the glory which is already his portion "in Christ" . . . [83]

That Christ's place was his place is the great **starting point** for the complex of truth that he saw during the period of convalescence. **Then**, he saw that the church was composed only of those so united to Christ. **Then,** he saw that one who has his place in Christ in heaven has nothing to wait for but Christ -- the interlocking truth that there were no predicted intervening events before the Lord would come, and that his posture was to be one of expectancy. **After** such things, he saw the earthly side, Israel's real place, and the change in dispensation (i.e., that there would be a millennial reign of Christ). And in all this he saw the ruin of the church on earth (as viewed in responsible testimony; not, of course, in the aspect of what Christ builds (Matt. 16:18)).

Thus, in 1827, the elements of dispensational truth were understood.

I do not doubt that such truths as he understood in the period of convalescence are implicit in a true understanding of the church/Israel distinction, but his order of understanding, and the interconnectedness of these truths needs to be noted -- in order to exclude some kind of a distinction someone might have made before JND, regarding the church and Israel, that might be seized upon to say "*there is the origin* of the church/Israel distinction"; just as has been done by hunters for the origin of the pretribulation rapture. Such seize upon a statement and say '*there is the origin* of the pretribulation rapture,' as we shall review later. They seem to be ignorant of the interlocking nature of the truth of Christ's place before the Father being the Christian's place, and the interlocking pre-Rev. 4 rapture, with the church/Israel distinction, and the future godly remnant in the time of Jacob's trouble, and a restored Israel under the new covenant. While all this, and more, is implicit in the true church/Israel distinction, the great truth which came before JND's soul in connection with "deliverance," is that **Christ's place is his place**. This is being "in Christ," seated spiritually (not representatively) in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2).

WHAT, THEN, ABOUT LITERAL INTERPRETATION?

Literal interpretation of prophecy, with all due recognition of figurative, symbolic, and apocalyptic language, has its place. But the recovery of these truths we have been considering did not occur because someone decided to apply "literal interpretation." That was not how the Spirit of God brought out these truths.

The heavenly place of Christ, and thus of the Christian and of the church, is the great key. The OT prophets spoke of the supremacy of Christ in the earth. It is in the NT that we learn of Christ's place in the heavens. That was a "mystery," i.e., something heretofore hidden, but revealed in connection with the introduction of Christianity. Hence, in Eph. 1:9, 10, we read:

> . . . having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself for [the] administration of the fulness of times; to head up all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth . . .

The "fulness of times" is not the eternal state, for in the eternal state there will be no time. It refers to the millennium.

It is God's purpose to glorify Himself in Christ, in two spheres: the heavenly and the earthly, all headed up by Christ, to God's glory.

The place of the true church in this was not spoken of by the prophets of Israel. Scripture has made this quite clear:

> . . . according to [the] revelation of [the] mystery, as to which silence has been kept in [the] times of the ages, but which has now been made manifest, and by prophetic scriptures, according to commandment of the eternal God, made known for the obedience of faith of all nations (Rom. 16:25-26).

The "prophetic scriptures" are, of course, New Testament writings. "Silence has been kept in [the] times of the ages." Either silence was kept or it was not. Covenant theologians are, of course, adept at making silence mean something less than silence, else they would have to give up the false notion that the OT prophets spoke about the church. The fact is, simply bowed to in heart, this Scripture is a great pointer to dispensational truth. And then there is this:

> . . . the mystery which [has been] hidden from ages and generations, but has now been made manifest to his saints (Col. 1:26).

The mystery was hidden from ages (the time periods) and from generations (from peoples). Of course -- since "silence has been kept in [the] times of the ages." The mystery was hidden. Where?

> . . . and to enlighten all [with the knowledge of] what is the administration of the mystery hidden throughout the ages in God (Eph. 3:9).

It was not hidden in Scripture. Types of the bride are not

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82. (...continued)

> place in his thinking (and I assume it was very early), it led him into a very different understanding of the Christian life than most believers possessed. Suddenly, for him the universal Church was not so much the elect company of the regenerate living on earth, as it was those united to Christ in heaven (*op. cit.*, p. 86).

Well, that is what the quotation from JND tells us; and, it was in the period of convalescence (Dec. 1826 - Jan. (or Feb.) 1827) that JND saw what is here called "Darby's dualism."

To say that the Church is the regenerate on earth would include all from Adam onward (since all saints are born anew) and that appears to be Mr. Henzel's view. He goes on to (rightly) point out that JND's view resulted in a new view of the world and the Christian's place in it. Indeed; and this is quite unpalatable to many Christians and seems to me to be at the root of the rejection of the Christian's true place as heavenly. It would be well for all of us to enter properly into our Lord's statement, spoken anticipatively of Christians:

> . . . the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, as I am not of the world (John 17:14).

Part of the title of Dr. Williams' book is, *This World is not My Home*. Ought not the Christian to acknowledge that such is actually the case, and walk in this world accordingly? -- instead of Judaizing, as Dr. Williams and Mr. Henzel do?

83. *Letters* 3:298.

prophecies or speaking about the church. Types can only be seen when the truth is revealed; and, there are no types of the body (of Christ). Eternally purposed, the mystery was hidden in God until it was revealed in the NT. [84]

If these Scriptures are bowed to in our hearts, rather than spiritually alchemizing them into (false) consistency with the notion that the OT prophets spoke about the church, they are powerful pointers to the distinct place of the Christian and the true church. He will then see that the OT prophets need to be interpreted literally (with all due allowance for figurative, symbolic, and apocalyptic language), [85] of Israel's future under Messiah, when all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:26; Isa. 66:8; Ezek. 20, etc., etc). It is instructive that the recovery of these truths we have been considering proceeded in just such a way: the Christian's and the church's place was seen, the rapture anticipated with no intervening events, and Israel's future place. So, literal interpretation was not the cause of the recovery of these truths.

Such Scriptures, then, point to the distinct place that the church has, the place that was seen by J. N. Darby in 1827.

And even if that period of convalescence was one year later, that does not alter what JND understood during the convalescence period.

Conclusion

We have seen a number of things that point to a convalescent period of Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 (or perhaps Feb.) during which JND, quickened some six and one half years earlier, now experienced the deliverance spoken of in Rom. 7 and was brought into the good of Rom. 8. He saw his place as Christ's place before the Father, in Christ; that the church was heavenly; that Israel was earthly; the coming of the Lord without intermediate events, i.e., the pre-Rev. 4 rapture of the saints; elements of dispensational truth; the fall and ruin of the church, etc.

In Section 3 we will see that JND left the Church of England in 1827 (not 1834 as historians keep repeating from one another), and that the breaking of bread began in late Nov. 1827 or early Dec. 1827. All the facts reviewed, and those to be reviewed, show that JND's period of convalescence from an injury was Dec. 1826 - Jan. (or Feb.) 1827.

An objection has been raised against this dating because of a statement in *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:185:

> I believe at my deliverance from bondage in 1827-8, God opened up certain truths needed for the church. I believe that, though holding and seeking to help souls by them, for what was called peace and union I swamped them, had not faith to make them good in service.

Using this against many other of his statements, this has been taken to mean that the period of convalescence was not in Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827, but rather in Dec. 1827 - Jan. 1828. But since such an understanding of it contradicts what we have seen so far, and will see below, it would be proper to understand that his experience of deliverance occurred in Jan. 1827 and he merely connected with it the great accession of truth realized during 1827 - 1828 as a consequence of that experience: "God opened up certain truths needed for the church" in the 1827-1828 period.

In summary, then, these are among the leading truths that JND was taught of God at this juncture.

> The cross is the end of the world, and it is the starting-point for the church! The goal before her is the coming of Christ. Between the two we have the Supper which connected the two points. These are the three fundamental principles of the church, which I immediately saw to be laid down when I left Nationalism. [86]
>
> What gave rise to the existence of the so-called Plymouth Brethren is the grand truth, the great fact, of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, to form the body of Christ into one; then the coming of the Savior as the continual expectation of the Christian. [87]
>
> What I felt from the beginning, and began with, was this: the Holy Ghost remains, and therefore, the essential principle of unity with His presence for (the fact we are now concerned in) wherever two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them. When this is really sought, there will certainly be blessing by His presence. We have found it so, most sweetly and graciously, who have met separately here. [88]

The importance of these truths, taken as a whole, was later expressed by JND in the following words:

> I am daily more struck with the connection of the great principles on which my mind was exercised by and with God, when I found salvation and peace, and the questions agitated and agitating the world at the present day: the absolute, divine authority and certainty of the Word, as a divine link between us and God, if everything (church and world) went; personal assurance of salvation in a new condition by being in Christ; the church as His body; Christ coming to receive us to Himself; and collaterally with that, the setting up of a new earthly dispensation, from Isaiah 32 (more particularly the end); all this was when laid aside at E. P.'s [89] in 1827; the house character of the assembly on earth (not the fact of the presence of the Spirit) was subsequently. [90]

Note that the truth of Christ's place being his place, and of the true church being heavenly, then of the Lord's coming, then of Israel's earthly, millennial place, is the order of recovery.

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84. The reader may consult *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vols. 1 and 2 (available from the publisher) concerning these Scriptures and how adherents of covenantism try to circumvent the force of such Scriptures.

85. There is a 26 page introduction to the study of prophecy, mainly from W. Kelly, dealing with the language of prophecy, in my *Daniel's 70 Weeks and the Revival of the Roman Empire*, available from the publisher.

86. *Collected Writings* 20:343. He left the national church; i.e., the Church of England.

87. *Collected Writings* 20:305.

88. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:94.

89. Edward Pennefather. He was married to a sister of JND, named Susannah. He was a brilliant lawyer and eventually became Lord Chief Justice of Ireland.

90. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:344, 1863.

Section 3

From the End of the Period of Solitude to the Beginning of Breaking Bread

Mar. 1827 - Nov. 1827

Section three traces the period from J. N. Darby's learning truth while in solitude (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827) until four brethren in Christ began to break bread, on a scriptural basis, near the end of 1827, *at JND's suggestion*. It is shown that he had separated from the Church of England in 1827 before the breaking of bread began. The notion of some of JND's detractors that he left the church of England in 1834 is absurd.

At the end of Chapter 3.2 there is a time-line chart graphically presenting the 1826 - 1827 era of JND's understanding and activities. All considered previously, and through Chapter 3.2 is sufficient to establish the chronology given in the chart.

The material presented in Chapter 3.3 adds evidence for the correctness of this presentation of the 1826 - 1827 events.

Chapter 3.1

Ending the Work in the mountains of Ireland and Separation from the Church of England

JND Left the Work in the Mountains of Ireland - Oct 1827

In *Letters* 3:297, 298, JND wrote:

> As soon as I was ordained, I went among the poor Irish mountaineers, in a wild and uncultivated district, where I remained two years and three months, working as best I could . . .
>
> An accident happened which laid me aside for a time.

Letters 3:297-298 speaks of the period of two years and three months (see the time-line chart at the close of Chapter 3.2), during which JND was laid aside and he made much advance in understanding, as was shown. No doubt, this is the period concerning which he speaks of his "deliverance" [91] in a number of places. But the point here is, when did this ministry of evangelization in the mountains of Ireland begin? He was ordained "deacon" in Aug. 1825 and ordained "priest" in Feb. 1826. To fit a scheme of delay by one year into the things we have been discussing, T.C.F. Stunt [92] chose to begin the two years and three months with JND's ordination as "priest," thus ending the period in May 1828, so as to place JND's accident in Dec. 1827 -- and (necessarily) to claim J. G. Bellett's letter was misdated from Jan. 31, 1828 to Jan. 31, 1827 (as it properly was, in fact, dated). [93]

91. This is erroneously referred to as a "'quickening' experience," by T. F. C. Stunt, *From Awakening to Secession, Radical Evangelicals in Switzerland and Britain 1815-35,* Edingurgh: T&T Clark, 2000, p. 370. JND did not mean "quickening" when he spoke of "deliverance," because "deliverance" is something an already quickened soul experiences.

92. *Ibid.,* p. 171.

93. Referring to J. G. Bellett's letter, and some other matters, he says on p. 171

(I have bold-faced some words):

> [L. M. Bellett], *Recollections*, 27. This letter was apparently received when {J. G. Bellett's brother} was at Brandon. It is dated Jan. 31, 1827, but Bellett had probably written the previous year's date, as one does, at the end of January. The year must be 1828 for several reasons. First, George moved to Brandon in 1827 and probably after 31 January ([D. Bellett], *Memoir of G. Bellett*, 64). Secondly the evidence for Darby's 1827-8 convalescence is overwhelming. His references to 'two years and three months' after his ordination (*Letters*, iii: 297) and '1827-8' (*Letters* i:185) are explicit. Lastly, F. W. Newman saw him on

(continued...)

93. (...continued)

> crutches in ***late*** 1827 (see below, ch. 8, p. 206).

His view is, therefore, that JND was not ministering among the Irish mountaineers between Aug. 1825 (when ordained deacon) and Feb. 1826 (when ordained priest). If he may be permitted to assume that, may I be permitted to assume otherwise? Let us consider his second point first. On p. 7 the reader will find some comments on the two years and three months period, during which the accident took place. The conclusion reached is that the accident took place *within* the two years and three months period, rather than the accident occurring subsequently to that period.

His view assumes that J. G. Bellett misdated his letter. May I be permitted to assume that JGB dated it correctly?

Concerning the "1827-8" (*Letters* 1:185) being "explicit," so is "We began to meet in Dublin, Ireland, 1827-28" (*Letters* 1:515, 516) explicit. That really is more explicit since the remark in *Letters* 1:185 may be taken in a general, comprehensive way, as stating the general getting free of so much that had bound him. Beginning to meet in 1827 **could not be so *if*** the convalescent period was Dec. 1827 - Jan. 1828. Besides, much else has been brought to bear in support of his deliverance in the Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 epoch, and more will be brought to bear as we proceed. I suggest that the evidence points to the earlier period (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827, if not Feb.) for the convalescence.

Regarding his point concerning J. G. Bellett's brother and the town of Bandon, in his index, on p. 363, under the entry "Bellett, George," TFCS indicates that George was "curate of Bandon (1827-1835)." In *Recollections of J. G. Bellett*, where J. G. Bellett's letter dated Jan. 31, 1827 to his brother George is found, JGB wrote:

> MY DEAREST GEORGE, - At times it is only the assurance that God is with you that makes me feel at all happy in our separation (p. 27).

To this sentence there is a footnote by JGB's daughter that reads, "My uncle was still at Bandon." Regarding that footnote, a friendly critic of my dating said to me, "'My uncle was *still* at Bandon' (not, had just moved there). You do not speak of someone as *still* being somewhere if they had only just arrived." The thrust of this is that the accident may have beenin Dec. 1827, not Dec. 1826. The argument hangs upon the word *still*.

George Bellett's curacy at Bandon lasted into 1835, and so he was *still* there in 1835.

TFCS thinks George probably moved to Bandon after Jan. 31, 1827. Let us assume that it is so. Perhaps the reader will bear with me for not concluding for an accident in Dec. 1827 based on ambiguous use of the word *still*. Possibly, the separation from his brother George that JGB refers to was being felt by him already on account of an impending, distant, curacy for George when JGB wrote the letter -- his brother having already gone to Bandon to make arrangements, and/or for whatever other reasons, and was *still* there for his purpose when JGB wrote to him. He was *still* there when JGB wrote to him. He would subsequently return, and then he would move to Bandon. How is it to be positively known that JGB's daughter meant more

(continued...)

Separation from the Church of England - Sept. 1827

THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF TRUTH

The truths we have been tracing led to JND's separation from the Church of England, as he says in the following extracts. Notice also, once again, the interconnectedness of the various truths which were made good to his soul.

> It was the unity of the assembly of God, of those who are united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, which forced me to leave the Anglican church, and prevented me from joining any other; and I have found in the word of God all the directions needed for walking according to the will of God, amid the ruin and confusion which surrounds us. I own then every true Christian as a member of the body of Christ, but I cannot walk with them when they do not walk according to the will of God, according to the word. [94]

> We began to meet in Dublin, Ireland, 1827-28. It was not dissatisfaction with the apostolic succession of the English national episcopal body [that led to the separation]. I had found peace to my own soul by finding my oneness with Christ, that it was no longer myself as in the flesh before God, but that I was in Christ, accepted in the Beloved, and sitting in heavenly places in Him. This led me directly to the apprehension of what the true church of God was, those that were united to Christ in heaven: I at once felt that all the parish was not that. The tract I then published {in 1828} was no attack upon anybody, but [was written] upon the unity of the church of Christ. When I looked around to find this unity I found it nowhere: if I joined one set of Christians I did not belong to another. The church, God's church, was broken up, and the members scattered among various self-formed bodies. I found membership in scripture was not membership of a voluntary association on earth, but membership of Christ, a hand, a foot, etc. And as the Holy Ghost had formed one body on descending on the day of Pentecost (1 Cor. 12), so ministry was those whom He qualified for such or such a service. So in Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4:10. At the same time Acts 2 and 4 made me feel how dreadfully far we had all got from the true effect of His presence. I found, however, that wherever two or three were met in Christ's name He would be in our midst, and acted on the promise with three other brethren and the wife of one of them; and never thought to go beyond thus meeting the need of our consciences and hearts according to the word. God was doing a work I had no idea of myself, and it spread over the world . . . [95]

In connection with his leaving the Church of England, he later wrote:

> The cross is the end of the world, and it is the starting-point for the church! The goal before her is the coming of Christ. Between the two we have the Lord's Supper which connects the two points. These are the three fundamental principles of the church, which I immediately saw to be laid down when I left nationalism. [96]

I take "when" to mean 'at the time.' He also wrote:

> It was not the details of the sacramental and priestly system which drove me from the Establishment, deadly as they are in their nature. It was that I was looking for the body of Christ (which was not there, but in all the parish perhaps not one converted person); and collaterally because I believed in a divinely appointed ministry. If Paul had come, he could not have preached, he had never been ordained; if a wicked ordained man, he had his title and must be recognized as a minister; the truest minister of Christ unordained could not. It was a system contrary to what I found in scripture. It was clear, a multitude of sects did not furnish the one body I looked for. [97]

J. G. BELLETT'S ACCOUNT

Previously we noted that in a letter dated Jan. 31, 1827, J. G. Bellett said he would see JND the following Friday and on that occasion found that JND had already learned much, independently of what was transpiring in London. Indeed, JND was greatly in advance of what was being learned in London.

Following J. G. Bellett's visit to JND in Feb. 1827, both JND and J. G. Bellett were still connected with the Church of England. J. G. Bellett's daughter's opinion was (without pin-pointing it exactly) that it "must have been about this time that my father withdrew from the Communion of the Church of England." [98] Probably it was not quite yet. J. G. Bellett himself says:

> I continued, however, in Dublin, and he {JND} was more generally in the County of Wicklow, but he had introduced me to dear F. Hutchinson, whose memory is very dear to me and much honored by me. He and I found we had much in common. Dissatisfied as I was, we went occasionally together to the dissenting chapels, but we had not much sympathy with the tone prevalent; the sermons we heard had generally, perhaps, less of the simplicity of Christ in them than what might be heard in the pulpits of the Established Church, and the things of God were dealt with more as for the intellect and by the intellect than, as we judged, suited the proper cravings of the renewed and spiritual mind. I believe I may say this for him as well as for myself, so we held on, loosely as it was, by the Established Church still. [99]

One day in 1827 J. G. Bellett was talking with A. N. Groves.

> Walking one day with him, as we were passing down Lower Pembroke Street, he said to me, "This, I doubt not, is the mind of God concerning us, that we should come together in all simplicity as disciples, not waiting on any pulpit or

93. (...continued)
than that in the footnote using the word *still* there?

What this is about is to get rid of the date on JGB's letter, which, if actually dated correctly (**and JGB's daughter did not question it**), it is clear that JND's accident took place in Jan. 1826.

Below, I will comment on F. W. Newman's seeing JND on crutches and how that fits into the proper understanding of the dates. Perhaps JND's period of being "laid aside" extended through Feb. 1827 -- at any rate, it would be no surprise if he used crutches for a considerable time afterward.

94. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:387.

95. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:515, 516.

96. *Collected Writings* 20: 343note.

97. *Collected Writings* 14:293.

98. *Recollections of the Late J. G. Bellett*, p. 27.

99. Letter from Mr. Bellett to Mr. J. McAllister, *Interesting Reminiscences* . . ., p. 3.

minister, but trusting that the Lord would edify us together, by ministering as He pleased and saw good from the midst of ourselves." At the moment he spoke these words I was assured my soul had got the right idea, and that moment -- I remember it as if it was yesterday, and could point you out the place -- it was the birth place of my mind, dear James, may I so speak as a brother. [100]

Edward Cronin had been by profession an Independent, and a member of York Street, but his mind at the same time was under a like influence, I may say, with us all. In a private room he had the Lord's Supper with, I believe, three others, while I was going still to Sandford Chapel and J. N. Darby was still in county Wicklow as a clergyman. In the summer of 1829 {1827} our family was at Kingstown, and dear F. Hutchinson at Bray. We saw each other occasionally, and spoke of the things of the Lord, but where he went on a Sunday at that time I cannot tell. I attended the Scotch Church at Kingstown, where all who were understood to be new-born were welcome. But on returning to Dublin in the November of that year, F. Hutchinson was quite prepared for communion in the name of the Lord with all, whosoever they might be, who loved Him in sincerity, and proposed to have a room in his house in Fitzwilliam Square for that purpose. He did so, designing, however, so to have it that if any were disposed to attend the services in the Parish church or Dissenting chapels they might not be hindered; and he also prescribed a certain line of things as to the service of prayer, singing and teaching that should be found among us each day. E. Cronin was prepared for this fully. I joined, but not, I think at all with the same liberty and decision of mind. Several others also were ready, and just at this time we first knew William Stokes.

Thus we continued from November, 1829. {1827}. [101]

Here, as elsewhere, J. G. Bellett has assigned the wrong year (in this case 1829 should be 1827) to certain events (unless someone tampered with the dates in his reminiscences before printing them). Notice that he assigned November as the month when the breaking of bread began. It was near the end of 1827 that the breaking of bread began as we shall see in Chapter 3.2. Some of the histories and articles err by following J. G. Bellett's two year errors instead of what JND *repeatedly* indicated. [102] At any rate, J. G. Bellett's account provides us with a little idea of what was transpiring after his visit with JND in early Feb. 1827. It was between then and when the breaking of bread began at the end of the year that JND left the Church of England.

WHEN IN 1827 DID JND SEPARATE FROM THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND?

It appears that for a time after the period of solitude (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827) he continued in ministry to the Irish mountaineers among whom he had been serving since he was ordained deacon in Aug. 1825. The reference to the two years and three months refers back to his ordination as deacon in Aug. 1825. This shows that he left his ministry in the mountains in Nov. 1827. It was perhaps two months before this that he left the Church of England.

In a letter dated Feb. 27, 1901, W. Kelly said that JND left the Church of England in 1827. Some other references that show 1827 was the year are:

I have been walking in this way for fifty years . . . [103]

My idea is that he is aiming at Christians gathering together without knowing where God will lead them -- just as I did thirty-nine years ago, only I had got the idea of the church, one by its union with Christ. [104]

I have worked unceasingly forty-nine years. I was set to it as positive ministry four years before: I preached nothing but Christ, and had not peace, and had no business to be in any public ministry. [105]

The 49 years refers to 1827 and the other "four" to 1823. [106] Speaking a little more generally, on Feb. 20, 1869 he wrote:

I left the Establishment more than forty years ago, because I did not think it the church of God. [107]

It was in Sept. 1827 that he resigned. In 1876 he wrote:

We cannot mix ourselves up with evil and testify against those who are in it. But grace and patience are needful. "If thou take forth," God said to Jeremiah (chap. 15), "the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth." This verse acted powerfully upon my mind fifty years ago, when I began; for in a few days it will be fifty years since I left the camp . . .

Belleville, September 21st. [108]

F. Gill has directed our attention to Sept. of 1827:

Evidently here Mr. Darby erred by a year, but his "in a few days" clearly identifies the time of his withdrawal from what he viewed as unscriptural with the end of September; the year, as indicated by other references, was 1827. [109]

The evidence, then, points to Sept. 1827 for the resignation of his curacy. [110] Speaking of when he left the Church of

100. This suggestion appears to be the basis of the claim that A. N. Groves was "the founder of the movement." He was not at the first breaking of bread (which was proposed by JND) and it is difficult to ascertain when he first broke bread with the others. See Appendix 1.
101. *Interesting Reminiscences* . . ., pp. 5, 6.
102. F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 29. Even E. E. Whitfield in his article "John Nelson Darby" p. 12, in *Chief Men Among the Brethren*, errs in making 1828 the year in which JND "completed his separation from the Establishment by 'breaking bread' in Dublin . . . ," though he correctly has 1827 as the year JND "relinquished his parochial position." These and other writers had the statements of JND that 1827 was the year as well as having the account by A. Miller, *The Brethren*, p. 9, and W. Kelly's statement quoted above.
103. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:386, March 5, 1877.
104. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:451, June 1866.
105. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:376, Aug. 20, 1876.
106. He had been called to the Irish Chancery Bar in 1822, but did not practice and a year later gave up the idea of being a barrister. See W. G. Turner, *John Nelson Darby*, p. 13. That brings us to 1823 when he must have been placed in some kind of ministry, though admitted to Deacon's Orders in 1825.
107. *Collected Writings* 20:288. See also 14:293 as to why he left.
108. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:379.
109. F. Gill, *Matthew 18:20*, pp. 108, 109, note 6, has directed attention to these, and other, remarks by JND concerning the commencement time.
110. *The New Schaff - Herzog Religious Encyclopedia*, article, "John Nelson Darby," p. 356, has the correct year, 1827. S. Cheetham, *A History of the*

(continued...)

England JND wrote:

> When I left it, I published the tract on "The Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ." [111]

This does not mean *immediately* upon leaving, but states the order. He published that paper in 1828. He left in 1827. Concerning this paper, another writer said:

> . . . "Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ." (Dublin, 1828). This is as fresh and distinct as possible, and in a practical point of view. It would be impossible for any godly soul who accepted that paper as a just application of divine truth to the actual state of Christendom, to continue a churchman or a dissenter. And in fact neither the writer nor those who felt with him as to this remained at that date in the denominations of which they had previously been members or ministers. [112]

It is an interesting phenomenon that writers on this history will not believe JND concerning when he left the Church of England. He stated that he left before he wrote that 1828 paper. And with the evidence before us it is an astonishing phenomenon that historians continue to assert that JND left the church of England in 1834.

JND LEFT THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND BEFORE THE BREAKING OF BREAD BEGAN

There are those who say JND left the church of England in 1834. That is absurd and sounds tendentious.[113] It seems like a way to have JND appear to be a liar about the beginnings in order to make another absurd claim, namely, that A. N. Groves is "the founder of the brethren.' Here is what JND plainly stated:

> At first, when I left the Episcopal church {Sept. 1827}, there was no one with whom I could walk; I was led on and guided simply by the word of God. Afterwards four of us met together {late Nov. or early Dec. 1827}; I thought only of satisfying my conscience according to the word of God. The work extended, and that everywhere, and I am deeply convinced that it is a testimony which God Himself has raised up for these last days. I have been walking this way for fifty years; I have seen weakness in myself, and mistakes, I do not doubt, in the way of walking; but I have never doubted for a moment that it is the work of God. But it is needful that each one should be convinced of this for himself by the word of God. It is a path of faith, and faith only can sustain the soul in this path; but I know that the peace, the approval of God are there; and those who walk by faith are made happy by them. [114]

Writing this in 1877 indicates that he was walking this way in 1827 (1877 - 50 = 1827).

The fact is that he left the Church of England before the breaking of bread began and that is most certainly long before 1834. In a letter of June 1866 he wrote:

> My idea is that he is aiming at Christians gathering together without knowing where God will lead them -- just as I did thirty nine years ago, only I had got the idea of the church, one by its union with Christ. [115]

Note that 1866 - 39 = 1827.

Writing in Feb. 20, 1869, he said:

> I left the Establishment more than forty years ago, because I did not think it the church of God {i.e., what represented the church of God}. [116]

Note the interesting remarks of James Patrick Callahan:

> To the chagrin of Darby's devotees, it is very difficult to determine at exactly what point Darby left the Established Church.

In a footnote to this remark he wrote:

> It is embarrassing for those who view Darby as *the* founder of the Brethren movement to correlate his supposed leadership in the first meetings of the Brethren in the late 1820s with his break with the Established church sometime in the early 1830s. For a discussion of these matters see Rowdon, *Origins*, 43-53; and Embly, "Early Development," 220-21. [117]

Personally, I am not conscious of ever having had any chagrin or embarrassment because I believed what the "exclusive" writers from the 1800s and 1900s had said about these things, and they were quite correct. For example, W. Kelly commenting on JND's publication of *Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ*, in 1828, wrote:

> . . . the Collected Writings of Mr. D., now in course of publication show that from the earliest days of the movement till now the same principles were asserted, the same object was avowed. Take the very first part as a witness, and the second article, "Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ." (Dublin, 1828.) This is as fresh and distinct as possible, and in a practical point of view. It would be impossible for any godly soul who accepted that paper as a just application of divine truth to the actual state of Christendom, to continue a churchman or a dissenter. And in fact neither the writer nor those who

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110. (...continued)
Christian Church Since the Reformation, London: MacMillan, 1907, p. 306, rightly said, "John Nelson Darby, a clergyman, left the Church in 1827 under deep religious convictions and set himself to do the work of an evangelist without connection with any Church."
111. *Collected Writings* 2:36.
112. {W. Kelly?} *The Bible Treasury* 6:255.
113. T.C.F. Stunt, *From Awakening to Secession, Radical Evangelicals in Switzerland and Britain 1815-35,* Edingurgh: T&T Clark, 2000., p. 370, is the latest of Open Brethren to repeat this absurdity, saying: "finally seceded (1834)." In connection with his treatment of J. N. Darby, I suggest it is tendentious. Another example of an absurd statement is that in the 1847 controversy over B. W. Newton's evil doctrine on the Person of Christ, BWN "withdrew tracts unreservedly" (p. 388). It is *preposterous* for anyone to say so. In *Precious Truths* . . . vol. 2 it is demonstrated that BWN withdrew ***one*** point only, and it is documented that during the rest of his life he held to his wicked libel of the Lord Jesus that He was at an "unspeakable circumstantial distance" from God. Why, in the *Fry Ms*. BWN himself says that he continued to teach his doctrine in a modified form so it was easier to understand. Has animus against JND blinded his adversaries?

In Appendix 2 of this volume the reader will find more evidence of B. W. Newton's evil teaching where a letter of BWN's to W. Lancelot Holland, written in 1896, wickedly speaks of Christ's "unspeakable *circumstantial* distance from God" during His life, etc.

114. Cp. this with TFCS's statement: that JND "finally seceded (1834)."
115. *Letters* 1:451.
116. *Collected Writings* 20:288.
117. *Primitivist Piety, The Ecclesiology of the Early Plymouth Brethren*: Latham:The Scarecrow Press, p. 82, 1996.

> felt with him as to this remained at that date in the denominations of which they had previously been members or ministers. [118]

Apparently these writers consider JND a liar. In his article, *Teulon's Plymouth Brethren,* W. Kelly correctly stated:

> . . . Mr. Darby who relinquished his clerical position in 1827, and published his "Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ" in 1828. [119]

Excursus on F. W. Newman Meeting JND in Sept. 1827

Even though F. W. Newman [120] arrived in Sept. 1827 at Edward Pennefather's house to be engaged as a tutor, T. F. C. Stunt wants it to be much later in 1827 before he met JND. [121] So, because F. W. Newman saw JND on crutches, he thinks that fact proves that F. W. Newman saw JND just about the time the accident occurred. In that case, he claims, the accident occurred in Dec. 1827, rather than in Dec. 1826 (the actual time). Thus, he wrote:

> When Newman arrived in September 1827 . . . From Frank's later autobiographical account, we know how Darby, who came to convalesce in his sister's home soon after Newman's arrival, 'rapidly gained an immense sway over me.' [122]

J. G. Bellett's letter dated Jan. 31, 1827 indicates that it was in early Dec.1826 that JND's accident occurred. TFCS assumes that F. W. Newman did not meet JND between his arrival in Sept.1827 and on through Nov. 1827. His statement that F. W. Newman saw JND in "***late*** 1827" (see footnote above) must mean F. W. Newman did not see JND until Dec. 1827 (because the accident happened in a December) -- but this is an assumption to fit his time-line of events. To bolster his time-line, we previously noted, he *assumes* that J. G. Bellett had misdated the year of his letter to his brother George Bellett.

First of all JND was laid aside, as we saw. The implication is that he was not able to be abroad on account of the severe knee injury. Likely, he may have been laid aside beyond the date of J. G. Bellett's letter (Jan. 31, 1827). With such a severe injury it takes much time to normalize, and sometimes never completely. JND refers to using crutches while in the house convalescing. [123] Are we compelled to suppose when he was able to leave the house he did not use crutches anymore for some time? I suggest that F. W. Newman's seeing JND on crutches indicates how serious the accident was that occurred in Dec. 1826, regarding which he was "laid aside" for two months, or more, finally beginning to get abroad some in March 1827, and that in Sept. 1827, when F. W. Newman arrived at E. Pennefather's house, JND was still using crutches.

Concerning JND, Marigold Freeman-Atwood, wrote:

> He spent the best part of 1827 convalescing at the home of his much older sister, Susan Pennefather, a godly woman whose spirituality doubtless reinforced his own. He recovered completely from his disability . . . [124]

I would think that there was a considerable period of physical difficulty following the two (or three) months of retirement. She goes on to state that JND resigned his priesthood in 1827 (though a few other dates given are not accurate).

T. C. F. Stunt has called attention to two letters in manuscript, written by F. W. Newman, one dated Oct. 8, 1827 to J. H. Newman, and the other to C. P. Golightly, dated Oct. 25, 1827. In the first of these letters F. W. Newman wrote:

> not *merely* to avoid the pomps and vanities, or *merely* judge of actions by an opposite rule; but it is to feel *the time is short*, and to be *looking for* the Lord Jesus from heaven. [125]

T. C. F. Stunt's time-line of events would prevent him from seeing the influence of JND here, but in the true time-line it fits in well, showing how soon he was influenced by JND.

In the letter of F. W. Newman to C. P. Golightly, dated Oct. 25, 1827, he speaks of the new friends he has found, and that he has higher thoughts of a spiritual walk. He remarks upon A. N. Groves and a paper that he wrote (likely, *Christian Devotedness*) and that he wants to go as a missionary to Persia with A. N. Groves. He goes on to remark that he had seen "several eminent Christians here." He has awakened to the thought "that the time is short & is hastening on to the day of the Lord." He did not mention the

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118. *The Bible Treasury* 6:255.

119. *The Bible Treasury* 14:269 (April 1883).

120. "This was Francis William Newman, the younger brother by four or five years of the more celebrated (not, I think, the abler) J. H. Newman, the Cardinal. The younger Newman was a man of prodigious versatility. He took a double first at Oxford, became fellow of Balliol, and was afterwards Professor of Latin at the University College, London, and finally professor of Political Economy at Oxford; and his writings cover an even wider range than these achievements might have led us to expect. Fifty years ago he was a recognized leader of a phase of strongly theistic free thought, and it was chiefly his books that gave rise to the brilliant polemic, Henry Rogers' *Eclipse of Faith.* It is in the work that traces the evolution of free thought in his mind that his description of Darby, under the designation of 'the Irish clergyman' occurs" (W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 45).

I. G. Sievreking, *Memoirs and Letters of Francis W. Newman*, London: Kegan Paul, 1909, remarked that "Many thought that his intellect was superior to that of his better-known brother," i.e., Cardinal J. H. Newman.

121. B. W. Newton reminisced that "while I was at Oxford and we were friends, F. W. Newman went to Ireland (1827) and there made the acquaintance of John Darby . . .," *Fry MS*, p. 61.

122. *From Awakening to Secession, Radical Evangelicals in Switzerland and Britain 1815-35,* Edingurgh: T&T Clark, 2000, p. 206.

123. *Letters* 3:298.

124. *Leap Castle a Place and its People*, Norwich: Michael Russell, p. 80 (2001). She does not cite documentation for her statement, but it is quite consistent with the dating evidence. JND had another injury to his knee that he mentioned in two places (*Letters* 1:265; 3:318). Perhaps he had a limp from his first accident to the knee.

125. *From Awakening to Secession*, pp. 207, 208. TFCS has called our attention to these letters. The letter quoted is in the Lambeth Palace Library. The other one that he refers to, an Oct. 8, 1827 letter from F. W. Newman to his brother, J. H. Newman, is in the Birmingham Oratory Archives, in the F. W. Newman file. I have a copy of each of them.

name of J. N. Darby, but the mention of A. N. Groves is interesting because he mentions him also in his *Phases of Faith* following what he has to say about J. N. Darby:

> About this time I heard of another remarkable man, whose name was already before the public, -- Mr. Groves, -- who had written a tract called Christian devotedness, on the duty of devoting all worldly property for the cause of Christ, and utterly renouncing the attempts to amass money. In pursuance of this, he was going to Persia as a teacher of Christianity [126]

"About this time I heard of another remarkable man." The remarkable man he had just spent pages speaking of was J. N. Darby. A. N. Groves was "another remarkable man."

JND, having had the accident in Dec. 1826, and still being on crutches in Sept.-Oct. 1827, would have met F. W. Newman at the home of Susannah Pennefather, JND's older sister, in whose house he convalesced.

F. W. Newman wrote about his relationship to JND at this time. He called JND "the Irish clergyman" in the following citation:

> After taking my degree, I became a Fellow of Balliol College; and the next year I accepted an invitation to Ireland, and there became private tutor for fifteen months in the house of one now deceased, whose name I would gladly mention for honor and affection; -- but I withhold my pen. While he repaid me munificently for my services, he behaved towards me as a father, or indeed as an elder brother, and instantly made me feel as a member of his family. His great talents, high professional standing, nobleness of heart and unfeigned piety, would have made him a most valuable counsellor to me: but he was too gentle, too unassuming, too modest; he looked to be taught by his juniors, and sat at the feet of one whom I proceed to describe.
>
> This was a young relative of his, -- a most remarkable man, -- who rapidly gained an immense sway over me. I shall henceforth call him "the Irish clergyman." His "bodily presence" was indeed "weak!" A fallen cheek, a bloodshot eye, crippled limbs resting on crutches, a seldom shaven beard, a shabby suit of clothes and a generally neglected person, drew at first pity, with wonder to see such a figure in a drawing-room. It was currently reported that a person in Limerick offered him a halfpenny, mistaking him for a beggar; and if not true, the story was yet well invented. This young man had taken high honors in Dublin University and had studied for the bar, where under the auspices of his eminent kinsman he had excellent prospects; but his conscience would not allow him to take a brief, lest he should be selling his talents to defeat justice. With keen logical powers, he had warm sympathies, solid judgment of character, thoughtful tenderness, and total self-abandonment. He before long took Holy Orders, and became an indefatigable curate in the mountains of Wicklow. Every evening {before the accident} he sallied forth to teach in the cabins, and roving far and wide over mountain and amid bogs, was seldom home before midnight. By such exertions his strength was undermined, and he so suffered in his limbs that not lameness only, but yet more serious results were feared. He did not fast on purpose, but his long walks through wild country and indigent people inflicted on him much severe deprivation: moreover, as he ate whatever food offered itself, -- food unpalatable and often indigestible to him, his whole frame might have vied in emaciation with a monk of La Trappe.
>
> Such a phenomenon intensely excited the poor Romanists, who looked on him as a genuine "saint" of the ancient breed. The stamp of heaven seemed to them clear in a frame so wasted by austerity, so superior to worldly pomp, and so partaking in all their indigence. That a dozen such men would have done more to convert all Ireland to Protestantism, than the whole apparatus of the Church Establishment, was ere long my conviction; though I was at first offended by his apparent affectation of a mean exterior. But I soon understood, that in no other way could he gain equal access to the lower and lowest orders, and that he was moved not by asceticism, nor by ostentation, but by a self-abandonment fruitful of consequences. [127]

Conclusion

Added to the evidence that we have considered that JND's period of being "laid aside" was Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 (if not Feb. also), his withdrawal from the Church of England in 1827 indicates that the period of being "laid aside" preceded this. F. W. Newman having seen him on crutches, rather than proving otherwise, is quite in accordance with an expectation of a long period until full recovery was reached.

126. Page 24. He went with A. N. Groves in Sept. 1830.

127. *Phases of Faith*, pp. 17, 18.

Chapter 3.2

Holy Separation Led to Scriptural Assembling: *Late Nov. or Early Dec. 1827*

Before we begin, attention is called to the fact that Edward Cronin, who was at the first meeting for the breaking of bread with JND and the two others (A. N. Groves not being there), lived as long as JND and did not contradict JND's account of this, including that it took place in 1827.

When Did the Breaking of Bread Begin?

A. Miller wrote:

> In the winter of 1827-1828, four christian men, who had for some time been exercised as to the condition of the entire professing church, agreed, after much conference and prayer, to come together on Lord's Day morning for the breaking of bread, as the early Christians did, counting on the Lord to be with them, namely, Mr. Darby, Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Cronin, Mr. Bellett, and Mr. Hutchinson. Their first meeting was held in the home of Mr. Hutchinson, No. 9, Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin. [128]

From the following letter, F. Gill suggested [129] that JND commenced breaking bread in Dec. 1827, since JND wrote this in Dec. 1877 (a letter of J. G. Bellett places the commencement in a November).

> I have the fullest persuasion that the testimony we have is God's testimony for the last days -- the gospel Paul preached, brought out to light -- what I never suspected when I began in this city, just fifty years ago now. I sought to walk for my own conscience as the word taught me. [130]

Elsewhere JND said:

> We began to meet in Dublin, Ireland, 1827-28. [131]

Thus, he began breaking bread in Dec. 1827 (or Nov. 1827 at the earliest) -- after he separated from the Church of England in Sept. 1827. In one letter he mentioned this sequence of events:

> . . . when I left the Episcopal church, there was no one with whom I could walk; I was led on and guided simply by the word of God. Afterwards four of us met together; I thought only of satisfying my conscience according to the word of God. [132]

JND neither approved of the Church of England, which he later said was really the world in its constitution, nor dissenting bodies, because their principles of association did not meet the test of the Word of God. At JND's proposal (see below) the above four men and one woman began to break bread in Nov. or Dec. 1827.

> **That the breaking of bread began in Nov. or Dec. 1827 shows that JND's accident did not occur in Dec. 1827.**

In the citation below, the words in brackets are annotations by W. Kelly in his own copy of W. B. Neatby's, *History* . . ., (p. 17). Finding fault with A. Miller's much more correct account, W. B. Neatby wrote:

> . . . but the idea conveyed by that narrative, that this particular meeting became a nucleus round which

128. *The Brethren* . . ., p. 9.
129. *Matthew 18:20*, p. 108.
130. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:423; Dublin, Dec. 19, 1877.
131. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:515; 1868. See also 1:524.

132. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:386. In J. G. Bellett's letter of reminiscences to J. McAllister, some dates are in error by two years (as was pointed out by F. Gill, *Matthew 18:20*, p. 109, note 21) which has given a handle to W. B. Neatby and others who are hostile to JND, to impugn his integrity. However, once the two year errors are seen, that very letter supports the Dec. 1827 date. J. G. Bellett wrote:

> In a private room he {E. Cronin} had the Lord's Supper with, I believe, three others, while I was going still to Sandford chapel and J. N. Darby was still in county Wicklow as a clergyman. In the summer of 1829 {1827} our family was at Kingstown, and dear F. Hutchinson at Bray. We saw each other occasionally, and spoke of the things of the Lord, but where he went on a Sunday at that time I cannot tell. I attended the Scotch church at Kingstown, where all who were understood to be new-born were welcome, but on returning to Dublin in the November of that year, F. Hutchinson was quite prepared for communion in the name of the Lord with all, whosoever they might be, who loved Him in sincerity, and proposed to have a room in his house in Fitzwilliam Square for that purpose (*Interesting Reminiscences*).

If we take 1829 to be 1827 here then it fits the order of events. In the summer of 1827 JND was still a clergyman. J. G. Bellett left Dublin then. In Sept. 1827, while J. G. Bellett was away, JND left the Church of England. In Nov. 1827, J. G. Bellett returned to Dublin and found F. Hutchinson ready for "communion . . ." At about this point JND suggested they break bread and this commenced in Dec. 1827. Thus, given that 1829 should be 1827 in J. G. Bellett's remeniscences, all falls into place. W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 21, said that "it is difficult to assign the meeting Darby mentions to its proper place in connection with Bellett's detailed annals . . ." I ask, why is it that persons not hostile to JND can assign it properly?

> Brethrenism at large gradually gathered, could scarcely be more erroneous [Not so]. It is evident that Bellett and Hutchinson "held loosely" to the Established Church through the greater part of 1828 . . . [This may be true of H. ? of B.]

In a footnote W. B. Neatby continued his effort against JND:

> Darby's churchmanship did not, in the judgment of such warm friends and supporters as Bellett and Cronin, terminate with the resignation of his curacy. Bellett brings it down to 1834 [This is ? error], when, he says, Darby was "all but detached from the Church of England." [Preaching is not "churchmanship"].

Yes, preaching is not the same thing as churchmanship. The fact that at first JND preached everywhere, and also in some churches, does not prove he was formally attached in some way to the Church of England. It so happens that we have something by JND about this preaching,

> It is very often the question whether the way of doing a particular thing is right. By the manner you may do a great good, or a great deal of evil. Am I to accept the evil in order to do good, or am I to trust the Lord? What God is now doing is separating the precious from the vile; and this is not a matter about which I have no feeling. It is often pressed upon my spirit, Am I to put water in the wine that people may drink it? At first, I did not care where I went -- into a church or elsewhere -- to preach the gospel, or into a Methodist chapel, and so on. I have no principle that directly hinders me, but one day, at Plymouth, they brought me short up, for I had in the vestry to write down who ordained me, and this brought me to a point. There was the question straight out: Am I to accept that, in order to get an opportunity to preach to five thousand people? [133]

Thus, JND continued to preach in the Church of England for a time. [134]

'Who Started the Movement?'

Why, the Spirit of God started this 'movement'! However, as to human instrumentality, we may review the following. In a letter to Prof. Tholuck [135] JND wrote:

> Four persons who were pretty much in the same state of soul as myself, came together to my lodging; we spoke together about these things, and I proposed to them to break bread the following Sunday, which we did. Others then joined us. I left Dublin soon after, but the work immediately began at Limerick, a town in Ireland, and then in other places.
>
> Two years later (1830), I went to Cambridge and Oxford. [136]

The breaking of bread started in Nov. or Dec. 1827. Soon after, he left Dublin and the work at Limerick began (1828). Two years later (1830), he went to Cambridge and Oxford.

> We began to meet in Dublin, Ireland, 1827-28. It was not dissatisfaction with the apostolic succession of the English national episcopal body. I had found peace to my own soul by finding my oneness with Christ, that it was no longer myself as in the flesh before God, but that I was in Christ, accepted in the Beloved, and sitting in heavenly places in Him. This led me directly to the apprehension of what the true church of God was, those that were united to Christ in heaven: I at once felt that all the parish was not that. [137]

Notice that he spoke of the others being "pretty much in the same state of soul as myself." Note also that he did not say that they had developed the same degree of understanding as himself. There is a clue here to a difficulty, for some had been meeting before this, but that had ceased and this indicates a fresh proposal and meeting. More on that point below. JND remarked:

> I was myself the beginning of what the world calls Plymouth brethren [138] though we began in Dublin. The name Plymouth arose from the earliest publications which attracted attention issuing thence, and was so far harmless, as no human name was attached to them; one cannot help the world giving some. The great question is, what the word of God says . . .
>
> We have the promise which first led me to meet, that wherever two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, He is in their midst, only it must be in the unity of the body. [139]

The truth of the one body was understood by JND in 1827

> But these are the two truths brought out in these days, throwing much light on the truth of the first coming. They have been consciously my theme these fifty years and more. They started me in my path of service; the assurance of salvation came with them, and the christian character as of the new creation, "like unto men that wait for their Lord." When man entered into the glory of God consequent on accomplished redemption, the Holy Ghost came down, till He comes to take us up. This connects the hope and the

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133. *Collected Writings* 26:363.

134. In an editorial in *Brethren Archivists & Historical Network Review*, 2:2, Autumn 2003, p. 66, Neil T. R. Dickson wrote:

> The earliest accounts are hard to reconcile and even Darby's own writings fail to give a uniform picture. Open Brethren historians have tended to downplay Darby's role; Exclusives to magnify it. What is certain is that Darby was only fitfully present at first and {it} was a number of years before he finally broke with Anglicism.

The only point I would concede as accurate is "Open Brethren historians have tended to downplay Darby's role; Exclusives to magnify it."

135. The following is a note to JND's French Edition:

Note to the French Edition

> This letter to Prof. Tholuck, found amongst the papers of J. N. D., had not been sent to his correspondent.
>
> There is reason to suppose that the Author, reluctant as to having the appearance of speaking of himself and his work, had

(continued...)

135. (...continued)

> given up the thought of forwarding it. (Perhaps his retention of it was of the Lord, because, had he forwarded it, it may have been lost to the brethren. Ed.) (N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:43).

136. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:301.

137. *Letters* 1:515.

138. ". . . the Plymouth brethren (a name, moreover, which I do not accept) . . .," *Collected Writings* 4:139.

139. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:208, 209.

> power of life and heavenly calling with accomplished redemption: Christ, Man at the right hand of God, is the central point. What set me free in 1827 {Jan.} is still the theme on which my soul dwells, with, I trust, much deeper sense of its importance -- something much nearer to me, but the same truths. And blessed truths they are; and the hope, what a hope! [140]

As we saw above, it was at the suggestion of JND that four persons first began to break bread.

> The beginning of the "Brethren" was not, as he said, the isolated acts of several brethren in various places, and that too without any understanding between them. [141]

According to an old copy of a printed letter by JND entitled "Heart to Heart," the last letter JND wrote to J. G. Bellett included these words:

> Besides the value I had for you, it was not a small thing to me that you, with dear C. {E. Cronin} and H. {F. Hutchinson}, were one of the first four, who with me, through God's grace the fourth, began to break bread in Dublin, what I believe was God's own work: much weakness I own in carrying it out, little faith to make good the power which was and is in the testimony, but God's own testimony I am assured -- in every respect, even as to the gospel to sinners, what He was doing. I knew, for one, in no wise, the bearing and importance of what I was about, though I felt in lowliness we were doing God's work. The more I go on, the more I have seen of the world, the more of Christians, the more I am assured that it was God using us for His testimony at this time. [142]

Could you really believe that JND was lying in this letter to his good friend JGB, *who was present at that first breaking of bread together*?

There is an interesting remark by JND when answering F. Oliver:

> What gave rise to the existence of the so-called Plymouth Brethren is the grand truth, the great fact, of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, to form the body of Christ into one; then the coming of the Savior as the continual expectation of the Christian. [143]

* * * * *

Note the order: church truth first, then the Lord's coming. At this point, those used to (erroneously) hearing that A. N. Groves was "the founder of the movement" will be wondering where he fits in. That is discussed in Appendix 1.

Did JND Join a Previously Established Meeting?

Previous to the commencement of the breaking of bread at Mr. Hutchinson's house, 9 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin, Nov. or Dec. 1827, E. Cronin and a few others had been meeting together. He later made the claim that the meeting at his house was the commencement. The question now before us is this: What is the bearing and relationship of this prior meeting to the beginning of the breaking of bread in Nov. or Dec. 1827? Andrew Miller tells us something about these prior meetings.

> Here we have to notice before going farther, the existence of a small meeting with a measure of intelligence as to the church of God being one body, previously to the meeting in Fitzwilliam Square. They had been Independents; but it does not appear that they left that body so much from principle as from dissatisfaction with their ways. Nevertheless, God was working in their hearts by His grace and overruling the discipline of that church for their spiritual blessing. And how often this has been the case with individuals in all similar movements, of whom it may be said, 'they went out, not knowing whither they went.' But the Lord was guiding, and their dependence was in Him. It happened in this way: --
>
> A young man, a medical student -- afterwards Dr. Cronin -- had come up from the south of Ireland to Dublin for his health, about 1826. He applied for communion as a visitor, and was readily received at the different tables of the Independents; but when they learnt that he had become a resident, this liberty was refused. He was then informed that he could no longer be admitted to the table of any of the congregations without *special membership* with some one of them. This announcement made a deep impression on his mind, and was no doubt used of God to turn his attention to the truth of the one body. If, he thought, all true believers are members of the body of Christ, what can that strange expression mean, *special membership with the Independents*? He paused, and after much exercise of conscience and prayer, he refused to submit to their church order. This forced him outside the gates of their Zion, and exposed him to the charge of *irreligion* and *antinomianism*. He remained in this outside place for several months, feeling deeply his loneliness and separation from many that he loved in the Lord. It was a time of trial in its way, and might have proved most injurious to his soul; but the Lord overruled it for blessing. To avoid the appearance of evil he used to spend the mornings of the Lord's day in secret. These seasons he found to be of great blessing spiritually, and also of deep exercise as to his future path. Such is the Lord's way with the instruments He is preparing for future testimony and service.
>
> The young student was at length publicly excommunicated by name in a chapel, of which the Rev. William Cooper was the minister. This greatly affected him: he found it no light thing to be thus publicly denounced and avoided by those whom he esteemed as Christians. But the church had gone far beyond its proper jurisdiction. She had authority only from her Head in heaven to cut off those who have proved themselves to be *wicked persons*. "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (1 Cor. 5). Thus the church in so acting received the deeper wound herself. One of the deacons, Edward Wilson, secretary to the Bible Society, was constrained to protest against this step, which led to his leaving the Congregational body.
>
> These two brothers, Messrs. Cronin and Wilson, after studying the word for some time, began to see their way clear to come together on Lord's day morning for the breaking of bread and prayer. They first met for this purpose in the house of Mr. Wilson, Sackville Street. They were joined in a short time by two Miss Drurys, who left

140. *Letters* 2:498.
141. The reference has escaped me.
142. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:383.
143. *Collected Writings* 20:305. See also 3:243.

> Mr. Cooper's where they were members; and also by a Mr. Tims, bookseller, Grafton Street. Mr. Wilson leaving soon after this for England, the little meeting was transferred to Mr. Cronin's house in Lower Pembroke Street, where several were added to their number.
>
> The existence of this meeting, it may be said, was the result of circumstances, not of divine conviction. We believe both concurred. They were no doubt forced into the place of separation by the mistaken conduct of the Congregational body, but they were also led to fall back upon the sure word of God to act under their divine instincts, and the unerring guidance of the Holy Spirit. This little meeting never formally broke up, but they united at once with those who began to break bread in Fitzwilliam Square; the accommodation was greater, and the principles of meeting substantially the same. [144]

Concerning the breakup of the meeting at E. Cronin's house, "formally" is the key word here. It never "formally" broke up, but none-the-less, the implication is that those previous meetings had ceased. A. Miller indicates that the meeting was held at Fitzwilliam Square because of larger accommodations. But E. Cronin had more than four persons for meetings at his own house. I suggest that E. Cronin's going to F. Hutchinson's house indicates that the meeting at his house had, in reality, dissolved. Moreover, the last sentence, above, is quite in error in saying that "they united at once . . ." "They" did no such thing. The fact is that only E. Cronin broke bread at F. Hutchinson's house, not "they." I am surprised that A. Miller said that the "principles of meeting were the same." Perhaps the outward form was similar, but JND, at least, was acting on truth that he had learned. There is more to meeting together than merely the outward form. It involves the principles of assembly according to the Word. Besides these considerations, JND said that at the time they commenced breaking bread *at his suggestion* he had not known about the meetings at E. Cronin's house -- well, likely because they were not then being held. [145] In *Interesting Reminiscences* . . . (p. 14), the following item appears:

Note by Mr. Darby

> All I have to remark is, that on their returning to Dublin, 1827, I was laid up in Fitzwilliam Street with a hurt.
>
> We had reading meetings, and these things came up among some others.
>
> Five of us met at Fitzwilliam Square -- Bellett, Cronin,

---

144. *The Brethren* . . ., pp. 11-13.

145. In order to have everything before us, let us consider a statement by E. Cronin that appears in some conflict:

> The two Misses Drury, my cousins, were led into the same path, and also left Rev. C.'s chapel, where they were members; also Mr. Tims, (bookseller in Grafton Street), and met with me in the back parlor of my house in Lower Pembroke Street. It then became noised abroad, and one and another became affected by the same truth, which was the oneness of the Body, and the presence of the Holy Ghost was also seen by us very clearly. Here F. Hutchinson found us and offered us the use of his large room in Fitzwilliam Square.
>
> At this time J. G. B. and J. N. D. were more or less affected by the general state of things in the religious world, *but were unprepared to come out in entire separation*, and looked suspiciously at our movement, still able to attend and minister in the Church of England, as well as to come occasionally to our little assembly (Letter of Dr. Cronin, *Interesting Reminiscences* . . .).

The second paragraph is certainly inaccurate. The fact is that the breaking of bread in Fitzwilliam Square began when JND proposed that they break bread. E. Cronin's memory is faulty here. However, it is true that J. G. Bellett did not join in, as he himself said, with "at all the same liberty and decision of mind" ("Letter of J. G. Bellett," *ibid*, p. 6) as did E. Cronin.

(continued...)

145. (...continued)

JND's preaching in churches does not in the least mean that he had not separated from the Church of England. At first he preached where he could.

E. Cronin also wrote:

> It is striking that those able and honored brethren, J. G. B., J. N. D. and G. V. W. did not constitute the embryo of it, while God has used and continued to use them in Divine intelligence and developing principles as to His church, &c. (*Interesting Reminiscences* . . .).

This is true if the meetings at 9 Fitzwilliam Square were but the transference of E. Cronin's meetings to that address. No doubt this is how he was pleased to think of the matter. But it is inaccurate, I do not say deliberately so. His thinking of it in this way is illustrated in the following citation from *The Bible Treasury* 19:304 (1893), concerning those who were meeting together before some of them met with JND.

BEGINNING OF RECENT TESTIMONY

To the Editor of the Bible Treasury.

> Dear Sir,
>
> In a recent number of the interesting papers on *The Gospel and the Church*, I notice this paragraph: --
>
> "The eminent servant of Christ referred to already, who was God's instrument in the marvelous movement, wrote of those days at the request of a French religious journalist: "We were only four men, who came together for the breaking of bread and prayer, on the authority of the word. Where two or three are gathered unto my Name, there am I in the midst of them."
>
> One of these "four men" {only E. Cronin and JND were still living at this point, so it was E. Cronin} told me that the meetings had gone on for some time before this period was reached. The first meeting consisted (in 1825 I believe) of himself and the Misses D----y in Dublin; and it was a considerable time after this that "the eminent servant" referred to above joined them. [Before these ladies, E. C. and E. T. broke bread together. Ed. B.T.]
>
> I asked him why he had not communicated these facts; and he replied that Mr. A. Miller, when writing his Short Papers on Church History, had sent him a paper with a number of questions on these subjects, desiring him to answer them; but that he had at the time doubted the advisability of publishing that portion of the book and had therefore refrained from giving the particulars asked for. -- Yours sincerely, J. C. B.

No doubt, this came from Dr. Cronin, whom W. B. Neatby erroneously considers the "founder" of "The Brethren." W. B. Neatby says that "according to Cronin, as we have seen, his meeting never broke up at all" (W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 21). What he would like to establish is that "Darby seems always to have grudged Cronin his undoubted priority. Indeed, Darby never shone in any kind of relation of rivalry . . ." (*ibid*. p. 20).

He then quoted part of the above citation from JND, and relying on E. Cronin's reminiscence, concludes:

> Information being very accessible, Darby's contented ignorance about the beginnings of a movement that restored, as he thought, so vast a sweep of apostolic testimony to the heritage of the Church is not a little surprising (*ibid.*, p. 21).

Such is a sample of W. B. Neatby's polemic against JND.

> Hutchinson, the present Master Brooke (who was frightened away by Hutchinson), and myself. As Hutchinson was willing, I proposed meeting next Sunday.
>
> We did at H.'s house. Brooke did not come. I have read since that Cronin had already met with Wilson and some others, but they had broken up. Of that I knew nothing. I afterwards went down and worked at Limerick, where it began next, Tom Mansell living there. It was subsequently after July, 1830, I went to Oxford (where Wigram was at Queen's) and joined him and Jarratt, and thence went to Plymouth, where it soon began in England, and immediately afterwards, through Wigram, in London. I was not in Dublin when they went to Aungier Street, but I went there afterwards. [146]

Since coming to the above conclusions, I came across a comment by W. Kelly on W. B. Neatby's remark, "according to Cronin, as we have seen, his meeting never broke up at all." [147] W. Kelly's annotation in his own copy of W. B. Neatby's book is:

> It {i.e., the break-up} is confirmed by the fact that only C.{E. Cronin} remained to take part in the Hutchinson Company.

That E. Cronin's meeting had broken up is the logical conclusion from the fact that only E. Cronin himself came to Fitzwilliam Square. In a more accurate assessment than that of W. B. Neatby, A. Miller stated:

> We now return to what may be fairly called the first meeting of "the Brethren," held in Fitzwilliam Square. [148]

The fact is, then, that JND did not join a meeting of E. Cronin's, but rather that E. Cronin came to the breaking of bread at Fitzwilliam Square, which JND had suggested beginning. That E. Cronin likely felt that there was a connection between the two meetings, or a sort of continuity, and so worded his comments, is how he erroneously thought of the matter.

JND's statements are confirmed, by implication, in the reminiscences of J. G. Bellett, who wrote:

> . . . But on returning to Dublin in the November of that year, F. Hutchinson was quite prepared for communion in the name of the Lord with all, whosoever they might be, who loved Him in sincerity, and proposed to have a room in his house in Fitzwilliam Square for that purpose. He did so, designing, however, so to have it that if any were disposed to attend the services in the Parish Church or Dissenting chapels they might not be hindered; and he also prescribed a certain line of things as to the services of prayer, singing and teaching that should be found among us each day. E. Cronin was prepared for this fully, I joined, but not, I think at all with the same liberty and decision of mind. Several others also were ready, and just at this time we first knew William Stokes. [149]

Note that the reference to Nov. would point to Dec. as the start of the new meeting -- and that J. G. Bellett returned to Dublin after JND had separated from the Church of England. So from the summer of 1827 until sometime in Nov., it is likely J. G. Bellett did not see JND, and likely that JND did not know what E. Cronin had been doing. [150]

The remark, "E. Cronin was prepared for this fully," implies he was not currently attending the same kind of meeting elsewhere. The implication is that E. Cronin and J. G. Bellett joined in with what JND suggested. This substantiates what JND said about these things and makes JND's lack of knowledge at that point in time concerning E. Cronin's previous meeting quite reasonable.

The conclusion is, then, that E. Cronin's meeting had broken up. I repeat what W. Kelly remarked in his annotations to W. B. Neatby's *History* . . . regarding the breakup of that meeting:

> It is confirmed by the fact that only C. {E. Cronin} remained to take part in the Hutchinson meeting.

In a letter dated Feb. 22, 1901, W. Kelly speaks of:

> the fresh start which began two or three years later {from when E. Cronin began meeting with a few} when Mr. Darby and others began.

I suggest that the evidence noted above shows that the commencement in Dec. 1827 was not connected with, or was not the continuation of, the previous meetings that E. Cronin had attended. [151] Moreover, A. N. Groves, whom Open-Brethren, and some others, claim was "the founder of the movement," was not there at the commencement at Fitzwilliam Square. It is difficult to ascertain when he first broke bread with these brethren. Not only do the above facts show that A. N.

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146. This note placed in *Interesting Reminiscences* does not seem to me to be connected with what had preceded the note. It appears taken from somewhere and inserted into the paper. It would be interesting to know the provenance of these various notes.

147. W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 21.

148. *The Brethren* . . ., p. 13.

149. *Interesting Reminiscences* . . .," pp. 5,6.

150. In view of the fact that it was known who attended the previous meeting with E. Cronin, it seems incredible that E. E. Whitfield would write, concerning those meetings:

> Prior to this, from 1826 private meetings had been held on Sundays under the leadership of Edward Cronin, who had been a Roman Catholic and later a Congregationalist, for "breaking of bread," at which Anthony Norris Groves, John Vesey Parnell (second Lord Congleton), and John Gifford Bellett, a friend of Darby, were attendants. In 1827 John Darby resigned his charge and in 1828 adopted the non-conformist attitude of the men named above (*The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, article "Plymouth Brethren," p. 95).

A short sketch of E. E. Whitfield is found under his name in this Encyclopedia, where he is designated a "Plymouth Brother." He wrote several biographical sketches in *Chief Men Among the Brethren*. I believe he was with the Kelly group, at least for a time. His comments seem excuseless.

151. It seems to me that persons who believe in independency of assemblies like to say that the previous meeting of some persons was the 'beginning." Thus, someone says, "In 1827 John Nelson Darby joined this group." And you will find that Miles J. Stanford's *The Plymouth brethren, A Brief History*, says:

> . . . in 1827 the little flock included H. Hutchinson, Wm. Stokes, Lord Congleton, J. G. Bellett, and J. N. Darby . . .

He put in two persons not there and omitted E. Cronin who was there. He goes on to say that "In 1830, J. N. Darby left the Anglican priesthood . . ." These errors, as well as others, appear on the internet and in some form are repeated at different web sites. Also, there is *An Account of Early Days* by Miss. A. M. Stoney (daughter of J. B. Stoney) which has errors also.

Groves was not "the founder of the movement," Appendix 1 adds more evidence for this conclusion. It was God using J. N. Darby, acting on the truths he had been learning, that brought about the commencement of the breaking of bread and the spread of the recovered truth.

Additionally, I emphasize here that W. B. Neatby's construction of these early years is quite unreliable, [152] as are those who more or less follow him, namely those who did not, and do not, trust JND's word -- which means most except: A. Miller, notes in *The Bible Treasury*, N. Noel, and F. Gill. No doubt it will be clear to the reader that the integrity of JND's word regarding the beginnings is vindicated. His integrity concerning this matter has a bearing on the preposterous charge that he obtained the idea for the pre-tribulation rapture from Manuel Lacunza, or an Irvingite prophetess, or from Miss Margaret Macdonald (each discussed in Section 7). And this establishment of his integrity regarding his word concerning the recovery of truth lays the foundation for his vindication against the charges of allegedly similar dishonesty viciously leveled against him by Open Brethren, regarding the Plymouth/Bethesda controversies.

Opposers of JND cannot believe that God would show JND so much truth (of course, they do not regard it as truth) so suddenly. That J. N. Darby held the any-moment coming of Christ, viewing the Bride in heaven by Rev. 4:1, during 1827, is really beyond reasonable doubt, though I expect opposition to this conclusion will continue.

Conclusion

Added to the evidence for the period of JND's being "laid aside" during Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 that we saw in Section 2, Chapter 3.1 showed that JND left the church of England in 1827, indicating that the period of being "laid aside" occurred earlier. Then, in Chapter 3.2 we have seen that the breaking of bread commenced with four persons in Dec. 1827. This also shows that JND's accident did not occur in Dec. 1827.

The objections to dating JND's accident in Jan. 1826 have been addressed and have not been found to be weighty. Those objections are not really demonstrably adverse, as if forming proof of a Dec. 1827 date for the accident. However, the body of evidence presented in Section 2 and 3 for the Dec.. 1826 dating is far more weighty than the objections; and, as we have seen, forms a consistent whole.

The conclusion of the time-matter is, therefore, that J. N. Darby suffered a severe accident in Dec. 1826, was "laid aside" from going out in service, recuperating at the home of his sister, Susannah Pennefather, for at least two months, if not three. Thereafter, for quite a period of time, he got around using crutches.

He experienced the deliverance of Rom. 7 in that period after having been quickened some six and one half years before, having been in his conscience struggling under the law in that interval. Delivered, he quickly understood a great range of Christian truth concerning the dispensations, what being "in Christ" meant, etc., and that he was to wait for the Lord to come for the saints with no intermediate events. Knowing that there was going to be a future, formal apostasy, he saw that the saints would be removed beforehand; indeed, perhaps 40 years before the millennium commenced.

The truth he learned from the Word of God led, in 1827, to:

1. a change in the character of the work for the Lord that he was doing;
2. separation from the Church of England; and,
3. beginning breaking of bread in Dec. 1827.

In 1827 he had printed a book (lost) on the fall of the church, and in 1828 he printed a paper on the subject of the church, its nature and unity.

On the next page is a time-chart that illustrates the period we have been examining.

Supposing that JND's accident occurred in Dec. 1827 instead of Dec. 1826 does not change what he learned during the period of convalescence -- which we have reviewed. Now, either you believe him concerning what he said that he learned in that period or else you do not believe him. He had an excellent memory. Therefore, if you do not believe him regarding what he learned in the period of convalescence, then state candidly that you believe that J. N. Darby was lying. Review, for example, *Letters* 3:297-305.

Moreover, those who believe that the accident took place in Dec. 1827 instead of Dec. 1826 might present a time-line chart of the 1827 - 1828 era that others may examine.

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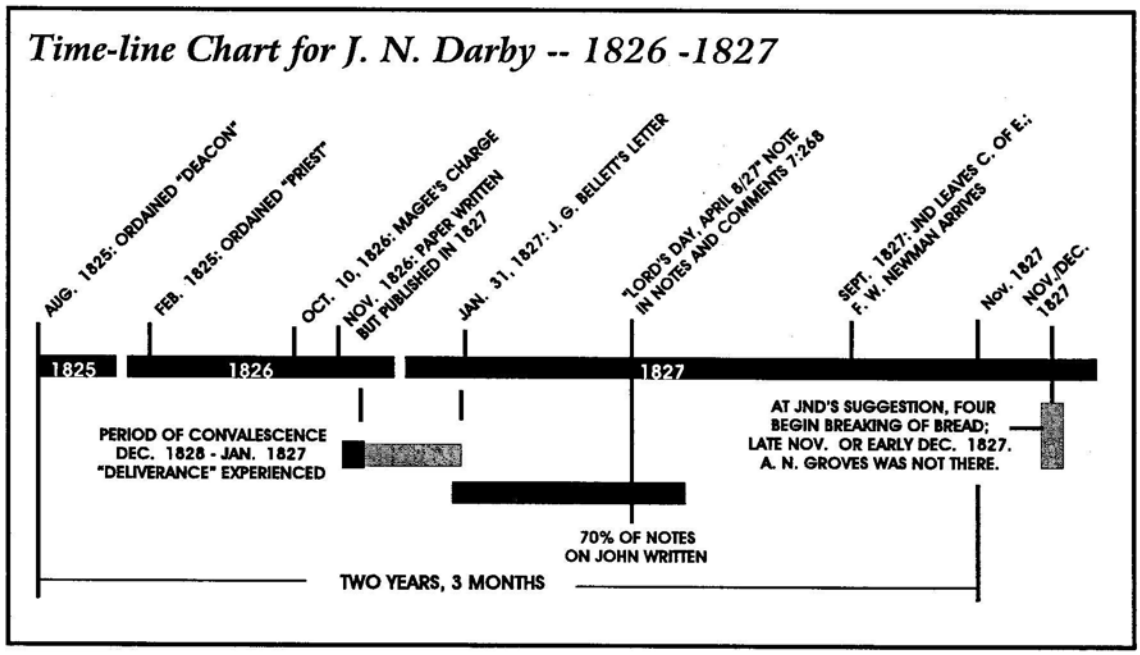
152. W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, sounded a warning against A. Miller's history, *The Brethren . . .*:

> But I would wish it to be understood that I do not think that any man can, with strict propriety, be spoken of as *the* founder of Plymouthism; though it seems fair to say of Groves that he had a larger share in its foundation than anyone else, if we confine our attention to the very earliest period. It is necessary to add a word of warning against the first chapter of *The Brethren, Their Origin, Progress and Testimony*. Its author derived his information largely from Darby, but it may be charitably hoped that he extensively misunderstood his authority. As the chapter stands, *it is putting it mildly to say that it teems with errors*. Refutation in detail would have been equally tedious and superfluous, and I have been content in my own narrative to let my authorities constantly appear. (p. 65, note).

W. Kelly said in one of his annotations to W. B. Neatby's book, "This is, like the book, shallow and short of the truth." That is putting it mildly, just as it is to say that W. B. Neatby's book teems with error. A. Miller was right, and W. B. Neatby, the hostile critic of JND, and calumniator of his character, was wrong. Having done everything short of using the word "liar" to describe JND, he has produced, not a true history, but a polemic against JND. In effect, W. B. Neatby has called JND an untruthful man. Others have done so also. Such blacken JND's character; for who would want to listen to a blackened man? It is cheap, carnal polemics.



Addendum to Section 3:

Historical Note from B. W. Newton Relative to the Recovery of the Truth of the Any-Moment Coming in 1827

The arch-antidispensationalist and posttribulationist, B. W. Newton supplied information, regarding the recovery of the truth of the Lord's coming, in his printed letter, *Is It Wrong to Expect Certain Predicted Events Previous to the Return of the Lord Jesus? A Letter to a Friend*, Plymouth: Tract Depot, Cornwall Street. This paper is listed in the United States *National Union Catalog* for the Boston (Massachusetts) Public Library under date of 1845. The date is not printed on my duplicated copy (which is not from that source). Printed on the fly-leaf is:

> The following letter was written some years ago . . .

On pp. 1 and 2 we read:

> When the doctrine of the Lord's return was revived in the Church about fifteen years ago, they who taught it were for the most part accustomed to say that no intervening event was to be expected. This they taught, not because it was believed that the early Churches did not look for intervening events, but because we were considered to be in circumstances different from theirs. It was allowed that they had the whole course of the dispensation before them, prophetically delineated by the Lord and His apostles, and that therefore many events must necessarily have been expected by *them*; whereas *we*, it was said, were living at the close of a dispensation when all prophecy had been fulfilled, and consequently, since the predicted events had come to pass, nothing any longer remained to be waited for.
>
> But when Scripture was more carefully searched, it was found that we [153] had erred in supposing that all the prophecies pertaining to this dispensation had been fulfilled. It was found that the 24th of Matthew, the 21st of Luke, and similar passages, had not been exhausted in the past destruction of Jerusalem -- that Romanism had not accomplished the predictions respecting the last apostasy -- that the 1260 days, so often spoken of in Daniel and the Revelation, instead of being completed, had not yet commenced; and that the greater part of the revelation was as yet unfulfilled. [154] Thus, therefore, we found ourselves placed in circumstances closely resembling those of the early Churches, having a path before us prophetically marked by events intended as signs of the great approaching end.

If we assume that "some years ago" may have been about three years ago, then 1845 - 3 = 1842, when the letter was written. Then about 15 years before that would have been about 1827. Thus, about 1827 (or 1828) some "who taught it were for the most part accustomed to say that no intervening event was to be expected." To me, that sounds like the any-moment expectation, held about 1827. It adds more evidence that J. N. Darby understood what we mean by the pretribulation rapture (the pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture) in 1827.

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153. {Does this mean that he also believed in the any-moment coming, i.e., with no intervening events, at first? -- but with wrong notions attached?}
154. {He did not tell us who found this. It implies that those who held the any-moment coming were at that time unaware of the *future* 1260 days. Is that believable? To me, this sounds like another example of his self-serving words, with a "spin" on the facts to make those he opposed look foolish; particularly, of course, J. N. Darby.}

Moreover, it is another indicator that B. W. Newton's relative, S. P. Tregelles, was engaged in calumniating JND when, in 1864, he made the charge that the "secret" coming was first uttered about 1832 in Irving's church.

Let us here emphasize two points:

1. The date of 1827 arrived at through BWN's statements predates even Margaret Macdonald's utterances (1830) by several years.
2. It *is* significant that B. W. Newton, who became such an adversary of JND's teachings, did not attribute JND's views to Irvingites

Brief Excursus on The Rapture Plot

Mr. Dave MacPherson (concerning whom we shall have more to say later) implicates William Kelly under such titles as "William Kelly's Journal -The Pinnacle of Pre-Trib Pilfering!" and his book, *The Rapture Plot*, in a lying plot to cover up the true origin of the pretribulation rapture so as to credit JND. A dupe of Mr. MacPherson wrote:

> To put it bluntly, John Darby and certain key lieutenants blatantly lied concerning the source of their teaching. This set the tone for the dozens of "thieves and robbers" that would follow in Darby's footsteps. This completely dishonest practice of historical revisionism has been thoroughly documented in a series of books by several rapture experts -- most notably a man named Dave MacPherson. [155]

Mr. MacPherson, a posttribulationist, has invested 30+ years working on his calumnies of JND, attempting to credit a Miss Margaret Macdonald of Port Glasgow with having spoken of the pretribulation rapture in a "revelation" that she received. He has provided us with an implication of his personal involvement and commitment to his notions. Here is a warning Mr. MacPheson sounded if what he says is not accepted:

> The real test is ahead. If pretrib promoters ignore or twist this book's documentation, and if their only bottom line is a continuing flow of funds, then I won't be surprised if God views them collectively as an "Achan" (Josh. 7) and allows a national or even international money collapse! [156]

Well, I would not be surprised if a money collapse may come, but Mr. MacPherson's manipulative thinking that it would be God's judgment for not listening to him gives an insight to the workings of his mind and the process by which he plots to find what in reality are non-existent plots.

Actually, I see a different matter, morally, regarding Margaret Macdonald (see ch. 7.7) and the Irvingites, than do these rapture-plot experts, and that is this: there was an occultic counter-thrust to this recovery of truth. By 1828, Irving taught that though Christ did not sin, He had the carnal nature (a doctrine for which he was deposed from the Presbyterian ministry). Indeed, he himself said that the phenomena that they experienced ("revelations," tongues," etc.) came in sanction of that teaching. JND wrote:

> . . . the gifts among the Irvingites were founded on this doctrine of Christ's being a sinner in nature like ourselves. Mr. Irving's statement was, that he had long preached the "gifts," but there were none, because there was nothing for the Holy Ghost to testify to: but when he preached this doctrine, they came as a witness to it. His teaching moreover on the subject was confirmed by what was received as the prophetic power among them.[157]

This may also be seen in the *Morning Watch*, March 1831, p. 143:

> The denial of miraculous powers in the church subverts the DIVINITY OF CHRIST. Every careful reasoner perceived that this consequence must necessarily follow from a denial of the true HUMANITY -- . . . for any endeavour to make the human nature in Christ different in itself from human nature in general, quickly passes into a *deification of the flesh* . . .

The truth is that in the incarnation the Son took humanity into His Person in indissoluble union; and His humanity was "holy" (Luke 1:35). By the power of the overshadowing Spirit, "sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3) was excluded. The result of the Irvingite blasphemy that Christ had the carnal nature means that the Son of God took "sin in the flesh" into His holy Person. The Irvingite occupation with the restoration of miraculous gifts tainted their views on prophecy, on the church, and on the nature of what they were calling the apostasy of the churches. **The Irvingites were historicists**. There was no affinity at all between their views and JND's view of "the ruin of the church." JND's view of the ruin of the church, the church as viewed in responsible testimony in man's hands, precluded restoration of the church to its primitive standing and precluded a restoration of miraculous gifts. Moreover, it excluded any thought of partial-rapture.

The ongoing healings, whether real or fake, and the speaking "in power," fastened these deluded people in what they had been conditioned to expect, and to pray for in their unbelief of the true, ruined state of the church viewed in responsible testimony; and they sealed to them their wicked delusion that Christ took the carnal nature. Such has been the history of so-called charismatic movements.

155. James Lloyd, *The Rapture Cult: Dishonesty In Dispensationalism*, Christian Media: Jacksonville, p. 31, 1999.
156. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 234.
157. *Collected Writings* 6:285.

Chapter 3.3

JND's Notes on "The Gospel of John" in Notes and Comments, Vol. 7

Introduction

The chronology we have traced through Chapter 3.2 stands on its own without what is in this chapter. The conclusions reached are not dependent on the material in Chapter 3.3.

There are seven printed volumes of notes taken from the notebooks of J. N. Darby: *Notes and Comments*. [158] In vol. 7 there are extensive notes on "The Gospel of John." About 70% of the way through these notes there is a date: April 8/27. [159] Some years ago my attention was directed to this date by F. Marotta who had seen a reference to the date in an older paper regarding some views of the Ravenite, James Taylor, Sr., who erroneously thought the notes on *The Gospel of John* were a later set of notes. The content of these notes bear on two particular points.

1. The character of these notes shows that JND had experienced "deliverance" before these notes were written. In these notes, he referred to the believer's life as "resurrection-life" (he probably invented this description) and in these notes we see that he understood his union with Christ. Thus, these notes show that his deliverance occurred before April 1827. Those few who in the past maintained that JND was accurate in ascribing the deliverance to the Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 era were correct. But that dating was knowable without these notes.
2. We learn much about JND's thoughts in the early part of 1827:
   a. He understood that the Church is heavenly.
   b. He understood the character of the life of the believer as "resurrection-life," and understood union with Christ.
   c. He saw the ruin of the Church (as viewed in responsible testimony).
   d. He understood that the Bride is above during the judgments on the apostate church.
   e. He had the heavenly hope.
   f. He sharply distinguished the Church and Israel.
   g. He saw a Jewish remnant in the times of Jacob's trouble.
   h. He understood that there would be a *personal* Antichrist over the apostate Jews.
   i. He distinguished the Church's and Israel's glory in the millennium.

The range of things that he understood at this point in time is astonishing, though it would be improper to look for certain phrases, used subsequently, to designate some of these things. For example, it would be perverseness to demand that he use the phrase "pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture" (though he recognized a period as "Jacob's trouble"); or even the expression "pre-tribulation rapture." However, it can be seen from his comments that he understood what we mean by those expressions, "pre-tribulation rapture" meaning a rapture preceding God's taking up with the Jews in Daniel's 70th week, i.e., a pre-Rev. 4 rapture.

Likely, JND had originally held to Augustinian amillennialism, or, perhaps, postmillennialism. While convalescing in Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827, he saw that there was to be a change in dispensation. That indicates a shift in his understanding to premillennialism, rather than previously having had historicist views. With but very few exceptions, the premillennialists of the day were historicists, thinking that the Revelation was being fulfilled in the historical process since the book was written, but expecting Christ to come and inaugurate the millennium. There is no reason to think that JND was unfamiliar with such views. Indeed, I suggest that he became what we may call a premillennial dispensationalist in Dec. 1826 - Jan. (or Feb.) 1827, that is, a believer in a rapture of the saints before God commences dealing with the Jews, and forming a godly Jewish remnant, in Daniel's 70th week, a rapture before the opening of Rev. 4. [160] But, concurrently with this view, he thought that there was merit in the historicist view

158. It is my impression that P. A. Humphrey had the chief responsibility in bringing the *Notes and Comments* to print. Six of the seven volumes I have in a James Carter printing of various dates, my volume six having the publisher as P. A. Humphrey himself, published at Bath in 1897. It appears to me that volume 1 was first published in 1883, vol. 2 in 1885, vol. 3 in 1886, volumes 4 and 5 in 1889, vol. 6 in 1897, and volume 7 I do not know (I have a 1913 James Carter edition of vol. 7).

159. This is found in *Notes and Comments on Scripture from the Note Books of J. N. Darby*, vol. 7, p. 261 in the Stow Hill edition.

160. Recall that in the period of convalescence he thought that the Lord might come for him 40 years before the commencement of the millennium.

-- in this sense: that there was to be the literal *fulfilment* of the 1260 days, while there might be an *application* of it in the historicist sense. We shall consider this below.

Prior to 1827, a two-stage coming was taught by some in their premillennial historicist schemes. (See ch. 7.3 and 7.4). Some held that there was coming a premillennial "conflagration," mis-applying 2 Pet. 3:10 to a time just before the millennium would begin, followed by a subsequent renovation of the earth. So the saints would be caught up just before that conflagration, and then return to earth with Christ after the conflagration and subsequent renovation of the earth. That might involve remaining in the air, or briefly being in heaven, and then returning. The famous Joseph Mede (1586-1638), the father of English historicism, proposed a possible scenario:

> I will add this more, namely, what may be conceived to be the cause of this Rapture of the Saints on high to meet the Lord in the Clouds, rather than to wait his coming to the Earth. What if it be, that they may be preserved during the *Conflagration of the earth and the works thereof*, 2 Peter 3,10, that as *Noah* and his family were preserved from the Deluge by being lift up above the water in the *Ark*, so should the Saints at the *Conflagration* be lift up in the Clouds unto their Ark, Christ, to be preserved there from the *deluge of fire*, wherein the wicked shall be consumed? [161]

We can see from this that one might think he finds a "pretribulation" rapture in some such writers. It depends on what the discoverer calls the "tribulation." For example, there are Christians who hold that since the Lord said that in the world we would have "tribulation," the church has been in the tribulation all along. There is a spectrum on notions about what persons call the tribulation and what they call a pretribulation rapture; and source-hunters fasten on this or on that statement by a writer and announce: there is the origin of the teaching of the pretribulation rapture, whatever they mean by that phrase, though usually not meaning the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, as JND understood in 1827.

Thus, by "the pre-tribulation rapture," I mean a rapture of the saints before the events of Rev. 4-20 occur. The closest thing to this and the complex of interlocking truth (though not really close at all) that has been found so far is something from Morgan Edwards (an historicist in the 1700s -- see ch. 7.4), who posited a rapture just before the 1260 days of the time of the two witnesses (Rev. 11).This was not accompanied by an understanding of dispensational truth, nor the scriptural truth of the church, nor the heavenly position of the believer, etc., as recovered through J. N. Darby. Indeed, even a "literal" approach to the interpretation of prophecy (however right in its place) was not, and is not, sufficient for this. What, then, was? The truth of the church and the heavenly hope are bound up together; Israel's earthly calling as distinct from the heavenly calling; Israel's distinct blessing in earthly places under the new covenant; and the Christian's blessing in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus, needs to be understood. Moreover, the truth of a future, godly, Jewish remnant in the time of Jacob's trouble, needed to be seen. Daniel's 70th week is clearly for Daniel's people:

> Seventy weeks are apportioned out upon thy people and upon thy holy city . . . (Dan. 9:24).

No amount of spiritual alchemy actually transmutes this into the church (the assembly) of God, though it be the notion of numbers of God's people and theological systems. Moreover, in OT ages silence was kept regarding the mystery of Christ and the church (Rom. 16:25); it was hidden from those time-periods and from the peoples (Col. 1:26). It was not hid in the OT, it was hid in God throughout the ages (Eph. 3:9). Covenant theology will not have it so and thus seeks to turn the sharp edge of these Scriptures so as to have the OT prophets prophesy about the church. I have dealt with this elsewhere. [162]

There were always prophetic and church views, and Judaizing, working against the recovery of the truth of the pretribulation rapture (the pre-Rev. 4 rapture) and the complex of interlocking truth in spite of any degree of literal interpretation applied to prophecy. And, an exposition such as we see with the historicist, Morgan Edwards, was not accompanied by a testimony sounding out in Christendom.

In the sovereignty of God, it pleased Him to raise up a testimony to a large body of truth, the foundation for which was laid in 1826-1827. The instrument used by the Spirit of God was J. N. Darby. We might reject this as from God, or else pick and choose some truths (which results in watering them down), or hold fast the recovered truth. What do you do?

In these notes we find how advanced he was in apprehension of truth, though he did not always word himself as he did more correctly later. [163] For example, it is clear that he held the doctrine of the occurrence of the ruin of the church by the time John wrote the book of Revelation, [164] though he did not use the phrase, "the ruin of the church" in these notes. (What is meant is the ruin of the church *as viewed in responsible testimony, in man's hands*. And, note, Matt. 16:18 does not address the matter of man's responsibility regarding what is committed to him. Of course, what Christ builds cannot fail.)

Concerning the future tribulation, he understood that the apostate Israelites and the Jewish remnant would be in it. This understanding is very important. And therefore he does not speak of the church in it, but rather that the church is heavenly. He saw the bride in heaven before Rev. 4:1. Moreover, he was waiting, and longing, for the Lord Jesus to come.

As we briefly examine some of this material, keep in mind

161. *The Works of Joseph Mede*, 4th ed., London, 1677, p. 775.

162. See *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vols. 1 and 2, obtainable from the publisher.

163. The earliness of these notes accounts for some expressions and some inaccuracies in his views that do not appear in later publications. The notes are unrevised, and their character shows that earliness, though showing an amazing grasp of truth at that time.

164. On p. 9, under the heading, THE FALL OF THE CHURCH, we saw that **in 1827** JND understood the fall of the church, and that there would be a future, formal apostasy, indicating that in 1827 he had a grasp of dispensational truth. I suggest that this would hardly be so if he had not already gone through the convalescent period during which much truth was opened up to him. It was during that period that he saw from Isa. 32 that there would be a change in dispensation.

the *typical* way he views many things in John's gospel. These are typical of future events. But this may not do justice to the range of his understanding because what he says is, generally, limited by his purpose of examining John. He was not generally ranging over Scripture.

I would just add that JND, as well as William Kelly, Edward Dennett (former Baptist), F. W. Grant (former Anglican), the William Reid (former Presbyterian) who edited *The Bible Herald* as well as *The Bible Witness and Review*, etc., turned from covenant theology in which they were schooled to embrace the recovered truth. Why? because they were stupid? because they were theologically immature? because they just did not know better? Or, you think they were given over to a delusion? Do you flatter yourself on our superiority?

And, finally, I do not know that JND did not add to these notes at later dates. However, I doubt that he wrote the main body of the notes appearing before p. 261 at a later time (say 1835) and then inserted a note on p. 261 dating the note "Lord's Day, April 8/27." If one holds that JND's accident occurred in Dec. 1827, he will have to claim that the notes were written later and explain away the date on p. 261. On the other hand, we have seen that the accident occurred in Dec. 1826 [165] and that deliverance, the elements of dispensational truth, the Lord's coming without intermediate events, etc. were understood by him during that period of convalescence. These notes on John are compatible with that understanding.

He Distinguished More Than One Sphere of Christ's Glory

Already on p. 12 he indicated that:

> Of that creation Judaism was the highest dispensed form, if good could have been in the creature.

Not only is there a recognition of Israel's *earthly place*, he was aware of the ruin of the first man, man in the flesh.

John 11:51, 52 shows that the death of Christ provided for the several spheres of the display of His glory:

> In this little sentence, then, we have the conversion of the wickedness of man into the purpose of God . . . The purpose is fully opened in verse 52. But there is much to be learned in every letter of this; for it is not, Not for the nation, but, etc.; but, "not for the nation only, but that also." Its present purpose was the Church, Jew or Gentile. The full purpose was "not for that nation only," etc. . . . And, indeed, on the whole, it is a remarkable synoptical view of the whole counsel of God . . . The blessed Lamb (to Him be all honor, to whom it is due) was led to the slaughter in the accomplishment of it, that we might see Him there, and the just stamp of honor on Him, as in our affections. For He "walked no more . . . among" them.
>
> We have, moreover, in detail the peculiar character and stamp of this dispensation in purpose: gathering into one the children of God. He died negatively, so to speak, for the world; that is, the purpose effected in dispensation is this gathering together in one the children of God. The world ought to have obeyed. But compare Ephesians 1:9,10 (pp. 189, 191).

The distinction between the Church, and Israel, and blessed Gentiles in the Millennium, runs through these notes in various forms such as the distinction of the earthly and heavenly spheres (p. 25), "Its present purpose was the Church, Jew or Gentile" (p. 190), etc. He understood Eph. 1:10 to speak of the millennium (p. 25). On page 28 he says:

> . . . and if I have told you the earthly part of the kingdom, and ye believe not, how will ye believe if I tell you of the heavenly things that are the crown and glory of it? It is not merely "earthly things" but "the earthly things," definitely, I think, pointing out the two associated portions of the millennial glory, the earthly and heavenly. "Earthly things" and "heavenly things" are doubtless contrasted in their knowableness, but also in fact, as in Ephesians.

He Understood Christ's Earthly Glory Is Postponed until a Future Millennium

He speaks of the future Jewish remnant here and there in these notes on John and understands Nathaniel (John 1) to typify that remnant (p. 16) that will receive Christ in a future day. Following that reception will be the millennial glory:

> Accordingly hereon follows (as we have seen, chapter 2) the two parts of actual millennial glory in their objects and service . . . (p. 46).

At this time he wrote of the millennium as the future fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles (pp. 95-96, 102-103):

> Christ was to be hid, hid in God (see Col. 3) till the time of the restoration, the true Feast of Tabernacles; He was to be with the Father, sitting there till, etc. (p. 102).

But when the future Feast of Tabernacles is fulfilled, the Jews will experience

> the Jewish millennial rest (p. 96).
>
> . . . They will be delivered. The power of that will be to the Jews in that day, as well as the power of the Kingship (p.191).

Thus there is a ***postponement*** of Christ's glory as Son of Man.

> Chapter 7. His glory, still as Son of Man; or, rather, postponement of glory, as connected with the Feast of Tabernacles and giving of the Spirit as ascended, the

165. JND has made several statements which appear to some to support a convalescent period a year later:

> I believe at my deliverance from bondage in 1827-8, God opened up certain truths needed for the church (*Letters* 1:185).
>
> . . . all this when laid aside at E. P.'s {Pennefather} in 1827 (Letters 1:344).

There really is no difficulty in the second quotation. It might refer to Jan. or Feb. 1827 at E. P.'s -- may it not? The result of inquiry into the date-references in JND's writings are consistent with a convalescent period of Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827, perhaps Feb. Is the statement in *Letters* 1:185 to set this all aside? -- including his statement that:

> We began to meet in Dublin, Ireland, 1827-28.

as well as many other considerations that have been before us? How could he have begun to meet with the other three in 1827 if the convalescent period, with the opening of truth to him, took place after beginning meeting? So, let the statement in *Letters* 1:185 yield to the chronology, taking it in a general way.

> witness of the glory meanwhile; this specially including Gentiles . . . (p. 363).

The glory of the Kingdom, not yet fulfilled (p. 20), shall occur at "His ascension to the mediatorial throne" (p. 350). Thus, He is not on His throne of glory now. His glory is ***postponed***. Observe that implicit in the above quotation is the postponement of the Kingdom. This involves the temporary setting aside of Israel. The marriage in John 2, then, is typical of the marriage with Israel:

> I have no doubt that in this, that is, the leading principles of the marriage feast, there is the typical development of His relationship with the Jewish Remnant, as Isaiah 8 and 49 (p. 17).
>
> Note, the first miracle in Cana of Galilee was (as noted heretofore) the expression of the change from Jewish purification to the joy of the millennial [rest], when Jehovah shall espouse Israel in truth; as the subsequent acting at Jerusalem was the judicial cleansing part of the same period (p. 60).

This involves Israel being laid aside now (Lo-ammi, p. 20) but then being restored as life from the dead. This is brought out typically by the second miracle in John's gospel:

> Thereon the second miracle in Galilee is the life-giving power of faith . . . an analogous and larger expression of the full, real state of things *dispensationally*, which is not His going down to heal, but the child really dead. Then He heals by virtue going out of Him by the way, where He is touched by active faith, and afterwards restores to life; Israel being really dead, but in God's eyes only asleep; that is, laid aside for a season, though morally dead. This second miracle, then, is in special connection, but contrast, with the first (p. 61; see also p. 68).

End of the Testing of Man

It is remarkable that he also saw the end of the testing of man:

> His going to the Father was come, for He was rejected. Man had proved reprobate, knew Him not, its Lord and God, or rejected Him (p. 213).

Meanwhile, a New Position is Brought Out

The Christian has a distinct position from Israel. He wrote:

> . . . a totally new thing and system was coming in; the old, or outward testimony, of no avail, gone, and the new thing announced; man wholly born *again*, anew; the Son of Man crucified, the Son of God given; eternal life; and on this ground, such in Israel would finally have the promises; but, as grace and power on God's part, it would go out to the Gentiles, and associated with heaven, through the cross; the moral condemnation of the world, where Christ has been as light (p. 41).
>
> We are quickened into the new place with Christ raised from the dead, He having in that work, which gave us title to be in glory, by glorifying God, having put away our sins by bearing them, and going down into death. He hath quickened us together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses. We are in Christ, or in the Spirit (not in flesh). That is our new place. So we are born of the Spirit. We are cleansed, and forgiven all the fruits of the flesh, and we are born of water. There acceptance does not go beyond resurrection; for we are, or Christ in testimony is, then in the new accepted condition of man in righteousness, God having raised Him from the dead.
>
> But then, in point of fact, the counsels of God had given us a place in glory . . . it was God's counsel to do so, to give us a part with Christ in glory (p. 43).

He Understood the Christian Position and the Heavenly Church

> The Church is united to Him, as in heaven, by the Holy Ghost, and the universe itself is to be put under the risen and now heavenly ascended Man, with the Church associated with Him as His body and bride. Hence all that takes Christians back to the world, to the law, to all that flesh has its part in, takes them back to the system they were redeemed out of. That they do not, and as in Christ, never belonged to at all; the law [166] being the measure of responsibility in it, the intermediate system antecedent to which the Church had its place with God, before the very sphere in which mortal man has had being existed; the Church which God has now set up actually in the heavenly place into which Christ has entered, when the man or Adam sphere, the world, has rejected Him, not knowing the Father.
>
> Under this Man and the Church the world will be. But we are not of it, as Christ was not of it, but of the Father, and now gone to Him, Man with Him, and we in Him. Of this the Holy Ghost is the revealer and the power, uniting us with the Head. But the law as a true measure, fleshly religion and its ordinances, the attempt to regulate the world, all belong to the Adam system, though the first be God's rule for it, not the Christian; it is going back to it, the beggarly elements. This it is that Paul insists on, the Church's place connected with redemption, the divine place of the Son before the world, with which (as now made good and returned into) the Church *is* connected with the Holy Ghost. It is true of life, life and incorruptibility being brought to light by the gospel; only this *life existed,* before the world was, in Christ; hence has in itself been true all through; whereas the heavenly Man, Man in heaven, and the Church raised up, and in Him there, did not and could not exist in fact; for He was not there as Man.
>
> But in what a place this puts the sticklers for law, and those who insist on influence in the world for the Christian! No doubt the law is perfect; but they are putting man back, out of Christ on high, into the system of the world and Adam responsibility. John *is* just as clear as Paul as to eternal life and Christ's place, but he does not treat the question of the Church. Paul was made the minister of that. Hence Paul would not know Christ after the flesh; that is, Christ as connected with the world, come to it in connection with men's Adam existence, in which Judaism was the testing form, and hence in His Jewish connection, to which He had offered Himself, and had been rejected. Hence,

166. {Observe what he says about the law in this quotation. Note that he understood the place of the law in the testing of man up to the cross. He never, ever, said that the law was dead; indeed, insisting that it was not dead, but that the Christian was dead (Rom. 6; 7:1-4) and that the law does not apply to a dead man, as Rom. 6 teaches.}

while fully owning Him as the fulfillment of promise (even as to this only in resurrection) he would only know Him as He had been revealed to him, the glorious Christ who had taken His place, really His own, but as Man, according to the eternal thoughts of God before the world in which man, as responsible creation, was tested. Hence our conversation is to be in heaven, and our life the display of that of Christ. This is the mystery (Ephesians 1 as a whole) of Christ; as to its form down here, Ephesians 3. So Christ hope of glory in Gentiles (Col. 1).

I fear I have given this confusedly and feebly; but the subject is of first-rate practical importance; it alters the *whole* nature and character of Christianity, and enters into every detail of life. Am I a living man, a child of Adam ? or have I died and risen, so as to belong to a heavenly Christ, drawing life from Him, and having to display that, not take the law for my guide, as still alive in the flesh? This put down flesh; dropped Judaism, which was in it; revealed the Father; shows we are in Christ (who is in heaven), and He in us. This shows the Church now wholly heavenly, as suited to the heavenly Man, the fulfiller in fact and object of pre-worldly desires, thoughts, with which the world can have nothing to do. It did not exist when they were in God's mind, and so the Church cannot belong to it; yea, exists as composed of those redeemed out of it, and connected wholly with the rejected and ascended heavenly Christ. The world is *"this* present evil world." The two great points are eternal Life and the Church; connected with Christ as Son and as Man set far above all principalities, etc., in heavenly places. The Church exists only in connection with Him . . . Where has the Church got? What is the putting it under law? . . .

Note, in practice as to this, what is said: "We are *clear from the law."* We have not ceased to exist, but we have been nullified (*vernichtet, annulled*) as regards, cease to have any existence, *as to law;* my existence is annulled (Rom. 7:6, flowing from verse 4). Then on the other hand Galatians 5:4: *"Ye are deprived of all profit from the Christ* whosoever of you are justified by law." So death: *"Who has annulled death,"* 2 Tim. 1:10.

The first two are very remarkable in their contrast. The law is not annulled, but we from it as dead in Christ; we are no longer thus alive as in the nature [167] which we were of this world, children of Adam. On the other hand, if we turn back to this, we turn back to life in the world and flesh. Thus the two things being contradictory we nullify ourselves as regards Christ, do not exist as and in connection with the risen and ascended Christ, who is out of the world. Hence, too, what is heavenly, what is Christ, is necessarily the cross down here (pp. 329-331).

He Understood that We Have "Resurrection Life"

JND has remarked in various places that he experienced "deliverance" (see Rom. 7) when laid aside from the accident (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827). In his teachings he connects deliverance with the character of the life of the sealed believer ("sealed with the Spirit"), calling it "resurrection life." It may be that he invented this description for it. He used this expression in these 1827 notes (pp. 31, 69, 200, 204, 239).

On p. 12 he wrote:

> Hence our hope is in resurrection, our rest in union by it, paramount to creation and creation-rest. Union is the secret of it all.

We have the resurrection-life of Christ now.

> From the resurrection of our Lord we have the resurrection life of the Second {last} Adam as the portion of the church (p. 204).

> Jesus in the Father, they in Him, and He in them; they would know this in and by this union and indwelling . . . Such was the union: because He lived, they would live, and by this life, the Comforter being present, know the union (p. 250).

Among other places where he speaks of union, see p. 259.

He Understood the Ruin of the Church

B. W. Newton spoke of a very early book by JND (lost) on the fall of the Church. [168] In 1827 JND wrote:

> We know that John continued till the whole system of the Church was broken up (see beginning of Revelation) . . . (p. 360).

He Understood That There Was a Coming Apostasy

> . . . and while the economy of foundation is given in the Acts, and the detail and order and place of the Church in the epistles, and its apostasy as in man here, the Apocalypse gives the end of all these things, and teaches (as to those of them which pass now) the Church to cry, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly" (p. 235). [169]

He Understood That the Bride of Christ Is above During the Judgments on the Apostate Church

Speaking of Peter and John as typical, in JND's notes on John 21 we find this:

> . . . the Apocalypse looks only into a gloomy future of judgment in the Church (the bride of Christ above); for such is that book. It has no earthly blessing or form, which note. It is entirely heavenly as to the Church . . . In prophecy it

167. {This implies that the believer has two natures.}

168. JND remarked about "a little paper which I published in 1827" (*Collected Writings* 4:298). T.F.C. Stunt has said that B. W. Newton and H. Borlase

> may well have influenced Darby more than he realized in the idea of the ruin of the Church ("A Comprehensive History," *The Harvester*, May 1986, p. 78).

Not so. More likely it was the other way around. This is an example of the "influence" hunting that contributes to obfuscating the true history of the understanding of the teachings in question.

169. In 1852 he wrote:

> As for myself, I believe that this apostasy, in its public and formal manifestation, is future. This is what I have thought since 1827 (*Collected Writings* 4:295, 296).

> is judgment. Below, the Church is in mystery, and the marriage above . . . John goes up, and looks down into judgment here, and has the Church for the marriage of the Lamb above (p. 367).

"The bride of Christ above"! In the Revelation when John takes the viewpoint from above, looking down (Rev. 4:1), John sees the church above, no longer on earth. Here is a pre-Rev. 4 rapture of the saints.

Moreover, the Bride being above means the church being above. We see that JND did not hold a partial-rapture view. [170]

The modern post-tribulation view sees Christ coming into the air, catching up the saints and immediately proceeding back to earth. Not so JND. He wrote:

> He could not rest here with them, but He goes to prepare a place for them in His Father's house; and He would come again, not to be with them as to the Jews and the world, but to take them to be with Him. But then they had seen and known where He was going, and the way; for He was going to the Father, and they had seen Him in Him, and He Himself was the way (p. 300).

So John 14:3 means Christ would come and take them into heaven and not rather, be with them as to the Jews and the world. The Jews and the world would pass through the events here on earth while His own, now, would be "with Him" (the bride of Christ above). Well, that is just how they are able to come forth from heaven when He appears in glory (Rev. 19).

It is Really the Pre-Daniel's 70th Week Coming That He Understood

The language now used to describe the true pretribulation rapture was not in vogue at this time. But what is meant by it is found in these notes. Besides the Bride being above, there is this:

> the resurrection of the saints, I think, precedes the manifestation of Jesus to the Jews; while the first resurrection is shown to be the glory of God; and also, etc.; and that it is subsequent to this that the development of the full actual hostility of the unbelieving portion of the Jews, not the nation, will show itself . . . (p. 174).

It is subsequent to the first resurrection that the hostility of the unbelieving potion of the Jews will develop. Exactly so.

We have the Bride above by the time Rev. 4 opens. The Jewish remnant is in the tribulation.

In view of the discussion in Appendix 1 herein, note that we have here in JND nothing about a (visible) epiphany to be followed by a parousia, with saints held in the air during the interval and then to descend from the air to earth, with Christ.

In John there is the expression, "where I am," some seven times. It never means 'where I happen to be.' It is an anticipatory statement (like others in John) in view of His going to the Father above. I do believe that JND was quite conscious of this when he wrote:

> It was not, observe, "Where I go," but "Where I am." . . . Where He was, that is, when He came again, they would *be* . . . (p. 238).

"Where I am," in John, always refers to His being in the Father's house above. No wonder modern postribulationists try to make the Father's house in John 14:1-3 be anything other than that! (We shall see later that R. Norton equated the kingdom of God with the Father's house; i.e., looking forward to the millennium. The Irvingites never had the heavenly hope that JND has expressed in these notes.)

In contrast to the Irvingites who were looking for the Lord to come in judgment, *thus emphasizing the epiphany* (what we should understand is the second phase of the coming of Christ -- i.e., the epiphany of the parousia; see 2 Thess. 2:8), JND understood the coming in John 14:1-3 was for receiving us to Himself and into the Father's house above. This is the pretribulation phase of the coming. So, rather than speaking of Christ coming to judge, and take us into the air in order to our pouring out the seven vials, JND wrote:

> Hence, also, the coming of the Lord is to take us to *Himself* (p. 259).

It is interesting that it appears it was on the day that he wrote "April 8/27" in these notes that he wrote:

> Oh! for his appearing. Yet I know the love which causes Him to bear long (p. 261).

Strictly speaking, the appearing is the coming in glory as in Rev. 19. These words would be more carefully used subsequently. It is implicit in the remarks that he expected no necessary intervening events; i.e., it is the any-moment coming.

Concerning John 14, on p. 300 he wrote:

> He could not rest here with them, but He goes to prepare a place for them in His Father's house; and He would come again and, not to be with them as to the Jews and the world, but to take them to be *with Him*.

He Understood That the Future Jewish Remnant Would Be There in the Time of Jacob's Trouble

He writes of the Jewish remnant on pp. 75, 76, 354, and that Antichrist would be over the apostate Jews (pp. 157, 311). Already on p. 16, as we noted, he speaks of Nathaniel representing the "Remnant in the latter days." Meanwhile, the Jewish people are "'Lo-ammi' (not my people)" (p. 20). In writing on John 3 there was occasion to speak of "heavenly things" in contrast to earthly things, in speaking with Nicodemus. Note that there is a

> portion in the "earthly things" peculiar to the Jew . . .,

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170. There is no hint in JND's writings that he ever entertained a partial-rapture view. That would violate the truth of the one body as he understood it:

> As to the question you refer to, it is one which exercised brethren early in their career, but I think they have all settled pretty positively in the conviction that all the saints will be with Christ at His coming . . .
>
> There is another thing that, at the time the question was mooted, acted on my judgment: all who are really members of His body must be with Him. You cannot divide the body. Again, if forming part of the bride they must be there . . .(*Letters* 2:230).

See *Collected Writings* 17:374; 21:32.

> But we learn also this further truth: how the millennial glory is the very purpose in which the full mind of God as revealed in Christ is revealed, as indeed stated in Ephesians 1 {:10} (p. 25).

His comments on the "heavenly things" may be noted on pp. 29, 31, 35.

The glory of the kingdom is preceded by the formation of a Jewish remnant. A Jewish remnant existed in Christ's day when here, but found its place in the Church as the "Israel of God" (p. 187). Note the implicit distinction between Israel and the Church in his use of this designation. Nathaniel is a type of this future remnant (p. 16). This remnant shall be in the time of Jacob's trouble. JND notes that the Lord departed from His own to a mountain (John 6) while His own are in difficulty on the sea. JND saw in this something typical of Christ and the future remnant:

> . . . and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went, but not till Jesus was in the ship rejoining it in the midst of, and walking over, the difficulties and trials they were in: the time of Jacob's trouble; but when they shall be delivered out of it, when a King shall indeed be among them, and the troubled and isolated Remnant, the yechidim, find themselves in the rest they could not attain, and that immediately, troubled as they may have been, even as his brethren before Joseph at his approach (pp. 75, 76).

So as to the Jewish remnant in that day,

> they will be in the "tribulation," but forget the trouble for the abundance of joy when the Son is given to them. They recognize that the Child was born to them, coming in by faith, even as the Gentiles did, who, seeing the glory and the Lord, had to be taught faith, "I am Jesus," that One that was slain (p. 287).

That future owning of Messiah by the Jews is typified by Thomas. He was absent when the Lord manifested Himself to what typified the Church in John 20:19 (p. 352). But concerning John 20:28, 29:

> And there are those who shall believe when they are looking on Him whom they have pierced, to whom Jesus will yet show Himself in due and appointed time in mercy, but with this reproach. And, as verse 28 will give the full confession of the Jewish Church and brought in Gentiles in that day, so verse 29 gives the judgment of the Lord on the difference. The saints are those who, having not seen, yet have believed, and they shall be in the glory . . . The conduct of Thomas, as we have seen, represented the Jewish people (p. 354).

Note that he here erroneously used the expression "the Jewish Church" as an expression for the blessed nation of Israel in a coming day. Observe also that the saints who have "not seen" refers to ourselves. Here again he distinguished the Church from Israel and from those Gentiles who are blessed in the millennium.

He Understood a Personal Antichrist to Be over the Apostate Jews

In notes on John 17, he connected Antichrist with the desolation of the Jews:

> [the Lord] kept those who owned Him Son of God in the Father's name. When another comes (to wit, Antichrist) in his own name, him they will receive. It will suit their selfishness. Hence the desolation of the Jews in the latter day (p. 311).

The idol shepherd of Zech. 11 is the Antichrist:

> The idol shepherd of Zechariah 11 is, I should think, however, the Antichrist as in his connection with the Jewish people. Compare that prophecy; it is most important. His object was to steal, etc., even as to the fold, which shows (though specifically resulting in the sheep) the generic character of the one there. He could not touch the sheep. He had no life to give . . . This could be most fully shown in Antichrist himself (p. 157).

On pages 223, 224, he speaks of the apostate Jews as connected with the Antichrist.

He also understood that Elijah has a future, literal mission:

> It is not known what became of Moses' body, save that God buried it; a great honor put upon it; though not such as Elias, for it would not have suited his mission (p. 210).

The implication here is that he did not regard the two witnesses of Rev. 11 as Moses and Elijah.

He Wrote about Israel and Christ's Earthly Glory During the Millennium

In the millennium "Jehovah shall espouse Israel in truth" (p.60) though they are now "Lo-Ammi" (p. 20), for He has a "relationship with Jerusalem as bride; chap. 3:29-36" (p. 61). JND referred to "earthly things, for which the Jews . . . must be born again, as the prophets testified, for the real enjoyment under God of the earthly things" (p. 362; see also p. 25, and especially p.28). That Day will be for Israel "life from the dead" (p. 68). Israel will be blessed under the King as the Melchisedec priest upon His throne (p. 74).

Christ's earthly glory will then be a royal glory:

> Accordingly our Lord showed His royal power of feeding and sustaining His people unlimitedly (for this shall be His portion in gift in that day over the creature, as it is also in Colossians, but not thus). See also Psalms 132:15, 68:10. So see the time of Solomon's manifestation in the temple when the Feast of Tabernacles was kept . . . also exercised in unity of royalty, as not simply over the house of David (though so) but also as Melchisedec, the Priest upon His throne; for as over the house of Judah and Israel it is exercised actually in royalty . . . (p. 74).

He Described the Church's Part in Christ's Millennial Glory

The future fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles will introduce the millennial glory:

> I remark in John's gospel, chapter 1, all the glory of Christ's Person set forth in a remarkable manner, from His divinity WHO IS to His millennial glory among the Jews as Son of Man; and this very methodically. . . .
>
> Then we have specially what the Lord is as regards the Church, or as effecting His *work*: the Lamb of God . . . Hereon He becomes a witness and a gatherer. Then He is

> presented to us as Messiah, Son of God and King of Israel; and the angels ascending and descending upon Him as Son of Man; thus closing with His millennial glory.
>
> It seems to me that the following chapter [John 2] shows the Church's part rather in that glory, or the principles of it, at least. The third day evidently gives some meaning. It was not the third day of the preceding, for He had passed into Galilee. Three days were elapsed withal in the former chapter: John's testimony, the Church, and the millennium (pp. 15, 16).

Note the sharp distinction between Israel and the Church, with Christ's respective relationship to these. Here, at the beginning of these notes, early in 1827, he displayed a wonderful understanding of the *typical* import of these chapters. What he meant by the church's part in the millennial glory was explained later:

> . . . the third day [chap. 2] the day of resurrection. This is the association of the Church, a new character; His (Jewish) mother cast aside; the water turned into the wine of the kingdom. It is not introduced consecutively (for Nathaniel properly includes the earthly part, and consequences of it), but a separate statement to show the Church, and withal in a certain sense the Jewish marriage of Christ. We belong, as it were, to the third day. Verse 12 seems to show, after the purpose in the Church was manifested or set about, that mother, brethren, Jesus and disciples were all together; which was just His earthly ministry in that place . . . and so the Kingdom in two parts: earthly things, for which Jews (for it also hung on resurrection in "the sure mercies," and was really with God) must be born again, as the prophets testified, for the real enjoyment under God of the earthly things. Besides, the Son of Man must be lifted up, not received of the Jew now (His miracles only affected what was in man), and so be the door of heavenly things; fit men for them too, even eternal life; enable them to enjoy them according to the love in which, as Son of God, he was given (pp. 361, 362).

The distinction between the heavenly portion of the Church and the earthly portion of Israel is quite clear in this passage.

Conclusion: In 1827 JND Had The Heavenly Hope

We close with these words of ardent longing to see the Beloved One by this 27 year old student of the mind of God revealed in His holy Word:

> . . . the Apocalypse gives the end of all these things, and teaches (as to those of them which pass now) the Church to cry, "Come, Lord Jesus," come quickly. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus, Amen." Do not I hear, O Lord? In this my heart says, Come. My soul says, Come. We are here so as in a manner to be "sick of love," yet in spirit so with Thee, and above this world's, living with Thee; set down with Thee; that we can say, "Thy will be done." Be thy name, blessed Jesus, fully glorified by their power and ways. Yet Thou knowest me to be "sick of love," desiring Thy presence, holy and blessed Savior, Lamb of God, our Lord, Prince of peace, King of kings, the Word of God (pp. 235, 236).

Note:

On p. 235 of these notes on *The Gospel of John*, there appears a cryptic reference to "Irvingites." Either he had obtained some writings of Irving by this time, or had learned some things through the visit of J. G. Bellett. In Nov. 1826 a conference of one week for the study of prophecy was convened at the residence of Henry Drummond. Edward Irving was by this time commanding attention, and JND may have been referring to this group as Irvingites. On the other hand, this may have been a later addition.

Excursus on JND and Historicism

For very many years (if not all his life) JND thought that a general *application* of the Revelation could be made to Christians and the world. The *interpretation* of the Revelation was a different matter. JND's 1839 work, *Notes on the Revelation*, contains a chart titled, "New Testament -- Viewing the Revelation on the Protracted or Historic Scale." [171] This is followed by another chart, "Synopsis of the Revelation -- The Prophetic Part Viewed as the Lord's Assumption of the Inheritance, Consequent On the Church Being in Heaven." [172]

Interestingly, W. Kelly remarked upon this book by JND:

> Years before the first edition of the *Horae Apocalypticae* {by E. B. Elliot} appeared in 1844, there were Christians who waited for Christ and looked for {believed that there would be} the personal Antichrist, with the many momentous consequences of both views, yet held the general application of the Apocalypse to the saints and the world since the time of St. John, as stated in my lectures. Nor ought Mr. Elliott to have forgotten this (as I doubt not he did); for I have so told him orally and given him a work by a friend of mine to that effect, which was published in 1839. [173] He should not therefore have spoken of {my} "renouncing" futurist dogmas once entertained, any more than of "a person originally altogether opposed to the Protestant view." [174]

Without the slightest doubt, in 1839 JND held the pretribulation rapture (the church in heaven by the opening of Rev. 4), yet made a historicist *application, **not** interpretation*. The same is true concerning his comments referring to historicism in his 1829 and 1830 papers. These historicist-type comments do not prove he did not hold the immediate coming before 1830. And this simple and obvious accounting for such comments harmonizes with the evidence that he held the coming, with no intermediate events, in 1827 already. How could anyone who does not have an anti-Darby agenda fail to see that? Even in 1860 JND wrote:

> I believe a certain prolonged application can be given in the

171. *Collected Writings* 2:262, 263.
172. Ibid., p. 264, 265.
173. {This would refer to JND's *Notes on the Book of Revelation*, London: Central Tract Depot, 1839. I have a Xeroxed copy of it including the accompanying charts, showing the Church in heaven during the Apocalyptic judgments.}
174. *Lectures on the Book of the Revelation*, p. 8.

> sense in which John said there were many antichrists, but they were not the Antichrist. In this moral sense, then, passages may have an application to the present order of things; but I do not doubt that the things which come after "the things which are" do not belong to the present order of things . . . [175]

Very true; and this is applicable to his views in 1827. He also wrote:

> We are properly nowhere, save in the extraordinary suspension of prophetic testimony, or period, which comes in between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week of Daniel, or at the end of that age which was running on when Christ was here, the close of which was suspended by His crucifixion; [176] His return to establish it then, according to Acts 3, being precluded by the rejection of the testimony of the Holy Ghost, which followed -- finally declared at Stephen's death. Whereupon the doctrine of the church in union with a heavenly Head, without distinction of Jew or Gentile, was fully revealed, and entrusted to Paul, who had joined in that rejection, in a ministry, beginning not at Jerusalem but Antioch. In the Revelation therefore, until the heavenly Jerusalem is revealed, the church is never, properly speaking, seen at all . . . I certainly apprehend that the period spoken of in the Revelation (or from chap. 4) is the interval between the removal of the church from the place of testimony, and the manifestation of it in a glorious testimony, as already stated, in chapters 21, 22. Whether this has had a partial fulfilment since the church failed in giving a testimony on earth at the beginning, and there were but a few imperfect witnesses, I will not say. I daresay it has, but whatever general principle of a year-day system may be admitted, there is no proper literal fulfilment of it, I apprehend, but in that which is to come, in which on earth as such the church will not be witness at all. [177]

Floyd S. Elmore, in a Doctoral dissertation, wrote:

> From his first tract "Reflections upon 'The Prophetic Inquiry' and the Views Advanced in It," dated 1829, Darby is openly premillennial. What is rarely mentioned is that the early Darby espoused a premillennial historicism before the famous Powerscourt prophetic conferences of 1831-33. Years later, he added in a footnote to his paper "On 'Days' Signifying 'Years' in Prophetic Language," written in 1830, disclaiming the historicism taught in it, but honestly leaving the paper unedited because it "may serve to show historically the progress made in the apprehension of truth." [178]

Apparently he took JND's remark about "assuming traditional views as true" [179] in the most absolute way so as to make it mean 'disclaiming the historicism taught in it,' and so make of JND a historicist at this point. He has read too much into the statement. We saw in the 1827 notes on John that JND placed the church above with Christ during the apocalyptic judgments. Moreover, JND did not make a crusade out of what he understood regarding these things. He gave time for truth to works its way. His temperament and attitude was the inverse of a detractor that we will consider later in this book.

Excursus on J. N. Darby's Reticence in Publicly Teaching Such Things

At first, JND proceeded slowly and with hesitation in teaching the truths the Spirit of God had taught him. He has commented on this fact:

> I believe at my deliverance from bondage in 1827-8, God opened up certain truths needed for the church. I believe that, though holding and seeking to help souls by them, for what was called peace and union I swamped them, had not faith to make them good in service. [180]

Excursus on the Relationship of JND's Ecclesiology and Eschatology

I think it fair to say that in reviewing JND's statements concerning what he experienced and learned in Jan. 1826 - 1827, he understood deliverance, and union with Christ, and the truth of the one body, and this led to clarity regarding eschatology. It was not the other way around. However, clearly, these two lines of truth were connected in his mind in this way: the hope of the Christian, i.e., Christ's coming to receive us to Himself, is bound up with, flows from, the connection that the Christian has with Christ as his life -- "resurrection-life," as JND called it in the *Notes on John's Gospel*. The saints are united to Christ in glory. The body of Christ will not be present in the time of Jacob's trouble. The Bride will be above when Rev. 4 opens. It was knowing his place in Christ, and as being one body with Him, that resulted in clarity regarding eschatology.

Moreover, with this right understanding, he would not be persuaded by partial-rapture views which soon afterwards developed among the (historicist) Irvingites (see ch. 7), which he would see as dividing the body.

One other point to emphasize is that JND was not a "restorationist." He saw that the church on earth, viewed in responsible testimony was in ruins. There would be no restoration from that state -- a state ending in the apostasy.

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175. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:306.

176. {This statement means that the termination of the Mosaic age has not yet occurred; and that concerning the earthly course of things, the Mosaic age is running on *right now*. "The end of the age" means the end of the Mosaic age that is running on right now. The church is not an age and is not part of the earthly ages, but is heavenly, and we are seated in the heavenlies (Eph. 2). JND's views on these matters are given in my *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 1, as well as *J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses*, both books available from Present Truth Publishers.}

177. *Letters* 2:131, 132, May 1, 1848.

178. *A Critical Examination of the Two Peoples of God in John Nelson Darby*, May 1990, p. 28, Dallas Theological Seminary.

179. *Collected Writings* 2:32, note.

180. *Letters* 1:185.

Section 4

The Testimony in Ireland and England

Section four briefly traces some of the early spread of recovered truth in Ireland and particularly Plymouth, England, from which the name Plymouth Brethren was attached by others to those who identified themselves with the four who first broke bread together in 1827.

Chapter 4.1

The Testimony in Ireland

JND described what followed the initiation of the meeting in Fitzwilliam Square, Ireland, in Dec. 1827:

> Others then joined us. I left Dublin soon after, but the work immediately began at Limerick, a town in Ireland, and then in other places. [181]

Before the meeting in Dublin moved to 11 Aungier St., "there were four or five other small meetings in Ireland." [182]

It is interesting that in regard to preaching in Ireland in early 1829 JND was threatened:

> 2nd of February 1829
>
> Dear Sir,
>
> I hope you will take notice for your own sake not to be Disturbing the people of Corofin – By your swadling business {?} coming like a Thief in the night seducing the people of Corofin by your Bible business and if you don't mind what I say you will meet with your fate at last In Corofin so darby return to your own Native place we have heard who you are and what your sceaming way of living is so you Rascal we have listened a long time to you But no longer make off as soon as possible you {indistinct} has brought you to the country . . .
>
> Written by Captain Rock [183]

On the other hand, there is a letter from Christians in Calary asking JND to return:

> Calary School House
>
> March 28th 1829
>
> Dr. & Revd. Mr. Darby,
>
> We the Inhabitants of Calary as a testimony of our love and grateful thanks feel it our duty to pay our tribute of filial affections and heartfelt thanks to your Reverence for your manifest love towards us in the bowels of our Lord & Saviour in commending us to His grace and the patient waiting for Him. Indeed we have I trust with unuterable (sic) pleasure heard your most tender affections for us, & we whom it pleased Providence to order you once to be the Shepherd of us and amongst whom you have first sown the Seed of life to the comfort of many do most humbly implore at the throne of mercy that where you began to labour in the vineyard willing to spend and be spent in the glorious cause of establishing His Kingdom amongst us, that He may in mercy bless us and grant we may behold your face again it is unecessary (sic) to multiply words as we only intend simply to declare our feelings which we most earnestly request our acceptance at the same time hoping your Reverence will present (text missing) our sincere regard may be communicated to that most valuable ornament of grace who made known to us in so plain & distinguished a manner your zeal for our eternal happiness and the consolatory admonishion (sic) delivered to us from the 12 of Romans, we candidly declare that some of us could plainly read the second or great commandment of the Law in his countenance and shall now close by praying that our Lord and Saviour may bless you, and mark your zeal for his cause in Calary in the Book of Rememberance (sic) above, Malachi 3rd.
>
> We are &c &c &c.
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Ellen Fox | Samuel Fox |
> | Jam Fox | Sutton Delamore |
> | Margaret Fox | Anthony Sutton |
> | Martha Luson (?) | Janet Sutton |
> | Signed by order of | John Sutton |
> | John Hatton | Dr. O'Brien |
> | John Delamore | S Master [184] |

It would be reading too much into this to conclude that JND still had an Anglican charge in Calary. I mention this because of seeing comments that JND had such a "curacy" from 1825-1829. We saw that he left the Church of England in 1827. Moreover, there were other occasions when he was referred to as Rev. -- in 1831, 1839, and 1842.

To return, in the following remarks concerning the change in location of the meeting room at Dublin, J. G. Bellett again has some errors in his reminiscences regarding dates -- almost systematically in error by two years. November 1829 should read 1827 because he met J. Parnell some time before the commencement of breaking of bread -- which began in late 1827.

> Some time before this {the commencement of breaking bread} I had become acquainted with J. Parnell (now Lord Congleton), and in that month (November, 1829 {1827} [185])

181. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:301. So N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:22.

182. N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:22.

183. This letter was preserved in what is called the "Sibthorpe Collection" and is CBA 5540 (188) -- the original collection is now in the Christian Brethren Archive in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, England. I transcribed it as it appears as hand-written.

184. In the *Sibthorpe Collection*.

185. F. Gill, *Matthew 18:20*, p. 31 suggests 1828 for the 1830 date. That does fit a pattern of two year errors that run through J. G. Bellett's

(continued...)

and through the spring of 1830, he was occasionally in Dublin and frequently amongst us. He became very familiar with Edward Cronin, and in the month of May, purposing to let the Lord's Table in the midst of us become somewhat more of a witness, he took a large room in Aungier Street belonging to a cabinet maker. There the meeting was transferred during that month. This tried me still more -- the publicity of it was too much for me. I instinctively shrank. F. Hutchinson, as I remember, would also rather have continued in the private house, so that I believe I did not join them for one or two Sundays, and I am not sure that he did, but the others were there at once. J. Parnell, W. Stokes, E. Cronin and a few sisters, and shortly several were added. [186]

A. Miller says:

This strange-looking place for the holy service of the Lord may be taken as a sample of what Brethren's rooms have been in all parts of the country ever since. In order to clear the place for the meeting on Lord's day morning, three or four of the brothers were in the habit of moving the furniture aside on Saturday evening. One of these active brothers, referring to their Saturday night's work, after a lapse of nearly fifty years, says, "These were blessed seasons to my soul -- J. Parnell, W. Stokes, and others, moving the furniture, and laying the simple table with the bread and wine, -- and never to be forgotten; for surely we had the Master's presence, smile, and sanction, in a movement such as this was." We have heard some describe the strangeness of their feelings on their first visit to this room, having been accustomed to all the proprieties of "church and chapel," but what they heard was entirely new to them, and is remembered to this day. Such love to speak of the peculiar freshness, unction, and power of the word at that time. [187]

Once more we will hear J. G. Bellett regarding Dublin:

In the summer of 1831 {1830}, the mission party to Bagdad was formed. Mr. Groves had been there for some months previously {having previously sailed from England on June 12, 1829 [188]}, and E. Cronin and his sister and J. Parnell with two or three more [189] were desirous of joining him.

They sailed, {Sept. 18,1830 [190]} and we continued our room in Aungier Street. It was poor material we had, dear James, and we had one or two solemn and awful cases of backsliding. There was but little spiritual energy and much that was poor treasure for a living Temple, but we held together in the Lord's mercy and care, I believe advancing in the knowledge of His mind. The settled order of worship that we had in Fitzwilliam Square gave place gradually, teaching and exhorting were first made common duties and services, while prayer was restricted under the care of two or three who were regarded as elders, but gradually all this yielded. In a little time no appointed or recognized eldership was understood to be in the midst of us, and all service was of a free character, the presence of God through the Spirit being more simply believed and used. In the year 1834 {1832?} many more were added, and that year J. N. Darby being in Dublin, it was a question with him whether he should come and help us, as God might give him grace, in Aungier Street, [191] or preach, as he had been invited, at the Asylum in Leeson Street, but he was all but detached from the Church of England. [192] He visited different places either that year or the next, and amongst them Oxford, Plymouth, Cork and Limerick, ministering wherever he might the truth which God had given him from His Word, and I doubt not, from what I remember, he found in all these places other evidences of the independent work of the Spirit of God on the hearts and consciences of the saints of which I have spoken. In Limerick and Cork occasionally preaching in the pulpits of the Established Church, he also met Christians in private houses, and the influence of his ministry was greatly blessed, light and refreshment visited many a soul, and that, too, of an order to which they had before been strangers; and by invitation going from Wexford to Plymouth, he found the same there, and that in those distant places which had, perhaps, never been combined before in any one kindred influence, this grace was magnified, and happy promising little groups of saints, who sought relief from their heaviness, were found in these places. [193]

That there were things to learn regarding right order in the things of God, and the day of the ruin of the church as viewed in responsible testimony, is given in this interesting note by W. Kelly:

Where the Lord's name is the living center, Christians grow and correct themselves by the Word and Spirit of God. Brethren, even when they met in Aungier St. (Dublin), used to settle on Saturday night for the scriptures and hymns on the Lord's day! Later still at Plymouth an elders chair was occupied at the Lord's table. But they learnt ere long that "the gifts" of Christ are permanent; whereas "elders" require apostolic nomination direct or indirect {i.e., by an apostolic delegate, like Titus}. [194]

Concerning these early activities in Ireland, JND wrote:

. . . my occupation is traveling and preaching two or three times a day, or as here, standing out on the question whether the gospel is to be preached, in spite of the clergy, or not; and now that the Lord has opened the minds of the people, lecturing nightly, and expected to answer all the questions and hold every ground that anybody might question. Nevertheless, the Lord is wonderfully at work here, but this, of course, does not make the labor less. I suspect the real difficulty is hardly come yet, for the Lord has allowed no felt difficulty yet, but set the tide one way as regards those around me. In

185. (...continued)
reminiscences. N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:24, says 1830. A. Miller, *The Brethren* . . ., p. 21, says "about the spring of 1830, if not in the winter of 1829."

186. *Interesting Reminiscences* . . ., p. 7.

187. *The Brethren* . . ., pp. 21, 22.

188. H. Groves, *Memoir of Lord Congleton*, pp. 18, 19.

189. The group consisted of J. Parnell (afterwards Lord Congleton), F. W. Newman, Hamilton, E. Cronin and his mother, sister and daughter. H. Groves, *Memoir of Lord Congleton*, p. 24.

190. {H. Groves, *Memoir of Lord Congleton*, p. 24.}

191. {*Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:1-5 have some comments on the brethren at Aungier Street.}

192. This is a very inaccurate statement though B. W. Newton had a similar notion. They seemed to have confused JND's preaching in the Church of England with not having withdrawn from it. But as we saw previously he separated from it in Sept. 1827. W. Kelly, in his annotations to W. B. Neatby's *History* . . . likewise objected to this erroneous conclusion. F. R. Coad (and others) use this misunderstanding to delay JND's withdrawal form the C. of E. (*A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 62).

193. *Interesting Reminiscences* . . ., pp. 7, 8.

194. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:224.

the meanwhile, the meeting at Powerscourt, as it has wrought conscious desires, and inquiry and prayer too, in the minds of many of the evangelical people in this place, there has been a considerable plunge made into the minds of this country by it, and this has partly exercised me, as interested in this country.

Aungier Street, too, as you know, through the captiousness of one person, has caused trouble. But the Lord worketh still His own way. There is a little church here which has caused in an idle town great trouble and confusion of thought, where the preaching of the gospel was made a crime before; yet I communicate there, preach the gospel, and none to hinder me. We have set up weekly scripture reading meetings, two of them in the most worldly houses in Limerick. Our only present difficulty is to keep people out. Pray that the Lord may turn this to His own real blessing in truth. [195]

J. B. Stoney (1814-1897) made some interesting comments about the effect of JND upon himself.

I first knew the brethren in 1833 {when he was 19}. I had, in anxiety to serve the Lord, given up going to the Bar in order to take orders {to become a clergyman}, thinking it the only true way of doing so. I at first very reluctantly went to hear at Aungier Street, but my "chum" in college, a Mr. Clarke, was a constant attendant (since gone over to Irvingism).

I was eventually much interested in the teaching there. I particularly remember Mr. Darby on being "Accepted in the Beloved," and Mr. Bellett on Mark 5; but I did not think of joining them -- I was expecting great things from Mr. Irving. Mr. Bellett brought Mr. Benjamin Newton to see me in my rooms in college, in order to disabuse my mind of Irvingism. I was constantly hearing of J. N. D., and at length heard him on Joshua 8: "Wherefor liest thou upon the ground? Up, sanctify the people." Get rid of the evil first, God cannot be with us until we are separated from the evil. I was broken down. I felt for the first time the immense step of leaving the Established order for the unsightly few in Aungier Street. This was in June, 1834. [196]

JND made an interesting comment in 1833 concerning a young sister in Christ who was instrumental in "setting afloat" some Scripture reading meetings for him:

We have also some very nice scripture reading meetings, to which any of the clergy who hold the truth, have fallen in, though quite mixed, and everyone at liberty to speak. It is chiefly, of course, on what may be called first principles, but I trust thorough ones practically. It was a remarkable circumstance, that a dear young lady, who was instrumental in setting them afloat for me, and at several members of whose family they were held -- who had been only called about a year by the Lord, but was very decided ever since -- was suddenly called away the other day in the midst of it all. The people in Limerick felt it a good deal, and I trust it may be the instrument of good to many. The whole family, which was a principal one here, had been all thoroughly worldly a year ago, and herself and her sister at the head of all idleness. [197]

There is an interesting letter by the younger sister of E. Pennefather, dated Mar. 14, 1835, that seems like it is describing J. N. Darby. E. Pennefather was married to a sister of J. N. Darby, but he did not share JND's teachings. The letter also includes some comments on Lady Powerscourt:

Mr. _____ is in Dublin, and we have the enjoyment of seeing him sometimes. He calls here occasionally, and seems to communicate the joy in heavenly things which he feels. He presses *rejoicing* on believers very much, because he says, 'Christ not only died, but is risen, and has purchased everything for us, and believers are children and heirs.' This joy in believing, he thinks, is the surest way of bringing about deadness to the world. I believe that you know his views about the Church of England: he wishes to draw believers out of it, although he admits there is salvation in it. On this subject he has not spoken to any of us. Surely we may be living as risen with Christ, whether connected with the Church of England or not. Many real Christians on this ground do not like to associate with Mr. ____; but this I cannot enter into, when there are so many delightful spots of common meeting. He appears to be engaged from morning till night preaching, expounding, visiting, &c.: he now seems ready to go anywhere, either to dine or call, always premising, 'If you will allow me to preach'; and he never goes anywhere unless about his Master's business. He says he feels his office principally lies in urging believers to walk worthy of their high and holy calling.

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195. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:13.

196. *Interesting Reminiscences . . .*, pp. 19, 20. J. B. Stoney entered Trinity College, Dublin when fifteen and studied classics and law. In 1831 (age 17) in Dublin there where deaths all around from cholera; and taken ill, he came to God for salvation and trusted Christ. He was restored and resumed studying. However, he joined the Divinity Class with a view to being ordained, though the requirement was an age of 24 to qualify. His family was angry concerning what they viewed as a waste of his talents. In the interim he came in contact with the "brethren" (Hy Pickering, ed., *Chief Men Among the Brethren*, pp. 88, 89).

197. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:15. Mr. MacPherson, who has a manipulative agenda to show that JND was an untruthful opportunist, has systematically distorted JND's remarks. He attempts to depict JND as a man who did not give others credit for their ideas which he (allegedly) adapted. He picked on this remark of JND about the young Irish woman to couple it with his polemic against JND regarding Margaret Macdonald. His thesis is that Miss Margaret Macdonald, of Port Glasgow, Scotland, was the originator of the doctrine of the pretribulation rapture in 1830; and that JND covered up his source; and now he seeks to implicate William Kelly in this cover-up.

The citation below illustrates his typical approach to JND and how his agenda has resulted in his systematic distortion of things JND has said. It appears that he thinks that the young Irish woman "set afloat" "first principles" for JND and that JND would not reveal what he learned from this woman. And so he wrote:

Question: why did Darby admit such things about a young Irish lady (written three years after Margaret's revelation) and not give Margaret any credit for her prior Rapture? Surely he must have known that sooner or later someone could discover the real Pre-Trib Origin. (*The Great Rapture Hoax*, p. 179).

If so, why JND would be so stupid as to even mention the young Irish lady, he does not discuss. At any rate, the answer is simple: JND did credit the young Irish woman: with setting afloat some Scripture readings (not principles); and Mr. MacPherson has *read into* both cases what *he* is *so anxious* to find for his anti-Darby agenda. This is not a singular case of 'mistake' but characteristic of his personal attack on JND. It does not appear to be a deliberate **hoax** on his part, but part of an **incredible coverup** of facts resulting from blind animus against the truth of the pretibulation rapture and against the servant of God who was used to bring that and related truths before the church. In general, his representations of JND are not to be trusted.

> Lady Powerscourt is living at present in Dublin; through a mutual friend, S. and I were invited to attend a meeting for reading the Scriptures, which she has established once a week: we were there at one reading, and are going again to-day. I found it very profitable, and so did Susan; every one is allowed to give an opinion, or to ask questions. Mr. ____ and two or three clergymen were present. The former read 1 John 1, and spoke beautifully on the Christian's hopes and present comforts. Others said but little; the ladies were silent, with the exception of two or three questions. Lady P. only asked one, which I could not hear. She is a lovely-looking creature, pale, elegant, dignified, and retiring; her face looks as it she were much in prayer and communion with God. We were introduced to her, and her address is very pleasing. Mr. ____ and Lady Harberton kept up an interesting conversation, he urging rejoicing, she seeming to fear presumption. [198]

Lady Powerscourt withdrew from the Church of England, late 1833, to be gathered together to the Lord's name (Matt. 18:20) with the saints at Aungier Street. She had been under the ministry of Robert Daly, a godly man, a Church of England clergyman, but who had become disturbed concerning "strange doctrines" at some of the Powerscourt meetings and did not share Lady Powerscourt's exercises of soul.

198. *The Life and Letters of the Rev. William Pennefather*, B.A., London: Shaw, fourth ed., pp. 23, 24. William Pennefather was the brother of Edward Pennefather.

Chapter 4.2

The Beginning at Plymouth

JND Visits Oxford

Concerning Oxford, we do not know how many times he visited there but there were several. It seems that it was F. W. Newman who first asked JND to come to Oxford.

> When I had returned {from Ireland, Autumn 1828, from the employ of E. Pennefather, as a tutor of his children} to Oxford, I induced the Irish clergyman {JND} to visit the University, and introduced him to many my equals in age, and juniors. Most striking was it to see how instantaneously he assumed the place of universal father-confessor, as if he had been a known and long-trusted friend, His insight into character, and tenderness pervading his austerity, so opened young men's hearts, that day after day there was no end of secret closetings with him . . . [199]

It appears that the visit occurred soon after F. W. Newman returned, B. W. Newton said:

> When he came back he said to me I have met such a devoted person who has got many books but doesn't use them, only his Bible, he leaves them in his room & they are a snare to him. Newman also gave me Darby's book on the "Fall of the Church" {lost} written in his usual involved style and also the subject involved. A few months afterwards {but see note} he came to me saying Now Newton, that friend has come to Oxford and is to have tea with me; I insist on your coming to meet him. [200]

Since FWN returned to Oxford in the Autumn of 1828 and this quotation says that a few months later JND arrived at Oxford,this visit may have taken place by early 1829, at least, [201] and JND and B. W. Newton became acquainted, though it is claimed that JND's first visit to Oxford visit took place in May 1830, which is the likely time. [202]

Another visit followed his labors at Limerick, Ireland :

> I afterwards went to Limerick, where I began next. It was subsequently, after July 30th, I went to Oxford, where Wigram was at Queen's (College); and I found him and Jarratt. I then went to Plymouth, where it soon began in England; and immediately afterwards, through Wigram, in London. I was not in Dublin when they went to No. 11 Aungier Street (in 1830); but went there afterwards. [203]

This seems to refer to July 30, 1830. The "(in 1830)" is probably an explanatory note by N. Noel. The date of this visit to Oxford has been determined by F. R. Coad to be during 1830.

> Darby's correspondence gives varying dates for this visit, but other evidence fixes it as mid-1830. In one place Darby dates it after July 1830, but we know that Newton and Wigram, whom Darby met on the visit, were both absent from Oxford at the end of that month, as there is a letter extant written from Newton in Plymouth to Wigram in Scotland dated 31st July 1830. (This is in the Fry collection {pp. 264-266}.) Neatby suggests that the visit must have been between July and Newman's departure for Bagdad in September {1830} -- but the descriptions make it plain that it was not in vacation-time. We are thus left with the early summer months of 1830. (Since the first edition of this book appeared, Mr. T. C. F. Stunt has confirmed that Darby was in Oxford by May 1830 -- *The Harvester*, May 1968, p. 78). [204]

W. Kelly said,

> It was at a much earlier date (1831, I think) [205] that F. W. Newman invited Mr. Darby to Oxford: a season memorable in a public way for his refutation of Dr. E. Burton's denial of the doctrines of grace, beyond doubt held by the Reformers, and asserted not only by Bucer, P. Martyr, and Bishop Jewell, but in Articles IX-XVIII of the Church of England. With a smile he said to me, 'That is the only

199. *Phases of Faith*, p. 28.

200. *Fry Ms*, p. 235.

201. We might notice here that Anthony Norris Groves, along with others, on June 12, 1829, began the journey that was to take them eventually to Bagdad for missionary work (*Memoir of Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 51). F. W. Newman, along with E. Cronin and V. Parnell, left England in 1830 to join that work.

202. Grayson Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals* . . ., p. 234. The 1830 date also has this in its favor: the *Fry MS*, p. 239, 240, has B. W. Newton saying, "A year before I met Darby, Newman gave me a book written by him . . .

(continued...)

202. (...continued)
Darby stayed in Ireland for some time, three or four months & came back to Oxford just as Bulteel was leaving the Anglican church {in 1831}."

203. N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:22. Cp. p. 58. See also *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:301 which seems to place this in 1830.

204. F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 4, note.

205. F. W. Newman was on the missionary trip during 1831. Also note that this may not refer to the very first time he invited JND to Oxford.

> pamphlet by which I made any money.' [206] The same visit of his acted more privately (not on Mr. W. E. Gladstone, who saw and heard him then) but on G. V. Wigram, Sir L. C. L. Brenton, B. W. Newton and W. Jarratt, as well as others too halting in faith to make a decided stand and endure the consequences. It was characteristic of those young men that, when once at a conversazione some one remarked, 'May the Lord give me a living in the beautiful country' (and he had more than his desire in a Scotch bishopric), Mr. Wigram immediately exclaimed, 'May He give me to follow and serve Him at all cost!' He too had his heart's desire. [207]

JND's habit at this time was to preach anywhere. J. G. Bellett wrote:

> In Limerick [208] and Cork occasionally preaching in the pulpits of the Established Church, he also met Christians in private houses, and his ministry was greatly blessed; light and refreshment visited many a soul, and that of an order to which they had before been strangers. Going by invitation from Oxford to Plymouth he found the same there, so that in those distant places, which perhaps had never been combined before in one kindred influence, this grace was magnified; and happy, promising little groups of saints, who sought relief from their weakness, were joined in those places. [209]

In 1875, JND remarked upon this preaching everywhere:

> For a year or two, at the beginning, I preached everywhere they let me, and others have done it, [210] but it was, after all, another thing; though the trumpet gave an uncertain sound, it resulted in bringing out, even if the gospel only were fully preached. Now the question is fully raised, and the testimony has to be clear, yet the fullest preaching of the gospel and of the assurance of salvation. [211]

G. V. Wigram's Preparation

Another servant of God, being formed with a view to the work God was doing through J. N. Darby, was G. V. Wigram. He had taken up a military career, but gave it up in 1824. In 1826 he went to Oxford to study, to be a clergyman of the Church of England. This also was not to be, for he was refused ordination on account of his evangelicalism and low-church views.

When F. W. Newman returned back to Oxford from tutoring at the Pennefathers, in the Autumn of 1828, he spoke to B. W. Newton about prophecy, and consequently meetings were held in BWN's rooms. It is likely that G. V. Wigram attended.

In a previous citation it may be observed that the work, said JND, began "immediately afterwards, through Wigram, in London." [212] We shall shortly see that it was G. V. Wigram that initiated the breaking of bread at Plymouth also, prior to doing so in London. N. Noel cited this from G. V. Wigram:

> Two, or three or four of us had broken bread together when I was at Oxford, before Edward Cronin went with others to the East {in Sept. 1830} and, from that time, wherever I might be on Sunday, there I was wont to break bread, though it might be only I and Snook [his valet] and my wife might join. This I did at Ridgway [about five miles from Plymouth], when I had left Ireland, and had gone to Devonshire for the work's sake, chiefly in the gospel. [213]

We may wonder, perhaps, why G. V. Wigram left Oxford. And why did he go to Ireland? Who did he contact there? The answers to these questions are found in this extract from B. W. Newton in the *Fry MS*:

> Wigram had been in the Guards, but left it and came to Oxford and studied and in due time went to Dr. Blomfield, Bishop of London, to be ordained -- but he wouldn't accept him (Why not?). Well, it was because Wigram was too evangelical. So, I said I would get him "a title" and meanwhile Wigram went to Dublin. He there got under the influence of the Powerscourt circle and made up his mind to leave the Church. He went to Plymouth and was there six months before Darby and I went there. [214]

G. V. Wigram left the Church of England "soon after Bulteel's University Sermon (Feb. 1831)" [215] at Oxford denouncing the Church of England. So it was in 1830 that he was affected by the Powerscourt circle, probably at one of the less public meetings for study, near Dublin, that was held before the larger three Powerscourt conferences held at Powerscourt Castle, 1831-1833 (see chapter 5.3).

There are also two interesting references in GVW's letters:

> What a contrast now everywhere to what it was in 1827, when I began to work and had to pray and wait, take a step, and be content to stand and let Satan try to undermine it, and let men break themselves against it! But God is God in every way, and there is no work worth much but what is in Him and under His Spirit. [216]

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206. This is the paper published during 1831, "The Doctrine of the Church of England at the Time of the Reformation . . .," *Collected Writings* 3:1-43. JND was showing what the doctrines were that had previously been held in the Church of England. Grayson Carter said that JND "simply dismissed Burton's claims and advanced his own notions of Calvinistic dogma. Thus did Darby make clear to opponents and supporters alike his assumption of leadership even among Oxford evangelicals . . .," *Anglican Evangelicals* . . ., p. 235. Well, that is one man's opinion. Read JND's article.

207. W. G. Turner, *John Nelson Darby*, p. 70.

208. There are a number of references to Limerick in the 1932-1834 letters of J. N. Darby, vol. 1. See also *Collected Writings* 10:119.

209. Letter of Mr. Bellett to Mr. Hutchinson in *Interesting Reminiscences*.

210. Some comments on early preaching are found in *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:227 and 325. Also the early letters in Vol. 1 will give an idea of JND's labors.

211. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:341

212. B. W. Newton said that meetings in London began in 1833. He described a meeting of 15 persons that had attended, apparently, to hear the Word, but GVW being sick, he asked BWN to take the meeting. It was not for the breaking of bread, but it shows how early GVW was working in London (*Fry MS*, pp. 261, 301).

213. *Interesting Reminiscences* . . ., p. 15.

214. *Fry MS*, p. 263.

215. *Fry MS*, p. 300.

216. E. Dennett, ed., *Memorials of the Ministry of G. V. Wigram*, fifth ed. vol. 2 and 3, p. 235. (Letter of Nov. 25, 1868).

> For three years or more, after I began to break bread {in London}, there were but three of us together -- I only name this as showing that I know the difficulties of the twos and threes; then we were nine, and a pause; then about sixteen. [217]

Since he left Plymouth soon after the breaking of bread started there, this last reference must refer to London where he began assembling.

When Did the Breaking of Bread Begin in Plymouth?

The settling of dates of events connected with beginnings at Plymouth has been difficult, as we saw above. Concerning a later visit to Oxford, in 1830, JND remarked:

> I went to Oxford where many doors were open, and where I found Mr. Wigram and Mr. Jarratt. Subsequently in calling on Mr. F. Newman I met Mr. Newton, who asked me to go down to Plymouth, [218] which I did. On arriving I found in the house Captain Hall, who was already preaching in the villages. We had reading meetings, and ere long began to break bread. Though Mr. Wigram [219] began the work in London, he was a great deal at Plymouth. [220]

We do not know how long JND stayed in and around Plymouth after he arrived there in May 1830. He was there in Jan. 1831, as indicated by the fact that his *Collected Writings* 2:42 has a letter of his dated "Plymouth Jan. 13, 1831." The following remarks, concerning G. V. Wigram, from the *Fry MS* may help us in our dating of events.

> Shortly after his leaving the Church he said to B. W. N. that he wished to give some lectures on Prophecy, and there was a Dissenting Chapel to be sold for a few hundred pounds and he had decided on buying it. And he did. [221]

P. L. Embly has given the dates regarding this purchase and the beginning of meetings in Jan. 1832. [222] The chapel was used:

> for expository meetings for some little time.[223]
>
> Those first few weeks, when only Monday evening meetings were held, had more the character that Mildmay [prophetic conferences] now has. All the Evangelical clergy came, and that might have continued. The moment a union and a corporate standing was taken, the clergy broke with it of course. [224]

JND came there with B. W. Newton and, according to B. W. Newton:

> . . . Wigram proposed that on Sunday evening we should have the Lord's Supper in the vestry. We did so. There were but six or seven of us. The following Sunday evening it was laid in the Chapel itself and we (Darby and I) were startled and said we were not expecting that. Darby was living with me for a time and had walked together with me from my house. However we joined, which we ought not to have done. It was very wrong, for I [225] had not left the Church of England (and was a member of the University). Capt. Hall used to preach Sunday evenings, and being an eloquent man, highly imaginative sort of mind, large numbers of persons were attracted, and thus a 'Meeting' was soon formed.
>
> We retained that Chapel after we took the other. In one (Raleigh St.) we had Gospel, and in _____ teaching, and that arrangement prospered, people knew where to go and whom to hear. [226]

It appears that these things transpired in the first half of 1832. On April, 13, 1832 JND wrote:

> Plymouth, I assure you, has altered the face of Christianity to me, from finding brethren, and they acting together. There are, as you know, individuals here, but scattered as missionaries over the country. [227]

The statement concerning Plymouth is cryptic -- but he may have been encouraged by this beginning at Plymouth to be less reticent regarding the teachings coming out since 1827. At any rate, the breaking of bread began in very early 1832. [228]

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217. *Ibid.*, p. 253, n.d.

218. {Cp. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:515, 301.}

219. {For biographical details regarding G. V. Wigram, see Appendix 10.}

220. A. Miller, *The Brethren . . .*," p. 40. Cp. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:301.

221. *Fry MS*, p. 300.

222. He wrote:

> Wigram was also a wealthy man, and he provided the means for the origin of the Plymouth meeting; on 2 December, 1831, he bought for £750 the recently completed Providence Chapel in Raleigh Street which for some reason was not required by the congregation for which it had been built. (1) Wigram intended to use the chapel to lecture on prophetic subjects, but on 12 December it was licensed for public worship, and services began in Jan. 1832. Wigram's foremost ally in this venture at Plymouth was Captain Percy Hall, a naval officer whose recent open-air preaching at Plymouth had already attracted adverse editorial comment in the local paper. (2)
>
> (1). 'Newton Memoirs' [*Fry MS*] pp. 252, 254, 259. *Plymouth and Davenport Weekly Journal* for 20 January, 1831 and 3 February, 1831, Title Deeds of Raleigh Street (Providence) Chapel, in possession of the Town Clerk's Department,

(continued...)

222. (...continued)

> Plymouth. Certificate of Registration for public Worship in Vol. 91 of the Episcopal Records of the Bishops of Exeter, in possession of the Devon County Archivist.
>
> (2). *Plymouth and Davenport Weekly Journal*, 14 April, 1831 and 4 August, 1831.
>
> ("The Early Development of the Plymouth Brethren," in B. R. Wilson, editor, *Patterns of Sectarianism*, p. 219).

223. *Fry MS*, p. 259.

224. *Fry MS*, p. 256.

225. Interestingly, he says "I." He did not include JND by saying "we." And that is quite correct because JND had left the Church of England in 1827; and since Dec. 1827 had been breaking bread. So there was no reason why JND should not have done so at Plymouth.

226. *Fry MS*, p. 254.

227. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:230; (Dublin, April 13, 1832).

228. Another indication that these things began in Plymouth in very early 1832 is a reminiscence of B. W. Newton that says:

> The 'Powerscourt-Garden' breaking of bread was six or eight months after we began at Plymouth" *Fry MS*, p. 266.

That would be at the large, 1832 Powerscourt meeting (see Chapter 5.3)

(continued...)

JND refers to Plymouth in his letter to Prof. Tholuck thus:

> By invitation I went to Plymouth to preach. My habit was to preach wherever people wished, whether in buildings or in private houses. More than once, even ministers of the national church, we have broken bread on Monday evening after meetings for christian edification, where each was free to read, to speak, to pray, or give out a hymn. Some months afterward we began to do so on Sunday morning, making use of the same liberty, only adding the Lord's supper, which we had, and still have, the practice of taking every Sunday. Occasionally it has been partaken of more often. About that time some also began to do the same in London. [229]

Growth at Plymouth

The name "Plymouth Brethren" derived from the fact that Christians were gathered together to Christ's name (Matt. 18:20) at Plymouth, which became well known. Also it was the place that in the early 1840's became, under B. W. Newton, the focal point of attack upon the recovered truths. So we will note here the arrival of certain persons to Plymouth.

JND said that "Mr. Newton remained Fellow of Exeter for some time after we began to meet in Plymouth." [230] After a little time he changed his residence to Plymouth and became one of the early laborers at Plymouth. He married in April (?) 1832 and thus could no longer be a Fellow of Exeter. Probably he withdrew from the Church of England about this time. It may interest some readers that B. W. Newton said that by the third, fourth, fifth or sixth meeting at Plymouth, J. G. Deck was present. [231] And, interestingly, in 1832 JND went to Bristol where G. Muller and H. Craik were working on close Baptist lines.

> The Lord sent us a blessing, and disposed the hearts of the saints much towards us at Bristol, and many also to hear. The Lord is doing a very marked work there, in which I hope our dear brothers M. and C. may be abundantly blessed, but I should wish a little more principle of largeness of communion. I dread narrowness of heart more than anything for the church of Christ, *especially now*. [232]

Alas, in 1848 their principle of communion became so large as to transgress the holiness due God's House:

> Mr. Muller's was a close Baptist church: when the brethren began to make progress in Bristol, he gave this up, and took in a measure the form of the brethren. These were transferred, I think unadvisedly, though with the best of intention, to his meeting. Since 1848 he has returned to, not close Baptist principles, but open Baptist principles, and his is a regular dissenting church with slightly modified forms. Mrs. G.'s account {Mrs. A. N. Groves' account of the beginnings} is in no way accurate, and had a special object. She was not born when the work took place. [233]

We turn now to an account of the early days of the Plymouth meeting. A. Miller wrote:

> Their first meeting place was called 'Providence Chapel,' and as they refused to give themselves any name, they were called in the town 'Providence People.' When the brothers began to preach the gospel in the open air and in the villages around, no small curiosity was awakened to know who they were; there was something new in their preaching and in their way of going to work. But as they belonged to none of the denominations, they were spoken of as 'Brethren from Plymouth.' This naturally resulted in the designation, 'The Plymouth Brethren' . . .
>
> A strong opposition was soon manifested against the new movement, especially on the part of the clergy and ministers of all denominations. Nor need we wonder: the ground occupied by Brethren was felt to be a standing testimony against their whole state and practice, and many were stirred up to say hard and untrue things against them, with the view of neutralizing the blessed work which God was doing by their means. But these efforts of the enemy -- as they usually are -- were over-ruled to increase the general interest in the new preachers, and to attract numbers to their various meetings. The blessing of God evidently rested on the labors of the Brethren at that time; many were led to separate from the different denominations of the day, and gather round the new center, the name of the Lord Jesus . . .
>
> There was great freshness, simplicity, devotedness, love and union, among the Brethren; and such features of spirituality have always a great attraction for certain minds; and many, of course, who united with the Brethren had very undefined thoughts as to the nature of the step they were taking. But all was new: Christ was owned as the only center, and the Holy Spirit as their only teacher. Thus they gave themselves to the study of the word of God, and experienced the sweetness of Christian communion, and found the Bible -- as they said -- to be a new book . . .
>
> It was no uncommon thing at this time to find valuable jewelry in the collection boxes, which was soon turned into money, and given to the deacons for the poor. But this quiet way of disposing of a little finery did not satisfy the devoted spirits at Plymouth. They parted with all that was considered worldly in dress, books and furniture. These free-will offerings were collected, and when the stripping time seemed nearly at an end, the accumulation was so great that it was necessary to sell them by auction. [234]

It was here at Plymouth that clerisy and "modified Presbyterianism" (as S. P. Tregelles, who was there, called it) was introduced by B. W. Newton, the heavenly hope was set aside, and blasphemous doctrine was insinuated through B. W. Newton during the 1840s -- that Christ stood at a distance from God and had to work His way to a point where God could meet Him. Before we consider this we will trace JND's apprehension of the truth through 1840. JND spent

228. (...continued)
held in the later part of 1832.
229. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:301, 302.
230. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:516.
231. *Fry MS*, pp. 302, 307, 310.
232. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:8.
233. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:516.
234. *The Brethren* . . ., pp. 40-42.

much time in Europe from late 1837 to early 1845 working especially among Swiss non-conformists, and while there, wrote some valuable papers on the church, on gift and office, as well as delivering lectures on the hope of the church. The work in Switzerland will be discussed in Section 6, so that we can concentrate next on the truth that was recovered to the saints through JND.

Before passing on, we note that Henry Borlase, a clergyman, separated from the Church of England, and was the first editor of the periodical, the *Christian Witness*, [235] until his illness in the summer of 1834, and then he went to be with his Lord in Nov. 1835. The periodical then was edited by J. L. Harris, [236] an ex-clergyman who also had seceded from the Church of England

* * * * *

Grayson Carter wrote:,

> The early Brethren thus regarded themselves as something akin to an 'apostolic' assembly, holding exclusive possession of the Spirit. [237]

Rather than merely stating such imaginative nonsense, why did he not document such a charge? This writer of a generally helpful book then spends a number of pages running down "separatism" and lifting up A. N. Groves, a not at all unfamiliar rehash of complaints against J. N. Darby, that, in effect, espouses ecumenicism -- which likely is the standpoint from which these criticism are made. It all involves the pretension that JND departed from original principles, and that A. N. Groves' principles were the original ones. The inverse is the truth. The first breaking of bread in Nov. or Dec. 1827 was *at JND's suggestion* and A. N. Groves was not there (see also Appendix 1). And where A. N. Groves' famous principle, and its fruits, lead, is documented in volume 2.

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235. 1834-1841. There was printed a second edition, in which B. W. Newton changed the doctrine in one of his papers. Volume 2 discusses this and its bearing.

236. 1793-1877. Ordained in the Church of England and made "perpetual curate of Plymstock (near Plymouth), in 1832 he separated from the Church of England and was with the growing assembly at Plymouth. Upon Borlase's illness in mid-1834, he took over the editorship of the *Christian Witness*. He it was who wrote to JND when JND was in Europe, telling JND of the changes being introduced into the assembly at Plymouth through B. W. Newton. He also was used of God in 1847 regarding the bringing to light a wicked, manuscript paper by BWN, that addressed the relations of God to Christ, that in after years BWN called the "unspeakable circumstantial distance" of Christ from God, which Christ had to overcome. See Appendix 3; and vol. 2 for a detailed consideration. J. L. Harris wrote some helpful papers.

237. *Anglican Evangelicals . . .*, p. 243.

Section 5

Survey of J. N. Darby's Apprehension of Truth

1828 - 1840

J. N. Darby wrote:

> I have been writing on Colossians with much instruction to myself, so that I am reading it once again. But all one does is so imperfect as to execution. It seems "Matthew" is enjoyed by the saints. I get on enough to be dissatisfied with what I have done before, though the truth into which one has been led by these inquiries retains its value. [238]

While JND labored in Ireland and England, his apprehension of recovered truth increased. In particular, his understanding of ecclesiastical, dispensational and prophetic truths enlarged together.

JND did not learn the truth of the pretribulation rapture and/or prophetic truth and/or dispensational truth from Ribera, M. Lacunza, E. Irving, the Irvingites, or Margaret Macdonald of Port Glasgow, Scotland (concerning whom we shall have more to say in Section 7). *His understanding of the pretribulation rapture follows from his understanding of the church as a heavenly company, a company distinct from Israel which is a people with whom the history of the earth is concerned regarding the development of God's ways in government*. This subject is covered in another book, *J. N. Darby's Teachings Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses* (available from the publisher).

An objection raised is that we have no early dated statements of JND; and his later statements concerning what he believed early in his course are not to be received because some later adversaries of his who supported B. W. Newton in the Plymouth controversy in 1845/1846 said JND was untruthful. Concerning this charge, I expect that when we come to that controversy (volume 2) we will find the opposite to be true. That charge is just as false as what we have found concerning W. B. Neatby's, and others', implication that JND was untruthful (virtually lied) about the beginnings. Their construction of the early history is false. Such *do* give an appearance of wanting to find JND untruthful. And, concerning JND's memory of what he thought in 1827-1830, we have found, and shall find, it is consistent with the dated documents that we do have, as well as with the reminiscences of others.

238. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:305.

Chapter 5.1

Ecclesiastical Truth and the Pretribulation Rapture

Previously, attention was drawn to the fact that B. W. Newton reminisced that when F. W. Newman returned from Ireland:

> Newman also gave me Darby's book on the Fall of the Church, written in his usual involved style and also the subject involved. [239]

This indicates that already in at least1828 (though we know it was earlier) JND understood something about the ruin of the church. [240] The reader should understand that this has to do with the testimony in man's hands. The church is in ruins as viewed in responsible testimony. The evidence indicates that his understanding of the church and its fall was paralleled by his understanding of prophetic truth and the "immediate coming," i.e., the daily expectation -- the expectation without intermediate events.

The First Published Pamphlet: 1828

JND published a paper, "Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ" (1828).[241] In it he speaks of:

1. The reformation "was much and manifestly mixed with human agency" (p. 32).
2. "The true Church of God has no avowed communion at all" (p. 33).
3. The desire for unity (p. 34).
4. The presence of the Spirit of God (p. 40).
5. The Lord's Supper (p. 41).
6. The Church's witness (p. 43).
7. The conduct of Christians (p. 44).
8. The unity of the Church (p. 46).
9. Denominationalism (p. 47).
10. Practical unity (p. 49).
11. The use of worldly aids (p. 50).
12. An appeal (p. 52).

This paper [242] shows that in 1828 the Scripture teaching concerning the Church was basically understood. Of course, he understood this before he published the paper. The evidence is that he had learned these things when in "solitude" in Dec. 1826 -- Jan. 1827.

There is a letter of JND's concerning which the editor stated "[before 1830, according to a note made by the original copyist -- "before he came to Plymouth."]."

> I cannot enter here into the statement of how I distinguish Christianity from all that preceded it, or is out of it, of which the Jewish system is an imputably defined covenant . . . [243]

Regarding the first published pamphlet, W. Kelly wrote:

> . . . the Collected Writings of Mr. D., now in course of publication show that from the earliest days of the movement till now the same principles were asserted, the same object was avowed. Take the very first part as a witness, and the second article, "Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ." (Dublin, 1828.) This is as fresh and distinct as possible, and in a practical point of view. It would be impossible for any godly soul who accepted that paper as a just application of divine truth to the actual state of Christendom, to continue a churchman or a dissenter. And in fact neither the writer nor those who felt with him as to this remained at that date in the denominations of which they had previously been members or ministers. [244]

The Truth of the Pretribulation Rapture Is Not an Isolated Truth

The truth of the pretribulation rapture is not a truth that stands isolated by itself. It must be seen in its relation to the truths

239. *Fry MS*, p. 235.

240. On the subject of the ruin of the church see: *Collected Writings*: 4:10-36; 3:272-281; 14:272-300; 1:149-153, 272-274, 169-186, 144-148; 20:189-194; *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:42,94,113,167; 2:94,343,388,423,465; 3:244-246,286; *Notes and Jottings*, p. 360.

241. *Collected Writings* 1:20.

242. A comment by Peter L. Embly reveals the difference between JND's views and his:

> This has been called "the first Brethren tract" but the description is misleading, for it is the writing of a man who does not yet see his way clearly, and it proposes no campaign or organization (from *The Origins and Early Development of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 46, on the bruderbewegung.de website).

The comments of Dr. Embly (of Open Brethren) are misleading and revealing.

243. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:226.

244. *The Bible Treasury* 6:255.

concerning the church of God, the dispensations, the covenants, prophecy, etc. Truth is a wonderful unity and misunderstanding one facet of it has an effect upon understanding other facets. It is no surprise that the posttribulationist J. B. Payne remarked that "dispensationalism" involves the interpretation of the whole Bible.

Sometimes Christians hold certain truths while denying other truths upon which they are based, or with which they are intimately connected. For example, it is inconsistent to hold the eternal security of the believer while denying election as God's sovereign choice. Both, of course, are taught in the Word, but they are not independent truths. They are interlocked. We stand in danger of accepting just so much of the truth as suits our convenience. The acceptance of truth involves a cost to self. "Buy the truth, and sell it not." We are often unwilling to pay the price.

I recall a Christian once telling me that a clergyman in town said that he would not accept Darby's doctrine of the pretribulation rapture because he did not accept his "ecclesiology"; and the brother said he didn't understand that. I remarked to him that the clergyman rightly grasped the interlocking nature of these things -- while some who receive both do not understand that inter-connectedness.

Of course, some opposers might not want to understand the interconnectedness either, especially if it stands in the way of their theory concerning from where JND obtained the doctrine of the pretribulation rapture.

The connection of the truths of the Church and of future events has been rightly assessed by F. F. Bruce (of Open Brethren) who, note, opposes the truth of the pretribulation rapture. He said:

> Darby's eschatology and ecclesiology were interdependent elements in a carefully constructed system -- not surprisingly, since in the New Testament itself eschatology and ecclesiology are interdependent. One cannot logically retain Darby's eschatology and reject his ecclesiology, as some schools of thought in our own day attempt to do. (I have never known anyone who accepted his ecclesiology without at the same time accepting his eschatology.) [245]

Accepting "his ecclesiology" involves rejecting much that is accepted practice in Christendom. This many do not want to do. When JND preached these truths in America in the 19th century, many accepted much of the prophetic truths and even some measure of ecclesiastical truth, but did not leave their denominations. In his book, *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, E. R. Sandeen put his finger on the trouble when he said that these men needed the denominations to support their ministerial status and their influence. [246] We well know that there often is not the requisite spiritual vigor to take the reproach of being gathered together to the Name of Christ, outside of all sect, on the basis (or ground) that there is one body. There is a cost involved in doing this.

J. N. Darby has stated exactly the consequence of denying the pretribulation rapture. He said:

> In denying a distinct Jewish remnant, having Jewish faith, Jewish hopes, and resting on Jewish promises {during the tribulation period}, it reduces the Church to the level of these {by putting the Church in the position of this remnant}; and the value and power of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and the place of Christ's body in union with Him, is denied and lost. It is this which makes the question vital for Christians themselves. The great object of the enemy in denying the rapture of the saints before the appearing of the Lord, and in the consequent rejection of a distinct Jewish remnant, with Jewish hopes and Jewish piety, is to deny and destroy the proper faith of the Church of God, and to set the Church itself aside. Far be it from me to say, that all who have fallen into this system have any such purpose, or are even aware of the effect; but the effect is nothing the less produced, and the loss theirs, though the intention be not. They are deceived by the enemy, though far from intending to deceive with him. [247]

Testimony Concerning the Recovery Of Truth in the Early Nineteenth Century

Beginning about 1827, the truth of the nature and the unity of the Church of God as one body, formed by the Holy Spirit sent down at Pentecost (Acts 2; 1 Cor. 12:13) to unite believers to the Head in heaven (1 Cor. 6:17; 12:12), and His abiding presence in the Church, along with the collateral truth of the distinction between Israel (connected with God's government displayed in the earth) and the Church (as a system of grace connected with the heavenlies), began to be brought forth from the Word of God. In connection with this understanding, and flowing from it, the *heavenly* hope of the Christian, Christ's pretribulation coming (pre-Rev. 4 coming) to take them to Himself in the Father's house (John 14:1-3), which is followed by Daniel's 70th week, was recovered.

It is a mistake to suppose, as some have, that what happened was that dispensational truth was (merely) systematized; [248] or that it was only found out that the rapture will occur before Daniel's 70th week.

As we should expect, historically the truth of the Church and the hope of the Christian were simultaneously lost. Concerning Paul and "the great mystery," H. A. Ironside said:

> It occupies much of his ministry, and is clearly the chief gem in the diadem of the truth of Christianity; yet for centuries it was almost entirely lost sight of. In fact, until brought to the fore through the writings and the preaching and teaching of a distinguished ex-clergyman, Mr. J. N. Darby, in the early part of the last century, it is scarcely to be found in a single book or sermon throughout a period of sixteen hundred years! If any doubt this statement, let them

245. In Foreword of H. H. Rowdon, *The Origin of The Brethren*, p. XII.
246. *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, p. 241.
247. *Collected Writings* 11:122.
248. See the book, *J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses*, available from the publisher.

> search, as the writer has in measure done, the remarks of the so-called Fathers, both pre- and post-Nicene; the theological treatises of the scholastic divines; Roman Catholic writers of all shades of thought; the literature of the Reformation; sermons and expositions of the Puritans; and the general theological works of the day. He will find "the mystery" conspicuous by its absence. Of ordinances exalted to the place of mysteries, as in heathen rites, he will find much; but as to the mystery, which to the apostle was so unspeakably precious, rarely a reference. [249]

Thus, 1826-1834 marks a discontinuity in understanding the dispensations, the covenants, the body of Christ, the hope of the Christian, prophecy, and other related truths. W. Kelly remarked:

> I am thoroughly convinced that the admirable men of the Reformation, though greatly beyond those who followed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were no more spiritually fit to traverse safely the field of prophecy than their descendants at the present time. It is a thing unknown among Protestants as among Romanists to meet with souls consciously dead to sin and law, standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes you free. Still less do they apprehend aright the union of saints with Christ by the Spirit, and the character of the assembly of God as the body of Christ or even as the house of God. Unacquainted with these truths, as little emancipated individually from every hindrance and bond as their systems are from the Popish leaven of a consecrated caste with its efficacious rites, they habitually gravitate towards Judaism, and this {gravitation towards Judaizing} in a prophetic scheme quite as much as in doctrine and walk.
>
> . . . I am sure I love the reformers with a hearty affection in the Lord, as I do those who adopt their views as a standard in our day; but I believe that it is no disparagement to either if we, profiting it may be by their footsteps, seek to go on to know the word of the Lord more fully. [250]

Regarding the oft repeated cavil about dispensational truth being novel, W. Kelly wrote:

> He is also surprised that truth so important should only of late have been learnt from scripture. How could Mr. Shackleton expect such a thing in the early fathers, if he is really acquainted with their writings? Which of them escaped the Galatian leaven? Now it is remarkable that this Epistle, which aims at clearing the churches of that country from a misuse of the law -- the bane of the patristic writings generally, is precisely that in which the apostle never speaks openly of the Lord's second coming. What was the use to those who had lost the virtue of His first coming? The Reformers were too absorbed in contending for justification, as well as against Popery, to search into prophecy or the church. And what real advance has been made since? I fear there has been in general a departure from much that was then recovered. Our appeal must therefore be to scripture only. The fathers invented the miserable system of expunging Israel and Judah from O. T. prophecy: for them, all was "the church"; and so with most Anglicans, and almost all "Dissenters," to this day. Their lucubrations therefore about the antichrist and the great tribulation are worthless. The Protestant scheme went farther astray in denying the individuality of the antichrist, as well as his literal place in the temple at Jerusalem in the consummation of the age, and converting the days into nothing but years. But both alike Judaised the church by blotting out Israel's hopes, through misappropriating Jewish scriptures . . . [251]

A. C. Gaebelein gave this judgment concerning the recovery of the truth in the 1800s:

> The midnight cry has been heard toward the middle of the last century, when the Holy Spirit through mighty instruments, though humble, gave a revival of the blessed Hope and all that which is connected with it. And this cry is still heard, "Behold the Bridegroom! go ye forth to meet him." The enemy would silence this blessed word, but he cannot do it. But notice it is not alone the announcement of the fact of the coming of the Bridegroom, but it is more than that. The right reading is to leave out the "cometh" in the Authorized Version and read simply, "Behold the Bridegroom!" The blessed Hope of His coming does not so much put the coming before our hearts as it does Himself. And as we behold the Bridegroom and know He is soon coming, how can we help ourselves but to go forth to meet Him. That means then a return to the true Christian calling, which is separation from the world, separation from all which is false and unscriptural, which dishonors Him, His person, His work or His Word. And this has been exactly the case. The midnight cry has awakened the true believers to a return to the true position and led on to a separation from that which is evil. It is still so. There is of course a preaching and teaching of Prophecy which does not touch the conscience, which is only for the head. Men teach correctly all about the 70 weeks in Daniel, the restoration of the Jews and the millennium, and they go on in their evil ways. This is an evil thing. May the Lord keep us from it. The midnight cry is given that we may go forth to meet Him and be truly separated unto Him, who is soon coming. And if we have heard that cry by the power of the Spirit of God and are gone forth to meet the Bridegroom, we have a responsibility to take it up and sound it forth. [252]

The Rapture Precedes The Manifestation of the Antichrist

In my paper, *The Truth of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Recovered*, p. 49, 1973 (no longer available), I suggested that by the end of 1830 or the beginning of 1831, JND had understood the pretribulation rapture. Subsequently I understand that it was earlier than 1830/1831 that he understood a rapture prior to Christ's appearing in glory, -- indeed, a rapture before the manifestation of the antichrist. [253] Indeed, it is now clear that he saw this during his convalescence in Jan. 1826 - Feb. 1827.

249. *The Mysteries of God*, pp. 50, 51.

250. *Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, p. vii.

251. *The Bible Treasury* 16:224.

252. *The Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 531, 532.

253. The reader might review Sections 1 and 2 concerning how this point bears on the year 1827.

Furthermore, since Manuel Lacunza's book [254] was published in 1827 by Edward Irving, we can see that JND, in solitude in Dec. 1826/Jan. 1827, had learned the "immediate coming," with no intervening events, before he had opportunity to see the book. Note well an important point here in connection with the allegation that M. Lacunza's book is the origin of the pretribulation rapture (which it is not): **neither E. Irving, the translator of the book, nor the Albury prophetic conferees (sponsored by Henry Drummond, 1826-1830), learned of a preribulation rapture from reading M. Lacunza.** Since the pretribulation rapture is not found in that book, this is hardly surprising.

His First Published Paper on Prophecy (1829)

In his "Reflections Upon the Prophetic Inquiry and the Views Advanced in It," Dublin, 1829, [255] JND referred to some truths as **"new views."** Of course, he meant truths which had been lost. He did not refer to merely what **he** had learned (and he was in advance of others) but to numbers of prophetic truths which students of prophecy were seeing. In his next paper (1830) he used the expressions, "new ideas" and "new truth." [256]

His first paper on prophecy had much in it which, of course, was developed more fully as time went on. Among other things, he spoke of:

> The sanctifying effect of prophecy (p. 2);
>
> History is not the interpreter of prophecy (p. 2);
>
> "The hope of the individual is being with Christ; the hope of the Church is His coming; doubtless the individual is deeply interested in this hope likewise" (p. 10).

And here is a statement from JND that I want to emphasize:

> Let no man, however, think that he will be excused from looking daily for the Lord's coming, because other men pursue their own errors. [257]

This again shows he was expecting Christ daily. Here is another important remark of his for our inquiry:

> One remark I would make; and it is one which struck my own mind long before the detail of millennial views opened themselves to it. There is not an epistle in the New Testament in which the coming of the Lord Jesus is not made the prominent object of the faith and hope of believers, for which they were to wait; and, observe, which characterizes distinctively those who should partake of His salvation. Now the expectation of it is put out of view and depreciated really as much as possible. It was a deliverance here that the church expected, so much so that the Thessalonians seemed to have considered those who died before it came to have failed in obtaining it. [258]

Note well the words, "struck my own mind long before the detail of millennial views opened themselves to it." Here again is an indication of his daily expectation of Christ -- some time previously to 1829 (actually 1827, if not in Dec. 1826) when this paper was published. Obviously, with such views he would have had to reject postmillennialism:

> I would suggest, too, that the instrument by which the work is to be accomplished cannot mean the dispersion of scriptural truth. It is not the sword of the Spirit, but one proceeding out of the mouth of Christ, sitting on a triumphal horse, wherewith He should smite the nations. It is treading the vintage of God's wrath. It is a destruction which will give seven years' firing from the weapons cast away. It is an invitation of all the fowls of the air to feast upon the sacrifice which God Almighty was about to make; a taking to Him His great power and reigning; a time when, God's judgment being in the earth, the inhabitants of the world would learn righteousness: and it was by these judgments that the heathen were to be converted. We take the broadest points, because the others may be said to involve interpretation, though to us they are equally plain and perhaps more deeply interesting. [259]

In reviewing once again what can be gleaned concerning the development of his understanding I have been struck by this: he was well in advance of others concerning many subjects (while willing to learn) and refrained from putting everything into print. This appears especially true concerning certain truths connected with what we call the rapture. It was better to bring that out after others had caught up concerning other elements of truth.

He was aware of E. Irving and Ben-Ezra (M. Lacunza) and the *Morning Watch*, [260] the organ of the Irvingites. He was quite abreast of the ideas concerning prophecy, but also immensely ahead of them. It may well be that the Irvingites were somewhat influenced by him.

As an illustration of how someone may be affected by the order in which he apprehends the truth, and by the interconnectedness of ecclesiastical and prophetic truth, consider this from G. V. Wigwam's experience. He said:

> The church cannot be in the judgment; and until I saw the truth of the remnant, I thought otherwise. [261]

In Chapter 3.1 we observed that JND saw the truth of the remnant in 1827.

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254. Manuel Lacunza (1731-1801) had written a book (2 vols.), *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, under the name Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra. He was a converted Jew and became a Jesuit -- and of course this is often indicated by those opposed to dispensational truth who say JND was influenced by him, or received the idea of a pre-tribulation rapture from him; which, of course, JND did not. See Chapter 7.6 where some of his views are touched on.

255. *Collected Writings* 2:1-31.

256. "On 'Days' Signifying 'Years' in Prophetic Language," (1830), *Collected Writings* 2:32.

257. *Collected Writings* 2:14.

258. *Ibid*. 2:25.

259. *Ibid.*, 2:24.

260. *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 7, 19, 20.

261. "Truth Learned in Communion With God," *Collectania . . .* , p. 78 (1839).

Did JND Regard the Antichrist as Personal?

JND did not take up the subject of the Antichrist in his 1829 published paper. But we do have something from his notebooks from 1829. In *Notes and Comments* 2:192-194 there is a paper entitled "Prophetic Map." Let us consider some comments of his concerning the personal Antichrist, keeping in mind that at this time, and into the early 1840s, he mistakenly thought that the first beast of Rev. 13 is the Antichrist.

The map (sketched in 1828-29, note well), is part of the notes and indicates he believed in a personal antichrist heading up the Western European power (p. 193). In a fascinating comment he speaks of those who will be at the steps of Antichrist or the mature apostate body, [262] for they will be judged as Antichrist, Gog and Magog, for coming against the Jews" (pp. 192, 193). Here, he says that Antichrist is the head of the apostates. He goes on to say ". . . we thus readily account for the nations apparently the same in Antichrist's and Gog's army . . ." (p. 193); and also speaks of, "The French, i.e. Western Europe, under Antichrist . . ." (p. 193).

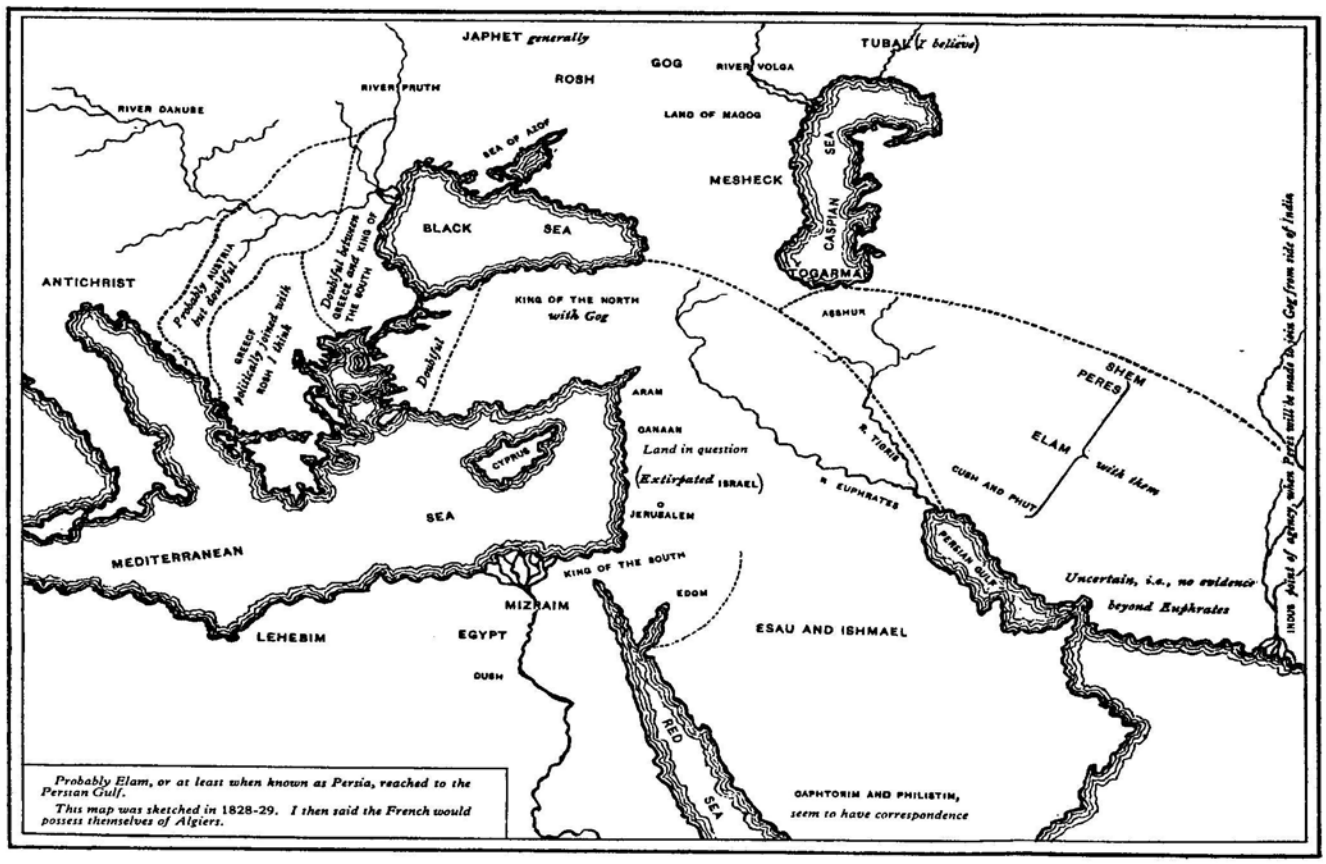
This shows that he understood there would be a future, personal Antichrist. Keep in mind that in 1829 he was also in the good of the daily expectation of Christ (no intermediate events) as he was in 1827 and 1828.

What is the implication if one understands that there is a future, personal Antichrist, and a future apostasy but believes that Christ might come any day?

JND HELD THE PRE-APOSTASY COMING IN 1827

We can go further than saying that he understood the pre-apostasy coming of Christ in 1828/1829; in 1827 he believed that the rapture would occur at some time before the appearance of the future apostasy.

1. Both himself and F. W. Newman stated that in 1827 JND held the immediate coming; i.e., with no intervening events.
2. In 1827 he ". . . saw there would be a David reign, and did not know whether the church might not be removed before forty years' time." [263]



262. This shows that he held that the Antichrist would head the apostates of Christendom. Lacunza held that Antichrist meant a body of persons. See Chapter 7.6.

263. Perhaps this means that he had thought that there might be a time interval of 40 years between when the church would be removed and the reign of Christ would begin. Or, he may have thought that the 40 years would be a period during which the enemies would be put down before the commencement of the kingdom (David reigned 40 years). In any event, it is more correct to say that when Christ appears in glory after the 1260 days from the middle of Daniel's 70th week, He will come in a Davidic aspect to deal with the enemies; and when that phase is completed, there will commence a Solomon reign on the 1335th day from the middle of the week. (Both David and Solomon together, as types, typify the coming and reign of Christ). See my *Daniel's 70th Week and the Revival of the Roman Empire*.

In an article on the Internet, Mr. MacPherson states, with God-like

(continued...)

3. He wrote:

> As for myself, I believe that this apostasy, in its public and formal manifestation, is future. This is what I have thought since 1827. [264]

4. In early 1827 he already understood the nature and unity of the Church and the distinction from Israel -- a truth intimately connected with the Church's hope.
5. According to B. W. Newton's reminiscence, JND understood the fall of the church in 1827.
6. Review the quotations from JND's 1827 notes given in Chapter 3.1 and observe that he not only saw a future apostasy but that a Jewish remnant would exist in the time of Jacob's trouble.
7. His 1828/1829 paper shows that he understood that a personal Antichrist would arise; and, he was holding the immediate hope.

For calumniators of JND, who say that he was not truthful, I say this: we have seen that those who would not accept his word that he left the Church of England in 1827 and that he began to break bread in 1827, were wrong. His statements **are** reliable. His statements regarding what he learned in 1827 are also reliable; and as to holding the immediate coming (no intervening events) in 1827, the fact was confirmed by F. W. Newman after he became an Arian [265] and JND had refuted him and the assemblies had rejected him .

So, we have documentation that shows that in 1828/1829 he held both an immediate coming (no intervening events) and that there would be a personal antichrist. Also, in 1827 he held that the Lord might come 40 years before the reign of Christ; and that there would be a public and formal manifestation of the apostasy in the future.

He learned these things in the period of solitude (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827), independently of others. Concerning these things there is one other interesting comment of his connected with an observation he made regarding (probably) a prophetic conference held by evangelicals in New York City in 1878. [266]

> In that congress (at New York) as far as I know of it, the presence of the Holy Ghost was, says ____ , wholly left out. But these are the two truths brought out in these days, throwing much light on the truth of the first coming. They have been consciously my theme these fifty years and more. They started me in my path of service; the assurance of salvation came with them, and the christian character, as of the new creation, "like unto men that wait for their Lord." When man entered into the glory of God consequent on accomplished redemption, the Holy Ghost came down, till He comes to take us up. This connects the hope and the power of life and heavenly calling with accomplished redemption: Christ, Man at the right hand of God, is the central point. What set me free in 1827 is still the theme on which my soul dwells, with, I trust, much deeper sense of its importance -- something much nearer to me, but the same truths. And blessed truths they are; and the hope, what a hope! [267]

And here I would remind the reader of why JND did not more vigorously assert all the truths he had learned. We saw earlier that he confessed this:

> I believe at my deliverance from bondage in 1827-8, God opened up certain truths needed for the church. I believe that, though holding and seeking to help souls by them, for what was called peace and union I swamped them, had not faith to make them good in service. [268]

HIS VIEWS IN 1830

A question arises concerning how far elements of the historicist year-day theory could fit with the daily expectation of Christ and the futurism seen in his holding that there would be a personal antichrist:

> First, in prophecy, when the Jewish church or nation (exclusive of the Gentile parenthesis in their history) is concerned, i.e., when the address is directly to the Jew, there we may look for a plain and direct testimony, because earthly things were the Jews' proper portion. [269]

Note, that by "Jewish Church" he meant Israel, but was using a conventional expression.

Here in 1830 we see he held to literal interpretation, "plain and direct testimony," for the period he designated as the "Gentile parenthesis in their history." This phrase refers to the time from Nebuchadnezzar to the appearing of Christ in glory (the times of the Gentiles; Luke 21:24) and he allowed for the use of symbol during this period. Perhaps he held that there was an application of the prophecies in a historicist sense without affirming the historicist system of fulfillment. At any rate, in closing his paper he said

> I rejoice, however, in the discussion, not merely in that it will throw light on Scripture by consequent research

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263. (…continued)
Christ). See my *Daniel's 70th Week and the Revival of the Roman Empire.*

In an article on the Internet, Mr. MacPherson states, with God-like omniscience:

> If Darby was suggesting a rapture 40 years before that reign, he would have written "forty years before" instead of "before 40 years!" Darby, then a historicist was merely speculating in 1827 that Christ might return 40 years later in about 1867 . . .

Observe, he wants to get rid of the force of the fact that JND held the any-moment coming at this point, and that the 40 years JND spoke of refers to something subsequent to the rapture. There is a pattern to Mr. MacPherson's manipulations and this will be seen at other points herein.

264. *Collected Writings* 4:296.

265. There is an interesting remark in a footnote in JND's paper, "The Irrationalism of Infidelity" *Collected Writings*, p. 125, note:

> It is remarkable that, as soon as he had got thoroughly infidel, Mr. N. {F. W. Newman} could get on good terms with his brother {John Henry Newman}, who had got thoroughly papist, and not before. This tells a tale few are prepared to believe. It is a sign, too, of the times.

266. Printed as *Premillennial Essays of the Prophetic Conference held in the Church of the Holy Trinity*, New York City, originally published by Revell (Chicago) and reprinted in 1981 by Klock and Klock.

267. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:498, 499 (April 1879).

268. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:185. The dates1827-8, would be more correctly, simply 1827.

269. *Collected Writings* 2:35.

> and inquiry, but that I am persuaded that this will lead more (for such I believe to be the truth) to the deep conviction that we are within the verge of the end of all, so as to be daily looking for the Lord, i.e., to be caught up to meet Him in the air in order to His judging of the nations. Amen. Amen. [270]

At any rate, he held fast the daily expectation, whatever difficulties, regarding prophecy, there may have been in his mind. He also referred to the Antichrist. [271] He did not explicate how he understood Daniel's 70th week [272] in connection with his belief in a future personal Antichrist and his daily expectation of Christ.

It is clear, then, that whatever difficulties were held in his mind, JND saw in Dec. 1826/Jan. 1827 that the N.T. showed that he should daily expect Christ. He learned the nature and unity of the Church and published on that in 1828. In 1828/1829 we have confirmation that he believed in a future personal Antichrist, as he did in 1827. He had also learned in his solitude the distinction between Israel and the Church, etc., etc. We also observed that the thought of a coming separated from the appearing (perhaps by 40 years) was before his mind in 1827.

T. TWEEDY SUGGESTED 2 THESS. 2:1, 2 AS A DECISIVE PROOF

The following statement was made by JND in 1850 regarding 2 Thess. 2:1, 2:

> That is, the apostle gives two reasons why they should not believe that the day of the Lord was come: first, the rapture of the saints is not yet; and secondly, the object of the judgment is not revealed. It is this passage which, twenty years ago, made me understand the rapture of the saints before -- perhaps a considerable time before -- the day of the Lord (that is, before the judgment of the living). [273]

In the light of what we have reviewed, we see that 1830 merely marked the removal of some difficulties that had remained in his mind and that he had already previously held that the Lord might come at any time. [274] In the following citation we will see that T. Tweedy was

> the one who first suggested, as a **decisive** proof from Scripture, 2 Thess. 2:1, 2. [275]

The reader who is acquainted with the post/pretribulation controversy will recall that posttribulationists do not tire of calling for "one text" that says that the church will not be in the tribulation -- in spite of the fact that they have never produced one text that states that the church will be in the great tribulation. [276] Apparently JND's difficulty included the lack of a decisive text though he well understood the pretribulation rapture in connection with the Christian's heavenly position and with the nature and unity of the Church. So before 1830, his understanding of the nature of the church and of the immediate coming led him to the truth of a pre-Rev. 4 coming. However, prior to T. Tweedy's directing attention to 2 Thess. 2:1, 2 during 1830, JND had not realized the bearing of that text on the issue. What he learned in 1827 through Isa. 32 he says, "was brought to my mind from the word." That was not through man's agency. In the last quotation above there is an implication that he did not see the bearing of 2 Thess. 2:1, 2 without someone else. And, indeed, that was the case. The citation indicates that it was during 1830 that he saw the force of 2 Thess. 2:1, 2; i.e., twenty years before he wrote the 1850 letter quoted above. Even if it occurred during 1831, actually, nothing is materially affected. Let us hear what W. Kelly had to say about this:

> Now it so happens that, during a visit to Plymouth in the summer of 1845, Mr. B. W. Newton told me that, many years before, Mr. Darby wrote to him a letter in which he said that a suggestion was made to him by Mr. T. Tweedy [277] (a spiritual man and most devoted ex-clergyman among the Irish brethren), which to his mind quite cleared up the difficulty previously felt on this very question. [278] No one was farther from lending an ear to the impious and profane voices of the quasi-inspired Irvingites than Mr. T., unless indeed it were J. N. D. himself who had closely investigated their pretensions and judged their peculiar heterodoxy on Christ's humanity as anti-christian and blasphemous. As to this anyone may satisfy himself by

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270. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

271. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

272. Referred to several times: *ibid.*, pp. 35, 36, 37.

273. "Short but Serious Examination of the Fundamental Principles issued by Mr. Gaussen in his book entitled "Daniel The Prophet," *Collected Writings* 11:67 (1850).

274. There is but ***one coming*** of Christ in the future. It has two phases. He will come and take His own to the Father's house (John 14) and subsequently to that He will appear in glory. This second phase is called "the appearing of His coming" (2 Thess. 2:8). The implication in this text is that when He comes *for* the saints, that will not 'appear' (be visible to the world) as will "the appearing of His coming."

In my paper on *The Truth of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Recovered* (1973), I had erroneously concluded that JND understood the pretribulation rapture at the end of 1830 or beginning of 1831. The reason for doing so was that I gave too much weight to the fact that in 1830 he still seemed to hold a few elements of the year-day theory and I wished to avoid overstating the case. But now we have seen that already in 1827 he held a coming of the Lord before the Antichrist; indeed, a pre-Rev. 4 rapture.

275. "The Rapture of the Saints: Who suggested It, Or Rather on What Scripture?" *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 4:315, 316.

276. Citing "elect" in the tribulation in Matt 24 is not a statement that Christians are in the tribulation. To say the elect means Christians is interpretation, not a statement of Scripture that Christians will be in it.

277. Owen Tweedy, *The Dublin Tweedy's: the Story of an Irish Family 1650-1882*, p. 9 says:

> On leaving college he was ordained and sometime before 1834, when he was twenty-five, he was appointed to a roving mission . . .

This indicates that he was about 22 years old when he made the suggestion to JND in 1830 regarding 2 Thess. 2:1, 2. At some point "He had joined the Plymouth Brothers" (p. 9) and in 1842 he emigrated overseas to Georgetown in Demarara for mission work. There he married a black woman and had two children. His health, which had been frail for years, had begun to decline further and he died a few years after coming to Demarara (pp. 9, 10).

278. In *The Truth of the Pre-Tribulation Recovered*, p. 63, note 2, I cited H. H. Rowdon who cited the *Fry MS*, pp. 238, 239, as confirming this about Mr. Tweedy. But when I was able to examine the *Fry MS*, pp. 238, 239, I found that nothing was written about the matter.

> the Collected Writings, 15, the first two articles of Doctr. 4, with strictures in six other vols., to which may be added, in a new addition, a longer paper that has been discovered since . . .
>
> But I willingly bear my testimony to Mr. N. that he never to me thought of attributing the source of the so-called doctrine, the rapture of the saints, to that seducing spirit. It was new, however, to hear that Mr. Tweedy, who died full of blessed labors in Demarara, was the one who first suggested, as a decisive proof from scripture, 2 Thess. 2:1,2. I so implicitly believed in his telling me the truth as conveyed in Mr. D's letter to himself, that it did not occur to me to question Mr. D. about it. I knew the latter to be generous in acknowledging readily any debt of the kind he owed to other brethren, having experienced it in my own case and in that of Mr. Bellett, if not of more still. Indeed it was very touching to observe that one, to whose richly suggestive help so many were indebted, was himself so frank to own any fresh thought of value in another, and to manifest his simple-hearted pleasure, not only in hailing the accession but in adding to the evidence of its truth, as he so well could and did, while pointing out its importance.
>
> Further, when Mr. N. {B. W. Newton} named to me the disclosure of Mr. D.'s old letter, things had reached a very high temperature, and on no question more than the one before us. Mr. N. had issued the first edition of his "Thoughts on the Apocalypse" in parts, completed in 1844; and Mr. D. was at that time bringing out in parts his "Examination" of it, as able a volume as he ever wrote, not only in my judgment thoroughly subversive of the "Thoughts," but establishing on a sound basis the grand truths which were sought to be undermined. Now B. W. N. was no neutral, but abhorred it in divine things as much as J. N. D. or anyone. Christ's relation to God had not yet come into controversy, nor the righteousness of God; but he was quite right in feeling the immense moment of God's revealed mind as to the Lord's coming, the heavenly calling, the church of God, etc. These truths he opposed through his prophetic system, which was sadly narrow and crude, however assured he might be of its certainty. His antagonism to Mr. D. and his teaching as incompatible had already come out clearly and decidedly, though the open breach did not occur till some months after. [279]

Attention should be paid to the fact that numbers of translations obscure the meaning of 2 Thess. 2:1. W. Kelly dealt with this text in numbers of articles in *The Bible Treasury*. We conclude with JND's translation of it:

> Now we beg you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind . . . [280]

This is confirmed by W. Kelly, a very capable and learned Greek scholar.

279. "The Rapture of the Saints: Who suggested It, Or Rather on What Scripture?" *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 4:315, 316.

280. The translation by J. N. Darby is available from the publisher.

Chapter 5.2

Consolidation and Advance

During the years from 1831 through 1840 JND wrote numerous papers in which he brought out great leading and fundamental principles. He was careful concerning what was said and how much was said since most were far behind him. He allowed time for the thoughts, which were new to people at this time, to work in their souls.

In this chapter we shall call attention, in the text or in endnotes, to all of his publications from 1831-1840 (except for several written in 1839/1840 in Switzerland, which are noted in Section 6). This will assist those readers who wish to read these papers in locating them.

J. N. Darby's 1831-1833 Papers

In 1831 JND published "The Doctrine of the Church of England at the Time of the Reformation . . ., [281] in which he demonstrated the Calvinistic beginnings of the Church of England. It also shows that he himself held clear views on election, predestination, the perseverance of the saints (or, as we might call it, eternal security) and that he denied the alleged free moral agency (moral free-will) of man.

In 1832 JND wrote a paper, "Review of 'Lectures on the Second Advent', and 'The Apocalypse Unfulfilled'." [282] The reviewed books were written by William Burgh.

In this paper JND spoke of "the great parenthetic anomaly of the Gentile dispensation" [283] meaning, I think, that the time of the Church has a parenthetical character. Some years previously, he had spoken of the "Gentile dispensation," [284] meaning the Church period (as distinct from the "Gentile parenthesis in their {Israel's} history". Here he speaks of the Church as a parenthesis. In effect, this means a parenthesis within a parenthesis:

1. The Gentile **parenthesis** of judgment began in Israel's history in 605/604 BC and will end at the Appearing of Christ in glory.
2. The Gentile Dispensation [285] began at Pentecost and will end at the Rapture.

What I have observed is that JND was not *pressing* on people a pretribulation/pre-Antichrist coming, though he constantly referred to the daily expectation -- since it is clear that that was the expectation of the saints in the N.T. times. His not pressing it is illustrated in this paper:

> . . . that Mr. Burgh's views divert the attention of Christians from the present antichristian principles, as now deceiving the nations, to some supposed or future actings of a personal Antichrist, with whom they *may* have nothing to do . . .

It is clear that JND firmly believed that Christians would have nothing to do with the Antichrist, except as the principles actuating him were already at work in the world and in the Church. He also wrote:

> For, after the withdrawing of the saints, and giving up of *all others* to the worshiping of the beast, and therefore to irremediable torment consequent upon the critical test of the everlasting gospel being put to them, we have, upon the judging of Antichrist, the nations converted by another and subsequent preaching of the gospel, as associated with the new dispensation. (p. 5).

His point in this paper is that the spirit of evil that will be manifested by Antichrist ("in that day amongst the Jews," p. 9), is at work **now**, and this is that with which we have to do (see p. 12). This paper shows that he believed the saints would be withdrawn before the worship of the beast begins. Interestingly, it also shows that he expected another preaching of the gospel, associated with the millennial dispensation, would be preached -- i.e., the gospel of the kingdom. The fundamentals of dispensational truth were firmly in place.

In 1832 JND wrote a very lengthy paper but it was not published until 1872: "Some Observations on the Scripture Lessons of the Board of Education." [286] The same is true of "A Letter on a Serious Question Connected with the Irish Education Measures of 1832." [287] The reader who is interested in these papers would also like to examine his "Speech Delivered at a Meeting Hall for the Purpose of

281. *Collected Writings* 3:1-43.
282. *Collected Writings* 33:1-12.
283. *Collected Writings* 33:2.
284. *Collected Writings* 2:24 (1829).
285. "Gentile Dispensation" is not an accurate expression. Later, when speaking more exactly, he would not use this expression -- except perhaps (continued...)

285. (...continued)
in a conventional way (see my book, *J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses*).
286. *Collected Writings* 32:281-305.
287. *Collected Writings* 32:306-314.

Promoting Scriptural Education" (1834). [288] In connection with the subject of education, years later he wrote on the subject in *Dialogues on Essays and Reviews*: "Christianity and the Education of the World." [289]

In 1833 he published "Thoughts on the Present Position of the Home Mission" [290] wherein liberty in service as immediately responsible to the Lord, rather than the arrogation of it into the hands of the clergy, was discussed. In connection with the Home Mission, laymen of the Church of Ireland had been preaching the gospel in Ireland. He wrote:

> Another most important principle developed by the Home Mission is this, that men have their place and agency in the system and the country by virtue, not of their official situations, *but of the gifts which God has given them* . . .
>
> There is another point at present of importance. The clergy have taken up the Missions at present. They have taken them up to the exclusion of laymen: their conduct has been marked in this respect. The Missions had been carried on, and were established, through the labors of laymen, while the clergy in great measure refused to act because it was irregular. I believe those most conversant in them will admit that they could not, in point of fact, have been carried on without . . . During the working of the laymen, it was merely an unofficial preaching of the Gospel, as God gave men ability where there was necessity and God gave opportunity; and clergymen being engaged in it too, it merely became a common work of necessity and love. Now that the clergy have excluded them, it becomes a deliberate rejection by them, the clergy, in their official character, of the control of the diocesan over his own diocese; its management in the spiritual energies of Christianity is assumed by other hands. The clergy themselves are setting aside the episcopal constitution, as at present subsisting, and acting not only in independence but in defiance of it. . . .

Concerning how the Home Mission began, he said elsewhere:

> It was I who suggested the work of evangelization which was called the home mission. [291]

Of course, he was not seeking to help the bishops by these remarks. He is showing the character of clerisy in its suppressing of those whom God would send; and also in this case flaunting authority *concerning its principle* and the example such men were setting before the public in doing so.

> The clergy, by virtue of their office, exclude laymen from any portion of the work which they are carrying on, while their work at the same time sets aside episcopal control. What can we think of this? It is not the first time that the clergy have sought to confine, to their own narrow channels, the working of the Spirit of God, and so grieved and hindered the work. And since they have thus raised the question, What is a clergyman? . . .

It may be that following this he wrote a paper which, however, was held back at the time and was published many years later, namely, "The Notion of a Clergyman Dispensationally the Sin Against the Holy Ghost." [292] While I understand what he means by the title, I suggest it would have been well to have had a different title, but I do not disagree with the thrust of the paper.

The various distinguishable periods in Scripture begin with some sin and failure that characterizes the period. For example, Government was committed to Noah and he became drunk. After Pentecost, the Holy Spirit having come to indwell the believer and unite the saints to the Head in heaven, Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit. It was an aggravated sin, he acting as if the Spirit had not just come. Thus what JND appears to have meant is that clerisy sets aside the free action of the Spirit in ministry by the gifts given by the Head of the body and that this characterizes the present period. At any rate, the paper shows how clericalism sets aside the operations of the Spirit. In 1837 he wrote a paper, "The Operations of the Spirit of God."

In 1834 he published, "Parochial Arrangement Destructive of Order in the Church." [293] This is noted here, instead of in the next section, in order to briefly trace its connection with a number of his previous papers that have an ecclesiastical bearing. This paper contains a key sentence which, I believe, ties together these papers:

> Now it appears to me that the present circumstances of the church have destroyed order, as well as liberty . . . [294]

His Ecclesiastical Papers Summarized. Above, we noted JND's remark about the church in its present circumstances had "destroyed order, as well as liberty." This remark shows the thrust of his previous ecclesiastical papers:

1. JND's response to Archbishop Magee was the germing of truth that afterwards developed (1826). It exposed the worldliness of the church of England in its appeal to the secular power. Really, the world was in the church; or, more accurately, the Church of England is no church at all, as he often said. Implicit in this is the destruction of God's order.
2. B. W. Newton reminisced that F. W. Newman had given him a book written by JND (a book of which we know nothing else) on the Fall of the Church (1827). Implicit in this fall is the destruction of God's order and liberty in the assembly.
3. "Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ" (1828) showed the liberty of communion of believers in the Lord's supper -- separate from the worldly church order. This is God's order.
4. "Thoughts on the Present position of the Home Mission" (1833) addressed the subject of the liberty of the believer's service, as immediately responsible to the Lord -- and how the clergy sets this aside, even while it

288. *Collected Writings* 32:315-332.

289. *Collected Writings* 9:1-86. The interested reader should also examine *Collected Writings* 26:360, 361 and *The Bible Treasury* 17:332; 6:336, note.

290. *Collected Writings* 1:52-67.

291. *Collected Writings* 4:138. See the rest of the paragraph *in loco*.

292. *Collected Writings* 1:36.

293. *Christian Witness* 1:252-263 (*Collected Writings* 1:80-91).

294. *Collected Writings* 1:80.

may flaunt its own system.

5. "Parochial Arrangement Destructive of Church Order" (1834) deals, as just noted above, with God's order and liberty.
6. "The Notion of a Clergyman . . ." (1834/1835?) also shows how clerisy sets aside God's order and liberty of the Spirit.

Interestingly, in an 1832 letter written to brethren at the Plymouth meeting, he wrote (emphasis mine):

> My heart is with you, dear brethren, **while you walk in order**, and therefore was your letter such a comfort. [295]

While he did not believe in what was called "dissent" (those not conforming to the established order of the Church of England, and who meet on some other non-scriptural basis), his articles had mainly dealt with that Church -- which he elsewhere said repeatedly, is not a church, but the world. In Section 6, concerning his visit in Switzerland, we shall see that he also took up the case of the Swiss non-conformists; since they, too, set aside God's order and liberty in another way.

J. N. Darby's 1834-1840 Papers

Several undated articles by J. N. Darby fit this era:

1. "Remarks on a Tract Circulated by the Irvingites Entitled, 'A Word of Instruction,'" *Collected Writings* 15:1-15.
2. "A Letter to a Clergyman on the Claims and Doctrines of Newman Street," *Collected Writings* 15:16-33.

In 1834 [296] JND wrote:

> The two [epistles] to the Thessalonians, are the building of the church in the great doctrine of the Lord's second coming, as an immediate and protracted expectation and hope, and the result of this special apprehension of it in the very healthful state of the church. [297]

The immediate hope is the rapture and the protracted hope is the appearing.

In a short article, "On the Extended Scope of Prophecy" (1834) he confused the Antichrist with the first beast of Rev. 13, [298] as also in "Scope of Prophecy" (1835). [299]

In "The Dispensation of the Kingdom of Heaven," (1834), he wrote:

> I would remark on this expression, that we are taught to hold the continuing value of the Jewish prophetic expectation, of all that a scribe in the law of Moses would have drawn from the Old Testament, and that distinct from the *expectation* introduced by the gospel. [300]

This distinguishes the coming of the Messiah, when He appears in glory, from our expectation as Christians (though, of course, when He is manifested, we shall be manifested in glory with Him).

This paper also explains the distinction between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God -- a most helpful thing to understand. He also pointed out that the Jew must take prophecy literally. [301] He speaks of the Jewish character of Matthew and as showing the introduction of "the new order of things" [302] (i.e., it is dispensational in character). And, in another paper, "The Melchizedek Priesthood of Christ" (1834), [303] he gave an exposition of the present and future character of Christ's priesthood. He showed also that the name "Most High" speaks of millennial times. He spoke, too, of the seed of Abraham and other matters.

In short, by 1834 the foundations of dispensational truth are all evidenced in his papers. He hardly came to understand all this just in 1834. In Chapter 3.1 where his 1827 *Notes on John* are reviewed, we saw he had grasped much dispensational truth.

The *Christian Witness* was a periodical begun in Jan. 1834, [304] in which the above articles were printed. A letter of JND's, dated July 24,1834, indicated some dissatisfaction with the magazine's character.

> As to work, I do trust the Lord is surely working there: as to the "Witness," I think we ought to have something more of direct testimony as to the Lord's coming, and its bearing also on the state of the church: ordinarily, it would not be well to have it so clear, as it frightens people. We must pursue it steadily; it works like leaven, and its fruit is by no means seen yet; I do not mean leaven as ill, but the thoughts are new, [305] and people's

295. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:10.

296. In this year he wrote: "On Colossians 1:19," *Christian Witness* 1:87,89 (*Collected Writings* 13:1); "Scriptural Criticisms," *Christian Witness* 1:313-320, 424-434 (*Collected Writings* 13:4-25); "Christian Liberty of Preaching and Teaching the Lord Jesus Christ," *Christian Witness* 1:252-263 (*Collected Writings* 1:80-91); "Parochial Arrangement Destructive of Church Order," *Christian Witness* 1:161-173 (*Collected Writings* 1:68-79).

297. "The Distinct Character of the Several Writings of the New Testament," *Christian Witness* 1:143; (*Collected Writings* 20:53).

298. *Collected Writings* 2:43-45.

299. *Collected Writings* 2:46-52.

300. *Collected Writings* 2:54, note.

301. *Collected Writings* 2:55.

302. *Collected Writings* 2:57 note.

303. *Collected Writings* 2:64-73.

304. The *Christian Witness*, a periodical started in Plymouth in Jan. 1834, was edited by Henry Borlase at first. For a short time he had been a curate of the Church of England but resigned and moved to Plymouth. In the beginning of 1834 he experienced a blood vessel rupture which led to his death in Nov. 1835 (*Extracts from the Writings of the Late Henry Borlase*, p. v).

W. H. Dorman, "High Church Claims of the Exclusive Brethren," Letter vi, pp. 25,26, says that the introduction to the *Christian Witness* and "'The Narrative of Facts' (which saw the light in 1846,) [was] written by the same hand." If so, that would be JND.

J. L. Harris, who left the Church of England in 1832, became the editor after H. Borlase (*Fry MS*, pp. 319, 343).

305. Ever ready to calumniate JND, Mr. MacPherson, wrote:

> Not long before his death in 1882, he declared in an 1879 letter (*Letters* 3:56) that "what is true is old, and what is new is wrong." But this was a complete reversal of his ministry's earliest days. In 1834, as observed, he'd said that "the thoughts are new" (*The Great Rapture Hoax*, p. 179).

(continued...)

> minds work on them, and all the old habits are against their feelings -- all the gain of situation, and every worldly motive; we must not be surprised at its effect being slow on the mass, the ordinary instruments of acting upon others having been trained in most opposite habits. There is a great effort making in this country to keep the reformation within the church, and not let it go farther than they like; for they are very anxious, as always, to keep God within their owns bounds; it will not do in the end, nor, if we are faithful, on the way. [306]

I judge from this that he desired more testimony regarding what we call the pre-tribulation rapture, i.e., the pre-Rev. 4 rapture -- in line with the earlier quotation where he spoke of the immediate and the protracted hope (the rapture and the appearing). We must keep in mind that the then editor, J. L. Harris, did not share this view, nor did many others [307] -- at least not yet.

There is also "Speech Delivered at a Meeting Held for the Purpose of Promoting Scriptural Education." [308]

In the *Christian Witness* for 1834 there appeared "Scriptural Criticisms," pp. 313-320, [309] continued on pp. 424-434, [310] and concluded in the *Christian Witness* for 1835, pp. 139-144, as "Critical Notices. -- No. 3." [311]

In 1835, in "The Covenants" [312] he showed that the new covenant is for Israel, not the church. In this same year he also published "A Letter Addressed to ___, Parsonstown, in Reply to a Tract entitled, Three Considerations Proving Unscriptural the Supposition of the Personal Reign of Christ on Earth During the Millennium." [313] Here, he showed that Christ is not reigning now, but will do so in the future. He also discussed the offices of Christ from a dispensational viewpoint. Additionally, he dealt with the subject of ministry and clerisy. Besides this, his "Brief Analysis of the Book of Daniel" [314] was published. It contained the confusion between the first beast (Rev. 13:1-11) and the Antichrist.

On the directly ecclesiastical side he wrote "The Character of Office in the Present Dispensation." [315]

He also published "Obedience" in the *Christian Witness* for Jan. 1835. [316] He expressed concern that the notion that blessing must precede obedience (it is the other way around) was spreading and comments upon the wrong order having been held by Irvingites.

In 1836, in "The Feasts: Lev. 23" [317] we find the feasts of Jehovah understood dispensationally. [318] Also, in 1836 there appeared, "The Apostasy of the Successive Dispensations." [319] Therein he rightly said,

> The paradisiacal state cannot properly perhaps be called a dispensation in this sense of the word . . ." [320]

He called attention to the fact that dispensations begin with Noah. I would remark upon this point that "innocence" was not committed to man **as an administration;** nor, for that matter, was "conscience" committed to man **as an administration.** But, government was committed to Noah, with whom dispensations, **properly speaking,** begin. The scheme to make **seven** of them has artificial elements; but not only that, it makes an *age* out of the Church. The chart below is offered as presenting how I understand JND's overall "dispensational" views. It is often erroneously stated that he held that there were seven "dispensations." This idea comes from confusing ages (or, distinguishable time periods) with dispensations. The chart below is explained in my book, *J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses*. He also showed that "there is no instance of the restoration of a dispensation afforded us, though there might be partial revivals of it through faith."

Several other papers appeared in 1836 also. [321]

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305. (…continued)
Let me cite what JND **really** said, in 1879, for the reader must not in the least trust his representations of JND:

> But then only notice, that in the summing up and guarding of the system found in the article I comment on, what is true is old, and what is new is wrong.

Obviously the "old" was what brethren had held for a long time and the reviewed article was departing from that and introducing something "new." JND also used the expression "new ideas" and "new truth" in his 1830 paper: *Collected Writings* 2:32. Perhaps that, too, can be perverted into a personal attack on him.

306. *Letters* 1:26, 27.

307. I think this is so by reading my set of the *Christian Witness*, assuming that the initials someone penned in the margin of the index truly indicates the authors of the various articles.

308. *Collected Writings* 32:315-322.

309. *Collected Writings* 13:4-10.

310. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-20.

311. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-25.

312. *Christian Witness* 2:328-341 (*Collected Writings* 3:44-56). The date given in the index to the *Collected Writings* says 1838. That would be the date in the second edition of the *Christian Witness*. It was published in the first edition in 1834.

313. *Collected Writings* 2:74-88.

314. *Christian Witness* 2:225-232 (*Collected Writings* 11:52-62).

315. *Christian Witness* 2:90-110 (*Collected Writings* 1:92-111). This is also misdated as 1838 in the index to the *Collected Writings*. The correct date is 1835.

316. *Collected Writings* 16:1-18 -- where the date 1838 is incorrectly given.

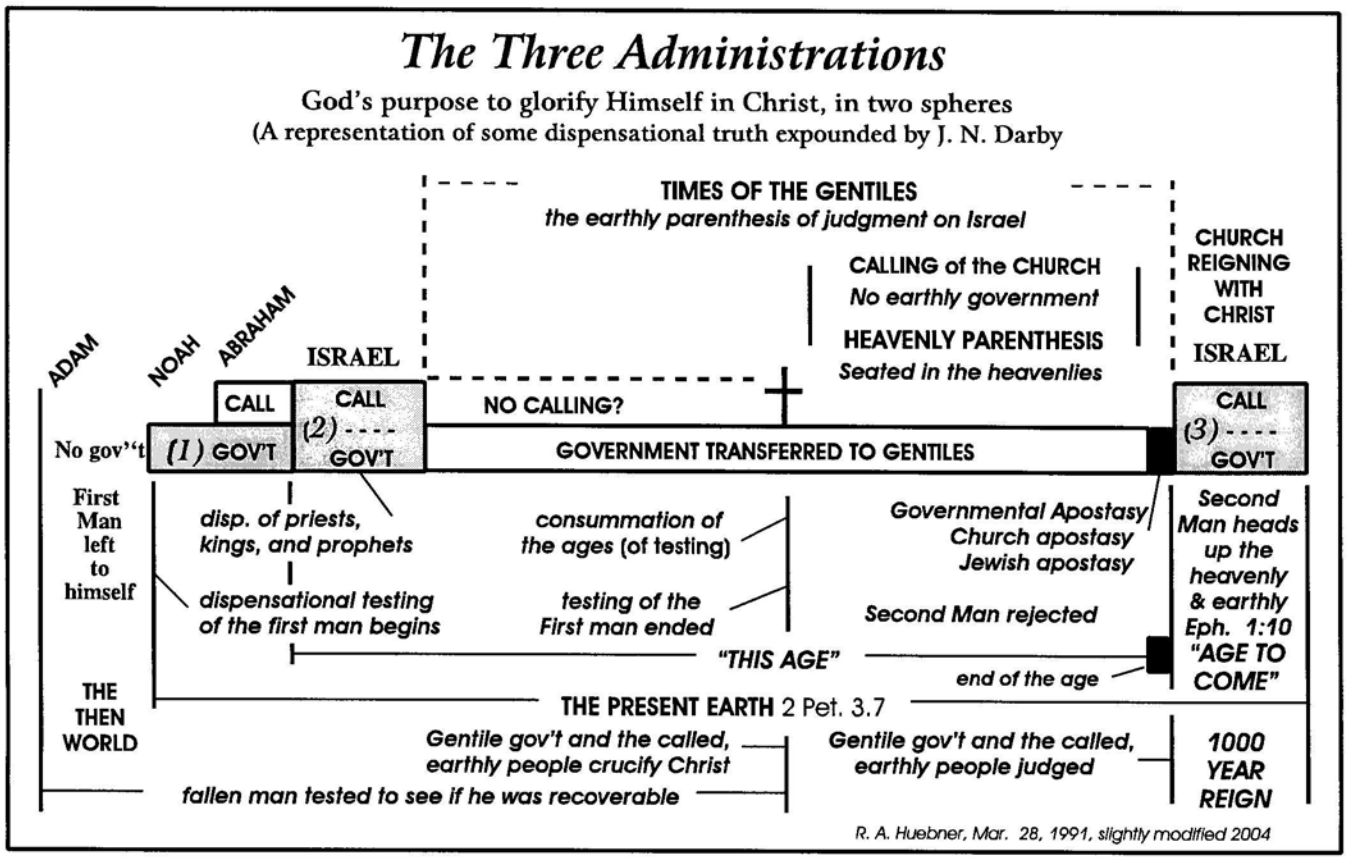
317. *Christian Witness* 3:230-243; (*Collected Writings* 19:262-275).

318. A 64 page pamphlet, *The Seven Set Feasts of Jehovah*, is available from the publisher.

319. *Christian Witness* 3:359-366; (*Collected Writings* 1:124-130).

320. *Ibid.* 1:125.

321. "Notes on the Offerings," *Christian Witness* 3:366-390; (*Collected Writings* 19:216-241); "Remarks on Light and Conscience," *Christian Witness* 3:390-406; (*Collected Writings* 3:57-72).



In 1837 he wrote an article, "Matthew 24, 25," and said, referring to Matthew 24:

> During this period, there will not only be false prophets, but false Christs, present promised deliverers from the great tribulation, "Jacob's trouble"; but the elect were told beforehand, they were to pray, being Jews, their flight might not be on the sabbath. This was Jewish tribulation, from which the obedient remnant were exempt . . . [322]

Of Matthew 25, he said:

> The sense of the bridegroom's immediate approach they had lost, they became insensible to this while the bridegroom tarried. Christ the bridegroom tarried in His return to earth. The Church at large gracious [i.e. having oil] or merely professing [i.e. having lamps but no oil in their vessels], all lost the present sense of this as their calling. [323]

Referring to Matt. 25:31-46, he wrote:

> We come to the Gentiles; hitherto it has been instruction to a remnant on the earth, the Jews previous to His coming. Then how He would deal with the church upon His coming, they being caught up to meet Him, and going in with Him to the marriage, to wit, with Jerusalem and the Jews. Here we have what is consequent on His coming. [324]

On the ecclesiastical side there appeared his "Operations of the Spirit of God." [325] Another study was "Heads of Psalms." [326]

It seems to me that the survey thus far has shown that the truth was essentially at home in his mind and the statement by H. Rowdon that "Darby himself was by no means clear on all points, as he confessed . . ." could only refer to minor details.

Near the end of 1837 JND went to Switzerland and in Section 6 we shall touch on that and some papers he wrote while engaged with non-conformists there. For continuity of thought regarding JND's apprehension of prophetic matters and the pretribulation rapture, let us continue our survey through 1840.

In 1838 he published "Divine Mercy in the Church and Towards Israel."[327] This is an extremely important paper concerning the great principles of dispensational truth. The principles of "the government of God" and of "calling" are here shown in their importance in understanding God's

322. *Christian Witness* 4:274; (*Collected Writings* 24:219-232).

323. *Christian Witness* 4:274; (*Collected Writings* 24:219-232).

324. *Ibid.* 279.

325. *Christian Witness* 4:42-53, 201-220 (1837); 6:231-278 (1839); (*Collected Writings* 3:73-148).

326. *Christian Witness* 4:332-355 (1837); 5:258-284 (1838); 6:146-168 (1839); 7:308-327 (1840); (*Collected Writings* 13:241-352).

327. *Christian Witness* 5:164-173, 323-359; (*Collected Writings* 2:122-164).

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here shown in their importance in understanding God's dispensational ways. The subject of God's ways in the earth in government is central to a right understanding of dispensational truth, as is shown in my *J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses*. The importance of this was already noted by JND in 1829. [328]

In *Collected Writings*, vol. 12, the first 13 evangelistic "Sermons" are said to have been delivered in 1838.

In 1839 addresses were given and were subsequently printed under the title **Collectanea** . . . This includes an address by JND, "Revelation 1-20." He distinguished the coming **for** and the coming **with** His saints (p. 29). Of course, to allege that this was the first time he made such a distinction would be absurd. Moreover, the distinction is implicit in holding a pre-Antichrist coming, which he held in 1827. On p. 31 we read:

> There is a clear difference between the Church of God caught up, and those suffering on earth during the time of Antichrist, and caught up too. In Matt. 24, I do not see anything about the Church; it is entirely Jewish testimony. The gospel of the kingdom, that shall be preached to all nations for a witness, I see to be Jewish too. [329]
>
> Christ cannot be manifested without His body, and therefore the saints are caught up. After they are caught up, Satan, having lost heaven forever, rages on earth for three and a half years. [330]

There were addresses by G. V. Wigram and J. G. Bellett at these meetings which also were recorded. G. V. Wigram remarked, "The Church cannot be in the judgment; and until I saw the truth of the remnant, I thought otherwise." [331] J. G. Bellett stated: "I believe the Church to be taken up at some undefined moment between chapters 3 and 4 {of Revelation}." [332]

In JND's "Notes on the Revelation" (1839), there is a chart that shows the church in heaven starting with Rev. 4. [333]

The reader may also want to refer to an 1839 paper "The Purpose of God." [334] Another paper he wrote is "The Resurrection, the Fundamental Truth of The Gospel." [335]

In 1840 two papers appeared in English: "Psalm 68" [336] and "On the Apostasy." [337] "Hopes of the Church of God" [338] were lectures delivered in Switzerland. Dispensational truth and the place of the rapture are clearly enunciated. The reader will not discover any doubts or wavering in JND.

Another paper is "On the Formation of Churches," originally published in French, about 1840. [339] But we will return to the matter of further publications in Ch. 6.3.

In the next chapter (5.3) we will return to the 1829-1836 era to glean what we can concerning the Powerscourt meetings.

When Was JND'S Mind Settled?

Based on all the evidence we have reviewed up to this point, we see that JND's mind was settled on the subject of the pretribulation rapture (the pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture -- the pre-Revelation 4 rapture) in 1827. Some writers are interested in delaying JND's understanding, and propagate the absurd notion that he was still not settled in the early 1840s. I will review a few samples of the way they seek to establish their (false) thesis and perhaps that will only strengthen evidence for the truth of the matter.

In JND's "Notes on the Revelation" (1839), there is a chart that shows the church in heaven starting with Rev. 4.[340] In this book he wrote, concerning his own thoughts, that:

> He believes that the book [Rev.] in the body of it, views the Church either *mystically*, according to Ephesians 2, or *really*, according to 1 Thessalonians 4:17, in heavenly places; and that the want of observing this has much obscured the study of it. [341]

Astonishingly, Mr. MacPherson wrote:

> And as late as 1839 he said waveringly that the church will be with the Lord either *mystically* or *really* during

328. *Collected Writings* 2:29. In connection with the subject of the ways of God, the reader should examine the *Collected Writings* 22:335-373.

329. *Collectanea: Being Some of the Subjects Considered at Leamington, on 3rd June and Four Following Days in the Year 1839.*

330. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

331. *Ibid.*, p.78.

332. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

333. *Collected Writings* 2:264, 265. This paper was likely written in 1838. Cp. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:30. Mr. MacPherson commented that the chart has no artist's name or date. Some of my own charts do not either. What does that prove? It proves that the chart has not an artist's name or date on it!

Well, Mr. MacPherson, ever ready to manipulate, observing that the chart shows that the church is in heaven by Rev. 4, says that this shows "additional manipulation." Such is his dull conspiracy theory of persons hiding that Margaret Macdonald is the author of the pretribulation rapture. As I write this, I have on my desk a copy of *Notes on the Book of Revelation; to Assist Inquirers in Searching that Book*, London: Central Tract Depot, 1839. There are ***two*** charts, each about 11" x 11," one of which is the chart he referred to as "additional manipulation." The other is the one viewing the Revelation on a protracted,or historical, scale -- illustrating what I have said that JND thought there was something to a

(continued...)

333. (...continued)
historicist-type view. (Mr. MacPherson did not object that there is no artist's name or date on *that* chart -- perhaps because it does not help his nonsensical "additional manipulation" humbug). The historicist type chart would be *application* as distinguished from *interpretation*.

Once again, the only manipulation is that of Mr. MacPherson. It is amazing how he has manipulated people into believing his notions.

334. *Collected Writings* 2:266-277.

335. *Christian Witness* 6:35-53; (*Collected Writings* 3:147-163).

336. *Christian Witness* 7:93-96; (*Collected Writings* 13:26-29).

337. *Christian Witness* 7:81-93; (*Collected Writings* 1:112-123).

338. *Collected Writings* 2:278-383.

339. *Collected Writings* 1:138-155.

340. *Collected Writings* 2:264, 265. This paper was likely written in 1838. Cp. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:30.

341. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

the Tribulation. [342]

Because this person wants to find a late date for JND's understanding, he claims that JND was wavering in 1839. At best, this is ignorance of divine truth. JND's point is that Eph. 2 shows the saints (*mystically*) seated in the heavenlies -- *now*, of course. 1 Thess. 4 speaks of bringing them there bodily, or *really*, as he put it. In the body of Rev. (ch. 4 ff), the Church is in heaven both mystically and really. At that time the Church-saints will still be seated in the heavenlies *mystically*, and also as a result of the rapture will *really*, i.e., bodily, be in heaven. The truth of Eph. 2 will not change because the saints will be bodily (really) with Christ during Daniel's 70th week. At that time both will be true, namely that the saints are seen there either *mystically* or *really*. Is that so difficult to understand?

Writing concerning the 1833 Powerscourt conference, E. R. Sandeen remarked:

> Darby used the third Powerscourt conference in September 1833 to continue his attack upon the apostasy of the churches and to stress the need for all true believers to gather in the name of the Lord alone. In a sense this was the first assembly of the new sect, but it was also the first occasion of disagreement between Darby and Newton. Darby introduced into the discussion at Powerscourt the ideas of a secret rapture of the church and of a parenthesis in prophetic fulfillment between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of Daniel. These two concepts constituted the basic tenets of the system of theology since referred to as dispensationalism . . . Neither Darby nor Newton seems to have been estranged at this time. Darby held an open mind on both of these subjects as late as 1843. [343]

There are numerous errors in this citation, but perhaps that is not a surprise in view of his statement that the *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* are "almost uniformly unintelligible," [344] yet he tells us what JND taught!

At any rate, while JND's writings are not always the clearest, I wonder what the many readers of JND, who have profited by his written ministry, think of such a statement. At any rate, I forebear comment on his misapprehension about *the* basic tenets, and other points, and merely point out this:

1. What JND held an open mind about was whether or not the pretribulation rapture would be *secret* (discussed more fully in chapter 5.4).
2. His assertion that JND introduced the *secret* rapture at this conference is another statement that adds confusion to the subject.

There is much talk about "secret" by persons who do not state what they are speaking about.

H. H. Rowdon also claimed that JND's mind was not settled on these points until 1843.[345] As evidence, he pointed to *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:71 (Morrish ed., p. 58, new ed.), where JND wrote:

> My mind has opened out to many wider views and details. I find many more classes of saints and glory in the Apocalypse than heretofore, though all blessed. It may be some will pass through, *but I am more than ever confirmed that it is not presented to our faith, but the contrary, and that the faithful will be kept from it*.

What I have emphasized states explicitly the opposite of H. H. Rowdon's claim; and of E. R. Sandeen's also. [346] JND is here saying that Christians "will be kept from it," i.e., from the tribulation. His continued studies "more than ever *confirmed*" that Christians would not pass through it. There are other classes of persons that will pass through it.

A statement used to support the 'late certainty agenda,' as we may call it, is found in an undated letter of JND preserved in the *Fry MS*, p. 322.

> As to any secret coming I have no conviction about it and the proofs to me are certainly very feeble and vague. I attach however no importance to them. [347]

Whatever JND may have exactly meant here, it seems to me that he did not believe that something hinged on whether the rapture is secret or not. Indeed, in his 1857 paper, "The Rapture of the Saints," he wrote:

> A point connected with this has been insisted on by the adversaries of the truth, to which I advert here only to leave it aside, as not touching the main point, even if true, and used by them only to obscure the great and vital truth of the rapture of the church -- I mean the secrecy of the rapture. The two points on which it is most important to have the clear testimony of Scripture are -- first, that there will be a Jewish remnant at the end, with a place belonging to itself as such; secondly, the true character of the church of God. [348]

Likely, he referred to the insistence that the epiphany will be visible. But that is not denied; rather, it is affirmed. But the visibility of the epiphany does not prove the visibility of the

342. D. MacPherson, *The Great Rapture Hoax*, p. 166.

343. *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, p. 38.

344. *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, p. 31.

345. *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 223.

346. E. R. Sandeen did not read this letter of JND correctly either; *op. cit.*, p. 64.

347. *Fry MS*, p. 322. One scholar feigns a scenario, prints it, and other scholars quote the absurdities and assumptions as historic facts. This is illustrated in a 1999 article by Mark Patterson and Andrew Walker. Having quoted JND from the *Fry MS*, p. 322, they wrote:

> Indeed, there appears to be no evidence to suggest Darby held the doctrine before the September 1833 Powerscourt Conference where he first articulated it.
>
> ("Our Unspeakable Comfort" . . . *Fides et Historica*, 1999, p. 69.)

Their authority for the error and assumption? E. R. Sandeen, *Roots*, p. 38. Near the end of their article they wrote:

> Between 1827 and 1833 it was Irving, Albury and *The Morning Watch* {the Irvingite journal} that determined the essential doctrinal tenets of premillennialism which Darby received, creatively adapted, and disseminated (p. 81).

The absurdity of this matches that of Mr. MacPherson's revision of actual history. In a note, these writers said:

> The purpose of our revisionist history in this paper is simply to set the record straight (p. 81, note 65).

It is an *unbelievable* revisionist distortion.

348. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 11:120.

rapture, except in the mind of posttribulationist's insisting on merging the two. [349]

To return; it is the height of absurdity to conclude from this that when things had become heated up with B. W. Newton in the 1840s that JND had doubts about the pre-Rev. 4 rapture itself. The only thing this referred to was whether or not the pretribulation rapture would be *secret*. Yet writers hostile to JND use this to support a 'late certainty agenda' regarding the pretribulation rapture itself. Is it not absurd to bring all his writings of the 1830s into doubt except his views on apostasy? Well, B. W. Newton replied to JND, and this reply adds evidence concerning the absurdity of the 'late certainty agenda.'

> So highly do I esteem you and your judgment, that I can assure you the first impulse of my mind on receiving such expressions of your disapprobation has ever been to bow to them and retire. This I have again felt on the present occasion: but there are two things which hinder me, first, that your strong expressions of condemnation (which have occurred from time to time during the last ten years frequently) have always been connected with a particular subject -- on that subject I believe you have departed from the truth. The first occasion on which I expressed a judgment different from yourself was in my own room at Oxford in a little reading meeting, & I well remember the character of our interview the next morning -- from that time to the present it has only been when I have been silent on the subject in question that I have escaped the severe expression of your condemnation.
>
> For the last 10 years [350] I have been for the most part entirely silent, until within a few months -- & for your sake & the sake of the Church I would still have continued to be so, if I did not consider the error that has crept into the prophetic and dispensational teaching of very many to be most fatal . . . [351]

In the same letter B. W. Newton wrote:

> The great hindrance to any approximation of judgment appears to me to be this: that we have severally adopted as axioms two principles which are entirely counterparts one of another. I believe that it is essential to the existence of Prophecy about the Church that there should be intervening events foretold. *You* on the contrary say there can be no intervening events for the Church's expectation and refuse to receive any thought from Scripture inconsistent with this main principle. Because you would find nothing consistent therewith in Scripture. [352]

Observe the accusation made by B. W. Newton in this letter:

> *You* . . . refuse to receive any thought from Scripture inconsistent with this main principle.

This last quotation shows what the issue was from which the disagreement arose; the previous quotation shows how early it arose. B. W. Newton gave up his rooms at Oxford shortly after the breaking of bread began in Plymouth in 1832. Therefore it was before that when he first raised an objection. Perhaps it occurred when JND visited Oxford in May 1830. But already in Dec. 1826 -- Jan. 1827 JND saw that there would be no intervening events.

E. R. Sandeen and H. H. Rowdon had access to the *Fry MS*, and cited from JND's letter therein which just preceded this one by B. W. Newton. What is their problem that they could not discern JND's certainty and firmness on these matters?

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349. 2 Thess. 2:8 speaks of the epiphany of the parousia, implying there may be a parousia without an epiphany. The truth is that there is one parousia in two phases, the catching up which likely will not be visible, and later the epiphany of the parousia, which will be visible.

350. The letter mentions some tracts which gave occasion to this correspondence. Undoubtedly this refers to B. W. Newton's *Five Letters on Events Predicted in Scripture, as Antecedent to the Coming of the Lord.* The preface to the second edition (1847), written by S. P. Tregelles, says that the *Letters* were written about seven years ago (thus 1840) and were copied and circulated in manuscript form. I suppose this means that B. W. Newton remained "for the most part silent." But they were first printed about two years previously (thus 1845).

Another interesting point concerning B. W. Newton's statement that "For the last 10 years I have been for the most part entirely silent . . ." is that this brings us back to 1835. In the fall of 1834 he had held meetings at the time of the Powerscourt meetings wherein his own notions were propagated. Very likely that had caused a collision with JND and B. W. Newton must have opted to say little on the subject but about 1840 wrote his *Five Letters* . . . which at first were copied and circulated in manuscript form. This way of propagating his views would occur again in connection with his evil doctrine concerning the Person of Christ, a subject which will be before us in Volume 2.

351. *Fry MS*, p. 325.

352. *Fry MS*, p. 327.

Chapter 5.3

The Powerscourt Conferences

Introduction

By Irvingites is meant followers of E. Irving, who, in 1827, published the book by Manuel De Lacunza (Ben Ezra), *The Coming of Messiah* . . . E. Irving had previously translated it from Spanish to English. In Nov 1826 a conference of one week for the study of prophecy was convened at the residence of Henry Drummond and these continued yearly through 1830. [353] They were called Albury Conferences. They served as a vehicle for the prophetic views of Henry Drummond and Edward Irving.

It seems that Lady Powerscourt attended some of these conferences and she had a small conference at Powerscourt in Ireland, in 1829 and 1830. In 1831, 1832, and 1833, there were larger conferences held at Powerscourt and the designation "Powerscourt Conferences" has been used regarding these three more public conferences. The happy thing about having the conferences at Powerscourt is that it removed the Irvingite influence and domination. No doubt the hand of God was in this change.

Notice the major addition to this chapter added at the end. From the paper quoted we see confirmation that there was a conference at Powerscourt in 1830, though nothing is said about any in 1929. Be that as it may, let us first note a few things about Lady Powerscourt before turning to the several conferences.

Lady Powerscourt

R. Daly, Anglican rector of Powerscourt, who edited her letters, wrote:

> She, of all Christians I have been privileged to know, came nearest to that which she has, in such strong, uncommon terms, stated to be her idea of a Christian: *"Not one who looks up from earth to heaven, but one who looks down from heaven on earth."* She appears to have ascended a high and holy eminence, and from thence to have looked down upon those earthly scenes, with which too many are entirely engrossed; living up to that high and spiritual requirement of the apostle, "set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." [354]

Interestingly, very little appeared in her published letters concerning the subject of prophecy though she was so much interested in it. [355] A letter dated Sept. 2, 1832 indicates that she leaned to partial-rapturism. [356] A letter dated July 16, 1833, shows that at that point in time she had not yet understood that the rapture would occur before the great tribulation. [357]

She was the daughter of a Colonel Howard and was the second wife of Lord Powerscourt, who died a few months after their marriage in 1823. [358] JND had thoughts of marrying her. [359] G. H. Lang wrote:

> It was understood that J. N. Darby had thoughts of marrying her. His family, though not titled, moved in the same social circle, his father being John Darby of Markley, Sussex, and Leap Castle, King's County, Ireland. I am informed that this castle was destroyed in the 1922 disturbances. My father, who knew J. N. Darby well, told me that he did not carry through his desire because his brethren advised him that it was more needful that he should travel among the assemblies. [360]

At some point Lady Powerscourt threw in her lot with those meeting in Aungier St., Dublin, [361] likely in 1833.

The Powerscourt Conferences

B. W. Newton reminisced:

> I went to the first {1829} and heard the address that alone would upset all prophetic truth. Darby went on with the

353. J. Zens, *Dispensationalism: A Reformed Inquiry into its Leading Figures and Features*, p. 4, says, "Both Darby and Irving made appearances at this prophetic conference during its short existence." He offers no documentation for the assertion.

354. *Letters and Papers of the Late Theodosia A. Viscountess Powerscourt*, p. vi.

355. *Ibid.*, p. viii.

356. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

357. "He waits for the last signal, when, immediately after the tribulation, shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; when the last elect shall have been born into the world, and fitted for glory, He will be found ready; and, as though too impatient till earth is prepared for his reception, we shall be 'caught up to meet Him in the air.' He remembers that he has jewels in Babylon; He will gather them for his crown, when about to visit the earth as King." *Ibid.*, p. 175.

358. H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 86.

359. W. Kelly, Letter of Sept. 8, 1897.

360. *The Disciple*, v.1, #2, p. 17.

361. Mrs. Madden, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

> meetings annually but I did not attend the second {1830}. Instead I had simultaneously the same subject at Plymouth {1834} which made Darby very angry as it was setting up an opposition meeting . . . Darby brought in his notes about The Old Testament Church, about the fourth meeting in the series {1832}. [362]

The dates that I have inserted [363] seem likely from the fact that he says G. V. Wigram was in Ireland and was influenced by the Powerscourt circle before Henry Bulteel's famous sermon of Feb. 6, 1831 denouncing the Church of England. [364] That put G. V. Wigram in Ireland in 1830 and he probably attended the second conference, which B. W. Newton did not attend. BWN's "opposition meeting" was, however, definitely held in 1834 and "we had the same subjects" as were purposed for the Powerscourt meeting. [365] It seems that he somewhat disordered these events.

THE FIRST PUBLIC POWERSCOURT MEETING: Oct. 4-7, 1831

The first of the three *more public meetings* began in 1831 which is the one noted by the editor of JND's *Letters*, p. 5, note, which says that "The first Powerscourt meeting was held on 4th to 7th 1831." *The Christian Herald*, Dec. 1831, II, p. 287, reported on this meeting.

THE SECOND PUBLIC POWERSCOURT MEETING: Sept. 24-28, 1832

The second Powerscourt meeting (of the more public ones) was held from Sept. 24 to 28, 1832. As in 1831, "the Rev. Robert Daly, Anglican Rector of Powerscourt, presided." [366]

Mrs. Madden, the biographer of R. Daly, who presided at the 1832 meeting, wrote that he was quite upset by the subject of the Irvingite gifts; and that "The Plymouth Brethren also gave expression to their peculiar views on religious subjects." [367] JND's report to the *Christian Herald* is given in *Letters* 1:5, 6. In part, he said:

> There was, of course, variety of view in so large an assemblage, but scarce anything which did not positively add to the information of all -- subject, of course, to the correction which interchange of views ever brings, where there is unity in the general scope. There was but one individual who introduced anything which could have given pain to any on these subjects; and that was a reference to the reception of "the gifts" and the principles connected with it. Little, however, was said upon it; and while the principles were calmly inquired into by a few, it did not, I think, affect the meeting, otherwise than to direct the earnest desires and prayers of many, for the more abundant presence of that Holy Ghost, by which alone, error can be brought to light, and the believer guided into all truth. On the whole, this part of the meeting was, perhaps, the most practically profitable, from the elucidation of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit casually drawn out by it; and the presiding presence of the Holy Spirit most marked, by a careful observer; and several defective and erroneous views prevalent (to the writer's knowledge) in England, met by what appeared to be scriptural light.
>
> The belief in the coming of a personal Antichrist was common, and that amongst many who, at a former meeting, had not received it at all; in this there was a very distinct and avowed change of opinion on the part of some. The discussion of the subject of Antichrist led to an extensive development of scripture, and to much very profitable detection of the spirit by which he might work in the nations; though no definite conclusion was come to upon this; while the recognition of his actings amongst the Jews, in Jerusalem, was more definitely recognized by those more conversant with the subject.

It is likely that the introduction of the subject of the Irvingite gifts gave an opportunity to JND and those like-minded to give "expression to their peculiar views on religious subjects," as said by Mrs. Madden. Very likely, hearing JND on the subject of "the presiding presence of the Holy Spirit" would upset the Anglican rector, R. Daly, very much. [368]

A brief sketch of what was taken up each day was given by JND. On Sept. 24, 1832 there was an examination of quotations from the OT in the NT. The next four days were occupied thus:

> Tuesday. -- The Prophetical character of each book in the Bible; including the three great feasts of the Jews, the blessings pronounced on Jacob's sons, the Parables in the Gospel, and the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Revelation.
>
> Wednesday. -- Should we expect a personal Antichrist? If so, to whom will he be revealed? Are there to be one or two great evil powers in the world at that time? Is there any uniform sense for the word *Saint* in the Prophetic, or New Testament scripture? By what covenant did the Jews, and shall the Jews, hold the land?
>
> Thursday. -- An inquiry into, and a connection between Daniel and the Apocalypse.
>
> Friday. -- What light does scripture throw in present events, and their moral character? What is next to be looked for and expected? Is there a prospect of a revival of Apostolic churches before the coming of Christ? What the duties arising out of present events? To

362. *Fry Ms*, p. 283.

363. Mrs. Madden, *op. cit.*, p. 150, says that Lady Powerscourt appears to have arrived at the idea of having meetings at Powerscourt from attending the Albury Conferences, sponsored by H. Drummond, and that she began these in 1827. This seems to me to be too early, especially since she said these meetings were held annually for three or four years, which would have them end in 1831 when the first of three of the largest took place.

364. F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 63.

365. *Fry MS*, p. 267.

366. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:5

367. *Op. Cit.*, pp. 152, 153.

368. Regarding R. Daly, D. H. Akenson wrote:

> A well-known evangelical who had held curacies in Ferns and in County Wicklow, Daly was promoted to the living of Powerscourt in 1814. This living was one of the most influential in the country, comprising a population of some 2000 Protestants, a large portion of whom were landed Gentry. Daly, therefore, had a superb base for his evangelical ministry. His influence grew continually, and he was appointed Archbishop of Cashel in late 1842 (*The Church of Ireland, Ecclesiastical Reform and Revolution*, 1800-1885, New Haven: Yale University Press, p. 133, 1971).

> what time, and to what class of persons do 1 Tim. iv.; 2 Tim. iii.; Jude; Matt. xxiv. 23, 24; and 2 Peter iii refer? [369]

The last question on Wednesday may have resulted in the publication of "The Covenants" in *The Christian Witness*, 1835, pp. 328-341. [370]

The subjects for Friday imply that the order of events in connection with Christ's coming was discussed. Writing from Limerick, JND said:

> In the meanwhile, the meeting at Powerscourt, as it has wrought conscious desires, and inquiry and prayer too, in the minds of many of the evangelical people in this place, there has been a considerable plunge made into the minds of this country by it, and this has partly exercised me, as interested in this country. [371]

THE THIRD PUBLIC POWERSCOURT MEETING: Sept. 23-28, 1833

It seems that B. W. Newton attended the 1833 Powerscourt meetings. He recollected:

> At one of the Powerscourt meetings there were seven of us on one of the days who had the Lord's Supper privately in the garden, Darby, Bellett, Hall, Muller, Craik and myself. She pointed to the Castle where all the rest were, and said she had called us out because we were differently minded from the rest, whom yet we nevertheless acknowledged as true Christians -- and indeed they were. They were some four hundred of the elite of the Evangelicals of the three Kingdoms -- But they didn't understand us, and we were of hopes, thoughts and feelings diverse from them; and therefore Lady P. proposed that we should have the Lord's Supper together and had ordered it to be laid in that summer-house yonder. And we partook there.
>
> When was that? It was 1833 I think. [372]

If the breaking of bread did indeed take place there in 1833, then it appears that Lady Powerscourt had begun such fellowship in 1833. She *did* cast in her lot with those at Aungier Street. It is said that the influence of R. Daly kept all in his parish from 'joining the brethren' except for Lady Powerscourt.

B. W. Newton appears to speak of the same meeting again, mentioning the 400 Evangelicals. He reminisced: "I took a strong view about there being intermediate events before Christ's coming." [373] Surely this implies that an 'any-moment' position had been put forth by some, or someone.

George Muller and Henry Craik, the two most prominent leaders at Bethesda in the Bethesda trouble in 1848/1849 also attended the 1833 Powerscourt Conference, [374] though not at this time identified with the Plymouth meeting. The discussions, H. Craik said, were on these subjects:

> Monday, 23rd. September. -- Arrived at Powerscourt, from Glanmore about 1, and met together for the breaking of bread. Felt united to Lady Powerscourt, who seems a dear, humble saint. In the evening, we considered the difference between the Everlasting Covenant and the Covenant of the Lord.
>
> Tuesday, 24th. September, 1833. -- Is the visible Christian church founded on the basis of the Jewish? What is the nature of the ministry and ordinances of the former? Are the promises to either, or both, conditional?
>
> Wednesday, 25th. September, 1833 -- the analogy between the close of this dispensation and the former. What is Mystic Babylon? Is the call out of her to be a Divine call at a set period, or is it a perpetual call?
>
> Thursday, 26th. September, 1833 -- What is the connection between the present and future dispensation?
>
> Friday, 27th. September, 1833 -- The Temptations of Satan.
>
> Saturday, 28th. September, 1833 -- Heard Brother Muller expound in the morning, after which we had the Lord's Supper at Lady Powerscourt's. Took leave, and came to Dublin, where the Lord, through Brother B., provided a lodging for us at his sister's in Bagot Street. [375]

It appears that John Synge of Glanmore Castle presided, not Robert Daly. [376] That it was not R. Daly is no surprise considering both his distress at things that were expressed at the 1832 conference, over which he had presided, and, it appears that before the 1833 conference Lady Powerscourt had withdrawn from the Church of England. It has been said that "she had confessed to having spent the night after the final session in tears" concerning loyalty to the Church of England [377] -- referring to the end of the 1832 conference

As noted, there has been disagreeing testimony as to when the conferences began. There probably was one in 1829 and one in 1830 of a more private character. The 1831-1833 conferences probably were of a much more public character. This would explain the editor's note in J. N. Darby's *Letters* 1:5, that "the first Powerscourt meeting was held on October 4th to 7th, 1831." B. W. Newton held a competitive meeting in Plymouth in 1834. [378] And JND wrote:

> I have what I believe to be a correct statement of the meetings Mr. Newton attended. He did not attend 1834, 1835, but he was at 1836; that is, I believe, the last Irish

369. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:7.

370. The index to the *Collected Writings* for this paper says 1838 -- but that would be the date for the second ed. of the *Christian Witness*.

371. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:13.

372. *Fry MS.*, pp. 281, 282.

373. *Fry MS.*, p. 284.

374. W. E. Tayler, *Passages from the Diary and Letters of Henry Craik of* (continued...)

374. (...continued)
Bristol, p. 166.

375. *Ibid.*, pp. 168, 169.

376. *Ibid.*, p. 166. John Synge was connected with the Church of England.

377. Grayson Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals*, p. 205.

378. *Fry MS*, p. 267. He also reminisced about 1834: "The best time was about a month (after)? when we had a week's meeting in the Mechanics Institute Sept. 15 1834 with different Ministers of Plymouth to converse & object or enquire. It was simultaneous with Lady Powerscourt's annual Meeting. Borlase, Douglas, and Morris and I. Very unanimous and delightful" (*ibid*). Elsewhere he noted that "Darby was very angry as it was setting up an opposition meeting" (*ibid.*, p. 283).

> meeting. He did not attend London or Liverpool, that is, the two last English. [379]

It would seem, then, that after 1833 the meetings again were not as public. This may have been due, among other things, to a change in location. F. R. Coad stated that:

> Lady Powerscourt was not able to use Powerscourt Castle after 1833 (apparently because her stepson, the heir to the title, had come of age), but she held later conferences in Dublin until her death in December 1836, and these seem to have been largely controlled by the brethren. [380]

J. B. Stoney, born in 1814, saved in 1831, left some comments on the Powerscourt conferences:

> I was at the meeting at Lady Powerscourt's in September, 183_. Mr. John Synge was in the chair. He called on each to speak on a given subject. Mr. Darby spoke last, and for hours, touching on all that had been previously said. Mr. Wigram sat next to him. Captain Hall, Mr. George Curzon, Sir Alex. Campbell, Mr. Bellett, Mr. Thomas Mansell, Mr. Mahon, Mr. Edward Synge were there. There were clergymen present and Irvingites.
>
> The prayer meetings in the mornings at seven o'clock were particularly striking to me, every one praying that the Lord would give them light, and grace to act on it. [381]

In summary, we observe that the Powerscourt meetings were an instrument whereby the teachings recovered through J. N. Darby were disseminated.

THE FOLLOWING PROPHETIC CONFERENCES

Conferences did not take place as before because Lady Powerscourt's son had come of age and he was opposed to her withdrawal from the Church of England. It is said that she moved to a smaller residence on the estate.

There was one other conference for which the addresses have been printed. It was held at Leamington in 1838, and printed under the name *Collectania*.

B. W. NEWTON'S RIVAL CONFERENCE: Sept. 1834

This was held at the Mechanic's Institute in Plymouth, England. It was printed in a paper, *Answers to the Questions Considered at a Meeting*. BWN held that there were intermediate events that must occur before Christ could come, while since 1827 JND, as we are aware, held that there were no intermediate events. Volume 2 in this series deals with the results of this.

Addition for This Second Edition Concerning Various Conferences

I am happy to have information available for this second edition regarding prophetic and other conferences following the 1833 Powerscourt Conference. The reader will find where they were held in the quoted material below

In an e-mail to me dated Sept. 12, 2003, Edwin Cross, of Chapter Two, London, wrote:

> Here is the best I have managed to find to date on the 'Powerscourt' prophetic meetings held in the early 1800s.
>
> P.H.E.I.: Powerscourt House, Enniskerry, Ireland.
>
> E.P.D.I.: Ely Place, Dublin, Ireland.
>
> S.G.D.I.: Sandymount Green, Dublin, Ireland.
>
> G.H.C.E.: George Hotel, Clifton, England.
>
> R.H.L.E.: Regent Hotel, Leamington, England [this, they say, was once the largest hotel in the world!]
>
> I hope this info is of use.

The following material is © copyright by Edwin and is used by permission. The name of the following paper might have been better as *Powerscourt and Other Meetings*.

POWERSCOURT MEETINGS

1830-1841

An individual, having found the manuscript of this Tract very valuable, is induced, upon his own individual responsibility, to print it. The whole was put forward within the last nine years, and contains eight series of questions; one series for each year (1837 excepted). As none of the series was drawn up in entire ignorance of the state of the church of God in Great Britain, the chain, as a whole, may furnish additional interest.

Aware that the sight of it may awaken, in many minds, many and varying thoughts, he who publishes it, wishes again to state that he does so entirely upon his own responsibility; and his inducement is simply the hope that it may furnish to others as much matter of research into God's Word as it has to himself.

1830. P.H.E.I.

Monday *Morning*. September.

On the study of those parts of Scripture, which are not directly the truths through which we obtain a knowledge of justification.

Evening. On the restoration of the Jews, including the subject of the covenants.

Tuesday Morning. Proofs if the 1,000 years {be} before the coming of our Lord -- what the believer's expectation as to death -- what as to the coming?

Evening. Present and future distinction between Jews and Christians -- what (as far as we can see) awaits both for the consummation?

Wednesday. What are the present position and duties of the children of God? How can they best show their distinction from the world? If time, on Trinity.

1831. P.H.E.I.

Monday. *Evening*, October 3. The gifts of the Spirit to be considered.

Tuesday. The intention of the end being first in the ordering of the Lord's declared to be the end of creation and redemption? {sic}. How does each dispensation further the means and answer the end? In this view, are Christ's people now in their right

379. *Collected Writings*, 20:13, note. W. B. Neatby (p. 39) is in error in saying the last was held in 1838.

380. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 110.

381. *Interesting Reminiscences . . .*, pp. 19-21.

position? (including, Is it present duty to resist or endure corrupt institutions)?

Wednesday. Proof if 1260 days mean days or years, connected with which, the sketch of Daniel and Revelation, whether it be literal or symbolical?

Thursday. Last great and terrible conflict at the coming of Christ. Who the power that heads it? Against whom? Signs by which this power to be known? Proof whether saints to suffer in it?

Friday. What to be the state of the world and state of the Church at coming of Christ? What cause to think from Scripture that these are or are not the last days? This to include whether Ezekiel's temple is to be before or after the Millennium.

1832. P.H.E.I.

Monday Evening, Sept. 24. An examination given in the New Testament from the Old testament, with their connexion and explanation.

Matt. 1:23-	Isa. 7:14	John 10:34 -	Ps. 82:6
2:15-	Hos. 11:1	19:37 -	Zech. 12:10
2:18-	Jer. 31:15	Acts. 2:17-	{Isa. 44:3
11:10-	Mal. 3:1 & 4:5		{Joel 2:28
? Heb. 2:6}-	Ps. 8:2, 4	15:16 -	Amos 9:11,12
Matt. 21:16}		Rom. 9:25 -	{Hos. 2:23
24:15-	Dan. 9:27		{Deut. 32:43
27:9-	Zech. 11:12,13	1 Cor. 9: 9)-	Deut. 25:4
Eph. 4:8-	Ps. 68:18	1 Tim. 5:18}	
Heb. 2:13-	Isa. 8:18	1 Cor. 15:55 -	Hos. 13:14
8: 8-	Jer. 31:31, 34	Gal. 4:27 -	Isa. 54:1
10:16-	31:33	2 Pet. 3:13-	{65:17
Luke 1:73, &c.-	Gen. 22: 16		{66:22

Tuesday. The prophetical character of each book in the Bible, including the three feasts of the Jews; the blessings of the Jews; the blessings pronounced on Jacob's sons; the Parables in the Gospels; and the Epistles to the seven churches in the Revelations?

Wednesday. Should we expect a personal Antichrist; if so, to whom will he be revealed? Are there to be one or two great evil powers in the world at that time? Is there any uniform sense for the "saints" in the prophetic New Testament Scripture? By what covenant did the Jews, and shall the Jews, hold the land?

Thursday. An inquiry into, and a connexion between, Daniel and the Revelations.

Friday. What light does Scripture throw on present events and their moral character? What is next to be looked for and expected? Is there a prospect of a revival of Apostolic Churches before the coming of Christ? What the duties arising out of present events? To what time and class of people do 2 Tim. 3; 1 Tim. 4; Jude; Matt. 24:23, 24; and 2 Peter 3 refer?

1833. P.H.E.I.

Monday, Sept. 23. What the nature of the covenant of the land and what the everlasting covenant? Are they identical or diverse?

Tuesday. Is the visible Church founded on the basis of the Jewish? What the nature of the ministry and ordinances of the former? The promises to either or both conditional?

Wednesday. What analogy between the termination of the present and the last dispensation? Mystic Babylon what? The call out of her a divine call at a set period, or a continuous call?

Thursday. The connexion of the present with the future dispensation? Do the same Scriptures admit of application to both?

Friday. What has been the different character of Satan's temptations in different ages? What now? What likely to be? Is our conduct to be regulated accordingly?

1834. E.P.D.I.

Monday, Sept. 15. Can the Church account for her present state, i.e. that instead of unbelievers being mixed up with the children of God, these last are found as individuals among bodies of professing Christians, and joined in communion not as the people of God, but upon other and different grounds?

Tuesday. Of what future events have we predictions in the Book of Psalms?

Wednesday. When was this world given up to Satan the God of this world? Where has God's dwelling-place been in it since? Was the dispensation of the Priesthood of Christ, in its graces, gifts and hope of future glory, as proposed to the early Christian Church, at its foundation among the Jews, identical with that possessed by the Gentile Christian Church after the rejection of Israel?

Thursday. What is the result to which a comparison of the 2nd, 7th, and 8th chapters of Daniel, with the 13th and 17th of Revelations leads, as to the scheme of Satan's working, and his future plans?

Friday. What does Scripture say will be the first movement of Christ towards the earth -- what the apostasy and consequent rejection of the professing Church? How far are ministers of the Word responsible for not proclaiming His speedy coming, or not warning of the Judgments to precede it?

1835. E.P.D.I.

Monday, Sept. 7. What will be the history of the remnant after the return of the Jews? What will be the measure of the renovation of the earth in the Millennium?

Tuesday. Does the Scripture (Eph. 2:6) mean that our present position is on the Father's throne? Where and what will be the fulfilment of verse 7? If this is our position, what separation from the world, and death of the flesh would faithfulness to it involve? Is life in the Believer in proportion to death in proportion to life?

Wednesday. Does each dispensation end in apostasy only -- or is the dispensation revived in a remnant, the rejection of which consummates the apostasy? What is the distinction intended in 1 Cor. 12:4, 5, 6? Are these three necessary to manifest Christ's commands, are ministrations ordained of Him to hold? Is the promise of the Comforter included in diversities of gifts, or diversities of operations?

Thursday. What characteristics of the closing scene of this dispensation can we discern in the historical parts of Scripture? What types of the future glory of Israel in the sacrifices and feasts?

Friday. Can we discover Satan's designs in the Church at large, from a study of our own hearts, or in our own hearts from his workings in the Church, or both from his attempts against Christ; the prophecies concerning the Antichrist, and the cries of the oppressed under him.

What is the cause of the Church's sorrow? Can she be in a right state if not sorrowful? What will end her sorrowful days.

1836. S.G.D.I.

Monday, *Evening* Sept. 5. Watchman what of the night? Is there anything going on in the Church which calls for observation? How far have we advanced into the 24th or 25th of Matthew? Have we entered on the perilous times? Any sign of the morning?

Tuesday. What contrast and what resemblance may be observed in design, workings, and end, between the Dispensations revealed in Scripture? How many may there be? Is there any distinction intended between Jacob's and Moses' blessing on Israel? Any between "Thy Maker is thy Husband" to the Jew, and "the Bride the Lamb's wife?" Any between the Spirit breathed on the Apostles after the resurrection, and the Spirit sent down after the Ascension? Any between judgment on the world at the coming of Christ, and the judgment of the wicked dead?

Wednesday. Is Scripture ever quoted in the New Testament as accommodation rather than fulfilment; or, if fulfilment, is such ever partial? When is Scripture to be taken spiritually, when literally? What is the purport of the Sermon on the Mount? How are we to understand the Lord's Prayer, and such passages as, "Resist not evil," "Swear not at all"; &c. Did any of the Saints in the New Testament hold places forbidden by the spirit of the Gospel? Does change of circumstance alter commands? What is the various import of the Lord's titles "Son of God" "Son of Abraham," "Son of David," "Son of Man?"

Thursday. What may be the typical history of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius, in Daniel, bearing on the last days? Has the Church fallen in with Satan's designs, and in what way? Can this be traced through the Epistles to the seven Churches or elsewhere in Scripture? Can we reconcile how the time of Christ's coming will be a time of security, and yet a time of perplexity? Does the abomination of the North, or to the Antichrist? {sic}. Which of these powers perish in the Holy Mountain (Dan. 11)? What is the shaking of the powers of the heavens?

Friday. How do the faithful from an Apostasy differ in character and testimony from the opening of a Dispensation? What difference will there be in the suffering and relief of the Jewish and Spiritual remnant? Did Christ experience the suffering of both? Did Apostasy manifest itself against Him: did love fail in this time of suspicion?

How is unity to be preserved consistently with faithfulness towards those whom we esteem as brethren, but believe to be in error?

1838. G.H.C.E.

Monday *Evening*, June 4. How may brethren meet for profit? The value, to this end, of prayer in the Spirit, subduedness of mind, brotherly love, Christian forbearance?

Tuesday Morning. THE HOLY SPIRIT. His person and character; His several operations, previous to the coming of Christ, during His presence on earth, after the Pentecost, and during the Millennium. What the distinction between "being born of the Spirit," and "baptized with the Spirit?" What is meant by His convincing "the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment?" What severally by the "quickening," "indwelling," "anointing," "sealing," and "earnest" of the Spirit. Are all these the present possession of the Church?

Wednesday. THE CHURCH. The distinctive character of the dispensation between the first and second coming of Christ. Christian priesthood; Christian Ministry; how and to what extent is it to be recognized? The authority of the church, and wherein lodged? Has she any, and what power of legislation? What Scripture authority for the distinction between the true and professing Church? What is the removal of the candlestick? What is the Scripture testimony as to the state of the church at the close of the dispensation? What measure of the original blessing of the dispensation may a faithful remnant hope to recover? Would such be warranted in applying to themselves Mal. 3:6, 7. How may such most effectively witness for the Lord?

Thursday. PROPHECY. What do the Scriptures reveal as to the future prospects of the Jew and Gentile in the present dispensation? What is meant by η οικουμεν η μελλουσα (the world to come) Heb. 2:5? What do the Scriptures declare concerning the Earth, the Nations, Jerusalem on earth, and 'Jerusalem above,' during the Millennium? What the extension and duration of Messiah's kingdom (Luke 1:33 comp. with 1 Cor. 15:24 and Rev. 20:4, 6)? What is the character of the power ascribed to the Son (John 5:24-29, inclusive), and in what dispensations manifested?

Friday. The means of attaining unto the mind of God? What the rule of life before and after the fall, and under the several dispensations? What to Believers now? The constitution of man as in 1 Thess. 5:23, body soul and spirit? What the inward man (Rom. 7)? What the witness of the Spirit with our Spirit (Rom. 8)? Christian experience -- what its place in the Christian life, its use and abuse? What is the extent of Satan's power, and how limited? Can we discover his working distinct from the working of the flesh? What is the distinctive character of 'heresy?' What our conduct towards those in error, not wilfully, but through confusion of mind or defective teaching? The character and extent of the Believer's subjection to the 'higher powers' -- his duty as to oaths, licences, etc.? is petition a right way of remedy? The source of division among those who love the Lord -- What do we learn from the word as to the means of union?

1839. R.H.L.E.

Monday. *Evening*, June 3. The value of Scripture knowledge -- how may we discern that which is of the Spirit's teaching, from that which is merely intellectual attainment?

Tuesday. Is the power in the Church of God the same now as in the days of the Apostles? -- if not; what is the difference, and wherefore? -- and what the consequent duty of the Saints?

Are there distinct gifts (according to the Scripture sense of the term) in the Church now? -- do they necessarily accompany the indwelling of the Spirit? -- how may any gift, or power, which we have of the Spirit, be ascertained, and directed to God's glory? What do we learn from Scripture should be the prayer of the Saints, concerning the Holy Spirit, as to his gifts, power or indwelling? God's dealing with his people in communion, and in discipline-is it the Father or the Son? -- what instrumentality, may we ask, does God use in discipline? -- may communion exist without distinct consciousness of it?

Wednesday. The Olive-tree, the Vine, the Fig-tree, Interpretation of Rom. 11:17, in reference to our distinct standing in dispensation. The import of the Scripture terms, mystery, apostasy, remnant.

What are the relations in which the word recognizes the Christian, and which may be maintained to God's glory? -- What is his duty, as to those in which the word does not recognize him?

Is the honor, or power, of this world, any part of the endowment of the Saint, according to the word?

Thursday. The special importance, as the day draweth nigh, of giving heed to the prophetic word -- what light does it afford us as to the state of Christendom at the coming of the Lord? -- the spirit in which we should ever come to it. The Apocalypse, its structure, and interpretation-its relation to the book of Daniel.

FRIDAY. The bride, the Lamb's wife.

Messiah's kingdom, the means of its establishment, its duration. Will the standing of the saints on earth, in the millennium, differ essentially, or only in circumstance, from the standing of the saints on earth now?

The fitting posture of the saints at the present time.

1841

Friday. July 16th 1841: *Morning*, 11 o'clock; *Afternoon*, 4. The heavenly calling. Heb. 3:1-6, 11:40. etc.

The union of the saints with Jesus risen and ascended. John 14. Eph. 1:19 to 2:10. Col. 3:1-17, etc.

Saturday. *Morning*, 11 o'clock; *Afternoon*, 4.

How far does Scripture show a faithful remnant at the close of each dispensation, in whom the Lord has proved his grace and faithfulness, and what duty have we in this respect? The Aaronic and Melchizedec Priesthoods. The church's connection with covenant, Priesthood, and Mediation.

Monday. *Morning*, 11; *Afternoon*, 4. The mind of Christ. 1 Cor. 2

The character of the application by the Spirit to the Church in the New Testament or Old Testament Scriptures. Are any or all such quotations to have a more full and literal accomplishment in the latter day?

Tuesday. *Morning*, 11; *Afternoon*, 4.

Discipline among the Saints; God's purpose and object in it; the gradations of it; mode of exercise, etc. It's force, how far left in the hands of the remnant, how far dependant on the Unanimity of the body which ought to exercise it. The second Coming of the Lord. Rev. 22:10-20

Chapter 5.4

The "Secret" Rapture

The word "rapture" was in use, to designate the catching up of the saints, long before 1832. For example, the historicist, Joseph Mede (1586-1638), wrote:

> Therefore, it is not needful that the Resurrection of those which slept in Christ, and the Rapture of those which shall be left alive together with them in the air . . . [382]

In 1967, attention was called to the *Fry MS*, where B. W. Newton reminisced that very early in Plymouth Capt. Hall preached the "secret rapture" and G. V. Wigram denounced it. [383] In 1973, when I published the pamphlet, *The Truth of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Recovered*, I did not have access to the *Fry MS*, but based on what was quoted from it, concluded *that a rapture at the time of Christ's appearing* in glory was meant -- a rapture at the time of the appearing that was to be *secret*. That is, I thought it referred to a secret rapture regarding some kind of posttribulation rapture -- better called a pre-conflagration rapture such as Joseph Mede held (see ch. 7.3). I had been able to examine the *Fry MS* in preparation for the 1991 edition -- and, while learning a slight bit more about this matter, I continue to think that a secret, pre-conflagration, or pre-days of vengeance, or pre- seventh seal, or pre-seven seals, rapture was meant because of reasons given below. However, even if Capt. Hall had spoken of a secret, pretribulation rapture (a pre-Rev. 4 rapture), that really alters nothing concerning what we have been tracing regarding JND, who in 1827 was in the good of the thought of an any-moment coming of Christ, though he never said it would be secret. Moreover, BWN wrote concerning Hall:

> that he too believed to some extent in a personal Antichrist, yet he followed {E. B.} Elliot very much. [384]

E. B. Elliot was a great champion of historicism. You cannot have it both ways; was Captain hall propounding a "secret pretribulation rapture" or some kind of pre-conflagration rapture in keeping with E. B. Elliot's premillennial conflagration view of 2 Pet. 3:10?

We must not merely read back from today what one may mean by a "secret rapture" and say that a pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture, or a pre-Rev. 4 rapture, was what was meant in 1830 by the words "secret rapture." Additionally, we must remember that these reminiscences were taken down many years after B. W. Newton had passed through the Plymouth controversy with JND; and these reminiscences contain numbers of extremely hostile remarks upon the character of JND, some of which are absolutely ridiculous. [385]

382. Joseph Mede (died 1638), *Works* 4:775 (1677).

383. H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 82.

384. *Fry MS*, p. 257.

385. The numbers after the following citations refer to the *Fry MS*:

> Afterwards he wrote a tract at my request. The very first he wrote -- at Plymouth at least -- on prophetic subjects; and it is exactly what Newman or any Romanist would write. I can carefully say I have never read a line [of his writing] which a Papist might not use (p. 250).
>
> . . . Mr. Darby. None so subtle as he and none so ingenious. These doctrines he said were "Extra Scripture" and we as believers possessed of the Spirit are "Not under the Bible" (p. 248).
>
> I often think he was in the employ of Jesuits . . . (p. 249).
>
> I don't know at all that he was not a Romanist (p. 249).
>
> Just then Darby made his appearance at Oxford (sent by Rome, possibly, to watch this Evangelical movement) (p. 139).
>
> Nor did he ever see clearly the doctrine of Irving. He wrote a pamphlet in which he used and adopted the very words that Irving had used saying that Christ had sin in the flesh of course meaning His own flesh. Darby tried to answer that error and upon the very same ground, namely that Christ could not sin in the flesh, *but allowing that which Irving taught* (p. 237).
>
> That doctrine of a Secret Coming is as an Angel of Light, yet it destroys the Bible from beginning to end. It destroys it under the guise of Love to Jesus. It is desolating and subversive of everything in Scripture. While I say this, I quite recognize that there are many who have not gone into the depths of Satan: -- that fact requires very careful attention (p. 238).

It is likely that futurist posttribulationism was propagated in America through the writings of B. W. Newton. The same spirit as he showed is often found in posttribulationists; and it is not always absent in other antidispensationalists either.

F. R. Coad, writing from a particular Open Brethren viewpoint, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, sec. ed., 1976, speaks of B. W. Newton as a "shockingly ill-used man" (p. 153, note). He speaks of "the incubus of Darbyite ecclesiology" (p. 167). That is a key statement to understanding Mr. Coad.

As to JND personally, F. R. Coad says -- "he was arrogant" (p. 112); "used disingenuous tactics" (p. 143); "descended to the disreputable" (p. 145). Much of this applies to the controversy with Newton where JND, he says, was "dangerously unbalanced" (p. 141); used "semantic and doctrinal juggling" (p. 150). He was -- "more ruthless" than B. W. Newton (p. 146); and is guilty of a "long and viciously worded attack" (p. 149). On p. 162 he says of JND, "Psychologically, he was obviously abnormal: but so have been many geniuses," while, interestingly, on p. 113 he says, "Yet, small as were his powers of self-analysis, Darby's personal counseling had about it something of those deeper insights into human nature which

(continued...)

These considerations raise serious questions about his negative assertions regarding JND and also his recollection of the character of the doctrine of the rapture in 1832.

In Section 4 we saw that meetings began at Providence chapel at Plymouth in early 1832. Thus this preaching by Capt. Hall occurred sometime during Feb. 1832. It is clear that JND understood the pretribulation rapture, i.e., the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, long before this, though he personally may never have thought it to be *secret*.

B. W. Newton reminisced that:

> On the very second Sunday that the Chapel was used, a divergence arose. In the morning the *Secret Rapture* was preached by *Capt. Hall*, and in the evening it was denounced by *Wigram*, and afterwards some discussion was raised and I myself was called in to help settle it. I agreed with Wigram. [386]

He also said Capt. Hall was a "vigorous advocate about the Immediate or Any-Moment Return of our Lord." [387] B. W. Newton's attitude is shown in this remark: "That doctrine of a Secret Coming is as an Angel of Light; yet it destroys the Bible from beginning to end." [388] Not content with that, he said the interest in prophecy in London really resulted from Lewis Way's influence awaking such as Drummond, Marsh, McNeale etc., and "Soon Irving joined, and ruined it all by suggesting the Secret Coming." [389] Too bad he did not tell us when or where E. Irving suggested that, or explicate what it was. And what was the character of the alleged "Secret Coming" E. Irving introduced? The implication is that Irving joined the others -- that would be 1827 or before -- and introduced a secret rapture. If Captain Hall held what Irving did, then he did not hold a pretribulation rapture, secret or not. Observe that B. W. Newton also said:

> He {Captain Hall} rushed at once into the prophetic system that Irving set forth. [390]

We can see from this the danger of putting much trust in what he says about this teaching and it does raise a question in my mind concerning the accuracy of his representation of what Capt. Hall said in early 1832 regarding a "Secret Coming." What are we to understand by the following startling remark of B. W. Newton?

> I put, in a magazine which a Clergyman was editing, an article in which I spoke of a personal Antichrist; and he was angry and controverted it. Hall was "glad that the Clergyman had smashed it" although he too believed to some extent in a personal Antichrist, yet he followed Elliott very much. [391]

It would be interesting to know if the reference is to E. B. Elliott (1793-1875), a premillenarian of the historical school and who was, of course, a strong advocate of the year/day theory, [392] and opposed to futurism.

Well, these are the facts of the case, to which I may add that he remarked that JND would not decide. [393] But decide about just what? Let us see.

It is possible that Capt. Hall preached something about a *secret* coming in connection with Christ's Premillennial appearing, to which, sixty years later in his reminiscences, B. W. Newton connected the idea of an immediate coming. At least that is how it appears to me. However, say that in 1832 Capt. Hall preached an immediate coming; well, **JND held that in 1827**. At any rate, if there is some substance to what B. W. Newton has said concerning Captain Hall, it would mean that he held a historicist view something like what we see in ch. 7.3. He did not hold the pretribulation rapture, the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, secret or not secret. [394]

Another point that bears on this issue is B. W. Newton's statement that "the 'Secret Rapture' was bad enough, but this was worse." Listen to what he said:

> *At last Darby wrote from Cork saying he had discovered a method of reconciling the whole dispute, and would tell us when he came. When he did, it turned out to be the "Jewish interpretation."* The Gospel of Matthew was not teaching Church-Truth but Kingdom-Truth -- and so on. He explained it to me and I said, "Darby, if you admit that distinction you virtually give up Christianity." Well, they kept on at that until they worked out the result as we know it. The "Secret Rapture" was bad enough but this was worse. [395]

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385. (…continued)
characterize the psycho-analysts." And what think you about "Darby's was a mind impossible to bring to objective debate" (p. 136)? I suggest that F. R. Coad has not helped at all to understanding JND, but he has helped us to understand F. R. Coad. And he is among those who spread the falsehood that BWN withdrew his evil teaching. Yes, up with BWN and down with JND. Vol. 2 in this series documents BWN's continued evil teaching (he having withdrawn only one point) and to this proof is now added a letter written by BWN quoted in Appendix 3 in the present volume.

W. Kelly said of JND:

> The late Mr. Darby was as highly educated as he was an extremely able man, of rare attainments in almost all branches of knowledge, of pre-eminent logical power, of moral and metaphysical analysts hard to match . . . his ablest critique the examination of *Newton's Thoughts on the Apocalypse* . . .
> (W. Kelly, Letter dated Feb. 22, 1901).

386. *Fry MS*, p. 255.
387. *Fry MS*, p. 253.
388. *Fry MS*, p. 248.
389. *Fry MS*, p. 333.
390. *Fry MS*, p. 237.
391. *Fry MS*, p. 257.
392. You will find numerous replies to E. B. Elliott in W. Kelly's larger exposition of the Revelation.
393. *Fry MS*, p. 253. "Darby held himself aloof for 2 years."
394. In the *Investigator*, 1832-1833, pp. 411-414, there is a communication dated Nov. 1832 by a P. H. It would be most interesting to know if this was Percy Hall. The article is called "On the Second Advent." The writer indicates that the saints should be expecting Christ especially "when so many signs declare the fulfillment of prophecy." The writer claimed that he was living in the accomplishment of the signs given in Luke 21. He was not a pre-Rev. 4 rapturist.
395. *Fry MS*, p. 238. Based on H. H. Rowdon's brief comments on this, I had previously concluded (in *The Truth of the Pretribulation Rapture*, p. 48) that B. W. Newton meant the pretribulation rapture was worse than the "Secret Rapture." The *Fry MS* shows he was referring to the interpretation that Matthew had a kingdom character and Matt. 24 referred to the Jews. (However, what JND said to him **entails** the pretribulation rapture.)
(continued…)

He added that this occurred in 1832 or 1833.[396] He reminisced further:

> I lost sight of Darby; he was in Ireland. But when he came back I asked him about the Immediate Coming, and he would not decide either way. I argued with him that it couldn't possibly be sinful to hope for the Lord's return in the way that evidently Paul hoped for it -- namely with intervening events. He wouldn't decide. Two years passed, and he wrote from Ireland saying that he had a scheme of interpretation now which would explain everything and bring all into harmony. And he would tell what it was when he came. When we met I inquired, and it was this elimination of all that could be considered Jewish. I warmly remonstrated. [397]

He seemed to want to portray JND as vacillating in a number of places in these reminiscences. Interestingly, he said that JND wrote from Cork saying he had a method of reconciling "the whole dispute." If there was a *dispute*, why say that previous to JND's return, JND would not decide either way? I would make the following observations:

1. Of course there would be a dispute, as we would expect from what we have ascertained concerning JND's views by 1830. JND had decided for a daily expectation (one without intermediate events) by, or in, 1827, during the period of solitude in Dec. 1826/Jan. 1827, and we saw that he held a pre-Antichrist coming before 1830 – indeed in 1827 .
2. If B. W. Newton "argued with him that it couldn't possibly be sinful to hope for the Lord's return . . . with intervening events," I wonder if JND told him the idea was sinful?
3. The implication is that JND did hold the immediate coming in spite of B. W. Newton's attempt to portray him as vacillating.
4. If B. W. Newton's recollection has some merit, then this is evidence that JND understood the true character of Matthew's gospel this early. [398]

In order to make this chapter complete in itself, I repeat the quotation from an important letter of B. W. Newton written in reply to J. N. Darby. B. W. Newton's own letter contradicts the above reminiscences about JND not being able to decide. This letter appears in the *Fry MS*. It is not dated but the impression created in that section of the *Fry MS* points to 1845. First let us hear what he says in this letter that is relevant:

> So highly do I esteem you and your judgment, that I can assure you the first impulse of my mind on receiving such expressions of your disapprobation has ever been to bow to them and retire. This I have again felt on the present occasion: but there are two things which hinder me, first, that your strong expressions of condemnation (which have occurred from time to time during the last ten years frequently) have always been connected with a particular subject -- on that subject I believe you to have departed from the truth. The first occasion on which I expressed a judgment differently from yourself was in my own rooms at Oxford in a little reading meeting, & I well remember the character of our interview the next morning -- from that time to the present it has only been when I have been silent on the subject in question that I have escaped the severe expression of your condemnation.
>
> For the last ten years [399] I have been for the most part entirely silent, until within a few months -- & for your sake & the sake of the Church I would still have continued to be so, if I did not consider the error that has crept into the prophetic & dispensational teaching of very many, to be most fatal. [400]

In the same letter B. W. Newton wrote:

> The great hindrance to any approximation of judgment appears to me to be this: that we have severally adopted as axioms two principles which are entirely counterparts one of another. I believe that it is essential to the existence of Prophecy about the Church that there should be intervening events foretold. *You* on the contrary say there can be no intervening events for the Church's expectation and refuse to receive any thought from Scripture inconsistent with this main principle. Because you would find nothing consistent therewith in Scripture. [401]

Here we have the testimony of B. W. Newton's letter bearing on how early JND held that there were no intermediate events before the Lord's coming for the saints. *This indicates that JND already held the immediate coming before B. W. Newton gave up his rooms in Oxford* soon after the breaking of bread

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395. (…continued)

E. R. Sandeen made a mistake here also, saying, "Commenting upon Darby's interpretation of the seventy weeks of Daniel, Newton remarked, 'The secret rapture was bad enough, but this was worse' (*The Roots of Fundamentalism*, p. 38).

396. *Fry MS*, p. 239.

397. *Fry MS*, p. 246.

398. This statement is as it appears in the first edition of this book (1991). Manipulatively, Mr. MacPherson wrote:

> R. A. Huebner, incidently, admits Darby didn't believe that "the elect in Matt 24 were Jewish saints" until "1832" or "1833,"

and gives pp. 97, 99 in his footnote. Point 4 is supposed to say what he attributes to R. A. Huebner? I do not see anything about "until" 1832 or 1833. It states that that is evidence that JND believed that *then*. That does not in the least address the matter of when JND **first** understood that. This is typical of Mr. MacPherson's manipulations.

The reader will see in Chapter 3.1 that JND understood that the future Jewish remnant would be in Jacob's trouble, and that JND saw the church removed before Rev. 4. This clearly points to the thought that he understood the "elect" in Matt. 24 not to refer to the true church. Who then? Is it really

(continued…)

398. (…continued)

difficult to see that it is the future, godly Jewish remnant in the time of "Jacob's trouble"?

399. The letter mentions some tracts which gave occasion to this correspondence. Undoubtedly this refers to B. W. Newton's *Five Letters on Events Predicted in Scripture, as Antecedent to the Coming of the Lord.* The preface to the second edition (1847), written by S. P. Tregelles, says that the *Letters* were written about seven years ago (thus 1840) and were copied and circulated in manuscript form. I suppose this means that B. W. Newton remained "for the most part silent." But they were first printed about two years previously (thus 1845 was the year of the first printed edition).

400. *Fry Ms*, p. 325.

401. *Fry MS*, p. 327.

began at Plymouth in 1832. Perhaps this occurred when JND was at Oxford during May of 1830.

Also, note well that he said "from that time to the present it has only been when I have been silent on the subject in question . . ." The subject in question is, quite obviously, the coming of Christ *without any intermediate events*. And this shows that JND was not vacillating in 1832 or 1833 as B. W. Newton reminisced. It shows that JND had his mind firmly made up. Observe the accusation B. W. Newton made:

> *You* . . . refuse to receive any thought from Scripture inconsistent with this main principle.

It shows that the above reminiscences where B. W. Newton asserted that JND could not make up his mind are nonsense, or worse. The only thing that JND would not make up his mind about was the *detail of whether or not the pretribulation rapture would be secret*. This case also serves as a warning that care must be used in utilizing B. W. Newton's reminiscences.

Evidently at this point in time (1832 or 1833) JND thought he could help B. W. Newton by explaining Matthew to him. It is essential to posttribulationism to have Matt. 24 describe Christians in the great tribulation, and have the rapture occur after that. [402] It is evident from the above that JND had rejected that and had told him that the elect in Matt. 24. were Jewish saints (the Remnant). In ch. 3.1 we observed that JND understood in 1827 that there was going to be a Jewish remnant. *The only point that JND would not decide about was the minor one about whether or not the pretribulation rapture would be secret*. I am not aware if JND ever thought that the rapture would be "secret."

And so, besides all that has been presented above (including the testimony of F. W. Newman) << Index will generate here >>to show how early JND understood the immediate coming (a coming without intervening events), we add the above testimony from a letter written by B. W. Newton.

402. Matt. 24 does not state that Christians are in that period. It speaks of "elect" ones, and this refers to the godly Jewish remnant formed after the rapture. Posttribulationist do not have one Scripture that states that Christians are present in the great tribulation.

Section 6

J. N. Darby's Early Work in Switzerland

1837 -1845

Chapter 6.1

His Initial Visit and How the Work Spread

The Occasion of J. N. Darby's Visit

In *The Christian Witness* for 1834 there appeared a summary of some movements in continental Europe regarding separation from evil. It consists of an extract of an appeal by Adolphe Monad. [403] In an 1868 letter, JND wrote:

> It was in no way any particular opposition that led me to Switzerland in 1837, but a report of a brother who had been there, and stated that there were meetings like ours. They were like in form in some respects, but were really regularly formed dissenting churches, so-called in Europe, with members. [404]

You will note that JND did not regard the Christians in those congregations as meeting on the same ground as he.

He first visited Switzerland in "the end of 1837." [405] Let us keep in mind that in connection with leaving the Church of England in 1827, JND had also rejected dissent and independency (see Ch. 1.1) as not expressing the truth of the one body. A. C. Smith theorized that the brother referred to in the above citation was A. N. Groves, who visited Switzerland at the end of 1834. [406] We do not know who it was.

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403. ". . . The writer of the Appeal, from which these extracts are made, was Pastor of the Reformed National Church at Lyons . . . We trust Christians may become interested in what is passing abroad, since, as affording evidence of the movements of God's Spirit, and giving it a larger character, it immediately and equally affects us here. The movement is far more extensive than people generally suppose. At Geneva, where the great body of the Ministers were Socinian, and had been progressively settling into it, till, in 1817, they forbad the preaching of fundamental truths, a distinct seminary for Christian ministers has been established, and there are Christian bodies formed, under circumstances very similar to that at Lyons, with more or less decision on the part of those who were previously ministers; to the piety and spirituality of some of whom, the writer of this can speak. In other parts of Switzerland, a similar work has taken place, In the Canton de Vaud, it was extensively the case; some there, united themselves to the National Reformed Church, when the power of Christianity prevailed in it, others not. We have added at the close, an account from Neuchatel and its neighborhood, of a similar work, which has since the date of this, increased in extent -- four little bodies being formed . . ." *The Christian Witness* 1:90, 91, 1834.

404. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:515.

405. *Ibid.* 3:293; while 3:233 seems to indicate a desire to visit there.

406. *British Non-Conformists and the Swiss "Ancienne Dissidence,"* p. 106. He erroneously stated that A. N. Groves was "the first person to stimulate the rise of the so-called Plymouth Brethren" (p. 106). A. C. Smith (a

(continued...)

406. (...continued)
Scottish Baptist) indulges the same exasperated hostility against JND as does F. R. Coad. He was bent on presenting JND's activities in the worst possible light in order to discredit him. Those who wish to glean what they can about JND's controversies in Switzerland may consult his dissertation or his *J. N. Darby in Switzerland: at the Crossroads of Brethren History and European Evangelicalism*, in *Christian Brethren Review Journal* No. 34.

In connection with his dating JND's first visit (really, quite easily dated by JND's own statements in his letters) he discovered a letter in English in a collection of JND's French writings: "To the Saints of God who meet for worship as saints and in the name of the Lord Jesus," dated Nov. 1, 1837. He thinks its language and phrase indicated it was written by JND and that the opening and closing remarks and request for prayer suggest that the writer was out of Britain (p. 198), thus closely dating JND's initial visit. It so happens that I have a book of bound-together pamphlets from last century that contains this very paper. Penciled on the first page of my copy is the name "Wigram." The opening sentence is: "Though absent in body I am present with you in Spirit." This does not show that the writer was out of Britain, nor does the end of the paper. The style does not strike me as JND's. G. V. Wigram, however, is a possibility.

A. C. Smith has also attributed another paper to JND, "Communion and Visible Unity, The Duty and Privilege of all True Christians " (p. 173). I also have a copy of this in a bound-together collection of pamphlets. It is a second edition, in two parts. The second part is dated Sept. 1, 1837. The whole is in a question and answer format (Q. and A.). It does not strike me as one of JND's papers.

A. C. Smith calls attention to the fact that extracts from Adolphe Monad's appeal, found in the *Christian Witness*, 1834, pp. 97, 98 contain the names of five meeting places in Neuchatel, Switzerland and that the paper (letter) he attributed to JND -- "Communion and Visible Unity . . ." refers to the same five locations, in the same order. His conclusion is that JND probably copied this from the *Christian Witness* article. Possibly the writer of "Communion and Visible Unity . . ." did extract this from the *Christian Witness* article, but this adds nothing to show that the writer was JND. I doubt JND is the writer because of expressions, format, and the fact that the writer supposes, "at Geneva, there are above 280 thus meeting in one place, with many similar gatherings throughout the surrounding country -- at Coffrane, Neuchatel, Bole, Dombressom and Val de Travers, there are similar meetings. About 42 can be counted in Switzerland. At Plymouth there are about 200 so meeting; there are similar gatherings at Tavistock, at Bath, in London, at Dublin, Limerick, Carhue, Tepperary, Westport, Cork, Mallow, & etc, & etc. & etc." I doubt JND would have so lumped these all together. In 1868, he wrote, "They were like in form in some respects, but were really regularly formed dissenting churches, so-called in Europe, with members" *(Letters, of J. N. Darby* 1: 515).

It is clear from the 1834 *Christian Witness* article itself that these were dissenting churches with a clerical system. Furthermore, the writer of the 1834 article speaks of two of Adolphe Monad's brothers. Of one brother, a "Pastor," he says, "we had the privilege of seeing him." So the writer of

(continued...)

Survey of the Spread of the Work 1837 - 1855

In several interesting letters regarding the spread of recovered truth in Europe, JND described hundreds of conversions and the establishing and growth of numerous assemblies from the Pyrenees to Switzerland. In these letters he noted the labors of many others, some of whom he had helped in their understanding of the Word of God. When he had finished his description of the work, he wrote:

> Such, beloved brethren, is in few words a brief general account of the work. I rejoice to give it to the brethren; but I must beg that nothing like publicity be given to it. It is for the brethren, for their hearts and prayers, that they may bless God and pray for the brethren that they may glorify God, that He may bless the work and guide those gathered in holiness and devotedness and love. But it is to be between them and God, and not to talk of to men. Were this done I should expect some chastening and humbling. I have so often seen works hindered and spoiled when brethren, perhaps with the best intentions, have made a noise about them, that I dread much anything of the sort. God is pretty jealous of it. He is working on -- man frail is full of weakness and shortcomings.
>
> I am sure I have felt (in my small though widely-scattered path) all sorts of feebleness of faith; but God has worked wonderfully and His blessed truth has been widely spread by it even outside those gathered. I ask (not a mystery) but that it may be between God and the souls of the brethren. Greet them heartily. I long to see them and hope to do so if God will.
>
> Elberfeld, 1855.

Interested readers may find the whole of these descriptions in his letters. [407]

406. (…continued)
the article had visited Switzerland. The article was published (pp. 90-98, of a total of 468 pages) in the early part of 1834 (the first issue being Jan. 1834). A. C. Smith seems to want to credit A. N. Groves with pointing JND towards Switzerland. A. N. Groves, he says, having returned from India "at the very end of 1834" soon went to Switzerland to recruit missionaries. Thus he claims that A. N. Groves became "the first of the Plymouth Brethren to encounter the "'Ancienne Dissidence' in situ" (p. 106). This is supposition, in the first place; and secondly, apparently he missed the point that the writer of the 1834 *Christian Witness* article had visited Switzerland (before A. N. Groves). He may have gone again; or someone else may have gone. We do not know. Nor do we know it was A.N. Groves who spoke to JND about Switzerland.

407. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:292-305.

Chapter 6.2

Geneva and Lausanne

1840 -1841

Geneva and the Pastors

After a short stay JND returned to England, in 1839, as several of his letters indicate. [408] His first letter from Switzerland is dated Neuchatel, Nov. 22, 1839. [409] Regarding his going to Geneva, [410] he wrote in 1849:

> Having gone about eleven years ago to Geneva, because I had been told that I should find there some brethren who met on nearly the same grounds as ourselves, without any intention of laboring in those parts, I found the pastors of the Bourg de Four divided amongst themselves, and the flock on their part holding meetings with the object of judging of the prerogatives of the pastors. After some hesitation, I endeavoured to bring them together and repair the breach; a work to which, as a stranger, I might apply myself without entering into painful details.
>
> By the grace of God I succeeded, and peace was reestablished. [411]

W. B. Neatby claims that a meeting was begun in the first half of 1838 in Vevey[412] but this seems too early.

JND had, of course, abandoned clerisy in 1827. Yet he encouraged the saints to recognize pastors. How could JND encourage the saints to recognize the pastors when he was against electing pastors? Why, no doubt JND could tell a *gifted* pastor when he met one. A pastor, i.e., one given by the Head of the body (Eph. 4), is not gifted by virtue of election or ordination to an office. Thus, JND recognized a true pastor without sanctioning such election or ordination. He would, thus, encourage recognition, but not election to office.

The Wesleyans

It appears that JND went from Geneva to Lausanne in March 1840 [413] to deal with Wesleyan doctrine. One of the papers JND published in 1840 in French was, *The Doctrine of the Wesleyans on Perfection and Their Employment of Holy Scripture as to this Subject*. [414] It is written as a dialogue. It deals with the "deplorably subtle and dangerous" Wesleyan distinctions of desire, lust and sin. Henri Oliver, a dissenting Lausanne pastor had propounded notions of perfectionism similar to Wesley's. This led to divisions there. "In the autumn of 1839 an influential member of the congregation at Lausanne invited him thither to oppose Methodism. In March, 1840, he came and obtained a hearing by discourses and a tract . . ." [415] as noted above. As a result Henri Oliver renounced the Wesleyan doctrine and sided with JND in the spring of 1841. [416]

Concerning this visit to Lausanne on March 23, 1840, he wrote:

> I had broken up from Geneva, where, through the Lord's mercy, though in all possible weakness, I had a share more or less in all the happy work and intercourse of the place, such as the poor church of God affords to feeble faith now, and was pleasing myself -- I hope not after the flesh -- that I should soon turn my face towards my old work in England, and what God in His goodness has prepared for me there, and indeed, I long much, the Lord knows, to be on my way thither, or rather at work there; when I find myself suddenly arrested in my course, by what is purely a trial of faith, where, speaking as a man, if blessing I should have no thanks, and another in whom I have no full confidence, though I trust I am mistaken, would externally step into the fruit, and where the canker, through human affection and ignorance and want of faithfulness, has eaten so wide and deep, that as a human judgment it is pure faith -- and with the form of good and holiness, when it was so wanting, that the claim justifies itself in almost all consciences; and I turn into a lodging alone to-morrow, knowing none here but those who now are almost all a weight, and that I have a sort of responsibility for drawing after me. But this is all well: it is my lot, and I bless God with all my soul for it too: and in this sense, little it may be to suffer for Him, only may I be faithful. Probably, almost ere this reach you, something will have manifested itself as to the position of things here, and the Lord, I trust, will give His showers and more blessing than before. I feel happily stayed on Him as to the conscience of my position. All the pastors of the so-called churches -- I abhor the name now -- stood aloof,

408. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:35-38.
409. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:40.
410. There is a letter dated Geneva, Jan. 2, 1840, *Letters* 1:35.
411. *Collected Writings* 4:188.
412. *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 76.
413. Cf. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:37.
414. *Collected Writings* 3:164-205.
415. *Schaff Herzog Religious Encyclopedia*, article, "Darby, John Nelson."
416. H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 206, 207.

> and let the wolf do what he might. As I said, did I not lean on the Lord, my heart would sink within me, and I should be ready to say, am not I wrong thus to care for them all, instead of letting them all ruin themselves? You have no idea of the patience which this country demands; there was plenty to try sometimes in England, but it was play compared to this . . . However, I hope soon to be free, and to wend my way towards work where my heart a good deal is. The brethren of Geneva I left in much peace, and did I seek only acceptance for myself, could rest, for which I thank them much in the Lord, with abundant satisfaction there, for they cherished and followed on my ministry much, and I trust with blessing. Certainly they seem very happy; indeed, they wanted me to take up my quarters there.
>
> I had a meeting when some came, last night, and the brother of the minister who had led them in error came; he had been, in fact, turned off *à la dissidence* four years ago, and is still much valued by many; so that this apparently throws a light, and in one sense a darkness, as to the position I am in here . . . But I find a little simplicity goes a great way, and finds no knots, where men have tied a hundred -- if God is there. [417]

The extreme heat coupled with his work, in the face of evil and the low state of the Christians, caused him much physical distress. He was much cast upon God, and felt weakness of conduct, faith and fidelity, which humbled him. Yet God was his strength, prospered him, and filled him with peace. [418] Instead of going elsewhere, at this time (Sept. 1840), as he had planned, [419] he went to Geneva, where (writing on Oct. 8, 1840) he could thank God for peace there.

During 1840, JND published a number of important papers in French. One was, *On the Formation of Churches*. [420] In 1841 he followed this with *Some Further Developments of the Principles Set Forth in the Pamphlet, Entitled, "On the Formation of Churches"and Reply to Some Objections Made to Those Principles*. [421] These papers dealt with the unity of the body, clerisy, ruin of the dispensation, etc. and, of course, rejected the idea of forming new dissenting churches. He also delivered his lectures, *Hopes of the Church of God* [422] in Geneva, in 1840. Thus, a considerable groundwork of truth was brought before saints whom he was teaching. These truths, all taken together, would lead saints to see the severe deficiencies of their ecclesiastical connections and own the true condition of the church, while waiting for their Lord to come.

The importance of JND's lectures on *Hopes of the Church of God* is underscored by Ian Murray's citation from it in his book, *The Puritan Hope*. The citation below stands at the head of his chapter 9, "The Eclipse of the Hope." JND described the idea that the millennium would result through the propagation of the gospel: "it produces results in man," he trenchantly and succinctly stated. Well, it is certainly true that he delivered a telling blow to postmillennialism in a number of his writings. But let us read the citation:

> What we are about to consider will tend to shew that, instead of permitting ourselves to hope for a continued progress of good, we must expect a progress of evil; and that the hope of the earth being filled with the knowledge of the Lord before the exercise of His judgment, and the consummation of this judgment on the earth, is delusive.
>
> We are to expect evil, until it becomes so flagrant that it will be necessary for the Lord to judge it . . .
>
> I am afraid that many a cherished feeling, dear to the children of God, has been shocked this evening; I mean, their hope that the gospel will spread by itself over the whole earth during the actual dispensation.

Very likely JND's lectures on the *Hopes of the Church of God* were delivered in Oct. or Nov. 1840. It is thought that these lectures were followed by his paper, *On the Apostasy: What is Succession a Succession of?* [423]

JND described some of the results of his labors in Geneva:

> . . . I take the liberty of laying before the eyes of the reader some facts relative to Geneva, because these facts throw light on the question of the establishment of elders, and on the position of the brethren of "L'Ile" (The place of meeting of the so-called "brethren" in Geneva.) with regard to these matters.
>
> Having gone about eleven years ago to Geneva, because I had been told that I should find there some brethren who met on nearly the same grounds as ourselves, without any intention of laboring in those parts, I found the pastors of the Bourg de Four divided amongst themselves, and the flock on their part holding meetings with the object of judging of the prerogatives of the pastors. (I do not doubt at this time that the question of the clergy was at the root of all this. But at that time I had no suspicion of it, and I only interested myself in it for the sake of peace amongst these brethren.) After some hesitation, I endeavoured to bring them together and repair the breach; a work to which, as a stranger, I might apply myself without entering into painful details.
>
> By the grace of God I succeeded, and peace was reestablished.
>
> The principle that the Church was in ruins [424] powerfully contributed to that end, in that I maintained the authority of the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, whilst recognizing that the actual state of things placed obstacles to our following out these epistles rigorously and in the details, on the question of elders, which had the effect of calming their minds. I cannot fail here to acknowledge the kindly feeling and affection which I at that time met with, whether from the ministers or amongst the brethren. I enjoyed their hospitality. God is my witness that I sought but their welfare. There was in their system more formalism than I could have desired. (Amongst other things I did not

417. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:37, 38.

418. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:40, 41.

419. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:41.

420. *Collected Writings* 1:138-155.

421. *Collected Writings* 1:156-205 (Geneva). According to A. C. Smith this was written in response to a paper against "Plymouthisme" written by A. Rochat before JND arrived in Switzerland in 1839, "J. N. Darby in Switzerland . . .," p. 69.

422. *Collected Writings* 2:278-383.

423. H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 209. *Collected Writings* 1:112-123 Recall JND's 1836 paper, "The Apostasy of the Successive Dispensations," *Collected Writings* 1:124-130.

424. See here *Letters* 1:42.

recognize the principle of the election of pastors by the flock.) But I bore with it, avoiding certain details which weighed on my conscience, such as voting, in which, as a stranger, I was plainly not called to take a share, although soon much bound up with the flock. During four years I labored in maintaining peace and unity, pressing on brethren the remembrance that though they might find some things which grieved them, the pastors had been the means of assembling the flock, and that very fact, as well as their work, was a legitimate source of influence, and gave them a right to the respect of brethren.

More than six months before the rupture which took place at La Pélisserie, on the occasion of a conference between the pastors and the flock, one of the pastors let me know that I ought not to be present, seeing I was not one of the flock. This communication was made to me at a moment when I was uncertain whether I ought to be present at the meeting or not. All uncertainty was put an end to, and I answered, "Well! I hardly knew what to do; here is my path plainly marked . . ." I have taken no part in the course of affairs at La Pélisserie from that day onward. I left Geneva and I withheld totally from all interference.

During a stay elsewhere, and when my relations with the flock were quite broken off, difficulties arose in their midst on the subject of a meeting for reading the word, a meeting to which the ministers raised some objections. One of them himself designated as a *coup d'état*, on their part, the step they took, which resulted in the withdrawal of brethren; the meeting of whom formed the first nucleus of the meeting at L'Ile. In no way was I informed of what was passing, or consulted on the subject. I had no knowledge of it till later. When I heard of it, I despaired of any reconciliation. After six years' discussion it became a question of a distinct clerical principle on the one hand, and, on the other hand, a formal denial of that principle. Later, one of the pastors addressed himself to me to get me to bring about a reconciliation. The difficulties arose about a platform from which the supper was given out and on which the ministers stood alone. "The platform is a trifle," said he to me. "It is," I answered, "a standard which symbolizes a principle. Let the pastors place themselves at the table with the brethren, and they may be certain of ensuring more influence than by standing on their rights." I cordially hope for my part that they may have all the influence that their labor may have brought them.

Although it is true that the question since that time has been much developed, I would still hold to this day the same language. And although the flock at Geneva was not all that I could desire, and inasmuch as I could not approve either the election of pastors by the flock or the principle of dissent which was more or less prevalent in its constitution, I can say that the remembrance of my first connection with it, has always rendered this breach infinitely painful. One of the pastors of whom I spoke above said to an English brother, that if I had been there the division would certainly not have taken place. That is very possible. God had other thoughts. And I believe in truth, that with regard to all that has taken place in the religious world, and to the development of the principles which lay at the root of the question which agitated the assembly, the position was not tenable. The division was none the less painful to me in every respect. I was forced to despair of finding any remedy for it. If the pastors had consented to take their places at the table when they met to break bread, nothing would have prevented me from trying it. The question of clergy was at the bottom of it.

This then, as to elders, is the extent to which I have gone. I could have joyfully recognized their existence in practice when they had given themselves up to the work and had received there the seal of God. Will people nominate them? I must stop. Without stopping to question the door by which they entered, I have recognized them according to my principles, when I have found them at the work. If their nomination is to be put forward as a principle, one must be decided.

The whole question of knowing, what the Church is, what is its state, what are the bases of its relations with Christ, what is its responsibility, the path which befits it in its state of failure; all is compromised. If not, my mind turns in preference to subjects totally different to that of the election of elders. Christ is too precious, the times too serious, to dwell on such points. [425]

In 1841 he was back in Lausanne. From a letter of Jan. 11, 1841, we can see that truth was making progress. He wrote:

The Spirit of the Lord has put many dear brethren in movement, out of their cramped position towards better things, two or three ministers among others. Two have given their *démission*, [426] but all is in transition, though truly if feeble, yet real progress, so that it is difficult to speak of detail. There needs some one of a faith and energy that I have not, to act positively. I have served negatively in some measure, for Satan would have seized this moment of crisis by the means of Wesleyanism, and that as a system or generality, has not taken place. There are merely here and there a few Wesleyans, much less than I supposed. Probably, in the actual state of the church, it will make its proselytes, and those predisposed by their nature to a certain extent; but in general, it has failed, and though it has very much troubled by its want of integrity, and want of honest firmness of those who differed -- for independence of conduct is comparatively unknown in these countries -- it, when known, rather retrogrades than advances. The weak state of Christians and the existence of worldly Christianity and Nationalism always leave room for these energies, in which vast evil is mingled with some necessary good. God cannot leave them without the good, and the church is too corrupt to give the good pure, too enfeebled to separate it. The Lord will do His own work: the brethren who were on higher and simpler principles, were not, humanly speaking, of qualities calculated to spread and sanction it. The Lord works Himself. What was in the eye of man steady and of influence, was opposed, but God chooses the weak things, to shew that the truth and strength are His.

I, dear brother, am in a very critical position here, and desire much the prayers of the brethren for me for the Lord's glory. The brethren who labored among the Dissenters here, feared the Wesleyanism, and could not come to their defence, standing in the gap. While they feared almost the determination with which it was opposed,

425. *Collected Writings* 4:188-191.

426. {These had resigned}.

> they were yet glad that the battle was fought; but when necessarily this conflict produced other effects, many Nationals came more or less out, and united. They feared again; for the conflict which had hindered in a measure the progress of Wesleyanism, had produced effects of which they felt afraid to judge, and yet more held aloof. In the meanwhile, the jealousy of the Nationals was natural enough; many many Dissenters in heart desire the union of God's children; others are excessively irritated, and hence, most of the others, or many at least, are timid as to committing themselves with their brethren who are opposed at Lausanne. Then there are now the old Dissenters, partly Wesleyans, among the women, though having protested as a body against it, some saying the pastor who introduced it, but who now denounces it, is their pastor, and some not -- and in the meanwhile the principle of leaving their churches, placing the others in a dilemma how to recognize this body: meanwhile they look on. In one place the dissident body is dissolved, or consists of five discontented Wesleyans, and there is a meeting where all the Christians can, and mostly do, unite to break bread with one of the ministers, also whom I mentioned -- very happy. At Vevey, Nationals, ex-nationals and Dissenters meet the last Monday of the month to break bread -- very happy. It is a beginning. There, also, another National minister has left; a third has quitted elsewhere, but the Conseil d'Etat has begged him to wait awhile till they see what they have to do, which he does for the moment gratuitously -- a faithful, upright man, but hitherto buried in scholastic learning, Fathers, &c., but I believe he makes progress out of this lore, and to him that hath shall more be given. Here the old Dissenters, and some who thought to seize the occasion to establish themselves, hate me cordially, at least, the leaders. You will understand by all this what has detained me here, though my judgment is, by more faith I might have got off sooner, for I am very weak in faith. [427]

His rejection of clerisy did not, obviously, please everyone. Professor J. J. Herzog left the following description of JND.:

> Such is the man who towards the end of March, 1840, appeared at Lausanne in the midst of the almost broken up dissenting Church. He came, preceded by the double reputation of an able pastor and of a teacher profoundly acquainted with the Bible. People spoke in glowing terms of the devotion of a man who, from love for Christ and for souls, had renounced almost the whole of his fine fortune; and who displayed in his whole conduct a simplicity and a frugality that recalled the primitive times of the Church. It was also said in his favor that, sacrificing the delights of family life, he spent his life in journeying from place to place to gain souls for the kingdom of God.
>
> Notwithstanding that Mr. Darby seeks less to convert souls than to unite under his direction souls already converted, we gladly acknowledge that he deserved to a great extent the compliments that were paid him. There certainly is to be found in him a combination of fine and great qualities. His conversion, we have no reason whatever to doubt, was real and sincere. He is capable of much devotion to the Lord's cause, and he has given striking proofs of it. He is a man of indefatigable activity, and at the same time of great originality and independence of mind. If he had taken a different turn, he might have rendered eminent services to the Church.
>
> Moreover we must distinguish in him, up to a certain point, the teacher, the head of a movement, and the simple Christian. Christian charity requires us to make such a distinction. Essentially our charge against him is that these three characters are not found in perfect harmony in him. From the point of view of his general Christian character he deserves the most honorable witness. His sermons, as well as his pastoral activity, in so far as they relate to what really belongs to the Christian life, are also worthy of great praise; Mr. Darby can edify very well when he wishes; he excels in treating certain thrilling truths of the Gospel; and both by this means and by his pastoral care he has done many people good, and has been, under God, the means of the conversion of some. But when in his teaching he broaches ecclesiastical questions, when he appears as head of a party, and when he endeavors to unite under his banner souls already converted, then he decidedly falls below his own level. Our criticism relates almost exclusively to his ecclesiastical system, and to his position and his proceedings as director of a particular society. [428]

The last two sentences are explained as coming from a cleric. At some point in 1841 JND also published *On Discipline*. [429]

427. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:43-45.

428. Cited by W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, pp. 79, 80.

429. *Collected Writings* 1:338-349.

Chapter 6.3

Geneva and Lausanne After Separation from the Dissenting Pastors 1842 -1845

We must now consider some more papers that JND published. **In 1840**, [430] JND had published his, "On the Formation of Churches." A dissenting pastor, Auguste Rochat, printed a reply to JND, to which JND in 1841 printed a rejoinder at Geneva, "Some Further Developments . . ." [431]

A. Rochat replied to JND's paper and again JND wrote a rejoinder, "Remarks on the State of the Church . . .," which was sent to the press at the end of Oct. 1842 but due to delays was printed in 1843. [432]

A series of eleven lectures was delivered in Geneva in 1840: "The Hopes of the Church of God, in Connection with the Destiny of the Jews and the Nations as Revealed in Prophecy." [433] There was also the penetrating paper, written in a conversational style, "The Doctrine of the Wesleyans on Perfection and Their Employment of Holy Scripture as to This Subject." [434] See also, "On Discipline." [435]

There were other papers written by JND **in 1842**:

"Notes on the Apocalypse" (Geneva, 1842). [436]

"The Claims of the Church of England Considered" [437] and includes correspondence from James Kelly from 1839.

A. C. Smith says the following was published in 1842:

Pensées sur l' Apostolat de Saint Paul, et sur le caractère du ministère dans la Dispensation actuelle. Lyon.

Perhaps this is part of a larger article in English, and found on pp. 36-39 of *Collected Writings*, vol. 4. [438]

Concerning what was transpiring in 1842, we have the following from JND:

> There is much blessing in Switzerland, but a little commotion, because of the new wine, which does not suit well with the old bottles -- old at least in many respects, because they are human -- and everything is feared about if anything is touched. [439]
>
> Dear Brother, -- I have not much news to give you from here. In comparison with what was the case a year and a half ago, the awakening and the results are striking enough, but old Dissent on one side, and especially the old Dissenting ministers, whom the new awakening has laid aside, are jealous, and are bestirring themselves. We have no other difficulty, except this jealous spirit of the ministers. They have taken the ground solemnly in a conference lately, that the church was not responsible for the condition in which it then was. I feel myself much more, or rather altogether apart, from all official connection with their system; as to individuals, I hope that love will be only the more easy in its exercise; but it appears to me a principle of rebellion against God. In general there is blessing; God has raised up some workmen, and all those who are laboring are blessed. There are conversions, and rather numerous considering our weakness, through the goodness of God, and in general more devotedness. I have not given up the thought of a visit to the Ardèche, but this attempt to revive the old Dissent in opposition to the awakening which is taking place, makes me undecided for the moment as to my duty to leave; the rather because hearts are calm as long as I am here, and are more agitated if they are themselves the object of these attempts. In general, Wesleyanism affects them, save perhaps where they have had too much to do with it . . . [440]
>
> I have passed through so trying and difficult a path here, that I distrust myself to speak of it, but I am come out of it, I trust, in charity, and it was no easy matter. To be opposed is easy in a certain sense; I have had plenty, and all who

430. J. E. Howard, in *A Caution Against the Darbyites*, gives the date 1841. In the *Collected Writings* the date is given as "about 1840."
431. *Collected Writings* 1:156-205.
432. *Collected Writings* 1:232-277.
433. *Collected Writings* 2:278-383.
434. *Collected Writings* 3:164-205, translated from French, Luasanne, 1840.
435. *Collected Writings* 1:338-349.
436. *Collected Writings* 5:1-106.
437. *Collected Writings* 14:176-242.
438. *Op. Cit.*, p. 174.
439. *Letters* 1:52; Geneva, Oct. 10, 1842.
440. *Letters* 1:53.

would maintain things when the Lord is overthrowing them, naturally count me to do the work of Satan -- the reputation I have in general in France and Switzerland -- when there is frankness to speak out; but speaking out or acting on conviction, is not generally the habit on the Continent -- they complain of it even. Yet there has been blessing. The young men, whom those who would be with us vilified all they could , have been blessed very generally, and there are many conversions through their means, and in general there has been awakening wherever they have been, and joy and gladness have accompanied their steps. This is a subject of rejoicing, and the Lord has kept them in a most healthful feeling of responsibility with much zeal. At the same time, the dissemination of truth and blessing, and on what are called our principles, thus spreading on the right hand and on the left, without knowing whence it came or how it sprung up all of a sudden, has exceedingly irritated those, who with much effort were doing nothing or spoiling their own work, and I confess, has surprised me; for we are slow to count beforehand on the goodness of God. That He has acted is most manifest. Also I am much more free, for in all their plans, they have planned against themselves. They had what they called a *Conférence Fraternelle*, to judge the expressions of my tracts, which has had the effect of setting me completely at large. They sent to all their churches, that a new system agitated many Christians, and that thereon they would judge if the expressions of my tracts were scriptural. They told nothing of their plan to those who had received more or less the principles contained in the tracts, but invited them when all was ready, saying that the state of Christians was so changed in Lausanne, that they could not offer hospitality to the brethren. At the meeting which I had declined attending, but went afterwards, at the demand of many who were come from far, they admitted the ruined state of the church, which they had denied hitherto, but denied our responsibility, saying that we were not answerable for the evil of our forefathers. I told the two I was most intimate with, that after that I could not go on with their *Dissidence* any longer, though I was in charity with all. I am much freer and happier since, and blessing is manifest.

In France there is progress, and I found the brethren well, and walking near the Lord in general. There is now a large field open in the Gard . . . At St. Hippolyte, though others labor equally, several true men (finding that our brethren walked more with the Lord, and had His blessing), who had been exceedingly prejudiced, have drawn towards the brethren and avowed it. There will be opposition there, at least, on the westward, but there is testimony. In the Isère there is a commencement of blessing, and in the Drôme, at Montmeyran, where they are however weak; this place will bring probably excessive enmity on me. I saw brethren from this place when in France. I could not go there when in the Ardèche. At Annonay and Vernoux they came as much as eighteen leagues to read and confer; this shows the awakening to the state of things which exists. It is chiefly, though not exclusively, among simple brethren; they are devoted and zealous -- this is a remarkable feature. One in Switzerland has been severely beaten, but is happy in his work; one who is much blessed, has left all recently (a lithographist), and felt led to go out at once, without reading with us at Lausanne. Five more are come to read, of whom three I trust will be valuable laborers in different ways. The brethren meet to break bread in France, in places of which I knew not the existence before I went there this last trip. Many of them receive next to nothing, being unmarried: their zeal has awakened the goodwill of those among whom they labor; they receive them, and even give them clothing as presents. In the towns this can be less the case, and in the Catholic population in France -- that is, where the work has not produced its fruits. At any rate, all work on their proper responsibility; if they have not faith, they have only to return to a life of labor like others. Much happy confidence reigns.

I am exceedingly happy with them all, exercising no control but what their own affection claims, and I find that thus cast in considerable difficulties on the Lord, they acquire by the necessity they are in, a rapid ripeness of judgment and prudence according to the Lord. In France many are locally employed, and earn their bread. The married brethren naturally having *ménage*, need more. . .

I write up my letters as much as I can; my head scarce suffices for all, but, thank God, I have been very happy in my soul, and helped on in various ways, and though poor and miserable, conscious that a gracious, faithful and pardoning Lord is with me . . . Kindest love to all the brethren. [441]

We have now arrived **at 1843**. We noted previously that JND had written "Remarks on the State of the Church . . ." in Oct. 1842 but due to delays it was not printed until 1843. P. Wolff responded to this with "Ministry as Opposed to Hierarchism and Chiefly to Religious Radicalism" to which JND immediately wrote a rejoinder "On the Presence and Action of the Holy Ghost in the Church . . ." [442] But due to JND's absence from the country for eleven months,[443] it was not printed until 1844.

During 1843 JND wrote, "On Ministry: Its Nature Source, Power and Responsibility." [444]

Another opponent of JND, F. Oliver, sought to rebut him. Hence, JND also wrote "Remarks on the Pamphlet of Mr. F. Oliver entitled, 'An Essay on the Kingdom of God; Followed by a Rapid Examination of the Views of Mr. John Darby." [445]

JND went to England in 1843. In a letter from London, dated Aug. 3, 1843, he wrote:

Here I am then, in this vast and horrible town, but led by the good hand of Him who never fails in His faithfulness, and the haste that I make to let you have tidings of us, ought to assure you on the one hand that I count on the interest you have in receiving them, and on the other hand, that I do not forget Switzerland. In fact, when I arrived here, I felt

441. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:54-56.

442. *Collected Writings* 3:206-313.

443. *Collected Writings* 3:206. Since he was in Montpelier on March 15, 1844 (*Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:72), it would seem that he left Europe about April/May, 1843.

444. *Collected Writings* 1:206-232. A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 174 gives the date as 1843.

445. *Collected Writings* 1:278-297. A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, gives the date as April 8, 1843.

myself a stranger, and much more at home in Switzerland than here. It was not from lack of affection on the part of the brethren, far from it, for their reception was affectionate, could not be more so. I felt my unworthiness, and attributed it as much to the interest that they take in the work in Switzerland, as to what was more personal. It is not as a compliment that I say this. But they had prayed much for the work in Switzerland, and naturally that had identified me with that work.

There was nothing extraordinary in my journey, unless it be the continued goodness of God. I hoped to spend the Sunday in London, but we encountered a storm in the passage from Rotterdam to London, so that we only arrived the Sunday evening. I have already spoken, on Monday and Tuesday, and we had the presence of God; but half of those who attended were unknown to me, the number of brothers having greatly increased during my absence. There would be an extraordinary amount to do in this country, but at present my heart is in Switzerland, I believe by the will of God. I do not know if you will believe me when I tell you that I feel much more a stranger here than over there, and it gives me wonderful joy when I meet a Swiss brother or sister. I hope that the only thing that will lead me will be the will of God. I cannot doubt that God has raised up a testimony at the present time in Switzerland and in France, which He gives me, at least I think so, still to carry on in those countries. I feel my weakness and my incapacity, but this does not stop me at all, because I feel that the work is of Him. I am conscious of having but one desire, namely, that testimony should be borne to Christ, to Him whose glory alone is precious to me. I am conscious that that is my only desire, and that makes me happy and inspires me with entire confidence. I do not doubt that I have done the will of God in coming here; and it is very sweet to feel it, and it is this that removes from me all anxiety with regard to Lausanne. When I shall have finished what God wishes me to do, I hope to be there again. I have only the thought of a journey here at present, till the moment of my return. I know nothing about it, that depends upon His will. May He give me the discernment of that will, and of the things that are really of some importance.

As to the brethren of this place, I have not yet spent a Sunday, but this is the impression they have given me. They talk to me *much* more of God and less of man than in Switzerland, this is a *great* good; on the other hand I have found, it has seemed to me, much more solemnity and seriousness in our meetings at Lausanne, &c., than here -- though I have been happy in the two I have been at. There is more care of souls also here. I am still ill at ease in meditating, and almost incapable of praying yet in English. In Ireland they have been neglected, but in Dublin they are much blessed, more than ever, and they walk in peace elsewhere, but there is no work. There are some, but few new workers in England, but the work has been greatly extended. The time of returning to Switzerland will be to me a time of joy, although I particularly love the brethren here, and see more and more the solidity and the truth of the work that God has done in these times in this country, and I feel that the links that attach me to them are not of man. [446]

While in England he delivered a lecture, "Substance of a Lecture on Prophecy." [447]

An interesting letter dated Kendal, Nov., 1843 gives information regarding his movements. It also reveals that he was concerned about the inroads of Puseyism (in England) and its Romanizing tendency. While he was anxious to return to Europe, he remarked, "I think I must return to work here." [448]

Another letter speaks of the joy of his heart in turning again to Lausanne. [449] By March 15, 1844 he was at Montpellier. [450] From St. Hippolyte du Fort he wrote on April 11, 1844 regarding conditions at V. [Vevey?] and commented on some who separated at Geneva, and on "adversaries of the brethren." He also criticized the principle of Dissent. [451]

We noted previously, that due to his trip to England of eleven months duration, his reply to P. Wolff, "On the Presence and Action of the Holy Ghost in the Church . . ." [452] was not printed until 1844. A. C. Smith noted that at this time JND brought out "a journal to propagate his views further, especially during his absence," namely, *Le Temoignage des disciples de la Parole*. [453]

In 1844 JND responded to a rebuttal by F. Oliver in "Thoughts on Romans 11, and on the Responsibility of the Church . . ." [454]

The *Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia* article, "Darby, John Nelson, says:

> When by Jesuit intrigues, a revolution broke out in Canton Vaud (Feb., 1845), the Darbyites in some parts of Switzerland suffered persecution and Darby's own life was in jeopardy.

An account by a "G." concerning some of the effects of a riot is included in *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:82-84. See also pp. 80, 81 and 126. Recovered truth had, however, been planted and took firm root.

JND left, shortly, for England and arrived there in March 1845 and went to Plymouth. This opened a new phase of his history, the maintenance of the recovered truth, which, if the Lord will, will be detailed in Vol. 2 of this work. B. W. Newton had been busy undermining the recovered truth. And while in Lausanne, JND had some correspondence in 1844 regarding this,[455] indicating he was quite aware of it. It was

446. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:63, 64.
447. *Collected Writings* 5:107-122.
448. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:66.
449. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:67-70.
450. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:72.
451. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:72, 76.
452. *Collected Writings* 3:206-313.
453. *British Nonconformists . . .,* p. 75.
454. *Collected Writings* 1:299-337. He referred to this paper in *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:240.
455. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:240-243.

indeed God's time for him to go to Plymouth, England.

His return to England, however, did not imply any lack of interest in the work on the Continent of Europe. In the years that followed he visited there and also wrote papers in English and other languages with special reference to the Continent. Perhaps most of these are listed on the following pages.

1848 The Unsearchable Riches of Christ. Meditations on Eph. 3 (French -- not available in English) (Nov. 19, 1848). [456]

1849 A Glance at Various Ecclesiastical Principles . . . [457]

The Church and its Friendly Subdivisions . . . [458]

Scriptural Views Upon the Subject of Elders . . . [459]

Consideration on the Character of Religious Movements of the Day . . . [460]

1850 Examination of a Few Passages of Scripture . . . [461]

Short But Serious Examination of the Fundamental Principles Issued by M. Gaussen in His Book Entitled "Daniel the Prophet." [462]

Letter on the Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures or Remarks on the Letter of Resignation of M. Le Professeur Edmund Scherer. [463]

The Sufferings of Christ, Psalm 22:22. [464]

On the Work of Christ; or Remarks on the Second Letter of Mr. Edmund Scherer. [465]

The Church According to the Word. [466]

Observations on a Tract Entitled 'Plymouthism in View of the Word of God.' [467]

1852 [468] An appeal to the Conscience of Those Who Take the Title of "Elders of the Evangelical Church at Geneva"; and a Reply to One of Them. [469]

What has been Acknowledged? or the State of the Controversy about Elders, followed by a Short Answer to an Article of Mons. de Gasparin. [470]

1853 Letter to the Rev. Mr. Guers, on the Subject of his Note on the Errors of B. W. Newton. [471]

A Letter to Count De Gasparin in Answer to a Question Which He Puts to me in the "Archives du Christianisme." [472]

1855 Reply to Two Fresh Letters from Count de Gasparin, Published in the "Archives du Christianisme," of December 3rd, 1854, and February 24th 1855. [473]

1857 On Gifts and Offices in the Church. [474]

A Short Answer to the Last Article by Count de Gasparin, Published in the "Archives du Christianisme." [475]

1859 Preface to the Vevey New Testament. [476]

1864 What is the Doctrine as to the Formal Texts and the Sufferings of Christ? [477]

1870 A Letter on a Pamphlet by Mr. F. Oliver, Entitled, "The Body of Christ, and a Misunderstanding on the Subject." [478]

Cf. with What is the Unity of the Church? [479]

1873 Letter Addressed to Some Pastors of Neuchatel.[480]

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456. A. C. Smith, *Op. cit.* p. 175.

457. *Collected Writings* 4:1-80. This is dated 1846 in the Index. A. C. Smith noted that while this was a reply to a rebuttal against JND in 1846, a reference to the Free Church of Vaud, founded in 1847, makes a date of 1848 more likely, *Op. Cit.* p. 175. However, on p. 56 there is a reference to Jan. 28, 1849.

458. *Collected Writings* 4:133-182.

459. *Collected Writings* 4:183-227.

460. *Collected Writings* 4:81-132.

461. *Collected Writings* 4:228-270.

462. *Collected Writings* 11:63-109.

463. *Collected Writings* 23:1-53. Dated by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p.176; given as English title only.

464. *Collected Writings* 12:120-128. Dated by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 176.

465. *Collected Writings* 23:54-71.

466. Dated by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 176 -- not located in English.

467. *Collected Writings* 4:271-285. Dated 1850 by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 176.

468. Cf. *Letters of J. N. Darby 3:277.*

469. *Collected Writings* 4:307-338. Dated by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 176.

470. *Collected Writings* 4:286-306. English title only.

471. *Collected Writings* 15:134-161.

472. *Collected Writings* 4:339-344. Dated by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 176.

473. *Collected Writings* 4:345-373.

474. *Collected Writings* 14:1-14. Originally written in Geneva. Dated by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 177.

475. *Collected Writings* 14:1-14. Originally written in Geneva. Dated by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 177.

476. *Collected Writings* 13:187-203.

477. French title translated into English -- but not located in English. Dated by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 177.

478. French title translated into English -- but not located in English. Dated by A. C. Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 177.

479. *Collected Writings* 20:296-306.

480. Title translated from French but not located in English. Dated by A. C. Smith, (Vevey: F. Guignard, 1914), *Op. Cit.*, p. 177.

Chapter 6.4

Souvenez-vous de vos conducteurs
Or
Remember Your Leaders

F. Cuendet, Vevey, 1966 [1935], Pages 21-30.

Translated by Hans Weber

{The following is an extract from the above named book by a French brother regarding some activities of JND in several European countries.}

Ministry in Switzerland, France and Germany

In 1837 Mr. Darby visited the European Continent for the first time. He began in Geneva, Switzerland. Probably it was there that he heard of "the Awakening" {French, "Le Reveil"} which was going on since 1810; and in particular he learned that there were some brethren who met nearly like us, as he said. [481] Several English Christians (Mr. Henry Drummond, Mr. Richard Wilcox, Mr. Robert Haldane and others) took part in this movement; later around 1820, Mr. Gonthier, Mr. Guers, Mr. Pyt, ministers of the church of Bourg-de-Four (so called because it met in an apartment in Bourg-de-Four) went to London. Mr. Pyt, sent on a mission to Boulogne in 1830, often visited the English who were around in great numbers. Thereafter he went to Ireland, where he lived three months, speaking and preaching every day in English before many audiences. Was Mr. Pyt ever put into contact with Mr. Darby or the little meeting at Dublin? At this time he wrote to one of his friends (a laboring brother), "I can no longer believe in the gradual conversion of the world by the preaching of the gospel; I do not see in the Scripture a single passage which supports this system -- it is evident to me that it is through terrible judgments that the will of the Lord will be established and the millennium established. I find this idea everywhere; I will cite only two or three passages . . ." A few months later he wrote again, "Time presses; the promises of the Lord are being accomplished; a little time and he that shall come will come. My spirit is under the influence of this sentiment; with me it is a matter of faith; I want to shout it to all my brothers. That is why I am constrained to act . . ." And in another letter he wrote, "It cheers me to see you awaiting the epiphany (the appearing in glory) of the Lord and it cheers me that it seems near to you. I like to think that this faith is spreading through his church. For a long time He has testified to His second coming; the bride too will come and He who testifies of these things says, 'Surely I come quickly' -- Amen, yes, Lord Jesus, come." This thought recurs again and again in the letters from the last years of this pious evangelist. The soon return of the Lord was the final perspective which filled him with joy, when he thinks of being separated from his brethren, "It is with a feeling with joy that I look forward to this brilliant era fast approaching . . ." Even if Mr. Darby knew him he would not have found Mr. Pyt at Geneva, for tired and used-up from his labor (work), he fell asleep in Christ at the age of 39, two years before Mr. Darby's visit in Geneva.

Mr. Darby was received with open arms by the church at Bourg-de-Four, by its pastors (shepherds), and stayed with one of them, -- probably with Mr. Guers. This church was engaged in a struggle {note by the translator: the French word suggests people pulling in opposite directions}. This struggle pitted the "pastor-brothers" (as they were called) against a number of lay brethren who were free to speak but wanted more liberty in the assembly -- they were opposed to the principles of Presbyterianism which they saw developing. Mr Darby was a force for peace there; he presented Christ and his work, the love of the Father in Jesus, the soon return of the Lord to take his well-beloved church home to be with himself. "Mr. Darby had the confidence of all, the confidence of the pastors as well as of the flock," said Mr. Guers. We see from a letter of Mr. Darby (which He addressed to Mr. J. Foulquier, one of the principal brethren at Bourg-de-Four, written in Edinburgh, 6th of October 1838) that he still

481. {Cp. *Collected Writings* 4:188.}

thought of and cared for the assembly there, despite his absence, he wrote,

> I hope that our dear Mr. Guers will be drawn gradually to throw himself with all his strength, in full confidence, on the work of God in your midst. He has many gifts, he loves much and he has a very affectionate, tender heart . . . I beg you in particular, dear brother, as I said in my letter to you all; [482] to show every confidence in those who labor as pastors in your midst. For the moment I say nothing of the arrangement, nor of the form of the church, nor of the way it was built . . . Greet my dear brothers, Mr. Guers, Mr. Empeytaz, and Mr. L'Hulliuer. I love them with all my heart, and I owe them this love for all the love and friendship they showed me. [483]

In the same letter Mr. Darby spoke of the "dear flock of Bourg-de-Four." In July-August 1839 he wrote again,

> you say, dear brother, that I did not know everything that was contrary to the liberty of the Holy Spirit in Bourg-de-Four. Doubtless there were things there which hinders this holy and mighty mover of the church, but I believed that the principles of the church of God were there and were recognized -- otherwise I would not have felt liberty to break bread. I hope it still remains the same. [484]

A few days later, August 10th, Mr. Darby wrote to another brother of Bourg-de-Four,

> I have received, beloved brother, letters from several of my dear brothers in Geneva. I cannot tell you how deeply I was touched by this evidence of their love . . . I beg you, beloved brother, to let them know the thoughts of my heart. I believe that the happiest moments of my life were spent in the houses, on the fields and under the skies of Geneva. This is neither a manner of speaking nor a compliment, my dear brother; I could reckon this happiness to personal circumstances, but it was really the love of the Genevean Christians which was the cause of this sentiment." [485]

These letters, which testify so much about the affection one for another, are no less also the evidence of the tension that existed at Bourg-de-Four. The tension ended with a division on 3rd March, 1842, which ended Mr. Darby's relations with the assembly at Bourg-de-Four (which had become the assembly at "La Pelisserie" since they had moved to another location three years prior to the division).

In 1840 at a building called "Temple Unique" which is presently called L'Eglisee sacre {?} coeur" Darby preached eleven evenings on the "Present Expectation of the Church." These lectures which were well attended were published in November 1840; the following is the closing message of one of these lectures:

> Dear friends, [486] it is this earth that we inhabit that God has taken to make the scene for the manifestation of His character and His works of grace. This earth is the place where sin has entered and fixed its residence; it is here that Satan has displayed his energy for evil; it is here that the Son of God has been in humiliation, has died and has risen; is upon this earth that sin and grace have both done their wonders; it is upon this earth that sin has abounded, if, notwithstanding, grace has much more abounded. If now Christ is hid in the heavens, it is upon this earth He will be revealed; it is here that the angels have best penetrated the depths of the love of God; it is here, also, that they will comprehend its results, manifested in glory; upon this earth, where the Son of man has been in humiliation, the Son of man shall be glorified. If this earth in itself is but a small thing, that which God has done upon it, and will do, is not a small thing for Him. For us (the Church), the heavenly places are the city of our habitation, for we are co-heirs, not the inheritance, -- we are heirs with God and joint-heirs with Christ; but the inheritance is necessary for the glory of Christ, as the co-heirs are the object of His most tender love, His brethren, His bride.
>
> I have, then, detailed to you, dear friends, briefly and feebly, as I am well aware, what is the destiny of the Church. The Spirit can alone make us feel all the sweetness of the communion of the love of God, and the excellence of the glory which is given to us. But, at least, I have pointed out passages enough in the word to make you understand -- with the help of the Holy Spirit, which I implore for you all like for myself [487] -- the thoughts which I had on my heart to tell you tonight. It results early enough that we live under the dispensation [488] during which the heirs are gathered together, and that there is another which will take its place at the coming of the Savior, -- that in which the heirs shall have the enjoyment of the inheritance of all things, -- that in which all things shall be subjected to Christ, and to His Church, as united to Him and manifested with Him. What is to follow ulterior to that is not our business now: I mean that last period, when God will be all in all, when Christ Himself, as man, will be subject to God; and chief, as man, of a family eternally blessed in the communion of God, who has loved that family, and whose tabernacle will be in the midst of it -- God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, eternally blessed. Amen.
>
> It is in occupying herself with these subjects, full of hope by the Spirit, that the Church will be detached from the world, and will clothe herself with the character which becomes her as the affianced bride of Christ, to whom she owes all her heart and all her thoughts. [489]

Mr. Darby spent the years 1840 to 1845 almost exclusively in Switzerland, and a bit in France. He resided mostly in Geneva and Lausanne. He wrote, "On two occasions of my spending a protracted time in Lausanne, some young brothers who desired to devote themselves to gospel work spent nearly a year with me in order to read the Bible.

482. {*Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:232-236?}
483. {Unpublished letter.}
484. {Unpublished letter.}
485. {Unpublished letter.}
486. {'Dear friends' is missing in the Stow Hill ed. but not in the Morrish (continued...)

486. (...continued)
ed.}
487. {'like for myself' is missing in the Stow Hill ed. as well as the Morrish ed.}
488. {'dispensation,' French: economy.}
489. {Collected Writings 2:288, 289.}

We also partook of the Lord's supper together every day." [490] Similar readings took place at the same period for about six months in Geneva, at Mr. Darby's house, rue Beauregard, no. 1. In French Switzerland conversions were numerous, most of whom came out of "dissidence," cover {?} the region. Dissidents had suffered faithfully for the Lord for twenty years previous; but then there was little activity among them, and they were headed for extinction. In the period 1840 to 1850 Mr. Darby published in French, almost exclusively at Geneva and at Lausanne, about 20 treatises and works of doctrine on: "The Formation of Churches," "The Ministry," "Outline of Revelation," "Scriptural Views on Elders," etc. The question of "Elders" was one of the principal problems at Bourg-de-Four. Mr. Darby showed that "Pastoring," [491] or better, a pastor, is a gift according to Eph. 4:11; it is the gift of shepherding the flock of God, -- this gift is not incompatible with the charge of an elder. The elder, also called a bishop, or an overseer, has an office that is exclusively local and has more to do with experience than with office. In apostolic times elders were established by an apostle or the delegate of an apostle (as in the case of Titus {Titus 1:5}); but nowhere does scripture imply that the authority of naming elders should continue, or even that it existed in all assemblies. Mr. Darby said that by {present day} establishing elders, clergy is introduced by a circuitous route. It is true that there are "de facto" elders in assemblies, but they are not invested with this office by the assemblies {but are recognized by moral weight, and qualifications, and the desire to exercise oversight (1 Tim. 3).}

In connection with the question of elders and more especially with the subject of meetings convoked to discuss cases of discipline, Mr. Darby expressed himself elsewhere as follows:

> For my own part, I do not think it even much to be desired that all the brothers should be present. If there are a few wise brothers, who occupy themselves habitually with the good of souls, true elders given by God, and that it be not official, but according to 1 Cor. 16:15, 16, that is better than all the brothers; it is thus more evidently not the assembly, which is not equally clear when all the brothers are there: and the danger of an assembly of brothers is, lest they should believe themselves to be the assembly to decide.
>
> But a whole assembly cannot make investigation of facts and the character of facts: two or three must do this, when all the information has been obtained, and the matter weighed before God, they communicate the result at which they have arrived, and it is the assembly that decides: if no one says anything, the matter is decided. If a brother of weight were to make an objection, or if he had anything to communicate, or knew of any circumstance likely to throw light on the subject, they might wait, or re-investigate the matter. If it is but a trifling opposition, the assembly may easily deal with it. I have seen such a case. If it is some one upholding the evil which has been judged, he becomes himself the object of judgment. (2 Cor. 10:6).
>
> Two things render it necessary that the action should be that of the **assembly**: first, because it is there that Christ is; secondly, because it is the assembly which purges itself. (1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 7:11). [492]

Paralleling the Swiss movement, the work continued in France through a brother who worked there for the Lord, then by a few of those who participated in the aforementioned biblical studies at Geneva and Lausanne. Mr. Darby himself went there and in the years 1847 to 1853 resided there permanently {this did not exclude visiting England}, traveling throughout the country in all directions and gathering the Brethren in numerous conferences.

From the years 1854 Mr. Darby turned toward Germany, where his oldest brother, who had passed two years in Dusseldorf, was occupied with the Lord's work. In October [1854] he was at Elberfeld where the work of the Spirit of God was beginning to be manifested. There was already an "Association of Brothers" which employed 12 laborers in the preaching of the gospel, seven of whom left to join the Brethren. The meetings soon multiplied in Germany as well as in the Netherlands, where Mr. Darby also visited. He passed the years 1855, 1856 and 1857 almost exclusively on the European continent and divided his time between France, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

In German-speaking Switzerland his work also developed, but in a more restrained manner than in the French-speaking part of the country. It seems improbable that Mr. Darby visited in German-speaking Switzerland before 1850, when he visited Berne and surely some other places. During this period {1854?} the brother Georges D. Romel-Gerber whom he greatly respected and to whom he was very attached, moved to Zurich and labored there. We know this from a letter [493] to his wife written in 1876 at the time of his death.

490. *{Letters* 3:302.}
491. {The gift is "pastors," not "pastoring."}
492. *{Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:415.}
493. *{Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:379.}

Chapter 6.5

Notes on the Ancient Dissidence and Brethren in Switzerland and France

by William Joseph Lowe

circa 1870

Some notes by W. J. Lowe have come to light and have been made available in this format by Serge Liachenko, of France, who has kindly granted permission for its inclusion here.

Vallée du lac de Joux

Commencement of Ancient Dissidence at Le Brassus — 1816 or 17 — father of Eugène Piguet (of Colombier), who left the valley for Nyon about 1853 & then joined the «brethren». His son Eugène left two or three years before & finally settled at Colombier (near Neuchâtel).

Yverdon — 1843

Essertines. (1 1/2 hr. dist.) spring of 1844 or 5 commenced with 3 brothers. Calame of Yverdon went up two or three Sundays. After 2 or more joined. Less than a month after that 4 others. (nearly all the Christians in the village.)

Then began conversions & the number rose to 60. Agricultural

Auguste Perret-Jordan at beginning of the meeting at Essertines — born September 1819 — converted at 12 years old. Made his first & only long tour April-July, 1848. Fleurier, Noiraigue, Les Ponts de Martel, &c. — Tramelan & country about Montbéliard. Married in November of that year.

Revival in villages about Essertines began in 1824 or thereabouts. Lardon preached in 1826 & following years & died in 1834.

In village of Gressy there was a Christian pastor M. Mellot, greatly blessed about 1824. He had two brothers also pastors in the neighbourhood & also devoted men.

Sainte Croix (1840)

1839. Brother Barbey visited Samuel Bornand who had already separated from the «Nationale» for some years & formed the «Ancienne dissidence».

In autumn of 1840 two or three began to break bread & were soon after visited by J.N. Darby.

Barbey went to Pau where he died.

Samuel Bornand born 1804 converted at age of 12.

Alf. B. 1843 [494]

Oldest brother at L'Auberson, David Jaques died 13 September 1869 aged 70.

Le Locle 1845

Commenced by Pfisters who removed to that place from La Chaux de Fonds at that time.

La Chaux de Fonds

Ancient Dissidence in 1838 & 1839 commenced 1836.

Brother Ronget visited them about that time. A. Frederick Pfister with them, also — he came to live at La Chaux de Fonds (from France) in 1839.

They first began to break bread regularly every Sunday in the house of Jules Jacot (1796) in 1844 or thereabouts when Ronget came to live at La Chaux de Fonds.

The meeting was held for some time in Ronget's house & then in the present local at Guyot's.

In 1836, they often went to «Les Bises» about 3/4 hour from the town where an «ancien» of the national church received them, by night when the persecution prevented their going by day.

Considerable persecution in 1838, 39. Jules Jacot's son Jules (1826) suffered as a boy.

Saint Imier 1834 (?)

Mme Perret & Mme Tschantz (mother of Tschantz of Sonvillier) exercised about truth in Dombresson, & used to meet afterwards in Saint Imier with a few others, & broke bread occasionally. Gradually feeling their way out of system. Rammel, Tracol & others worked here.

In 1842 Tracol commenced a meeting for evangelisation at Mme Vuillieumier's house which was blessed to the conversion of many, as well as her own family.

Meeting very fluctuating as to numbers.

494. This line is written in pencil.

Les Ponts de Martel. 1846-7.

Adolphe Huguenin came from La Chaux de Fonds & established himself at Les Ponts autumn 1846. Meeting began soon after. Félix Ducommun converted at that time took his place afterwards at the table. Auguste Aellen converted year after, also Henri Stauffer, Ducommun (afterwards of Gorgier) & the Perrin.

Berne.

1845-6, chiefly through a Mr Conod & another, both of whom afterwards went back. Mme Huntziker came out at that time.

In 1870 about 30 in fellowship.

Rheinach (Argovie) commenced in 1859 or thereabouts by a brother from Zofingen. More than 100 meeting there in 1869.

Tramelan.

Severe persecution in autumn 1848 & spring 1849. N° in communion then about 15. Several were added at the time so that the number soon rose to 70, which was afterwards reduced by death, secession & other causes.

About 30 in communion up to 1867. 14 added in 1868, 30 more in 1869 and eight others in 1870.

Louis Étienne died 1870.

Geneva.

Madame Séchehay (the Lydia of Geneva) buried 2nd November 1869.

July 1870

Besançon. 1849

Ulysse Junod came to Besançon March 1849 & broke bread with his wife for 3 months. (He came from Courtelary, Val de Saint Imier.) Then he was joined by a brother Arthaud, also from Switzerland, deserter from the army because he would not fight against the Fribourgers. This brother died in Besançon.

The Sunday after Junod's arrival, when he was very low in spirit, feeling his desolation & in prayer, David Rodt knocked at his door, — an entire stranger to him, but who had heard something of him through an affair what had happened at the Custom, (where Junod rated his goods higher than was usual for conscience sake), — he soon made himself known as a child of God, only very zealous for the established church from which he did not get delivered till 2 or 3 years after. He afterwards married an English sister, & went to Nelson, New Zealand.

Marcelin Jornod came to Besançon 27 months after Junod & through David Rodt, they became acquainted with the family Magnin, who gradually got freed from system & came out about 1854.

M. Jornod remained there 6 1/2 years, till November 1857, when he went with his family to Noiraigue in the Val de Travers.

23 July 1870

Montbéliard

This meeting is more or less connected with the history of Louis Gabriel Vierne.

Born in 1799, converted at Geneva in 1818, connected with M. Guers in the «revival» which took place about 1824, employed as colporteur, (expenses paid by Robert Haldane), — went to Montbéliard in 1827.

Several were converted through his & others means at Montbéliard, Désandans & c.

About 1831, — Vivian, a disciple of César Malan came from Geneva & wanted to «organise» the church of Montbéliard & establish himself as their pastor: but he was quickly resisted by Vierne, & he went to Paris not long after: — (among other things he wanted to impose Malan's hymn book).

At this time the Christians met simply, through not knowing much ecclesiastical truth & not breaking bread every Lord's Day.

In 1837, Vierne left for Belgium (near Waterloo) & did not return to Montbéliard till 1843.

Thomas Carey (1807-1869) came about 1840 (while Vierne was away in Belgium) — stayed first in Colombier-Châtelot for a time; afterwards for several months in Désandans, & greatly helped the brethren there to understand the scriptures: from there he went to Montbéliard.

[*Note*. Thomas Carey carried on the French work in Guernsey till his death 3 May 1869 soon after which his widow went to stay with her niece Mrs. Compain at Puligny. Pierre Compain & his family left Puligny: February 1870, after years {of} solitude in that Roman catholic village, breaking bread with his wife & mother only, his father being unconverted & worldly. He went to Guernsey to carry on Mr Carey's work.]

Bethoncourt. 1850

Abraham Oulevay came & established himself at Bethoncourt, in the property of the sister he married there, about 1844 — and on the occasion of his marriage François Antoine Schüttel came for the first time.

The meeting was then held in the house of Pierre Perrot, a labouring brother, who soon after went to Marseille, where he now is. The meeting was then held in a sister's house; but when some difficulty arose, it was transported in 1850 to the house of Pierre Tissot at Bethoncourt.

Here it remained till 1870 & still is though Oulevay has built a new room but not used yet on account of affair spring 1869.

In 1866, F. A. Schüttel came to reside at Montbéliard, & as there were several brethren in the town, they decided to begin a meeting again in Montbéliard leaving that at Bethoncourt to stand as it was.

The meeting was thenceforward held in the house of F. A. S. until the war with the Prussians Autumn of 1870. F. A. S. left at the end of 1870 & went to Sonvilier (Switzerland) others left also & the meeting broke up, those that remained going to Bethoncourt.

Désandans. — Beutal.

George & Pierre Rigoulot received the truth about 1830 from L. G. Vierne at Montbéliard, to whom they applied for tracts &c., being already zealous for the Lord but not freed.

They returned home to Désandans & soon by the publication of a full, free gospel to those that applied to them, many souls became exercised & a few years after (about 1837?) they began to break bead together, once a month, feeling their way, & being in advance of Vierne who was opposed to it & to the doctrine of the Lord's coming.

There were two dissenting parties at that time — one with Vierne at Montbéliard — the other in a Mr. Jacques at Glay near Terre-Blanche.

Mr Carey remained here some months about 1841 & taught the brethren truth from the Scriptures.

Meeting held at Fréd. Haye-Rigoulot's house (sister of Mme Jacques Jeannin of Terre-Blanche)

Beutal.

Jacques Chavet converted about 1835 by means of his sister who was converted at Blussangeaux.

The Rigoulots showed him there was no need of a pastor for breaking of bread & the meeting began then about the same time as at Colombier.

Pierre Marchand-Chavet & some others converted 1860 & meeting held in his house.

Colombier-Châtelot. 1840

Barbey was the first to set onfoot the breaking of bread about 1840, though there had been meetings at Blussengeaux some few years before that, & also in Colombier; but more or less connected with the «Ancienne dissidence» or old dissenting movement.

Pierre Droz, of Blussengeaux converted about 1832 at Montbéliard when in pension there, for his health, where he used to attend the meetings but he remained a dissenter more or less to the end of his days. He was used to several, but matters in Blussengeaux went ill: the affairs of this life ruined everything.

In Colombier, matters were better, one of the Lochard's & George Bossardet-Lochard who went to Terre-Blanche were among the first.

Thomas Carey made 3 visits about 1840-5 & Oulevay, Tracol & Pierre Perrot, came often the succeeding years.

(1843) Pierre Lochard (tailor) received the truth from Carey during a severe illness in which Carey & his wife nursed him, & was set free 2 or 3 years after.

Pierre Droz has been always nominally with the brethren — father of Émilie & Marie — & so has Pierre Gein since the beginning 1840.

Terre-Blanche 1848 — [1870 July]

Meeting for breaking of bread commenced about 1848 after conversion of Pierre Jeannin and his brother Jacques a few months after in 1847 or thereabouts & was soon reinforced by several from Colombier-Châtelot who came to work in the cutlery fabric at Terre-Blanche.

The Bossardets came from Colombier about 10 years after, — four brothers George, Pierre, Etienne (died 1869) & Frédéric (died young as well as his wife) leaving many children of whom eldest Louis is in fellowship & ditto Auguste Normand of Besançon. The other brothers also have children many of them grown up & converted.

Meeting held at Jacques Jeannin's the eldest of four brothers all in fellowship, (Pierre, Frédéric, Charles) the youngest of whom, Charles, took the name of his mother: Mégnin; he married Esther Delacoux half-sister of Abel Delacoux who got «reformed» from military service on account of a swelling in the neck which turned out to be temporary.

Jacques Jeannin born 1825 lost his father 1831 when he was six & was left with his two brothers to the care of their mother who still lives — & was converted after he was. (Charles J. born afterwards).

He married Clémence Rigoulot (of Désandans) born 1831 converted 1847 about same time as he & afterwards went to America for a time before her marriage. Pierre (1830-1887) married first Sophie Ménétrey, then afterwards Catherine Gentil of Valentigney.

Saint Julien. 1848.

Meeting commenced about same time or soon after that of Terre-Blanche & soon after the conversion of Frédéric Bainier, at whose house it has always been held.

At the time there were four or five sisters, converted, who, though attending church, used to meet together to read the word & read tracts &c. Through their means Mme F. Bainier got peace, before her husband.

Frédéric Bainier's conversion made some stir in the village, which was made a blessing to the soul of another Bainier who had been exercised many years, but given to drinking & he was converted shortly after, & died in 1865. His son was converted on his own deathbed some years before, & was then the means of leading his wife and his mother (Bainier's wife) to Christ. The son left his widow with one daughter Maryanne. This widow was afterwards married to Junod of Besançon.

There was considerable opposition from the villagers at the time the meetings were first held in Frédéric Bainier's house & sometimes they were interrupted & disturbed. Fréd. B. born in 1815, converted 1848.

One of the first of the sisters converted was Catherine Bainier-Colin cousin of Mme Oulevay of Bethoncourt — who married an ungodly, wretched man, who gives her but little liberty.

There are two other Bainiers in fellowship brothers, George & Pierre, — cousins of Fréd.

Lougres. 1862.

A Christian pastor, Mr Donzé was blessed to giving many a knowledge of the truth, but it was not till Autumn of 1861, that there was much manifestation. At that time several were set free, the brethren in the neighbourhood especially Beutal helping greatly.

The nominal religion is Lutheran. Most of those converted are more or less nearly related, the family name being Jacquin.

Jacquin the ex-mayor is the most intelligent. He was much

exercised during the 8 years he was mayor.

The Lords table was spread in 1862, in the spring.

Two years after this, spring of 1864, there was a little burst of persecution. The occasion was the burial of the child of a brother Martz at Longevelle, the first in these parts, performed by the brethren. The villagers made considerable opposition prompted by the clergy & L. G. Vierne was very roughly handled. [Fred. Lochard (Colombier-Châtelot) bears the marks of the stones flung at him to this day.] But the father succeeded in burying his child. P. & F. Lochard assisted.

Encouraged by this the villagers of Lougres (2 miles from Longevelle) made a «charivari», 2nd or 3rd Sunday after the affair at Longevelle. They assembled together the moment they came out of church at the time of the afternoon meeting, but the brethren aware of the conspiracy did not meet as they expected, & so not finding them some women assaulted the sister Susanne Bourquin aged 17 at the time; & the mayor, the deputy-mayor, & the rural policeman all managed to be absent. This came to the ears of the authorities who severely reprimanded the mayor, who was forced to resign, sent one or two of the worst to prison & sent some gendarmes to guard the meeting room the next Sunday.

August-September 1870

Pays d'En-Haut. 1846

4 Meetings

Rossinières At David Roch's house

Chabloz At Vincent Mottier's house

L'Étivaz At Sophie Favrod's house (since 1870)

RougemontMarie Huser-Känel

The ancienne dissidence began.

The venerable Samuel Pilet at Rossinières was one of the first. His son Samuel, adjutant of gendarmerie, also christian but remained a «neutral» at the time of the division in Canton de Vaud (he is now at Lavigny).

Vialet laboured much here about 1846-7. Mr. Darby came up also at the same time & the meetings of brethren began almost simultaneously at all four places.

Melet of Rossinières was much used to help the brethren.

David Roch brought out of Eglise libre.

The Église libre which sprung up soon after the brethren took their stand, & which swallowed up the ancienne dissidence, has a strong hold in these valleys.

In Chateau d'Oex, 1870 it fraternizes very much with Église Nationale.

Section 7
The Recovery of the Truth of the Pretribulation Rapture

The true origin of the truth of the pretribulation rapture (the pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture) is the New Testament and this truth was recovered to the saints through the instrumentality of J. N. Darby in 1827. Those who directly, or by inference, say that he lied about his finding this in the Word of God fall into two classes: (1) those who say he was influenced by the Jesuits Ribera and/or Lacunza; (2) those who say it came from a (demon-inspired) woman in E. Irving's church (1832), or a visionary/occultic, tongue-speaking, Scots girl (1830).

We have already seen how this truth was recovered in 1827 but here we will address these allegations in some detail.

Chapter 7.1

A Brief Sketch of Prophetic Views

The Early, Post-Apostolic Christian Writers

They were futurist, postribulational premillennialists.In view of certain allegations that are made regarding who the father of futurism is, I think it would be well at the beginning of Section 7 to notice that the early Christian writers were futurists. Our minds will thus be cleared of the notion that futurism is from a Jesuitical source, particularly Ribera.

John Wilmot quoted Dean Alford as saying:

> The early church fathers cannot be said to be futurists as everything to them was future. [495]

Such remarks, rather than being helpful, obfuscate. Moreover, if preterism [496] is true, then they could have taught some form of preterism instead of futurism. At any rate, the denial that the early Christian writers were futurists is absurd, as W. Kelly said:

> I am sure that it is a poor thing to court or reckon up the suffrages of the more ancient Fathers who wrote on prophecy; but it is absurd to deny that, right or wrong, they stand in the main with the futurists against the historicists. They held that the end was nigh; they held that the Antichrist was an individual, not a succession; they held that he would take Christ's place, not His vicar's; they held that he would set up to be God in the temple of Jerusalem, not as the Pope in Rome; they held that the days are days, not years, so that the times of Daniel and of the Apocalypse would be but a brief crisis. Now these are the capital points of futurism, as opposed to protestantism {i.e., historicism}; and how the earlier Fathers thought is beyond controversy. [497]

W. Kelly summarized some of the early futurism:

> On the other hand it is allowed that the early Christian writers are opposed to the Protestant school [historicism] as to the following weighty points: --
>
> 1. That the ten toes denote individual persons.
>
> 2. That the ten horns denote the same.
>
> 3. That the little horn (Dan. 7) is an individual king.
>
> 4. That the times, time, and a half of Daniel are three and a half years.
>
> 5. That the period of Daniel viii. is 2300 literal days.
>
> 6. That the 1290 days, and 1335 days in Daniel 12 are to be taken literally.
>
> 7. That the man of sin (2 Thess. 2) is an individual. [498]
>
> *8. That the 42 months are three and a half years literally.
>
> *9. That the 1260 days are literal.
>
> *10. That the two witnesses are individuals.
>
> 11. That the beast and the false prophet are two individuals.
>
> 12. That the ten kings (Rev. 17) are individuals.
>
> The points are marked with asterisks where concurrence is but partial. Thus some at least of the ancients apply the toes of iron and clay, or divisions of the empire, not to be barbarian kingdoms which sprang up in the 4th and 5th centuries, but to the kings of it at the very end, whom the Lord will find and crush at His second advent; as they also interpreted the little horn in Daniel 8 of Antiochus rather than of Antichrist, and some of the periods

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495. *Inspired Principles of Prophetic Interpretation*, Swengel: Reiner, 1967, p. 251.

496. It is said that the Spanish Jesuit of Seville, Luis de Alcazar:

> devoted himself to bring into prominence the Preterist method of interpretation . . . and thus endeavored to show that the prophecies of Antichrist were fulfilled before the Popes ever ruled at Rome, and therefore could not apply to the papacy (Joseph Tanner, *Daniel and the Revelation* . . ., London: Holder and Stroughton, 1898, pp. 16, 17).

Charles Maitland, remarked:

> Though Alcazar was the first to apply the Praeterist principle to the Apocalypse, the rest of the prophecies had been so treated 100 years before (*The Apostles' School of Prophetic Interpretation* . . ., London: Longman . . ., 1849, p. 445.

Thus, it appears that Preterism arose from a Jesuit source.

See also H. Gratton Guinness, *The Approaching End of the Age* . . ., London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1884, p. 93; L. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, Washington: Review and Herald, 1948, p. 488; F. W. Grant, *The Numerical Bible*, Hebrews to Revelation, New York: Loizeaux Brothers, pp. 274-279, fifth ed.

497. *The Bible Treasury* 9:344.

498. The utterly discreditable Duncan McDougall says: "RIBERA: Jesuit author of the Future Antichrist concept . . ." (*The Rapture of the Saints*, p. 59, n. 2).This fabricator also had the effrontery to concoct the following:

> Even Darby's friend William Kelly, though a leader of the futurist school, finally renounced many of their dogmas and accepted the Historical fulfillment.

indefinitely. [499]

Numbers of the writings of the "Ante-Nicene fathers" (prior to 325 AD) should be classed, in general, as posttribulational. These writers expected Christ to come and set up His 1000 year kingdom. [500] They expected Antichrist to appear before Christ's appearing and expected to pass through the tribulation. [501] Though they spoke in expectant terms, [502] Antichrist and tribulation, in their view, had to occur first. Some of them understood the futurity of Daniel's 70th week regardless of notions they may have had about it. Hippolytus wrote:

> . . . and the one half of the week is for the preaching of the prophets {he means Enoch and Elias, returned as the two witnesses, as he imagines}, and the other half of the week -- that is to say, for three years and a half -- Antichrist will reign on the earth. [503]

Irenaeus wrote:

> But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in the world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple in Jerusalem . . . [504]

Cyril of Jerusalem was quite express:

> "A time" means a single year covering his rise to power. "Times" means the ensuing two years of his wicked career, which when added to the single year, makes up the three years. "The dividing of time" means the last six months . . . I think that some exegetes deduced the same meaning from later verses, "the thousand two hundred and ninety days" . . . [505]

Elements of the Spiritual Decline

The loss of the truth of the pre-Rev. 4 rapture was part of a loss of some other things. Note that the pretribulation rapture involves the fact that the elect of Matt 24: 22 during Daniel's 70th week refers to a godly Jewish remnant being formed to be the new Israel under the new covenant when Messiah reigns. The early post-apostolic writers had lost this truth, along with the truth of the pretribulation rapture. And, necessarily, the distinctive heavenly position of the Christian was lost. W. Kelly noted:

> Here, as is known, the so-called Fathers fell into the most serious error, even such as looked for the return of the Lord and His future kingdom over the earth. But not one of them, as far as I remember (and my friend Dr. D. Brown has proved the point well), bore witness to the future national restoration of Israel to the promised land. They on the contrary embraced the further error of supposing that the risen saints would be in the earthly Jerusalem: thus ignorantly were the best of them agreeing to blot out the distinctive hopes of both Israel and the church; and so rapid was the departure of the early Christians even from plain prophetic facts. Still earlier had they lost sight of our heavenly relations to Christ, and of the capital truth of the Spirit's presence and action in the assembly here below. The consequence was that then was consummated the fatal scheme of treating the church systematically as Israel improved. Maintain simply and firmly the literal restoration of Israel as wholly distinct from Christianity, and you have a bulwark against pseudo-spiritualism, and a groundwork, if rightly used, for seeing our special and heavenly privileges. The Fathers thought that Jerusalem during the millennium would be the city of the heavenly saints, that the Jews would be Christians, and that all would be together, risen and unrisen, reigning in glory. [506]

An important point to note in regard to this decline is that there was necessarily involved a faulty way of looking at the Word of God. How could this change in teaching have come about without involving a process of *spiritual alchemy* whereby aspects of the OT prophecies concerning the future reign of Christ are *transmuted* into church blessings? Such spiritual alchemy is implicit in the wrong views.

It is a very basic element of dispensational truth that the new Israel has a distinct national place under the new covenant. The distinctive millennial position of Israel, i.e., the new Israel under the new covenant, when all are saved (Rom. 11:26, etc.), and Israel as the head of the nations, was lost -- and the result necessarily is Judaizing of the church. Israel's blessing must be *transmuted* by *spiritual alchemy* into church blessings. And it ought not to be difficult to see that since "the blessed hope" and "the appearing of the glory" were, in effect, merged into one thing, namely Christ's coming in glory after the 1260 days of Antichrist, the coming of Christ for *us* was Judaized also. The saints who are in view regarding Christ's appearing in glory are the godly Jews and the Gentiles who believed the "gospel of the kingdom." I suggest that the idea that some elements of dispensational truth may be found in the post-apostolic writers is not true. Sometimes such thoughts are fathered by treating ages as if they are dispensations.

The groundwork for the idea that the Church has replaced Israel was thus laid. The "pseudo-spiritualism" to which W. Kelly referred is the spiritualization of the Old Testament prophecies of Israel's future glory under Messiah's reign. This process is involved with the idea that Christ was reigning through the church and ended in Popery and with the professing "church" exercising temporal power. The writings of these early post-apostolic writers are the record of

499. *The Bible Treasury* 9:358. In the paper quoted, W. Kelly drew this list from the historicist, T. R. Birks, *First Elements of Sacred Prophecy*, pp. 42, 43, (1843), hence W. Kelly's remark, "it is allowed." That book was written specifically to refute the futurism of S. R. Maitland, W. Burgh, and J. H. Todd, in particular.

500. *The Epistle of Barnabas*, ch. 4.

501. *The Epistle of Barnabas*, ch. 15; Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, ch. 81 and ch. 110; *Irenaeus Against Heresies*, ch. 26 and ch. 30, par. 4; Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, ch. 24; Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes*, ch. 17; *The Shepherd of Hermes*, Second Vision, ch. 2 and ch. 4; *The Epistles of Cyprian*, ch. 50, par. 1; Hippolytus, *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*, par. 60, 61 and 64; *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, ch. 16 (this is reviewed in the *Bible Treasury* 19:95).

502. *1 Clement 23.*

503. Hippolytus, "Appendix to the works of Hippolytus," ch. 25, and see ch. 21; see also his *Treatise . . .*, par. 43.

504. *Against Heresies*, Book Five, ch. 30, par. 4.

505. *The Library of Christian Classics*, vol. 4, *Cyril of Jerusalem and Nemesius of Emesa*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, p. 161, 1955.

506. *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Minor Prophets*, pp. 525, 526.

departure and decline. The spiritualization process would not stop at their posttribulationism and their views of the church's place in the millennium (attended as that was by the loss of the Christian's distinctive position). Moreover, ecclesiasticism was rapidly developing.

The point being made is that much more than the truth of the pretribulation rapture was involved. A body of doctrine was involved, the loss of which set a course ending in popery.

Further Decline

The Roman emperor Constantine's Edict of Milan in 313 AD granting religious freedom to Christians changed matters significantly, giving a new-found status to Christianity -- that it should have the world's sanction. This led to a new attitude among the professed followers of the cast-out Lord Jesus. Bishops of the hierarchy that had developed in the post-apostolic church received worldly status. Someone remarked that the world became a little churchy and the church became exceedingly worldly.

In this new atmosphere Amillennialism arose. It was a great further step downward to be believe that Christ was presently reigning through the church. [507] The new views even raised questions about the inspiration of the book of Revelation. [508] The names of Origen and Augustine are connected with the rise of amillennialism. Origen's name is connected with an allegorical/spiritualizing method of interpretation. Augustine's standing gave a spirtualizing view impetus. Augustine taught that the millennial reign was already in progress and would end about the year 1000. He taught that the first resurrection is the new birth.

The rise of the papacy was furthered by the idea that Christ was reigning through the church and that the church was in the millennium. The decline was this: pretribulation truth → posttribulationism → amillennialism.

Many thought that the year 1000 would bring the final judgment; [509] but it passed, and thus the 1000 years had to be 'spiritualized.' How this was handled is traced by the amillennialist, O. T. Allis. [510] The Reformers were amillennialists [511] and believed that the Pope was Antichrist. [512] (Preterism also arose. And, in 1703 Daniel Whitby (1638-1726) popularized postmillennialism.) The year-day theory, wherein the 1260 days are taken to mean 1260 years, arose (with the Abbott Joachim of Flores) and that is the backbone of the historicist interpretation. This view -- historicism, sometimes called "the Protestant interpretation" -- is discussed in the *Bible Treasury*, vols. 9 and 10, by W. Kelly. He remarked:

> Nevertheless it ought to be not a matter of litigation but certain that the Protestant exposition {historicism} in all its peculiarities is at direct issue with the early ecclesiastical writers who stood on the main foundations of Futurism, except indeed as regards the restoration of Israel to their own land, which many Protestants {historicists} allow no less than {current} Futurists. In this at least no instructed mind can agree with the Fathers; and the difference enlarges according to knowledge. Of the other presumptions for or against their respective systems, enough has been said already. As to such a protracted application as Protestant writers conceive, the Fathers knew nothing, expected nothing, of it. Some of the earliest held with the Futurists that the prophecies of scripture are mainly occupied with the grand crisis at the end of the age; but the fact is however that very few appear to have known anything worth notice about these subjects. [513]

The Reformation

The reformers held the Augustinian view that the present period answers to the millennium; i.e., amillennialism. The 1000 years of Rev. 20 is regarded as a symbolic number of the entire period, however long it may be, from the cross to the end of time, when the last day occurs. They also held that the Antichrist is the Pope.

At the time of the reformation a Romish priest, Franciscus de Ribera (1537-1591) returned to *some* elements of futurism of the early "fathers" (see chapter 7.2). Another Romish priest, Luis de Alcazar, introduced Preterism, a system which regards most of Revelation as having already occurred in the early centuries of the church, or by AD 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed. These two Romish writers are regarded by historicists to have written what they did as a counter-move against the view of the reformers that the Antichrist is the Pope. There followed in Ribera's path other Romanists also.

The reformers ought to have rested content with Rev. 17 setting forth the harlot as the Romish system as contrasted to the Lamb's wife (ch. 19) and the contrast of the Romish system portrayed as a city (Rev. 18) with the Bride portrayed as a city (Rev. 21:9, 10). The two women and the two cities are, of course, symbolic of the anti-church and the true church.

Joseph Mede was the father of historicism in England, the system of prophetic interpretation wherein the 1260 days are taken to mean years (the "year-day theory"). Historicism, sometimes called "continuism," or "the Protestant interpretation," views the Revelation as the unfolding of church history. He introduced into his system a two-stage coming of the Lord, the removal of the saints occurring just before a "conflagration." He thought that 2 Pet. 3:10 referred to something introductory to the millennium, and called it a "conflagration." He thought the saints would be

507. See C. Maitland, *The Apostles' School of Prophetic Interpretation*, pp. 206-255.

508. G. N. H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:485; A. C. McGiffert in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, series 2, vol. 1 (Eusebius), note 20, p. 154.

509. G. N. H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom* 1:253.

510. *Prophecy and the Church*, pp. 2-4.

511. G. N. H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom* 1:257, 258.

512. *Ibid.*, pp. 215, 216.

513. *The Bible Treasury* 10:12. See also W. Kelly's *Christ's Second Coming* and F. W. Grant, *The Numerical Bible*, Hebrews to Revelation, New York: Loizeaux Brothers, pp. 279-288, fifth ed.

removed while that took place and then would return to earth with Christ after the conflagration and renovation of the earth. We should call this a ***historicist, two-stage, pre-conflagration coming.*** Some others, following him, also held something similar.

Daniel Whitby introduced postmillennialism, the dream that the world would be gradually Christianized and enjoy a millennium, and then Christ would come. I recall J. N. Darby's trenchant comment that such a millennium "produces results in man"; for, in effect, man will bring it about, rather than Christ's premillennial appearing in glory.

During the early 1800s there began a return to something akin to what the "Ante-Nicene fathers" held. In 1818 William Witherby, a "layman," published *A Review of Scripture in testimony of the Truth of the Second Advent, The First Resurrection and The Millennium* . . ., and in 1821 his *Hints humbly Submitted to Commentators, and More Especially to Such as have Written Elaborate Dissertations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation of St. John*, stating that the 1260 days were literal days, not years. He called historicism a "delusion" (pp. 14, 19, 41). He also thought that the seventy weeks of Dan. 9 meant a literal 490 days (pp. 28, 29). In this mistake we may see over-reaction to the year-day theory, for in throwing out that theory, he erroneously carried his thought into the 70 weeks, the 70 hebdomads. He also thought that the gospel of the kingdom had to be preached in all the world and then the Antichrist (which he did not regard as part of a succession) would be revealed (p. 6). Rev. 4-19, he said,

> are descriptive of events which will be accomplished shortly previous to the second advent of the Lord (p. 15).

He pointed to a book by an anonymous author, *On Antichrist*, published in1713, from which he quoted some similar views. We will consider this in more detail below.

In 1826 S. R. Maitland published *An Enquiry into the Grounds on Which the Prophetic Period of Daniel and St. John, has been Supposed to Consist of 1260 Years*. Subsequently B. W. Newton championed a posttribulationist view. Meanwhile, historicism continued to have adherents, as it does to this day among some Presbyterians and also Seventh Day Adventists.

In 1827 Edward Irving published his English translation of a Spanish tome by a Romish priest, Manuel de Lacunza (1731-1801), *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, in which we have a two-stage coming spanning 45 days, the number derived from the difference between the 1290 and the 1335 literal days of Dan. 12.

In Dec. 1826/Jan.1827 J. N. Darby understood the daily expectation of Christ, the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, and other related truth, as we have previously seen in Section 3. JND has written very ably exposing the true character of Romanism, in *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* vols. 18, 22, 29, and 31.

In 1829 S. R. Maitland published his *A Second Enquiry* . . . The Irvingite organ, the *Morning Watch*, took issue against S. R. Maitland's futurism, and did so from a historicist position. Others joined battle, while Wm. Burgh took a futurist position, followed by J. H. Todd's lectures in 1838, *Discourses on the Prophecies Relating to Antichrist in the Writings of Daniel and St. Paul; Preached before the University of Dublin, at the Donnellan Lecture*. The history of this controversy is not in our purview but I will mention the fact that John Henry Newman (first a priest in the Church of England, then a Romish priest and made Cardinal; and brother of F. W. Newman), published *The Protestant idea of Antichrist*, consequent upon J. H. Todd's lectures. [514] He took the position that there would be a future Antichrist and that the Pope was not the Antichrist, this latter idea being a part of the "Protestant interpretation" (i.e., historicism).

* * * * *

We will now expand on some of the points touched on in this brief survey.

514. *Essays Critical and Historical by John Henry Cardinal Newman*, London: Longmans, Green and Co., vol. 2, p. 112 (1914).

Chapter 7.2

Was Franciscus de Ribera the Source of Dispensational Truth and the Pretribulation Rapture?

Was Franciscus De Ribera the Root Of the "Dispensational Movement"?

The postmillennialist, L. Boettner, thought that he had found the root of the "dispensational movement." He wrote:

> But while the dispensational movement did not gain popular recognition until the rise of the Plymouth Brethren, its real origin is traced to a Jesuit monk, Ribera, who lived in the early Reformation era. The standard Protestant interpretation at that time was that the Pope was the Antichrist, and that the sins of the Roman Catholic Church were set forth in the 17th chapter of the Book of Revelation under the figure of the woman arrayed in purple and scarlet sitting upon the scarlet colored beast. In defence of the Roman Catholic Church the monk Ribera put forth the futurist interpretation of the Book of Revelation.
>
> Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, in his *Approaching End of the Age*, says: "In its present form it [the futurist interpretation] may be said to have originated at the end of the sixteenth century with the Jesuit Ribera, who moved like Alcazar [a Preterist] to relieve the Papacy from the terrible stigma cast upon it by the Protestant interpretation, tried to do so by referring these prophecies to the distant future, instead of, like Alcazar, to the distant past" (p. 100).
>
> Eric C. Peters says: "The method was invented by the Jesuit Ribera, in 1585. Strangely, the modern Futurists make no mention of him in their writings, but, be that as it may, to Ribera goes the credit for starting the Futurist fire . . . It was first set adrift by the Roman Catholic Ribera, for the sole purpose of confusing Protestants. The truth of this statement cannot be denied, for copies of Ribera's original book are still in existence" (Booklet, *Antichrist and the Scarlet Woman*, pp. 4, 5).
>
> Dr. Allis says, "The futurist interpretation is traced back to the Jesuit Ribera (A.D 1580) whose aim was to disprove the claim of the Reformers that the Pope was the Antichrist." He adds that, "Its acceptance by the Brethren was not due of course to any objection to the 'Protestant' interpretation as such, but to the fact that their literal interpretation of prophecy and their refusal to admit that predicted events were to precede the rapture made their acceptance of this system of interpretation inevitable" (*Prophecy and the Church*, p. 297). [515]

To these charges and the implication that there may be some connection with Jesuitical doctrines, we may reply:

1. A number of the so-called apostolic Fathers were more or less what we today call futurist posttribulationists. [516] Thus, the futurist interpretation is traced back, not to the Jesuit Ribera (A. D. 1580) as O. T. Allis said, but to the so-called apostolic fathers.
2. E. W. Bullinger, with whose distinctive views I have no sympathy, recounts the following story:

   > In the twelfth century Joachim, the Abbot of Floris, was a great student of prophecy, and Richard I, when in Italy on his way to the holy land was desirous of meeting him. This took place, and, according to the Chronicle of Roger of Howden, Richard, replying to some of Joachim's remarks, said, "I thought that Antichrist would be born in Antioch or Babylon, of the tribe of Dan; also that he would reign in the Lord's temple in Jerusalem; and would walk in the land in which Christ walked; and that he would reign there for three years and a half, and would dispute with Enoch and Elias, and kill them." Here are some features of what is called futurism maintained at the end of the twelfth century . . . [517]
3. In the last sentence from O. T. Allis, cited above, he let the futurist cat out of the hermeneutical bag. His last sentence is partly correct and also implies that prophecy has been spiritualized by many. In this system of spiritualization of prophecy, the promises to Israel are spiritually alchemized into church blessings. Thus Christianity is not really understood. If prophecy is taken literally (allowing for figures and symbols), O. T. Allis informs us that "futurism" is "inevitable." Why not, then, consider the matter on its own merits? The truth is that *in some measure* Ribera returned to what some of the so-called apostolic fathers had taught, for there is no

515. *The Millennium*, p. 376.

516. I say this as having examined relevant writings in the Eerdman's ed. of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. See also ch. 7.1.

517. *Things to Come* 21:78.

doubt that they looked for Antichrist and then Christ (they were really posttribulationists -- for the loss of the rapture preceding the tribulation, along with the rise of clerisy, were amongst the first departures). Following this, it was expected that Christ would set up a 1000 year reign on earth. [518]

Ribera and the Future Antichrist

It is a piece of historicist myth-making, taken up by others, that the Jesuit Ribera started futurism. This is a sample of an attempt to stigmatize on the part of some opposed to the truth. Many antidispensationalists appear to be attempting to stigmatize futurism as Romanism and Jesuitism; even some Preterists do so, who seem to ignore the Jesuit Alcazar who interpreted the book of Revelation in a preterist sense. [519] The historicist interpretation, i.e., the "Protestant interpretation," regarded the Pope as the principal Antichrist and so when futurists regarded the Antichrist as a single, future person, this was construed as assisting the Romanists by relieving the Pope of this charge of being the Antichrist. Ribera produced a commentary on the Revelation [520] in which he viewed the Antichrist as a future individual. Likely this was an anti-Protestant move. Be that as it may, futurism has had an earlier history.

Since early Christian writers held that the Antichrist was a future individual, Ribera was not the first to do so. Moreover, others that preceded Ribera also held such a view. Norman Cohn wrote:

> Moreover the eschatological tradition had long associated the Jews with Antichrist himself. Already in the second and third centuries theologians were foretelling that Antichrist would be a Jew of the tribe of Dan; and this idea became such a commonplace that in the middle Ages it was accepted even by scholastics such as St. Thomas Aquinas. Antichrist, it was held, would be born at Babylon; he would grow up in Palestine and would love the Jews above all peoples; he would rebuild the Temple for them and gather them together from their dispersion. The Jews for their part would be the most faithful followers of Antichrist, accepting him as the Messiah who was to restore the nation. And if some theologians looked forward to a general conversion of the Jews, others maintained that their blindness would endure to the end and that at the Last Judgement they would be sent, along with Antichrist himself, to suffer the torments of hell for all eternity. In the compendium of Antichrist-lore which Adso of Montier-en-Der produced in the tenth century and which remained the stock authority throughout the Middle Ages, Antichrist, while remaining a Jew of the tribe of Dan has become still more uncanny and sinister. [521]

Christopher Hill said:

> The [Antichrist] legend was summed up by the tenth-century French monk Adso, and taken over by orthodox scholastics like Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus. The identification of the Pope with Antichrist by medieval heretics led to the assumption that Babylon must be Rome, where Joachim of Flora thought Antichrist had already been born . . .
>
> In most protestant versions, on the other hand, despite occasional references to "Antichrist and his synagogue," the Jews play a much less sinister role: their conversion indeed is the prelude to the fall of Antichrist and to the millennium. Brightman had given 1695 as the date for the conversion of the Jews, but Mede and Archer brought it back to 1650-6. Mary Cary, Henry Jessey, John Tillinghast, and Thomas Goodwin, among a host of others, expected it in 1655-8 or by 1666 at the latest. Much controversial protestant energy was therefore spent in proving that Antichrist could not be a Jew, and that he had already come. Only Shelford in 1635 seriously suggested that Antichrist would be a Jew . . . [522]
>
> In general the widespread adoption by respectable protestant scholars of the view that the Pope was Antichrist led Roman Catholic interpreters to lay new emphasis on Antichrist as a Jew -- men of great erudition like Ribera and Alcassar, Bellarmine and Malvenda. [523]

I note in particular the words "to lay new emphasis on" in the last sentence.

What Was Ribera's "Futurism"?

E. B. Elliot was a very learned and well-known writer of the historicist school of prophetic interpretation. In one of his works he summarized the prophetical thoughts of Ribera. It is clear that his summary is not presented with a hidden bias in favor of futurism. He wrote:

> And let me at the outset beg my readers to observe, respecting this expositor, that he had not the hardihood which has been manifested by modern Futurists, to suppose the plunge into the distant future of the consummation to be made by the Apocalypse *at its outset*. For while, as Pareus states, Ribera has thought good to explicate the argument of the Apocalypse as if it were nothing else but certain commentaries upon our Lord's prophecy in Matt. 24, [524] he makes it *begin* with the early period of the Church. So his 1st Seal's white horse and rider signify the gospel-triumphs of the apostolic era; his 3rd Seal's black horse and rider, heresies; his 4th Seal,

518. The reader may wish to consult W. Kelly, "The So-Called Apostolic Fathers on the Second Coming," in *The Bible Treasury, New Series* 4:374-380; G. N. H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom* 1:494-498; 2:214-215; P. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* 1:614-620; C. Maitland, *The Apostle's School of Prophetic Interpretation*, pp. 97-103, 201-205; and the writings of the so-called apostolic fathers.

519. Likely, there are some present-day preterists who claim that the early church was preterist, similarly to some postmillennialists who claim that the early church was postmillennialist.

520. J. W. Brooks, *A Dictionary of Writers on the Prophecies . . .*, p. LXXIV (found in *The Investigator*, 1835) attributes these books to Ribera:

> Ribera, Franciscus de -- Commentarii in librum duodecim prophetarum; sensum prophetarum historicum et moralem, persaepe etiam allegoricum, complectentes. Antwerpiae, 1571, fol.
>
> An edition edited by R. Gibbons, an English Jesuit. Doway, 1612, 4to. -- Commentarius in Apocalypsis Joannis. Salmant. 1591. fol.

521. *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 77, 78.

522. *Antichrist in Seventeenth Century England*, New York, Oxford University Press, pp. 179, 180, 1971.

523. *Ibid.*, p. 178.

524. Parcus, Pref. p. 16.

the violence of Trajan's persecutions of the Church, and multitude of deaths of Christians under it, by sword, famine, wild beasts, etc. At length in the 6th Seal Ribera explains the phenomena there figured as meant of the signs before Christ's second coming spoken of in Matt. 24 and Luke 21: [525] and construes the sealing vision too, *with all that follows in the Apocalypse*, to have reference to the times of Antichrist: the four winds (life-giving winds) being meant literally; and their restraint by the four *good* angels indicating the calamities then destined to fall on the persecutors of the saints. The 144,000 of Apoc. 7 he makes to be the Jews converted to Christ at the consummation, though inconsistently afterwards explaining the 144,000 in Apoc 14 of both Jews and Gentiles under Antichrist; and taking the number 144,000 literally.

Passing to the 7th Seal Ribera explains the incense-offering Angel to be Gabriel; and the thunderings, etc., consequent to signify generally the judgments impending. Which judgments of the four first Trumpets he explains *literally*: -- as plagues respectively of hail, of some great fiery globe (qu. as of a comet?) cast into the sea; of a fiery exhalation falling from heaven; and of signs in the sun and moon, such as in Matt. 24. The locusts of the 5th Trumpet however he expounds figuratively of a woe of cruel and barbarous invading armies, (as barbarous as the Goths and Vandals of old,) which their crowned kings leading them on against the Church. In the 6th Trumpet the four angels are evil angels, bound at Christ's first coming, but now at length let loose to hurt men. -- In Apoc 10 the descending angel is the same that proclaimed about the book in Apoc. 5; and who swears that, because of men's not having been led to repent by the six previous Trumpet-plagues, the end of the world and last judgment are now at hand. -- St. John's direction to prophesy again meant simply that he had still many things to predict against the Gentiles. -- In Apoc. 11 alike the *temple* and *holy city* figure the *Church*: and the city's being given to be trod by Gentiles meant that it would be obtained and occupied by Antichrist with armies consisting of heathenish men. Ribera's slaughterplace for the two witnesses, (I presume, Enoch and Elias,) when slain by Antichrist, or the Beast from the abyss, is the city of Jerusalem: their 3-1/2 *days* of death denoting Antichrist's 3-1/2 *years*. The 7th Trumpet is that of the last judgment: but it is here noted by anticipation; as the prophecy reverts to a description of Antichrist's kingdom and doings.

In Apoc. 12 Ribera acts out the futurist. The Woman is the Church travailling in the last times, just before the 3-1/2 years of Antichrist; seeing that her 3-1/2 years in the wilderness coincides with those of Antichrist's reign: for he identifies the Dragon with the Beast Antichrist. Then, as to the Beast and his great city Babylon, in Apoc 13 and 17, here is the main point in Ribera's system. He admits that the Woman in Apoc. 17 is Rome, Papal Rome; and argues from 17:16, that *shortly before the consummation* the ten kings, figured in the Beast's ten horns, shall overthrow Rome; this being probably before the coming of Antichrist. But how so, seeing that the Woman is seen sitting on the Beast from the abyss, which in Apoc 11 Ribera had admitted to be Antichrist? Because in this chapter 17, with marvelous inconsistency, he makes the Beast to be the Devil reigning. Yet in Apoc 19, just after, when the Beast is taken, (of course the same as in the preceding chapters,) and the Dragon, and False Prophet, he admits the Beast to be Antichrist, just as in Apoc 11. Elsewhere Ribera doubts whether it will be the ten kings before Antichrist, or Antichrist himself, that will destroy Rome, after having his seat a while there. But what of the Pope when Rome is destroyed? Ribera admitting that the Papal seat will be destroyed, says that notwithstanding the Pope will still be the Roman Bishop, though he sits not at Rome, just as during the absence of 70 years at Avignon. In Apoc. 16 the *vial-plagues* are expounded literally, as those on Egypt. In Apoc. 18 Rome's burning is explained to be in judgment on the sins both of *old Pagan Rome*, and of *Rome apostatized*.

In the *millennium* Ribera follows Augustine. It is the whole time from Christ's resurrection to Antichrist's kingdom: the *new Jerusalem* being viewed by him, Pareus seems to hint, as a figure of the Church of Rome. [526]

We can see from this summary that we have a mixture of historicism regarding the first five seals, with futurism and also Augustinian amillennialism.

Charles Maitland quoted Ribera thus:

> And so Rome, after the worship of so many idols, after incredible superstitions, and after shedding the blood of so many martyrs, might yet remain till the end of the world, having become the seat of Christ's vicar, were it not that she will equal her former impiety with new sins and horrible wickedness. [527]

Charles Maitland suggested that Ribera's purpose was to refute Protestant attacks by utilizing some of the futurism of the early Christian writers:

> In this matter the Jesuits acted with their usual sagacity. By allowing Rome to be Babylon, they made the Apocalypse comparatively easy of exposition; and while they contrived to evade the dangerous consequences of their admission, they were entitled to insist upon the literal meaning of the city where the Lord was crucified. They could tie down their opponents to the Calvary of the spiritual Sodom, as rigorously as they themselves consented to abide the Palatine of the mystic Babylon. By this concession the revival of the primitive system was advanced: Ribera had already come nearer to it than Augustine. [528]

After discussing the views of a few more Jesuits, Charles Maitland noted:

525. *Ibid*. pp. 112, 116, 123.

-- On the 5th Seal Ribera says that the Apocalyptic figure of *souls under the altar* "had respect to the ancient custom of Christians laying up the relics of saints under the altar. 'For when', saith he, 'an altar is builded, there is made under it a sepulchre for to keep the relics: and the priest, dipping his finger in the chrism, makes the sign of the cross upon the four corners of the sepulchre, &c.'" But in this, remarks Pareus, "Ribera is to be hissed at: . . for this custom is superstitious and gross idolatry, idly invented many years after," p. 119.

526. *Horae Apocalyptae*, London: Seeley, etc. fifth ed., 4:481-483.

527. *The Apostles' 'School of Prophetic Interpretation*, p. 378.

528. *Ibid.*, p. 379.

> In proportion as the life of the Reformation declined, Rome relaxed those efforts that had enabled her to hold her ground in the great theological strife. The Jesuits, no longer thinking it needful to grant so much, shut up the Apocalypse, and devoted themselves to those political intrigues that have made their names infamous in modern history. [529]

To say that futurism is Jesuitism, as does L. R. Thomas, [530] seems quite bitter, but for such a student of history as H. G. Guinness to say that "futurism was first invented by the Jesuit Ribera" [531] is utterly excuseless.

We will later return to another Jesuit, Manuel de Lacunza.

529. *Ibid.*, p. 386.

530. *A Symposium on Prophecy*, pp. 80-81.

531. "The former, or futurist, system of interpreting the prophecies is now held, strange to say, by many Protestants, but it was first invented by the Jesuit Ribera . . ." Cited from *Romanism and the Reformation*, pp. 183,184, by V. K. Van De Ventor, *Some Errors of Futurism*, p. 1.

Chapter 7.3

Historicism and the Two-stage, Pre-conflagration Rapture

Joseph Mede is the father of English historicism. It is quite clear that he held a two-stage coming. He mistakenly thought that 2 Pet. 3:10 applied to a premillennial "conflagration" to be followed by a renovation of the earth so as to be fit to dwell on for the millennium. This created the difficulty of what to do with the saints while this conflagration went on. The solution was to have Christ come in two stages, in the first of which the saints would be raptured and then when the conflagration and renovation were completed, the Lord would descend to the earth with the saints. This influenced some of the subsequent writers, for Joseph Mede's works were widely read.

We shall survey some writers from the time of Joseph Mede, the father of English historicism, and conclude with E. B. Elliot, thus spanning the time from the early 1600s to 1862. Of course, not all historicists held a two-stage pre-conflagration rapture, because not all viewed 2 Pet. 3:10 as speaking of a pre-millennial conflagration. But those that did so view 2 Pet. 3:10 had to solve the problem of the protection of the saints during the pre-millennial conflagration, and this they did by holding a rapture before the conflagration and then a return to earth, wih Christ, after the conflagration was over.

After looking at some of the statements of some two-stage, pre-conflagration rapturists, we will refer to several other cases before examining the two-stage comings found in Morgan Edwards and Manual Lacunza -- in two other chapters

From Joseph Mede to E. B. Elliot

JOSEPH MEDE AND HIS PRE-CONFLAGRATION, HISTORICIST, TWO-STAGE COMING

Joseph Mede (1586-1638) lived long before July 1830. Mr. MacPherson says July 1830 is the point at which he found "the earliest mention of even a hint in Irving's writings of a two-stage coming." [532] Let us pause a moment to ask: is that what this is about -- merely finding a mention of a two-stage coming? Yes it is, and finding a "two-stage coming" is the basis of his claim of having found the origin of the pretribulation rapture (whatever he means by that phrase) in an utterance of Margaret Macdonald of Port Glasgow, in 1830. Well, then, what about the historicist Joseph Mede's (1586-1638) remarks:

> I will add this more, namely, what may be conceived to be the cause of this Rapture [533] of the Saints on high to meet the Lord in the Clouds, rather than to wait his coming to the Earth. What if it be, that they may be preserved during the *Conflagration of the earth and the works thereof*, 2 Peter 3,10. that as *Noah* and his family were preserved from the Deluge by being lift up above the water in the *Ark*, so should the Saints at the *Conflagration* be lift up in the Clouds unto their Ark, Christ, to be preserved there from the *deluge of fire*, wherein the wicked shall be consumed? [534]

Of course there is "a two-stage coming" in that quotation, though Mr. MacPherson will not have it to be so. Moreover, there have been other historicists that thought in such terms.For Mr. MacPherson to admit that there were some who held a "two-stage coming" before the time when he alleges Margaret Macdonald did, would undo his 30+ year mission, and expose his litany of *ad hominem* attacks and calumnies for what they really are.

A book in which Joseph Mede elaborated his reasons for believing that 2 Pet. 3:10 referred to a premillennial conflagration is, *A Paraphrase and Exposition of the Prophesie of St. Peter, Concerning the Day of Christ's Second Coming: Described In the Third Chapter of his Second Epistle. As also, How the Conflagration, or Destruction of the World by Fire, (whereof St. Peter speaks) and especially of the Heavens, is to be Understood*, London, third edition, 1652. Over the years the issue of whether or not the conflagration was premillennial or introductory to the eternal state was discussed, some holding it was one case, and others

532. *The Great Rapture Hoax*, p. 60.

533. {M. T. Horvat, A Roman Catholic writer said:

> The word Rapture was coined by John Nelson Darby, a leader of a British sectarian group, the Plymouth Brethren. The end times preaching of this rabid anti-Catholic took hold on his numerous trips to America and Canada (1859-1874) (*The Rapture Virus: Infectious, But not for the Informed Catholic*, Los Angeles: Tradition in Action, p. 4, 2003).

JND's "Familiar Conversations on Romanism" in *Collected Writings* 18 and 22 are able ctitiques. His little tract, "Superstition is not Faith; or, the True Character of Romanism" in *Collected Writings* 15:238, lays bare the character of Roman Catholicism. Also, his replies to Cardinal J. H. Newman (brother of F. W. Newman) in *Collected Writings* 18:145 and 22:187, 202, expose Roman Catholicism, and are hardy "rabid" writings any more that that he coined the word "rapture," used by Joseph Mede in the (continued...)

533. (...continued)
1600s.

534. *The Works of Joseph Mede*, 4th ed., London, 1677, p. 775.

the other case. Implicit in holding a premillennial conflagration, based on 2 Pet. 3:10, is a historicist, two-stage coming, with a pre-conflagration rapture, and a return to earth after the conflagration has passed and the earth has been renovated.

INCREASE MATHER, A HISTORICIST WHO HELD A TWO-STAGE COMING, WITH A PRE-CONFLAGRATION RAPTURE

In Increase Mather's (1639-1723), *A Disertation Concerning the Future Conversion of the Jewish Nation*, London: Tookey, 1709, p. 15, he wrote:

> The Living Saints at Christ's coming shall be *caught up into the Air*, that so they may escape the *Deluge of Fire*, which will be the Perdition of ungodly Men, Luk. 17:34; 1 Thess. 4:17; 2 Pet. 3:7. But before *this rapture* of the living, the dead saints shall be Raised. Therefore the Apostle says, *They that remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep*. i.e., They, as to their Bodies, shall not be with Christ before the Bodies of Saints asleep in the Grave shall be with him; but *the dead in Christ shall rise first*, and ἔπειτα, *after that*, the living saints will be caught up to meet the Lord coming in the Air, 1 Thess. 4:15, 16. *Chrysostom* on that Place observes *the just shall be the first Risers, not only in Dignity, but in Time*. As when the flood came, there was a Difference made between *Noah's* Family and the rest of Mankind. Thus when the world shall perish by Fire, no Saint shall be hurt by that Fire, but Sinners shall. We must not be wise above what is written, and therefore we may not determine how long the Conflagration will last. Noah's Flood continued for many Days and Months, he was a whole Year in the Ark. The weapons of *Ezekiel's Gog* are *Seven Years in Burning*, Ezek. 39:9. No doubt but that the Conflagration of the Great Day will last a long Time. Many will perish as soon as that fire begins; but the wicked shall not be raised until the Conflagration be over: Nor (as we shall endeavour to prove) of a long time after that. [535]

He is suggesting a *long interval* between the rapture and the descent to earth.

COTTON MATHER'S TRIPARADISUS

The following quotations are taken from Reiner Smolinski, *The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather, An Edition of "Triparadisus."* [536] *Triparadisus*, published posthumously, gives Cotton Mather's (1663-1728) matured views on the subjects treated, one of which is the conflagration, to which much space is given, based on viewing 2 Pet. 3:10 as introductory to the millennium (p. 190). One of the last things to happen to the saints, before Christ comes, is the persecution by Antichrist (p. 225). The saints "shall be *caught up to meet the Lord*" (p. 225). "Our GOD having thus *made up His Jewels*, and snatched away all that He had any Value for, the *Earth* is now left with none but the *Wicked* upon it . . ." (p. 227). The "*Vials* of Divine Wrath are poured out upon the World . . ." (p. 233). "Now, *Why should it be thought a Thing Incredible to you*, That GOD should bring upon the *Earth* a *Conflagration* which will *at once* carry all before it! Since the *World* is as *Wicked* now, as it was before the *Flood*. And there will be a far greater Number *Saved* out of the *Conflagration*, than there were out of the *Inundation*. The *Saved* will be far more than *Eight Persons*. Tis to be hoped, there will be no fewer than *One hundred & forty four Thousand* of them; From whom the NEW EARTH, will be *Replenished* . . . (p. 242). During this time the saints will be safe: ". . . *Caught up* to the Place, where the LORD will have His *Holy Ones* with Him, at such a distance from the *Earth* as to *Deliver* them *from the Wrath to Come*, and from the Flames of a World on Fire; They will be then again Returned unto the *Field* praepared for them, and be on the *New Earth* . . . (p. 273). The Antichrist will perish during the Conflagration (p. 330).

Interestingly, he speaks of the Conflagration in a way that makes it the great tribulation: "At this Time of such *Trouble as has never been from the Beginning of the World unto this Time* . . ." (p. 223).

He does not say how long the saints will be above before the Conflagration is ended and Christ descends with them to the earth. But it is clear there is an interval, a two-stage, historicist, second coming.

JOHN GILL LIKEWISE HELD A PRE-CONFLAGRATION, HISTORICIST, TWO-STAGE COMING

John Gill (1697-1771) opens Ch. 6 of his *A Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity* with these words:

> The effects of Christ's second coming and personal appearance are many; as the resurrection of the just, of which we have treated at large already; and the burning of the world, and making new heavens and a new earth, and the reign of Christ there with his saints a thousand years; and then the general judgment: of all which in their order. And to begin with the universal conflagration; which is strongly and fully expressed by the apostle Peter, 2Pe 3:10,12 where he says, "the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up": which is to be understood of the burning of the whole sublunary and visible world; signified by the heavens and the earth, taken in a literal and not in a figurative sense.

The conflagration, then, precedes the millennium. Where are the believers during this conflagration? In Par. 2f4e, he said:

> not one wicked man will escape the conflagration, all will be burnt in it, yet the wicked only; for the righteous dead, who will then be raised, and the living saints, who will be changed, will be caught up together into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and will be carried up far enough to be out of the reach of the devouring flames . . .

The Lord will be seen in the air (this we may think of as the epiphany). In Ch. 5, Par. 3 he wrote:

> 3. The visibility of Christ's personal appearance; he will appear in human nature, visible to all; the sign of the Son of man, that is, the Son of man himself, shall appear in heaven, in the air . . .

How long shall the saints remain in the air until the descent to

535. {His view is that the wicked are raised after the millennium, not immediately after the pre-millennial conflagration.}

536. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1995.

earth? In Ch. 5, Par 2b, he wrote:

> The place whither he shall come, is the earth; for, as Job says, he shall stand on the earth in the latter day; though he shall not descend upon it at once; when he appears from the third heaven, he shall descend into the air, and there stay some time, until the dead saints are raised, and the living ones changed; and both brought unto him there; and till the new earth is made and prepared for him and them; when he and they will come down from heaven to earth, and they shall reign with him on it a thousand years; and he shall reign before his ancients gloriously.

He did not speculate concerning the length of time the saints would be in the air while the conflagration and renovation of the earth took place. It is clear, however, that we have here, not the pretribulation rapture, not the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, but a historicist, two-stage, pre-conflagration rapture and a descent with Christ to the earth some time afterwards, connected with the misunderstanding of 2 Pet. 3:10, *just as in the case of Joseph Mede*.

THOMAS BURNET

Thomas Burnet (1635-1715) wrote an extensive description, exhausting imagination, of the supposed premillennial conflagration, viewing it as consuming all the wicked, world-wide, by fire. [537] However, the righteous will be

> translated and delivered from this fire (Book 3, p. 156).

The New Jerusalem, he wrote, is "the Spouse of the Lamb" (Book 3, p. 289). It is after the conflagration that the New Jerusalem descends:

> . . . for he places the *New Jerusalem* in the New Heavens and the New Earth, which cannot be until after the conflagration (Book 3, p. 289).

I am not aware that he ventures to say how long the interval between the translation and the descent is.

We will now go to the case of the well-known historicist, E. B. Elliot writing in 1862.

E. B. ELLIOT

The great 19th century champion of historicism, E. B. Elliot, also held a historicist, two-stage, pre-conflagration rapture, based on the misunderstanding of 2 Pet. 3:10, as if it referred to a conflagration introductory to the millennium.

> Now on this I must beg to remark, *first* and *foremost*, that by St. Peter's words, "We, *according to his promise*, look for new heavens and a new earth, &c.," the new heavens and earth, that he alluded to were identified with the new heavens and earth promised in Isa. lxv., lxvi.; in Isaiah's description of which alike *Jews* and *Gentiles*, distinct the one from the other, figure as the still remaining inhabitants; and Judah's city too, the earthly Jerusalem. So that supposing their identity irrefragable or irrefutable, as I believe it to be, inhabitants in the flesh are declared by Scripture itself to exist upon St. Peter's new earth, however preserved to it. -- *Secondly*, let me suggest that the earth of St. Peter's conflagration, at its primary outbreak at least, seems by no means certainly *the whole habitable world*; any more than the earth covered by the Noachic deluge must be certainly regarded as the whole terraqueous globe; (St. Peter's own case of parallelism;) or, in fact, any other than the *Roman earth*, which we have seen on Apocalyptic evidence is to be destroyed premillennially by fire at the time of Antichrist's destruction: -- and, in any case, that he who saved a remnant out of the *watery deluge*, may well be supposed to have his own ways of saving alive a remnant now again out of the *deluge of fire*. [538]
>
> As regards the earlier and millennial period of the New Jerusalem, it is of course among the Apocalyptic "nations" [of them that are saved], which are said to walk in its light, and "the kings of the earth," which are said to bring their glory and honor into it, that we are to place the restored Jews and Gentile remnant saved from the primary conflagration, of whom the Old Testament prophecy speaks so much: -- the Jews having now a certain pre-eminence and peculiar glory, such as seem constantly predicted of Israel and the earthly Jerusalem, in the earlier prophecies of the latter day. [539]

Commenting on the Romanists, Lacunza and Lambert, he wrote:

> I may add that like myself, he {Lacunza} considers Peter's conflagration to be one introductory to the millennium, and moreover not universal: also that he explains the new heaven and earth of St. Peter and the Apocalypse (like Lambert and myself) to be millennial in the date of commencement. [540]

Other Historicist Writers

There were historicists who wrote against that view that we are reviewing, applying 2 Pet. 3:10 to after the millennium. Likely, other historicists than those quoted above held a two-stage coming of Christ, the two stages separated by the conflagration of 2 Pet. 3:10, as they thought, and more research would likely bring this to light.

At any rate, it is clear that a two-stage coming was not first propounded by Margaret MacDonald in 1830.

Next we will consider an historicist that spoke of a two-stage coming of Christ, the two stages separated by 3 1/2 years.

537. In, *The Sacred Theory of the Earth: Containing an Account of the Original Earth and of All the General Changes Which it Already Hath undergone, or is to undergo, till the Consumation of All Things*, London, 1719.

538. *Horae Apocalypticae* . . . 4:192, 193, fifth ed. (1862).

539. The reference has escaped me.

540. *Horae Apocalypticae* . . . 4:542, fifth ed. (1862).

Chapter 7.4

Historicism and the Two-stage, Pre-1260 Days Rapture of Morgan Edwards

(1722-1795, Calvinist, Baptist.)

Here we notice the case of another pre-1830 writer -- Morgan Edwards, an historicist who held a rapture before the 1260 days. The evidence that there were those who held a two-stage coming before Miss Margaret Macdonald of Port Glasgow, in her supposed "revelation" received in 1830, means the end of Mr. MacPherson's notion, though he desperately insists on it. The fact that a fellow posttribulationist like Tim Warner acknowledges that Morgan Edwards did hold a rapture before the 1260 days of the Revelation would be no consolation for Mr. MacPherson. It is true that Morgan Edwards saw a little more clearly than Joseph Mede, who, as we saw above, posited a two-stage, pre-conflagration view.

Morgan Edwards is quoted copiously so that the reader may judge for himself what Morgan Edwards wrote. The reader will see Mr. MacPherson's manipulative attempt to make of Morgan Edwards a "historical posttrib" (whatever he means by that) by violently squeezing Morgan Edwards' two-stage coming separated by at least 1260 days, into a "tiny gap" of only three and one half days (yet, is not even that *a two-stage coming*?). The reader may look with more suspicion on how Mr. MacPherson views his favorite, Margaret Macdonald, and how he views his object of contempt and disdain, J. N. Darby.

Let us look at Morgan Edwards' own words before we consider Mr. MacPherson's contemptuous dismissal of that evidence.

Morgan Edwards' Statements

In 1980 a book was published, *The Life and Works of Morgan Edwards*, in which the authors point out that Morgan Edwards believed that there would be two resurrections separated by a little more than 1000 years, and that:

> the first resurrection would take place when Christ would appear in the air (1 Thess. 4:17), at which time the dead saints would be raised and the living saints would be transformed. Edwards believed that the first resurrection would take place three and a half years before the millennium. During those three and a half years , the risen and changed saints would be judged. After the judgment Christ would return to Jerusalem to rule the whole earth for a thousand years . . . [541]

Not only is this a two-stage coming, it is more than that as is easily seen when comparing this with the quotation from Joseph Mede above. The writers go on to say:

> About a month before the millennium would begin, Antichrist would be destroyed by Christ.

We do not know when Morgan Edwards thought the final Antichrist would first be manifested (he believed that the Popes were Antichrist).

We may note that this is not a pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture, yet, understandably, it might be called a pretribulation rapture -- while a pre-Conflagration or a Pre-Days-of-Vengeance rapture does not warrant such a description. It would amount to confusion and obfuscation, though it would appear to some to serve their purpose of finding such things as a source for the pretribulation rapture (the pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture).

I am not aware that any evidence has been presented that Morgan Edward's view was the origin of the spread of the truth of the pretribulation rapture. The origin of that spread was ***the complex of truths*** understood by J. N. Darby in 1827 (see Chapter 3.1-3.3). I desire here to emphasize that "literal interpretation," while having a rightful place (with all due allowance for symbolic and apocalyptic language, and figures of speech), is not, and was not, sufficient by itself for the spread. It necessarily fell short. The pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture involves the nature and unity of the assembly as one body on earth, with the heavenly position and calling of the saints, etc, .etc., along with the truth of the ruin of the church on earth viewed in responsible testimony (what Christ builds cannot be ruined, of course). There are those who presently hold the truth of the pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture who do not hold the ecclessiology, and other things, that JND taught.

Now let us consider something directly from Morgan

541. McKibbens, Jr., Thomas R., and Smith, Kenneth L., *The Life and Works of Morgan Edwards*, New York: Arno Press, 1980.

Edwards' book, lying before me, but with the spelling and Scripture references updated:

> II. *The distance between the first and second resurrection will be somewhat more than a thousand years.*
>
> I say, somewhat more --; because the dead saints will be raised, and the living changed at Christ's "appearing in the air" (I Thess. 4:17); and this will be about three years and a half before the *millennium*, as we shall see hereafter: but will he and they abide in the air all that time? No: they will ascend to paradise, or to some one of those many "mansions in the father's house" (John 14:2), and so disappear during the foresaid period of time. The design of this retreat and disappearing will be to judge the risen and changed saints; for "now the time is come that judgment must begin," and that will be "at the house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17). [542]
>
> When these witnesses will appear is hard to say; for though their time of prophesying in sackcloth is 1260 days or three years and a half (allowing 30 days to a month)yet they may preach out of sackcloth long before; for the 1260 days refer only to the time that the holy city and the outer court of the temple shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles (or Antichrist and his army) viz. 42 months, which make exactly 1260 days, allowing 30 to a month (Rev. 11:2): but the ministry of the witnesses requires many more years to perform than the time of their wearing sackcloth; and there are about no more than 204 years[543] between now and their death: I would therefore expect that their appearance is not far off. I have hinted before that the two witnesses and the Antichrist will be in Jerusalem during the said 42 months: they in the temple defending it; and the Antichrist and his army in the town besieging the temple: and he will prevail {over the two witnesses}. [544]

As a historicist, believing that the Popes have been the Antichrist, he understood that there would be a final Pope who would be the Antichrist that Christ would destroy directly:

> 4. The struggling of Antichrist towards the mastery of the world, and his assumption of Godhead will also precede the *millennium*. Who this Antichrist will be is hard to say. I take him as the last of them {i.e., the last Pope}, who have plagued the world under the name of *Popes*; for Antichrist is to be destroyed at Christ's coming to reign (2 Thess. 2:8), and popery will last to then . . .
>
> . . . when he has slain them {i.e., the two witnesses}, then the pope will spring up to Godhead . . . Then and not till then, will that wicked one be *revealed* who has hitherto assumed no higher title than "the vicar general of Christ on the earth"; but then off goes the mask. He will hold his godhead for 2300 days according to Daniel (ch. 8:14); but according to John for 42 months; viz 1260 days, allowing 30 to a month; the difference between these two numbers is 1040 days; and these are the days which the Lord has shortened for the sake of the elect nation of the Jews, lest they should all be destroyed (Matt. 24:22); so that the last and most dreadful persecution will continue but three years and six months, instead of six years two months and twenty days. Blessed therefore (saith Daniel) is he that cometh to the end of the 1260 * days; for then Christ will begin to reign, and Daniel will *stand in his lot* in his own country (ch. 12:12, 13), and Antichrist be no more.
>
> > * The number referred to by Daniel (ch. 12:13) contains 75 days more than his number in ver. 7; the reason is, the last begins at the time of the visions; the other at sealing the book that contains the visions, which made a difference of 75 days. This being granted, the two numbers agree with that of St. John, as they surely must; because both of the writers speak of the same event. [545]
>
> 5. Another event previous to the *Millennium* will be the appearing of the son of man in the clouds, coming to raise the dead saints and change the living, and to catch them up to himself, and then withdraw with them, as observed before. This event will come to pass when Antichrist be arrived at Jerusalem in his conquest of the world; and about three years and a half before his killing the witnesses, and assumption of godhead.[546]
>
> And that godhead he will now assume, after killing the two witnesses and gaining the temple. Behold, then, "the man of sin sitting in the temple of God, showing that he himself is God," (2 Thess. 2:4). Now the great persecution of the Jews will begin; who (though bad men) cannot submit to him as God . . . Nevertheless it appears that many of the nominal Christians, and Jews *outwardly*, will apostatize to him, and become his idolaters (Matt. 24:10, Dan 11:35). [547]
>
> 8. The last event, and the event that will usher the *millennium*, will be, the coming of Christ from paradise to earth, with all the saints he had taken up thither (about three years and a half before) . . . [548]

Whatever historicism he held does not alter this. Note also that he did not believe in an any moment coming. Indeed, on p. 34 he added another 205 or 208 years to the date of the publication of the book (1788) to the commencement of the millennium,

> . . . that from the present year (1788) to the commencement of the millennium are but two hundred and eight years . . . it is true, that a late chronologer places the birth of Christ in A.M. 4007; and makes it out that Dionitius fixed the Christian era 3 years too late; if, so there are but 205 between us and the *millennium*. Time little enough to bring forth the events we have already

542. *Two Academical Exercises on Subjects Bearing the Following Titles; Millennium, Last-novelties*, Philadelphia: Dobson and Lang, 1788, p. 7. "Last-novelties" seems to mean the new conditions of the new heavens and earth. This book is said to be an essay written during the time he attended the Bristol Baptist Seminary in England (1742-1744) and with a few changes was published in Philadelphia in 1788.

543. {In another quotation below the reader will see that M. Edwards thought there would be another 205 or 208 years from 1788 (i.e., 1993 or 1996) to the beginning of the millennium.}

544. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

545. {The 75 days from the end of the 1260 bring us to the 1335th day, the inauguration of the millennial reign. These matters are explained and graphically illustrated in my *The Seven Set Feasts of Jehovah*, and in my *Elements of Dispensational Truth*. However, Morgan Edwards is using these numbers as literal days and is coming to the point that the saints will be raptured before the opening of the 1260 days.}

546. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

547. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

548. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

> mentioned, viz the destruction of the Ottoman empire; the restoration of the Jews, and their rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple; the exploits of Antichrist towards the mastery of the world, &c. Therefore we may expect soon to see the fig tree budding and putting forth its leaves. [549]

He had a notion concerning seven septenaries from the creation of the world to its end (7000 years) and this was the result of his calculation. Well, 1788 + 205 or 208 = 1993 or 1996, years that are now past.

Note that he remarked upon what he expected to fill the time from 1788 until the future unfolding of the literal events that he wrote about. This is in keeping with his historicism, but does not change the final scenario that he described, concerning all those numbers which he took literally. The reader is now in a position to consider the following view of Morgan Edwards' statements.

Mr. MacPherson's Dismissal of the Historicist, Two-Stage, Pre-Conflagration Rapture

Before looking at Mr. MacPherson's dismissal of Morgan Edwards, let us see how he dismisses the historicist, two-stage, pre-conflagration rapture. Referring to the historicist writers that John Bray had quoted, Mr. MacPherson dismisses them thusly:

> Whenever one examines the context of these "hints" and also notes that their contemporaries saw nothing significantly new in the same "hints," the conclusion is that a handful of modern writers, for a variety of motives, has simply read into the earlier writers what they wished to see. [550]

First, the context shows that they held a historicist, two-stage, pre-conflagration rapture, or some variant of it. To John Bray's quotations, I have added others.

Second, observe his dictum that their contemporaries saw nothing significantly new in such views. *He* does not know what they saw, but his notion about Margaret Macdonald compels him to write as though he did. And if they actually saw nothing new, the explanation just might be that it was no longer new, but had a place in historicism. But the fact is that there were historicists who rejected the pre-millennial conflagration view (with its two-stage coming of Christ) as well as those who accepted it. His notion is historically unsound.

Third, here is the champion of reading in and out of writings what he wants to see, in support of his 30+ year investment in the phantom of his own imagination, attributing his own deficiency to others. It is quite clear who it is that sees what he wishes to see. This easy dismissal does not get rid of the facts. Let us now how Mr. MacPherson dismisses Morgan Edwards.

549. *Ibid*, p. 34.

550. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 227.

Mr. MacPherson's View of Morgan Edwards

Mr. MacPherson's view must necessarily be predetermined by insisting on maintaining that he is the discoverer of the source of the pretribulation rapture; i.e., in Margaret Macdonald, of Port Glasgow, in 1830. Apparently he is incapable of seeing a pre-1260 days rapture and the subsequent appearing of Christ, as presented by Morgan Edwards. Should this be a surprise?

His method is by pointing out historicism in Morgan Edwards (who denies that?), and by forcing historicism into his statements [551] that can only refer to literal, future things, and by postulating that Morgan Edwards' basis for a rapture 3½ years before the millennium,

> *may well have been the Revelation 11 witnesses on whom he focused. This chapter has a period of three and a half days (verses 9, 11) that historicism can view as three and a half years.* [552]

This chapter has 1260 days that historicism *can view* as 1260 days as well as 1260 years. Is the issue what historicism *can* view, or is it what Morgan Edwards *stated*? He concludes:

> Edward's scheme of a rapture three and a half years before the end of a *1260-year* tribulation has the same tiny gap a futurist would have if he were to teach a rapture three and a half *days* before the end of a *1260-day* tribulation! Since such a futurist view would be seen as a *posttrib* view, Edwards (who has the same small percentage) should be classified as a historicist *posttrib*! [553]

Even so, that would be a "historicist *posttrib*" ***holding a two stage coming***. So, after all, even with his humbug explaining away the plain fact that Morgan Edwards viewed the 1260 days as days, not years, he ends with an implicit admission of a two-stage coming, trying to minimize the thrust of this by referring to a "tiny gap" of 3 ½ days. It sounds like a biased "claim game" is at work, not sobriety in investigation. Can such a person be trusted to tell us what the writers quoted above thought, or what Margaret Macdonald thought, or what J. N. Darby thought?

He uses the words plot, hoax, humbug, etc., to denounce those opposed to his notion, yet it is but himself that is guilty of such things.

What we see incorporated into Morgan Edwards' historicism is a future, pre-1260 days rapture; a clear, two-stage coming, long before Margaret Macdonald was born.

We also clearly see an exposure of Mr. MacPherson's 30+ years agenda. However, he warns that:

> The real test is ahead. If pretrib promoters ignore or twist this book's documentation, and if their only bottom line is a continuing flow of funds, then I won't be surprised if

551. This he does while his favorite, Margaret Macdonald was also a historicist, as were the Irvingites. What is the description we use for those who espouse a double standard?

552. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 267

553. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 268.

> God views them collectively as an "Achan" (Josh. 7 and allows a national or even international money collapse! [554]

A money collapse would not be a surprise. What also is not a surprise is that he should think that such a thing would be God's world-wide vindication of himself!

554. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 234.

Chapter 7.5

A Move to Futurism -- William Witherby and S. R. Maitland

William Witherby

William Witherby published a book in 1818 [555] and another in 1821. [556] In the 1821 book (54 pages), he referred to historicism as a "delusion" (pp. 14, 19, 41) and condemned calculations (p. 18). He understood Rev. 4-19 to refer to future events previous to the second coming (pp. 14, 15), though he erred in taking the seventy weeks of Dan. 9 to be 490 days (pp. 28, 29), and applies them to the future regarding the final restoration of Israel. He connects the last half of the 70th week with the 3 ½ days of Rev. 11:11 (p. 32) so that the witnesses are killed in the middle of the 70th week of a literal seven day period (p. 34). It seems that the writer was misled in these things by rejecting the fact that the seventy weeks are weeks of years; i.e., 490 years, one of which is still future. Rightly rejecting historicism, he went too far in rejecting the understanding of the 70 weeks. He understood Ezek. 40-48 to refer to literal things (p. 25). There is no indication concerning the rapture. His view seems to me to be a confused posttribulationism. There was no expectation without intervening events.

We need not follow this further other than to notice that he referred to a book by an anonymous writer, dated 1713, *On Antichrist*, that refers to literal years at the end while allowing for a historical application (pp. 22, 52). W. Witherby called attention to Matt. 24:24 and said:

> A proper meditation on this great truth must stimulate us in this most glorious work . . . (p. 52).

He remarked upon agencies for the spread of Bibles and Christian and said :

> These have all one tendency, and will ultimately terminate in those glorious times when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Habak. 2:14.
>
> Let us, therefore, humble ourselves before the Lord, that we may be prepared for these things.
>
> But (to use the words of a pious writer - On Anti-christ, p. 213, Anno, 1713.) whether we regard it or not, whether we be provided or not, that day will surely come, the times are ripening apace; God hath begun to shake the heavens and the earth; an alarm is sounded to the ends of the earth. The day does already dawn upon the tops of the mountains; and the spirit of love and peace is descending in plentiful showers, like the latter rain upon the earth, to unite, strengthen, and prepare for himself a peculiar people, to be the first fruits of the kingdom of the Lamb. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly! turn thee, O thou beloved of our souls, and come swiftly as a roe, or a young hart, over the mountains of (Bether) Division, (even the divisions and distractions of the Christian Church), till the day (even thy day) break forth, and the shadows of darkness be perfectly dissipated. O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down and melt at thy presence! Lord, pity the stones of Zion. It is time that thou have mercy upon her, yea, the time is come. Thine holy cities are a wilderness; Zion is a wilderness; Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up. We see not our tokens, there is not one prophet more; there is none amongst us that knoweth how long. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things? O God, where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies towards us, are they restrained? Arise, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee. Send thy fear upon all the nations that seek not after thee. Show new signs, and make other strange wonders. Glorify thy hand and thy right arm, that they may set forth thy wondrous works. Make the time short; remember the covenant; gather all the tribes of Jacob together, and inherit thou them as from the beginning. O be merciful to Jerusalem, thy holy city. Fill Zion with thy unspeakable oracles, and thy people with thy glory. Give testimony to those whom thou hast possessed from the beginning, and raise up prophets -- such as have been, in thy name.
>
> O Lord, hear the prayer of thy servants, according to the blessing of Aaron, yea, of our everlasting high priest Jesus Christ, over thy people, that all they which dwell upon the earth may know that thou art the Lord the Eternal God. Amen.

I am not aware that W. Witherby's book had any impact, but we are not tracing impacts; we are considering views that were published regarding prophecy.

555. *A Review of Scripture, in Testimony of the Truth of the Second Advent, The First Resurrection, and the Millennium: with an Appendix, Containing Extracts from Mr. Joseph Eyre's Observations on the Restoration of the Jews*, London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1818.

556. *Hints Humbly Submitted to Commentators, And more especially to such as have written Elaborate Dissertations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation of Saint John*, London: Hatchard, 1821.

S. R. Maitland

Before Manuel Lacunza's book was published in English (in 1827),[557] in 1826 S. R. Maitland published his *An Enquiry into the Grounds on which the Prophetic Period of Daniel and St. John, has been Supposed to Consist of 1260 Years*, London: Hatchard.[558] He set forth elements of futurism in this book. In 1829 he published his *Second Enquiry into the Grounds on which The Prophetic Period of Daniel and St. John, has been Supposed to Consist of 1260 Years*, London: Rivington. In the Preface, (p. vi) he wrote:

> I was not aware that the literal interpretation of the 1260 days had been maintained in a work recently published. (b) I mention this, not only that I may offer my thanks to the author, for that and for other works on the subject, for which I am indebted to his kindness; but because, in some parts, the line of argument is so similar to that which I have myself followed, that the readers of that work might reasonably think me guilty of having borrowed from it without acknowledgement.
>
> > (b) "Hints humbly submitted to Commentators; and more especially to those who have written elaborate Dissertations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation of St. John: by William Witherby," London, 1821. The same view had been previously maintained in "A Review of Scripture, in testimony to the truth of the Second Advent, the first Resurrection, and the Millennium, &c. by a Layman" -- London, 1818 --a work containing many suggestions which I believe to be original, and which certainly well deserve the consideration of the writers on prophecy.

S. R. Maitland's 1826 book and the 1818 and 1821 books by Wm. Witherby were available in English before Lacunza's book. However, these writers were not Jesuits.

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557. As another example of how anti-dispensationalists falsify history, V. K. Van De Ventor remarked:

> *Futurism* was introduced into the Protestant Church by Samuel R. Maitland, a clergyman of the Church of England, from Romanist writers, chiefly from the Jesuit Lacunza, about 1830 (*Some Errors of Futurism*, p. 7).

558. W. R. Kimball, *The Rapture -- a Question of Timing*, Grand Rapids: Baker (1985), erroneously asserted that "He [M. Lacunza] would play an instrumental role in helping influence such key figures in the 'prophetic awakening' as Dr. Samuel Maitland . . .," (p. 32). He also merely asserts that S. R. Maitland drew from Ribera (p. 33). Referring to James Todd (who delivered futurist lectures in 1838) and W. Burgh's 1835 works, he wrongly stated: "As of yet pretribulationism had not surfaced" (p. 34). Next, relying on L. E. Froom's erroneous assertion that the pretribulation rapture teaching "was formulated" at Powerscourt castle, he asserted that "Irving and Darby stepped to the forefront and for the first time injected the novel teaching of a pretribulation rapture" (pp. 34, 35). How it had not surfaced by the time of J. H. Todd's 1838 lectures, and how Irving injected the teaching (having died in 1834) is left to the reader to solve. He also asserted that JND "borrowed it from his repeated contacts with the Irvingites" (p. 41). Well, it seems to be habitual with antidispensationalists to manufacture their 'data.' The agenda to be maintained is that JND must not have learned it from his study of the Word of God -- especially not before 1830.

Chapter 7.6

Manuel de Lacunza and the Two-stage, Post-1260 Days, Pre-45 Days, Pre-conflagration Rapture
With Notice of Lambert and Agier

We will now back up a little to consider a book by a Romish writer that influenced Edward Irving, whom we shall consider below.

Who Was Manuel De Lacunza?

Manuel de Lacunza was born in Santiago, Chile (1731) and died in Italy (1801). In 1747 he entered the Jesuit order and was ordained in 1755. When the Jesuit order was expelled from Spain and its colonies in 1767, he went to Italy for study and there wrote his famous tome, *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty,* under the pen name of Juan Josaphat Ben-Ezra, being suspicious it might be placed on the Index of forbidden books for Roman Catholics. He completed this work in 1790. Before it was published in Cadiz, Spain in 1812, it circulated in manuscript form. It was placed on the Index on Sept. 6, 1824 and again on July 11, 1941, referring specifically to its millenarianism. [559] There were numerous editions of this work in a number of languages, including condensations and extractions. [560]

Edward Irving, interested in prophecy, and learning Spanish, published a two-volume edition in 1827, in English. More about Manuel Lacunza may be learned in the introduction to that two volume edition and elsewhere. [561]

Alleged to be the Author of the Pretribulation Rapture

J. L. Bray is a Southern Baptist who, some years ago, accepted full Preterism, [562] which is, of course, heterodoxy. A series of articles was carried in *Thy Precepts* examining what is called "full" or "complete" preterism and directing attention to a number of fundamentally evil teachings inherent in it. J. L. Bray had been promulgating the notion that Manuel de Lacunza, a Jesuit, taught the pretribulation rapture. [563] He wrote:

> We look askance at Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Herbert Armstrongism, etc., because we know they had their origins with false teachings thought up in modern days by their leaders. But how in the name of Bible truth can Christians look with FAVOR on modern-day inventions by human leaders, such as the theory of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture, which never was taught by ANYONE before 1812 so far as we have any record? Actually, this is the way by which nearly all new cults have their beginnings.
>
> And I have not seen but one published book anywhere (and I have studied a tremendous number of books on this subject) that traced this Pre-Tribulation Rapture teaching back as far as Lacunza (1812), and that quoted very little from Lacunza. So I am hoping that all of what I have to say in this little book, tracing in detail the origin of the teaching back to Emmanuel Lacunza's book, will be of help to sincere and honest Bible students in ascertaining

559. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, New York: McGraw Hill, vol. 8, p. 309 (1967).

560. *Manual Del Librero Hispanoamericano*, Barcelona, vol. 7, article Lacunza (Manuel) (1954).

561. See L. E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers* 3:307ff, 518; *Encyclopedia Cattolica*, 7:796,797 (1951).

562. A chart of full Preterism may be seen on www.presenttruthpublishers.com.

563. D. McDougall, *The Rapture of the Saints*, p. 51 tells the following untruth:

> Were the Powerscourt meetings started for the express purpose of "bringing to light" the "secret rapture?" The theory had been in print for six years in Irving's TRANSLATION of Lacunza. It had been preached by Irving in his own church, and was regarded as one of the distinct tenets of his new Irvingite sect. But the spirit manifestations in connection with his preaching of the new doctrine had put the Christian public on their guard, so it took him six years to dispose of the first edition of his translation. Then, in this fateful year 1833, in which Newman floated the Tractarian Movement, appeared the cheap popular edition of Lacunza, and about the same time the Powerscourt meetings were first opened "for the study of prophecy." Would it be a very wild guess to surmise that the anonymous editors of Lacunza were among the promoters of the Powerscourt meetings?

This is quite a concatenation of manufactured 'facts.' I wish to comment only on this: the spirit manifestations came (1830) in sanction of E. Irving's teaching that Christ had the carnal nature; while E. Irving had done the translation of Lacunza in 1826 and the Powerscourt meetings, in their less public character, had begun in 1829. I suggest that D. McDougall is not only characterized by "wild guess" but by calumny, distortion and innuendo.

the truth about this matter. [564]

He since then learned about Morgan Edwards, and with some further research on his part he came across some historicists who held a two-stage coming. Now, rather than discussing his opinions about Lacunza, let us see for ourselves what Lacunza had to say.

Lacunza's Two-stage, Post-1260 Days, Pre-45 Days, Pre-conflagration Rapture

Lacunza stated his view that at the close of the 1290 days of Dan. 12 (which, of course, includes the 1260 days) the rapture will occur and judgment will be poured out for 45 days, before the saints return with Christ to the earth -- thus at the 1335th day of Dan. 12. Like some historicists had done, he viewed the conflagration of 2 Pet. 3:10 as occurring just before the millennium and that the saints would return to a renovated earth. But he gave it a precise time.

First, we take note of his statement that much before Christ's arrival to earth, He will have raised the righteous dead and have caught up the living ones:

> From these words of the apostle {1 Thess. 4:13-18}, which he himself gives us to know, that he spoke by the word of the Lord, we derive two truths of the utmost importance; first, that when the Lord returns from heaven to earth, upon his coming forth from heaven, and much before his arrival at the earth, he will give his orders, and send forth his commandment as King and God omnipotent; which is all signified in these words, With a shout, [in the vulgate, *jussu*, i.e. by the order] with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. At this voice of the Son of God, those who shall hear it, shall forthwith arise, and, as saith the Evangelist St. John (chapter 5:25.) "those who hear shall live." But who are these? May it not be all the dead, good and bad, without distinction? It certainly and evidently appears not, otherwise St. Paul would not have taught us, upon the word of the Lord, the great novelty of two things absolutely incomprehensible, as well as contradictory, to wit, that all the individuals of the human race good and bad should rise, which could not take place unless all had died; and after that resurrection, that some should still live and remain until the coming of the Lord. [565]

He directly linked 1 Thess. 4:13-17 with the elect in Matt. 24.

> Besides this, it ought to be remembered that the Apostle in this place is speaking of the resurrection of the dead *who are in Christ*, or of those who sleep in Jesus, and not a single word does he speak of the other infinite multitude; doubtless for this very reason, that their time is not yet come. In the same way speaketh the Lord in the Gospel, and pray consider it. *And they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory; and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds*. Matt. 24:30. If you compare this text with that of St. Paul, you shall find no other difference than this, that those who are to arise on the coming of the Lord, the apostle nameth those *who are dead in Christ*, who sleep in Jesus; and the Lord nameth them *his elect*. [566]

Thus, he placed the Christians in the time of tribulation in Matt. 24, but had said that before Christ actually descended to the earth, they would be caught up "much before His arrival at the earth."

Later in his work, he came to the conclusion that the interval would be 45 days. Let us consider what he wrote.

> Although it was said at the beginning of the fourth section that it is uncertain how long the great and terrible day of the Lord's coming will endure, that is the commotion, perturbation, and agitation of our globe; yet having now read with greater reflection the 12th chapter of the prophet Daniel, it appeareth to me certain that it cannot endure a shorter time than the space of forty-five natural days. Whoever readeth this chapter shall at once perceive, without the possibility of a doubt, that it is a prophecy wholly directed to the last times, very immediate upon the coming of the Lord, forasmuch as there are announced therein these two capital points only; first, the vocation and conversion of the Jews; second, the anti-christian temptation and tribulation of the Gentiles. Of this latter the prophet, or the angel who speaks to him, says, that it shall endure in all its force twelve hundred and ninety days, which is forty and three months. "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." Dan. 12:11. Which days being concluded, (doubtless in the first beginning of the day of the Lord,) these words are added, which have ever appeared to me an impenetrable mystery; "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days"; Dan. 12:12, the difference between which two periods is exactly forty and five.
>
> Why then shall he be blessed who waiteth or abideth alive during these forty and five days? Because he will be one of the few untouched by the two-edged sword which proceedeth from the mouth of the King of Kings. Because he will be one of the few clusters which shall remain untouched in the great vine when the "vintage is done." Because he will be one of the few which shall not have been deemed an object for the wrath of God Almighty, nor for the wrath of the Lamb. Because he will be one of the few who having seen this present earth and these heavens, shall be worthy to behold likewise the new heavens and the new earth, which "we according to his promise do look for." This appeareth to me the true understanding and resolution of that enigma. I invite all the intelligent to examine it with greater attention, considering, as ought to be done, the whole context from the beginning to the end of the chapter.
>
> In this examination it is very natural that some may be struck with another kind of enigma, which though accidental to the point in hand, might yet occasion a degree of embarrassment; which is, that the prophet Daniel makes the anti-christian tribulation to last for a thousand two hundred and ninety days, or forty and three months, whereas St. John in his Apocalypse assigned to

564. *The Origin of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Teaching*, p. 31.

565. *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty* 1:99.

566. *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty* 1:100.

> it only the duration of one thousand two hundred and sixty days, which is thirty days less. This difficulty occasioned me in other times not a little embarrassment, until I recollected those words of Matthew 24:22. "And except those days should be shortened, there should not flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." As St. John wrote after this prophecy and promise of Christ, he sets down the time of that great tribulation as actually abbreviated, and so strikes off thirty days from the time that it was to endure according to the prophecy of Daniel. In a pestilence of conflagration so great and universal, appeareth it to thee a slight mercy to assuage the fire thirty days before the time of its appointed duration, that all flesh might not perish? [567]

Note in the last paragraph that Lacunza explicitly wrote that "Daniel makes the antichristian tribulation to last for a thousand two hundred and ninety days . . ." That is something like posttribulationism. And he says, "John . . . sets down the time of *that great tribulation* as actually abbreviated, and so strikes off thirty days . . ." That makes the anti-christian tribulation last 1260 days. It is after the 1260 days that the rapture will occur. That is like posttribulationism. That "great tribulation" he denominates "a pestilence or conflagration so great and universal . . ." But not only that, he speaks of assuaging "the fire {of that tribulation} thirty days before the time of its appointed duration, that all flesh might not perish"; that is, it is assuaged by the 1260th day, after which the 45 days begins. Besides this, in the first paragraph, Lacunza had said Dan. 12 spoke of the "antichristian temptations and tribulation of the Gentiles" and that it would endure for 1290 days.

Elsewhere he remarked on Rev. 12:6:

> . . . three years and a half, the exact time during which the great tribulation of Antichrist among the Gentiles is to last . . . [568]

> The council or supreme judgment which opens, as hath been observed, after the delivery of the woman, continues open and in constant operation, all the time that the woman is in her retreat in the wilderness: that is to say, during the same forty and two months, during which the great tribulation of Antichrist among the nations is to endure . . . [569]

It is not to my purpose to outline all of Lacunza's prophetical scheme, such as, for example, that he regards the Antichrist not as an individual but a moral body, [570] that the Harlot is papal, [571] that the first beast is a body and the second beast the Roman Priesthood [572] or that the sun-clothed woman (Rev. 12) is the Zion of Isaiah, [573] i.e., the Jewish Church, [574] etc.

According to Lacunza, following the coming of Christ on the 1260th day when He will destroy the Antichrist, the day of the Lord will begin and last for 45 days. Since the seals, trumpets and vials, really all of Rev. 4 - 18, have already occurred, and Christ has come (Rev. 19), what occupies these 45 days? It is the conflagration of 2 Pet. 3. Lacunza said:

> This great day being at length concluded, (the time of the duration of which we know not,) the horrible tempest being overpast, all the impious and sinful being exterminated thence, the ecliptic and equator being united in one and the same individual line, the whole atmosphere hushed, the air cleared, the sea quiet, and all its waters gathered into the place which shall then be appointed; there must necessarily forthwith appear a new earth, a new heaven, a new terraqueous orb, in every thing widely different from what the present is, even as the present appeared in everything very different after the flood of Noah was past; and in every thing it shall be at least as good as it was in its primitive state . . . "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13) . . .
>
> And here thou dost behold the present age concluded, and the day of men come to its end . . . Now begin the thousand years of St. John, at the beginning of which the imprisonment of the devil must take place, with all the circumstances which are written expressly throughout the 20th chapter of the Apocalypse . . . [575]

It should be clear that his view is that the Revelation from chap. 4-19 precedes Christ's coming, that the tribulation under Antichrist precedes that coming; at which coming Antichrist is destroyed and the saints are caught up and remain in the air during the 45 days of the Day of the Lord during which the conflagration of 2 Pet. 3 takes place in preparation for the 1000 year reign. What we have is a posttribulationist variation, a two-stage, pre-conflagration coming, not a pretribulation rapture (a pre-Rev. 4 rapture) with all its blessed associations and interlocking truths.

Lacunza would say that many held that a period, whether long or short, was understood to occur between Antichrist and the millennium. At first he did not think that this period was 45 days, but later he did and inserted the addition quoted above. He wrote:

> *That there shall be a space of time after Antichrist, is established by the unanimous consent of all the doctors.* [576]

Well, perhaps the origin of the doctrine of the pretribulation rapture goes back to some early "doctors"?

Conclusion Regarding Lacunza

Lacunza taught a variation of futurist posttribulationism. He believed that the church would go through the 1260 days of tribulation, though he placed a subsequent 45 day period between the rapture and the return to earth, during which the conflagration of 2 Pet. 3:10 [577] was to occur and the saints

567. *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty* 2:250, 251.
568. *Ibid.* 2:103.
569. *Ibid.* 2:107-109.
570. *Ibid.* 1:197-199.
571. *Ibid.* 1:253.
572. *Ibid.* 1:217-222.
573. *Ibid.* 2:91-93.
574. *Ibid.* 2:117.
575. *Ibid.* 2:248, 249.
576. *Ibid.* 1:276.
577. As E. B. Elliott said:

(continued...)

return to a renovated earth. It is a variant of a pre-conflagration, two stage coming, set in a posttribulational scheme.

Keeping this in mind, the reader may perceive that as we review the development of prophetic views among Irvingites, he may see Lacunza's influence at work, for it was E. Irving who published Lacunza's two volumes in 1827.

I hardly need to say that Lacunza is not the source of the doctrine of the pretribulation rapture (the pre-Rev. 4 rapture), the interlocking church truth, and dispensational truth.

Moreover, I hardly need to say that Mr. MacPherson will not have it that Lacunza taught such a two-stage coming, though some of his posttribulationist friends are admitting it is so, as the reader may discover on the internet.

Père Bernard Lambert and Pierre Jean Agier

The Romanist priest, Lambert (d. 1813), is mentioned in this survey only because T. C. F. Stunt has brought forward three letters by S. P. Tregelles to B. W. Newton that he thinks bears on the development of JND's views.[578] The reader may consult E. B. Elliot's *Horae Apocalyptae* 4:530-536, for a survey of Lambert's views on prophecy. Also, L. Froom, *Prophetic Faith* 3:324-326 has some comments on Lambert. There is a translation giving copious extracts from the French of Lambert's "Last Times of the Gentile Church," found in the *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* 1850, pp. 234-238, 489-499, and 1851 pp. 108-111, 212-215, 323-327, 417-422.

I pause to note that Lambert holds that the conflagration will be premillennial but the extracts do not indicate how the living righteous are to be preserved during that period, though we are told:

> This new earth will become the habitation of the just, and of those who have taken part in the first resurrection. [579]

I have nothing really to say about the views of Lambert and Agier [580] other than that when quotations from these writers are given which are supposed to support what S. P. Tregelles says concerning J. N. Darby, that will be the time to consider the claim. I am mindful of the shocking behavior that went on in Plymouth in support of B. W. Newton, in which S. P. Tregelles had a hand, which came to light through a manuscript by Henry W. Soltau, a self-confessed, guilty participant in that ungodly behavior, and which is formally published for the first time in volume two of this series on J. N. Darby. If the reader is suspicious that I do not trust S. P. Tregelles' representations when it involves JND, he is correct.

I have had, for some years, copies of the first two letters quoted by T. C. F. Stunt (from the Christian Brethren Archive at John Rylands University, England), and will quote from them as he has done, and take the liberty of quoting the third from his copy, the final sentence quoted from it being of much interest:

> To BWN Jan. 29, 1857
>
> The book on prophecy by the Père Lambert is entitled Exposition des Prédictions et des Promesses faites à l'Eglise pour les derniers temps de la Gentilité. Paris 1806. The views in this are much more sound than those in the Commentaries on the prophets by the President Agier (published at various times up to about 1824).
>
> Lambert and Agier were the writers Mr J. N. Darby studied earnestly before he left the Church of England. I remember his speaking much about them in 1835; & when I *saw* what Agier had said, I learned the source of his notions. As soon as he learned German he read Olshausen (who had himself gathered from Agier) with avidity: I remember how *earnestly* he recommended Olshausen to me before I knew a line of German. And thus out of Agier and Olshausen sprung up the system that divides the Church of the saved into classes essentially distinct and puts the saved of this dispensation on a ground indescribably higher than those before or after. You would however often fail in guessing Olshausen's meaning from the published English translation. [581]

The next letter quoted is CBA 7181(28), dated Aug. 31, 1862 but I will add something else from this letter that shows his notion of what Christian blessing is:

> The way in which I printed my translation of the sentence in Jer. 33:16, twenty two [or twenty three] years ago was
>
> > "And this is that which shall be declared unto her, The Lord is our righteousness."
>
> And my note on it was this --
>
> > "This is what *we* believers in Christ now know: and all our blessing depends upon it. Jerusalem will then know it likewise and in it her blessing depend: thus our salvation does not rest upon one ground, and the future blessing of Israel upon another, but each upon the same; each is secured in the work of the same Lord; each will have the same completeness: and (however different in circumstances) each will have the same characters."
>
> Throne of David, p. 12.
>
> This was just when Mr Darby was learning from Olshausen to split up the saved into classes essentially distinct.

The blessing of every saint in any age is based on the work of

577. (…continued)

> I may add that like myself, he {Lacunza} considers Peter's conflagration to be one introductory to the millennium, and moreover not universal: also that he explains the new heaven and earth of St. Peter and the Apocalypse (like Lambert and myself) to be millennial in the date of commencement (*Horae Apocalypticae* . . . 4:542, fifth ed. (1862)).

He, like Joseph Mede (and Lacunza) and John Gill, as well as the two Mathers, believed in a two-stage, pre-conflagration coming.

578. "The Tribulation of Controversy: A Review Article," *Brethren Archivists & Historians Network Review* 2:2, Autumn 2003, pp. 97, 98.

579. *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, 1851, p. 422.

580. 1784-1823. He was a French jurist of a Jansenist family. The British Library has numbers of his writings. L. Froom, *Prophetic Faith* 3:482 comments on some of his views.

581. CBA 7181(7).

Christ on the cross. It does not follow from this fact that therefore there are no spiritual blessings of saints now that are unique. His objection is neither Scriptural or logical. Moreover, we do not know what he meant by the word "essentially" distinct. There is a common blessing to all saints: the new birth. There are distinct blessings of saints. Every blessing for any saint is based on the finished work of Christ.

The next letter, Nov. 20, 1865 (CBA 7181(89)), remarks upon Prof. Payne-Smith having told him that he heard "the doctrine of the indescribable heights of the Church of this dispensation above Abraham and Isaac and Jacob taught by an 'evangelist' to the children of an Irvingite School . . ." S. P. Tregelles wrote:

> Did the Brethrenites get this doctrine from the Irvingites?

Well, I have a question also. Did JND get it from Lambert and Agier and Olshausen, or did he get it from the Irvingites?

Which is it? In 1854 S. P. Tregelles said the teaching of "the secret rapture" (whatever he meant by that) came from Judaizers. In 1862 he said it came from a demonic utterance in 1832, in Irving's church. Concerning JND's teaching of the distinct place of blessing of the church, in 1857 he said it came from Agier, Lambert and Olshausen. In 1862 he said JND learned it from Olshausen. In 1865 he asks, "Did the Brethrenites get this doctrine from the Irvingites?"

And there I leave it.

Concerning classes of saints, of course JND saw distinctions in 1827. In 1843 he wrote:

> I find many more classes of saints and glory in the Apocalypse than heretofore, though all blessed.[582]

In his magisterial refutation of the posttribulationist, B. W. Newton, he again spoke of classes of saints. [583] S. P. Tregelles was, of course, at one with the views of B. W. Newton.

582. *Letters* 1:59.
583. *Collected Writings* 8:299.

Chapter 7.7

Alleged Demonic and Occult Source of the Pretribulation Rapture

JND understood the immediate coming early in 1827 (Chapter 2.4), and perhaps in Dec. 1826, actually. Besides that, we saw in Chapter 3.1 the great range of truth he had apprehended, with a pre-Rev. 4 rapture. And so the allegation that JND received the idea of a pretribulation rapture from a demon-inspired utterance in Irving's church in 1832 (or a visionary, tongue-speaking Scots girl in Port Glasgow in March of 1830) is false. Nonetheless, for some completeness, we will trace the manufacture of these bizarre and unprincipled calumnies.

I call attention to T. C. F. Stunt's article, "The Tribulation of Controversy: A Review Article," *Brethren Archivists & Historical Network Review 2:2*, Autumn 2003, pp. 91-98, in which, as a non-dispensationalist, he rejects Mr. MacPherson's view.

The Alleged Demonic Source

In 1864 the posttribulationist S. P. Tregelles, of text critic fame, put forth the charge as follows:

> But when the theory of a secret coming of Christ was first brought forward (about the year 1832), it was adopted with eagerness . . .
>
> I am not aware that there was any definite teaching that there would be a *secret* rapture of the church at a secret coming until this was given forth as an "utterance" in Mr. Irving's church, from what was there received as being the voice of the Spirit. But whether anyone ever asserted such a thing or not, it was from that supposed revelation that the modern doctrine and the modern phraseology respecting it arose. It came not from Holy Scripture, but from that which falsely pretended to be the Spirit of God, while not owning the true doctrine of our Lord's incarnation in the same flesh and blood as His brethren, but without taint of sin. [584]

Nine years earlier, in 1855, S. P. Tregelles had attributed the doctrine *merely* to Judaizers:

> All Christians, of course, believe what is taught in 1 Thess. 4, as to the raising of the dead in Christ when He comes, and this was known alike by John and by those whom he addressed, in Rev. 1 . . . Their hope is that day; not some secret advent, or secret rapture to the Lord, as Judaizers had supposed might be the case, but His coming, with every circumstance of publicity and manifested glory. [585]

It should be noted that these two allegations are contradictory.

In 1840 and 1861 R. Norton published books that spoke about a "revelation" that Miss Margaret Macdonald (MM) of Port Glasgow, Scotland received. Since R. Norton spoke about 1830 and Scotland, it is evident that S. P. Tregelles (SPT), who spoke about 1832 and E. Irving's church (London), did not get his ideas from R. Norton's books. Perhaps SPT *manufactured* the notion.

And what did B. W. Newton (BWN) say? Pointing out that a number of persons awoke through Lewis Way to Israel's prophesied return, he said:

> Soon Irving joined, and ruined it all by suggesting the secret rapture. [586]

We do not know what "secret rapture" means here. It might refer to a historicist pre-conflagration, or historicist pre-days of vengeance rapture. BWN did not attribute this to one of those who spoke in tongues or other kinds of utterances.

At any rate, SPT was, along with BWN, in the Plymouth, England, gathering of Christians. They were in fellowship with JND for some time. In 1844 BWN began publishing his *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*, a posttribulational work to which JND replied, as it was issued, in parts. The book by BWN is really a systematic attack on the truth God had recovered to His saints through the instrumentality of JND. But BWN, though greatly opposed to JND and dispensational truth, never alleged a demonic source for the pretribulation rapture as JND understood it. W. Kelly noted

584. *The Hope of Christ's Coming, How Is It Taught in Scripture and Why?* p. 35.

585. "Premillennial Advent" in *The Christian Annotator* 2:190; June 16, 1855.

585. (...continued)

586. *Fry MS*, p. 233.

BWN's knowledge of Irvingism:

> Mr. Newton knew, as well or better than most at this time of day, such of the Newman St. oracles {Irvingite demon-inspired utterances} as reached ears and eyes outside . . .

Yet BWN, who was acquainted with the teachings of Irvingism, made no charge of a demonic source. Instead, he is the one who claimed that, about 1830, a certain Mr. Tweedy suggested 2 Thess. 2:1, 2 to JND as bearing on the immediate coming (*that,* JND had understood during the Dec. 1826/Jan 1827 period of isolation and convalescence). More will be said about 2 Thess. 2:1, 2 later (ch. 7.7).

SPT stood with BWN as an ardent defender of his teachings and as an opposer of JND. BWN was guilty of teaching that Christ was at an "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God" and held that all his life (See Appendix 2 herein, and vol. 2 in this series for details). Eventually faithful brethren separated from BWN and his supporters in Plymouth because of BWN's evil doctrines concerning Christ's Person. SPT stood with BWN and subsequently when BWN became a clergyman of a church, SPT was the one man he trusted to fill his pulpit when he was absent. This is taken up in vol. 2.

Writers in *Watching and Waiting* (a British, posttribulationist publication of Strict Baptists) are supporters of SPT and BWN and in substance repeat SPT's charge:

> . . . the Any Moment, Secret Rapture, Pre-Tribulation, or Two-Stage Coming theory was taught by Edward Irving, as a result of a vision received by a woman in his church. [587]

> Beginning with an Irvingite woman, then propagated by Mr. J. N. Darby, this new, spirit-inspired doctrine . . .[588]

> This strange theory, originally put forth by persons in connection with the Irvingite assembly under the power of evil spirits . . . [589]

J. B. Payne, once professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College, erroneously wrote:

> For soon after 1830 a woman, while speaking in tongues, announced the "revelation" that the true church would be caught up (raptured) to heaven before the tribulation and before Christ's return to earth. Edward Irving was deposed from the ministry and died in 1834, but not before his pre-tribulationism had been introduced at the Powerscourt meetings. There the Irvingite view received the enthusiastic support of Darby and of others. . . [590]

Listen to the historicist E. P. Cachemaille, who, relying on SPT, wrote:

> It is very notable that the whole movement, including the origin of the "Secret Rapture" idea, belongs to the era when the three unclean and delusive spirits like frogs began to go forth. It would therefore be part of their work. [591]

Being a scholar has not saved him from this foolishness. These statements proceed, not from inquiry into the history of the matter, but from a certain animus to JND and opposition to dispensational truth. Having misrepresented the Irvingite teachings, they have alleged that these (misrepresented) teachings were accepted by JND.

Here is how the matter stood in the early 1830s. Robert Baxter, a lawyer who had joined the Irvingites in London, England, became one of their "prophets," and subsequently was delivered from that demonic snare. He wrote an exposure of the Irvingite delusion in 1836 wherein we find what Irving and his followers actually held concerning the second advent:

> The first testimonies from the utterance [592] were on the nearness of the coming of Christ, and of the fearful judgments which would immediately precede it. The minds of Mr. Irving and his followers had been prepared for this by a long course of prophetic study; and the opening and upholding of their prophetic views formed one of the means by which the utterances commended themselves to their consciences as from God. . .
>
> This was the position of affairs when I unhappily joined them. In January 14th, 1832, [593] I became a participator in the power of utterance, and was recognized by Mrs. Caird, Mrs. J. and Miss E. Cardale, Miss Hall, and Mr. Taplin, as equally gifted with themselves . . .
>
> The progress of the utterances was from this time very rapid. Under the interpretation of the eleventh chapter of the book of Revelation, it was declared the persons speaking in power were the two witnesses who in that scripture are said to prophesy three years and a half, and then be slain and raised again, and caught into heaven. That thus these utterances were God's witness to the earth for an appointed season, preparatory to the day of Christ. This, it is true, was first declared from my own utterance, but it was received and sanctioned by the others, and was preached as truth by Mr. Irving in the public congregation . . .
>
> There was an utterance from Miss Cardale, in April, 1832, which stated, "*that the word was true, but contained a mystery*." I know not what is to be inferred

587. Oswald J. Smith in *Watching and Waiting*, July-Aug., 1957, p. 341. The readers of *Watching and Waiting* have been fed a steady diet of this falsehood. See July-Aug. 1954, p. 54; July-Aug. 1956, p. 242; Sept-Oct. 1956, p. 266.

588. *Watching and Waiting*, July-August, 1956, p. 242.

589. *Watching and Waiting*, November-December, 1969, p. 391.

590. *The Imminent Appearing of Christ*. p. 32. See also G. E. Ladd (once professor at Fuller Theological Seminary), *The Blessed Hope,* pp. 40,41, to the same effect. Yet he says (p. 148) that we should not dissipate our energies over the rapture question! G. L. Murray, an amillennialist, quotes S. P. Tregelles without comment. A. Fraser, *Watching and Waiting,* Sept.-Oct. 1956, vol. 15, p. 266, also repeats S. P. Tregelles, as does *Teachers* (continued...)

590. (...continued) *of the Faith and Future,* p. 42, by G. F. Fromow. Others who have attributed (the truth of) the pretribulation rapture to a demon are quoted by G. Stanton, *Kept From the Hour,* pp. 217,218.

591. *The Prophetic Outlook Today*, p. 20. The statement must be understood in the context of his historicism.

592. {"Utterance" refers to Irvingites speaking by a power that came upon them, causing them to "prophesy." R. Baxter believed it was demonic power and had himself experienced it. See my *The Word of God Versus the "Charismatic Renewal*," Appendix 2: "Irvingism and Demon Manifestations," available from the publisher.}

593. {On the above date R. Baxter prophesied that the Lord would come in 3 1/2 years.}

> from Miss Cardale's message; but this I do know, that Mr. Irving, up to the time of this message, preached it literally; that I always declared it to be such; that the opening of the chapters in the Revelation concerning the trumpets, which was confirmed by Mr. David Dow, proceeded upon the same assumption. This moreover is also the fact, that on the 14th July, 1835, when the three years and a half had expired, the church in Newman Street had called for delegates from all their followers throughout England, to meet as a holy convocation, which was extended for seven days. So much importance did they continue to attach to the literal interpretation of the days. [594]

It is quite clear that JND did not receive the doctrine of the pre-Rev.4 rapture from E. Irving or others who taught that "fearful judgments" . . . "would immediately precede" the coming of Christ.

The Alleged Occult Source: Margaret Macdonald

We have observed previously that one of Mr. MacPherson's manipulations regarding JND is to indicate that JND was a liar and also to allege a delay in JND's understanding regarding the pretribulation rapture. And thus he systematically 'misunderstands' what JND wrote, seeing things that are not in his writings and not seeing what *is* there (unless to indicate that JND is not being truthful). [595]

Mr. MacPherson has relocated the source of the teaching of the pretribulation rapture from London in 1832, to Port Glasgow, Scotland in 1830 (though at first he parroted the calumny of S. P. Tregelles). [596]

This shift involved a Margaret Macdonald. In another mimeographed brochure, *Who was Margaret Macdonald?* (1971) he wrote:

> She was the young woman who originated the Pre-Tribulation rapture theory!
>
> According to Robert Norton's book, *The Restoration of Apostles and Prophets in the Catholic Apostolic Church* (London: 1861), she claimed on p. 15 to have received a "revelation" in the spring of 1830, while living in Port Glasgow, Scotland, that Christians would be raptured *before* the Tribulation -- something never taught before 1830. Before 1830, the Church taught only one coming, *after* the Tribulation!
>
> Margaret's revolutionary "revelation" split the second coming of Christ into two phases -- first, a Pre-Trib rapture; then later, after the Trib, the return of Christ to earth. Her own statement, covering three pages in Norton's book, clearly contains most of the major tenets found today in Pre-Trib dispensationalism -- meeting the Lord in the air, secrecy, suddenness, invisibility, imminency, a Pre-Trib separation of believers and unbelievers, distinction between the raptured bride and the Trib elect, and so on.

He did not say what "the tribulation" meant here. Is he trying to have the reader believe that this tribulation was the second half of Daniel's 70th week? Later he would *shift* to a Partial-rapture view of what Margaret Macdonald said, assuming she said it. Even so, that would be a post-Antichrist, partial rapture.

Margaret Macdonald's "Revelation"

Mr. MacPherson refers us to a book by an Irvingite, R. Norton, *The Restoration of Apostles and Prophets In the Catholic Apostolic Church* (London: Bosworth and Harrison, 1861), pp. 15-18, [597] and I cite from the copy located at Yale Divinity School. The account is also found in a book by R. Norton published in 1840, *Memoirs of James & George Macdonald of Port Glasgow*. This 1840 account ***differs*** from the 1861 in an important way -- one that tells a story. Here is his *1861* account of Margaret Macdonald's "revelation," *after R. Norton had become a member of the Catholic Apostolic Church (Irvingites)*:

> Marvelous light was shed upon Scripture, and especially on the doctrine of the second Advent, by the revived spirit of prophecy. In the following account by Miss M. M __, of an evening during which the power of the Holy Ghost rested upon her for several successive hours, in mingled prophecy and vision, we have an instance; for here we first see the distinction between that final stage of the Lord's coming, when every eye shall see Him, and His prior appearing in glory to them that look for Him.
>
> She writes:-- "I felt this needed to be revealed, and that there was great darkness and error about it; but suddenly what it was burst upon me with a glorious light. I saw it was the Lord Himself descending from heaven with a shout -- the glorified Man -- even Jesus; but that all must be, as Stephen was, filled with the Holy Ghost,

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594. *Irvingism in its Rise, Progress, and present State*, pp. 18-35 (1836).

595. Here is another example. He wrote:

> The . . . "Passing Away of the Present Dispensation," is not dated but probably appeared between 1835 and 1839. On p. 97 he talks about "the gathering out the remnant before the judgments" and ties this with Revelation 14:6-7 . . . In this period of his development Darby thus had a small gap between stages and taught a prior appearing (Rapture) that would happen just before the judgment of the nations (*The Great Rapture Hoax*, p. 157).

Reading this without checking on him, who would have thought that there is a footnote **on this very page** of the *Collected Writings*, vol. 2, p. 97? There JND wrote:

> The literal accomplishment of this passage is, I doubt not, yet wholly future. It will be a testimony, or gospel, of the kingdom when the church is gone.

Thus, to JND, "the remnant before the judgments" was no the church at all!

596. In 1971 he published the following statement in a mimeographed brochure, *Origin of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Theory*:

> It was from this supposed revelation {i.e., in Irving's church in London} that the modern doctrine and modern phraseology respecting it arose: it came not from Scripture, but from that which falsely pretended to be the Spirit of God.

Observe that he is here using the words of S. P. Tregelles *charging a demonic source*, and an utterance in E. Irving's church in London, 1832.

597. W. Kelly has penned some notes on the history of Irvingism in *The Bible Treasury* 17:219, and used this book as one of his sources. See also pp. 233-237, 252-255, 268-271, 283-287, 300-303, 315-318, 329-332, 350-351, 365-366. See Appendix 15 for quotations from this.

that they might look up and see the brightness of the Father's glory. I saw the error to be that men think it will be something seen by the natural eye, but it is spiritual discernment that is needed, -- the eye of God in His people. Many passages were revealed in a light in which I had not before seen them. I repeated, Now is the kingdom of heaven like unto ten virgins who went forth to meet the bridegroom, five wise and five foolish . . . Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is; and be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit.' This was the oil the wise took in their vessels: this is the light to be kept burning -- the light of God -- that we may discern that which cometh not with observation to the natural eye. Only those who have the light of God within them will see the sign of His appearance. [598] No need to follow them who say, See here or see there; for His day shall be as the lightning to those in whom the spirit of Christ is. I saw that we must be in the Spirit that we might see spiritual things. John was in the Spirit when he saw a throne set in heaven. I saw that the glory of the ministration of the Spirit had not been known. I repeated frequently, 'The spiritual temple must and shall be reared, and the fullness of Christ poured into His body; and then we shall be caught up to meet Him. None will be counted worthy of this calling but His body the church; a candlestick all of gold. Oh, the glorious in-breaking of God now about to burst on this earth; the glorious temple now about to be reared; the bride adorned for her husband: and, oh, what a holy, holy bride she must be, to be prepared for such a glorious Bridegroom! Now shall the glorious mystery of God in our nature be known; now shall it be known what it is for man to be glorified.' I felt as Elijah, surrounded with chariots of fire. I saw, as it were, the spiritual temple reared, and the head-stone brought forth with shoutings of grace, grace unto it. It was a glorious light, above the light of the sun, that shone about me. I felt that those who were filled with the Spirit could see spiritual things, and be, as it were, walking in the midst of them, while those who had not the Spirit could see nothing; so that two shall be in one bed, the one taken and the other left.[599] I saw the people of God in an awfully dangerous situation. Now will the wicked one be revealed with all power and signs, and lying wonders, so that if it were possible the very elect will be deceived.

{* omission #1} [600]

It will be a fiery trial. Every soul will be shaken to the very center; but the trial of real faith will be found to honor and praise and glory. Nothing but what is of God will stand; the stony-ground hearers will be made manifest; the love of many will wax cold. I said, Now shall the awful sight of a false Christ be seen on this earth; and nothing but Christ in us can detect this awful attempt of the enemy to deceive, for it is with all deceivableness of unrighteousness he will work. He will have a counterpart for every part of God's truth, and an imitation of every work of the Spirit. In proportion as the Spirit of God works, so will he; when our Lord anoints men with power, so will he. This is the trial through which those are to pass, who will be counted worthy to stand before the Son of Man. There will be outward trial, but principally temptation. It is brought on by the outpouring of the Spirit, and will increase in proportion as the Spirit is poured out.

{** omission #2} [601]

I frequently said, Oh, be filled with the Spirit; have the light of God in you, that you may detect Satan; be full of eyes within; be clay in the hands of the potter; submit to be filled with God. It is not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord. This will fit us to enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb. I saw it to be the will of God that all should be filled; but what hindered the life of God from being received by His people was their turning from Jesus -- passing the cross, through which every drop of the Spirit of God flows to us. Oh, it is much needed, a leading back to the cross. I saw that night, and often since, that there will be an outpouring of the Spirit such as has not been; a baptism of fire that all the dross may be put away; -- the servants of God sealed in their foreheads; His holy image in His people; the bride made comely by His comeliness put upon her -- Jesus wants His bride. His desire is towards us. He that shall come will come and will not tarry."

Concerning Mr. MacPherson's assertion, that she spoke of a pretribulation rapture, she was not expecting Christ at any moment because she said,

> The spiritual temple must and shall be reared, and the fullness of Christ poured into His body; and ***THEN*** we shall be caught up to meet Him {emphasis mine}.

598. As to her saying that "Only those who have the light of God within them will see the sign of His appearing," she is confusing Matt. 24 and 1 Thess. 4 as posttribulationists always do. How does this fit with Mr. MacPherson's assertion that we find in these remarks a "distinction between the raptured bride and the Trib elect"?

599. {JND taught that one taken and one left refers to one being being taken away (removed) *in judgment* when Christ comes in glory, the other being left for blessing on earth. It has nothing to do with the rapture.

However, MM, from a post-Antichrist-rapture view, says,". . . those who had not the Spirit could see nothing; so that two shall be in the bed, the one taken and the other left." The one that had not the Spirit was left -- why not left for judgment? The one who had the Spirit would be raptured. None of this proves she held a pre-Antichrist rapture, or a partial rapture. Mr. MacPherson has read into this what he is so eager to find. So he proceeds to tell you what MM noticed about "taken" in 2 Thess. 2: 7 and what happens after that, and combined this with Matt. 24:40, when she was bed-ridden and ill during the 1 ½ years before her "revelation." This is certainly an uncanny power he pretends to have. Why does he pretend to tell us what she thought while she was ill? "And my writings emphasize that this was her most important point" (*The Rapture Plot*, p. 3; see also p. 212).

Omission #1, given in the next note, is in the context of the statement about two in one bed. It is in ***a posttribulational context***. See the next note.

600. We will shortly consider the following words found in R. Norton's 1840 book but omitted in his later account in 1861:

> Now will THE WICKED be revealed, with all power and signs and lying wonders, so that if it were possible the very elect will be deceived. This is the fiery trial which is to try us. -- It will be for the purging and purifying of the real members of the body of Jesus; but Oh it will be a fiery trial. Every soul will be shaken to the very centre. The enemy will try to shake in everything that we have believed -- but the trial of real faith will be found to honour and praise and glory. Nothing but what is of God will stand.

601. {We will shortly consider the following words found in R. Norton's 1840 book but omitted in his later account in 1861:

> The trial of the Church is from Antichrist. It is by being filled with the Spirit that we shall be kept.}

She believed in intermediate events. She was under the influence of E. Irving's teachings concerning the coming out-pouring of sign-gifts, and the need for preparation for the coming, including a need for apostles to be appointed. Furthermore she says,

> I saw the people of God in an awfully dangerous situation. Now will the wicked one be revealed with all power and signs, and lying wonders, so that if it were possible the very elect will be deceived . . . I said, Now shall the awful sight of a false Christ be seen on this earth; and nothing but Christ in ***US*** can detect this awful attempt of the enemy to deceive . . . This is the trial through which those are to pass, who will be counted worthy to stand before the Son of Man . . . This will fit ***US*** to enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb," etc. {emphasis mine}.

Where is the distinction made "between the raptured bride and the Trib elect"? Where is the pretribulation rapture? Where is the pre-Rev. 4 rapture? The scheme of Miss MM is that Christians will be in the world when Antichrist is there, including herself (which is what posttribulationists believe).

Concerning Miss MM's remarks and the question of suddenness and imminency, this is meaningless in the light of her posttribulation expectation of Christ. The Irvingites used similar language and it didn't mean that they believed in a pretribulation coming, a pre-Rev. 4 coming, either. [602]

The ONLY thing left to work on concerning this alleged source is "invisibility": an invisible epiphany to be followed by a parousia. Is that "the secret rapture"? Her scheme is the same enunciated by an Irvingite, T. W. C. (in the *Morning Watch* 2:589, Sept. 1830), six months later, wherein the catching up of the saints is coincident with the epiphany, except that it seems that for MM the epiphany is invisible to men. Below, "Development of Irvingite Prophetical Views," presents to the interested reader some extracts from the *Morning Watch*, the organ of the Irvingites, and gives more detail. It is nigh incredible to think that anyone could attempt to derive dispensational truth and the pretribulation rapture, a pre-Rev. 4 rapture (which is what J. N. Darby saw in 1827) out of a kind of posttribulational, invisible epiphany to be followed shortly after by a parousia! This is a pre-conflagration type of view!

Omissions in the Above Account of the "Revelation"

In 1973 when I published *The Truth of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Recovered*, I only knew of R. Norton's 1861 version of MM's "revelation" (which is the version quoted above). I did not have Mr. MacPherson's 1973 book, *The Incredible Cover-up*, in which he collated R. Norton's 1861 doctored version of MM's 'revelation' with R. Norton's 1840 version found in his *Memoir of James and George Macdonald of Port Glasgow*. And therein lies an interesting matter concerning both Mr. MacPherson and R. Norton. First, observe that the analysis (above) of MM's 'revelation' remains, in substance, unchanged from what I published in 1971. Next, let us weigh several sentences that R. Norton quoted in 1840 that he omitted in his 1861 book. The following two sentences are found in his 1840 book and should be located where a double asterisk enclosed in brackets {**} is found in the quotation of MM on p. 136.

> The trial of the Church is from Antichrist. It is by being filled with the Spirit that we shall be kept. [603]

There is one other important omission in R. Norton's 1861 book that is found in his 1840 book. Its location is marked in the quotation from MM above by a single asterisk enclosed in brackets [*]. In this case I will include several unomitted sentences for completeness.

> Now will THE WICKED be revealed, with all power and signs and lying wonders, so that if it were possible the very elect will be deceived. This is the fiery trial which is to try us. -- It will be for the purging and purifying of the real members of the body of Jesus; but Oh it will be a fiery trial. Every soul will be shaken to the very centre. The enemy will try to shake in everything that we have believed -- but the trial of real faith will be found to honour and praise and glory. Nothing but what is of God will stand. [604]

Recall that above she said:

> I repeated frequently, 'The spiritual temple must and shall be reared, and the fulness of Christ poured into His body;

602. E. Irving wrote on June 2, 1830 concerning Margaret Macdonald:

> The substance of Mary Campbell's and Margaret Macdonald's visions or revelations, given in their papers, carry to me a spiritual conviction and a spiritual reproof which I cannot express (Mrs. Oliphant, *The Life of Edward Irving*, p. 385, 1862).

Since E. Irving did not hold the construction about a pre-antichrist coming put upon Margaret Macdonald's words by Mr. MacPherson, this statement indicates that E. Irving did not find in them a new revelation about the second coming, which is what Mr. MacPherson is so anxious to see in them. What convicted and reproved E. Irving was the out-break of "gifts," as he was anticipating expectantly in view of his historicist notions. T. W. C.'s article (Sept. 1830) and this "revelation" are essentially compatible, and it would appear that E. Irving thought so also. Indeed, It was E. Irving who influenced MM, not the other way around.

The Macdonald's had been under the influence of E. Irving's views through the instrumentality of his assistant, A. Scott. Among other sources that indicate this, E. Miller said:

> The Macdonalds were strong believers in assurance, and they had also embraced the teaching concerning the universality of God's love, of the Human Nature of our Lord, and about the millennial Reign, and the miraculous endowments of the Church, which were now identified with the name of Irving. A sermon preached by Mr. A. Scott, then Irving's assistant, upon the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit in the church, and the probable manifestation of it, first brought this latter subject before their minds (*The History and Doctrines of Irvingism* 1:54).

The reference to receiving the teaching of Irving about the human nature of the Lord refers to his blasphemous teaching that Christ had the carnal nature (though He did not sin), for which he was ejected from the Presbyterian ministry in 1832. The tongues-speakers were all infected with this evil doctrine. From E. Irving, through A. Scott, the need for the restoration of the manifestations of power was brought before them. So MM's utterances were the fruit of E. Irving's teachings.

603. R. Norton, *Memoirs of James & George Macdonald of Port Glasgow*, p. 175 (1840).

604. R. Norton, *Memoirs of James & George Macdonald of Port Glasgow*, p. 174.

> and then [605] we shall be caught up to meet Him.

Let the reader ask himself why R. Norton omitted this material in his later book. Could it be because the omitted material contradicted his claim in the 1861 book: that Margaret Macdonald was the origin of the idea of "the distinction between that final stage . . . and His prior appearing in glory"?

What seems so incredible is that in his 1973 book, *The Incredible Cover-up*, Mr. MacPherson had collated the 1840 and 1861 versions by R. Norton and so he knew about these sentences that were omitted in the 1861 version. To maintain his notions, he had the temerity to state that:

> Margaret believed that a select group of believers would be raptured from the earth before the days of Antichrist, but also saw other believers enduring the Tribulation . . . [606]

Her view is that all members of the body must undergo the fiery trial from Antichrist. He cited these sentences (that R. Norton omitted in his 1861 account) once again in 1983 in his *The Great Rapture Hoax*, p. 127.

I would add here that we see in this 'revelation' the idea that persecution under Antichrist is meant to make the body of Christ ready for His coming. This is for purification (the idea of purification is a posttribulationist idea also). Later on, the Irvingites saw themselves not merely as firstfruits, including non-Irvingites, but as a separate class now designated "first-fruits," sealed for protection, and raptured to the air where they were to remain until others, who needed this purification, could join them, (perhaps through martyrdom and resurrection just before the kingdom) and be with Christ in the kingdom. More will be before us about this, later.

Query: did Mr. MacPherson, having only R. Norton's 1861 book in 1971, commit himself to what we now see is R. Norton's *manipulation* of MM's statement, saying she:

> originated the Pre-Tribulation rapture theory!,

and then when he saw the rest of what MM allegedly said, shift to a partial rapture explanation? Yet he was already committed. Now, even if MM thought that there would be a partial rapture, *it is a post-Antichrist rapture*.

R. Norton's Shift

I turn now to R. Norton himself. It is true that he visited the Macdonalds in 1830 as an observer, as Mr. MacPherson says. [607] Here are several statements that show what R. Norton *believed in 1839*:

> If, then, the second advent has been even from the apostolic age a consummation ever to be looked for as possibly and indefinitely near, with one exception, that it should not come, "except there be a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed" . . . [608]

> The tribulation which this fearful reign of Antichrist will bring upon the saints, and for which, therefore, we should be preparing, instead of anticipating nothing but a smooth and immediate passage into the latter day glory . . . [609]

> . . . we have also seen that he shall make war with the saints, and prevail against them, for the well-known period of 1260 days. We have next to remark, that at the conclusion of this period, and immediately previous to the last judgments and woes of the Apocalypse, a most important event intervenes, viz., the translation of the saints, and their consequent exemption from these woes. [610]

Mr. MacPherson has tried to mitigate, if not contradict, the bearing of these quotations by saying that three pages afterwards R. Norton wrote that:

> Christ will reveal himself to his church, in loveliness and love, as her glorious Bridegroom -- previous to his revealing himself to the world in the awful character of Judge.

Concerning this, Mr. MacPherson obfuscatingly wrote:

> (hardly a posttrib-only coming). [611]

It is clear in the last of the three quotations above, from R. Norton, that he espoused a historicist-type, pre-conflagration view, or a historicist-type pre-days of vengeance view, as some others had done in the past. So in 1839, the chronicler of the Macdonalds, R. Norton, who himself heard MM, *propounded the same post-Antichrist type notions as MM had done in 1830*, and as others had done in the past, namely, that the saints had to be prepared by the falling away and the man of sin; which means that the rapture would take place after these events, a thing that Mr. MacPherson, as a futurist posttribulationist, also believes. However, by the time R. Norton published the *Memoirs of James & George Macdonald of Port Glasgow* **in 1840**, he had embraced a different view. He wrote:

> . . . the Lord's Advent is to be expected by the church without waiting for the last full development and reign of the Antichrist . . . [612]

Where did this new view of his come from? In this 1840 book R. Norton quoted the interesting sentences from MM that he later ***omitted*** in his 1861 book. In 1840 he did not pretend that MM was the first to give the distinction between "two stages" as he claimed in his 1861 book. Indeed, he remarked that

> recollections of a certain evening, having already, though surreptitiously, got into circulation . . ., [613]

thus indicating that there was some knowledge abroad in 1840 regarding what Miss MM had *really* said. He had been a

605. {Observe that there is no any-moment coming here.}

606. *The Incredible Cover-up*, p. 155.

607. *The Incredible Cover-up*, p. 38.

608. *Neglected and Controverted Scripture Truths* . . ., p. 245 (1839).

609. *Ibid.*, p. 254.

610. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

611. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 213. See also p. 252. I add here Mr. MacPherson's error in referring to *The Witness* as a "(Darbyist) Brethren magazine" (*The Rapture Plot*, p. 254). It was an Open-Brethren magazine and gradually fell into the hands of those who did not hold the truth of the pretribulation rapture.

612. Page. 12, See also pp. 11, 16, 22 and 256.

613. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

medical doctor, became a clergyman in the Church of England but withdrew in the 1850s and became an Irvingite. Some Irvingites eventually accepted a pre-antichrist rapture of the Catholic Apostolic Church, and as far as I know they did not credit J. N. Darby with anything.

The fact is that in his 1861 book, R. Norton, then a member of the Catholic Apostolic Church (Irvingites), ***omitted*** the sentences ***that stood in his way,*** which we examined above, and claimed, regarding MM, that:

> . . . the power of the Holy Ghost rested upon her for several hours, in mingled prophecy and vision . . . for here we first see the distinction between that final stage of the Lord's coming, when every eye shall see Him, and His prior appearing in glory to them that look for Him. [614]

That certainly fits in with the rest of the Irvingite pretension.

1. In 1861 R. Norton suppressed parts of Margaret Macdonald's 'revelation' that are clearly post-1260 days.
2. It would appear that this was an attempt to soften MM's post-1260 days in light of later Irvingite views.
3. I suggest that this was less than upright of him. Indeed, softening MM's post-1260 days seems like a *coverup* and a *manipulation*.

Mr. MacPherson has followed this Irvingite in this crediting of Margaret Macdonald. But Mr. MacPherson's agenda is different than R. Norton's.

One other point we should note is that in 1861 the Irvingite, R. Norton, did not give credit to E. Irving.

The Norton Omissions and Mr. MacPherson

In 1991 I had called attention to the 1861 omissions in R. Norton's report of MM's "revelation." Recently, T. C. F. Stunt wrote that R. Norton had married Margaret Macdonald [615] though he did not give the source of this information. In any case, it does appear that Mr. MacPherson was taken in by R. Norton's omissions -- and we may ask, why was he taken in by them?

MM's "Revelation" Is Occultic

In a paper dated Jan. 23, 1990, wherein Mr. MacPherson touts himself as "the world's leading authority on the origin of the Pre-Trib rapture theory," he wrote:

> **1830 - "The Occult Connection"**
>
> Darby didn't originate any rapture view in 1827 or any other year. Pre-Trib leaders know that Prior Rapturism began in 1830. But they're also aware that both the originator and the first group to adopt it (that is, the Irvingites - followers of Edward Irving) were all heavily influenced by the **OCCULT!** So leaders today do **everything** they can to draw attention away from 1830 . . .
>
> **"For This They Willingly Are Ignorant Of . . ."** [616]
>
> Darby knew that in 1830, Margaret (whom he had visited) had given birth to the Prior Rapture. [617] He also knew that the Irvingites had soon echoed her ideas and given her credit. Too many people knew about this **even in 1850**. If Darby had dared to claim in 1850 that he'd come to these ideas **BEFORE** 1830, he would have been the laughingstock of Britain! In effect, the Pre-Trib Darby of 1850 contradicts today's Pre-Tribs who deviously emphasize 1827. Such history revisionism allows them to detour around 1830 (even though Darby himself pin pointed it!) and thus escape the stigma of the **OCCULT!** (I'll reveal such connections later on.) Their claim that Darby was the originator in 1827 is groundless. Neither Darby nor any other early developer ever made such a claim. [618]

Here it comes out plainly that the purpose is to *stigmatize*. [619] However, if there is a valid stigmatization by an **OCCULT** source, as Mr. MacPherson indicates that there is, then notice that MM's "revelation" expounded post-1260 days tribulationism. Moreover, these things were happening in an Irvingite, historicist expectation of the pouring out of sign-gifts. It was a time of expectancy of fulfilment of prophetic events, such as the pouring out of the vials. These persons were being psychologically prepared for such events, and laid open to demonic deception in sanction of the wicked teaching that Christ had the carnal nature. At any rate, chapters 2.4 and 5.1 show that it is "the world's leading authority on the origin of the Pre-Trib rapture theory" that has distorted, and revised, and manipulated history. He did not at all profit by

614. *The Restoration of Apostles and Prophets in the Catholic Apostolic Church*, p. 15 (1861).

615. "The Tribulation of Controversy: A Review Article," *Brethren Archivists & Historians Network Review* 2:2, Autumn 2003, p. 94). The article reviews, and rejects, Mr. MacPherson's thesis and wide ranging charges of conspiracy; he also did in his review article, "Prophetics, Pentecostals and the Church," *The Harvester*, Nov. 1975, pp. 303-305, where he praises Ernest Sandeen and rejects Mr. MacPherson's thesis.

616. On p. 9 of this paper he repeated the absurdity that JND received basic principles from a young Irish woman. In 1984 F. Marotta, who showed me correspondence between himself and Mr. MacPherson, wrote to him pointing out that the woman had set afloat *reading meetings* for JND's use. The title to which this note is attached seems to have application to himself. He does not appear interested in facts which expose his jaundiced, calumniating view of JND.

617. {Mr. MacPherson states as a fact what he merely projects into the heads of others. It is a practice with him. As an example, he stated that "even R. A. Huebner would agree that in 1825 Darby was a posttrib in Ireland . . ." (*The Rapture Plot*, p. 269). Apart from his pretension that historicism is posttribulational (a semantic confusion many engage in), I have personally asked R. A. Huebner if would agree with that, and he assured me that he does *not* agree. He thinks that JND was postmillennial, but in convalescence (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827) saw that there would be a change in dispensation. Mr. MacPherson certainly pretends to an uncanny ability to see into people's heads! No doubt, though, it would be a great asset in historical investigation.}

618. *The Rapture Hoax*, Christian Tract Service, Jan. 23, 1990, pp. 7-9. In his 1994 book, *The Rapture Plot*, he tries to distance himself from the charge of demonism. Observe his use of the word "occult."

619. On p. 17 of the same paper, dated Jan. 23, 1990, he wrote:

> Some of Darby's fans later produced the COMPANION BIBLE which includes ASTROLOGY AND THE ZODIAC SIGNS.

So many of his comments are just too silly to comment on them.

reading the alleged utterances of Margaret Macdonald. Instead of

> 1) apprehending the plain import of her statements, which has affinity to the posttribulational scheme and no real resemblance to the interlocking church truth, pre-Rev. 4 rapture and dispensational truth, and
>
> 2) not being alarmed by R. Norton's omission of certain statements in his 1861 version of MM's revelation,

he has read into her statements what he appears so anxious to find. He has calumniated and slandered JND for about 30+ years now, as well as indulged in *ad hominem* attacks and attributing unsavory motives to those who have not fallen for his manipulations (2 Cor: 5:10; Luke 12:2, 3).

His attributing Margaret Macdonald's "revelation" to an occultic source is particularly interesting in view of the fact that at least three of his books have been published by those who are pro-visionary/revelations, namely Logos International and New Puritan Library. Indeed, one of the books has a Foreword and a Postlude by Pat Brooks of New Puritan Library. Then, too, the posttribulationist James McKeever, who seems to be constantly receiving "revelations," has touted the line of calumny put out by Mr. MacPherson. [620]

A Line of Calumniators

Mr. MacPherson stands in the line of discredited calumniators of JND, regarding the recovery of the pretribulation rapture, i.e., the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, beginning, it seems, in 1855 when the supporter of B. W. Newton (i.e., S. P. Tregelles) in his effort to attack the recovered truth said the doctrine came from (merely) Judaizers, while in 1864 he stepped up the calumny to say it came from a spirit -- a great difference.

From S. P. Tregelles, Mr. MacPherson received that idea but subsequently shifted to MM of Port Glasgow, Scotland; hence his baseless allegation, "So Plymouth Brethren organizer John Darby rejected Margaret's 'miraculous gifts' but accepted her novel two-phase coming." It is interesting how some who are hostile to dispensational truth have fallen for this *obviously* absurd calumny. Consider the following by the "reconstructionist" postmillennialist, Gary North:

> The students are not told of Dave MacPherson's discovery that Margaret Macdonald, a girl about twenty year old, went into trances in 1830 and announced the pre-tribulation rapture doctrine. We are still waiting for Professor John Hannah, a competent and talented church historian, to go into print and show from original source documents that MacPherson's thesis is nothing but a sham. Strangely, he has decided to remain silent. Or not so strangely, as the case may be. [621]

G. North no longer needs to wait for Professor Hannah to show from original documents that Mr. MacPherson's thesis is false. Here G. North seems to mean that if Mr. MacPherson's thesis is false, it "is nothing but a sham." "Sham" is a strong word, meaning:

> an imitation that is meant to deceive; a counterfeit; a deception; a fake. [622]

A writer with amillennial leanings, J. R. Boyd, wrote:

> To provoke thought and stir researching we have even circulated some challenging, system wrecking material from Dave MacPherson in his "Incredible Coverup" . . . blockbusters for destruction of phony pretense . . . [623]

Notice the alleged reason for circulating what is in reality *obvious* calumny.

Mr. MacPherson's Calumny Has Been Exposed for What It Is

Mr. MacPherson has been attacking the truth of the pretribulation rapture for 30+ years by two, main, fleshly methods:

1. He has attempted to *stigmatize* the truth through the grossest historical misrepresentation and asserting it comes from an *occult* source. We have seen that he has read glaring distortions into MM's 'revelation' and has contradicted her express statements. Her "revelation" has sanctioned posttribulation notions which "revelation," *he* says, is occultic.
2. He ignores the omissions of R. Norton.
3. Coupled with this, his carnal polemic requires that JND be a liar. He has, in effect, called JND a liar in order to vitiate JND's written accounts of the beginnings. In 1991 he wrote:

   > Huebner quotes Harold Rowdon's *The Origins of the Brethren* (1967) enough to know that Darby's memory of his past was often faulty enough and even deliberately false (Darby dated Brethrenism back to 1827 *and* 1828); [624] Lord Congleton was "disgusted with . . . the falseness" of Darby's memory. [625]

   We have already settled the fact that JND's memory was remarkably accurate concerning the beginnings. Lord Congleton was a partisan of the posttribulationist B. W. Newton. Huebner is "disgusted with . . . the falseness" of Lord Congleton's contentions (exposed in volume 2 in this series) as he is with the falseness of the maligners Mr. MacPherson quotes. Calumniators like to rely on one another's besmirching of their mutual object of contempt.

   One of Mr. MacPherson's titles, *Dishonest-*

620. *The Rapture*, ch. 9.

621. Introduction to G. L. Bahnsen and K. L. Gentry, Jr., *House Divided*, Tyler: Institute for Christian Economics, 1989, p. xxxv.

622. *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language*, unabridged, sec. ed., World Publishing Co., 1975.

623. *The Researcher*, Sudbury, Ontario, vol. 20, no. 1, Spring, 1990, p. 19.

624. {Notice that he asserted that JND lied about the beginnings whereas we have seen JND wrote the truth about it. There never was any reason to doubt JND's word. The will is at work to make him a liar.}

625. *Dishonest-Pensationalism*, p. 5.

> *Pensationalism,* seems to make a whole class of dishonest people, the proof of their dishonesty being that they do not accept his calumny and distortions.

Mr. MacPherson Was Not the First

R. Norton had put forth a claim for Margaret Macdonald; and W. R. Kimball, who naively appreciates Mr. MacPherson's work, wrote:

> John A. Anderson, an English author, was even more specific {than L. E. Froom} in establishing the actual origin of pretribulationism. In his work entitled, *Heralds of the Dawn*, [p. 40] he asserted that a Miss M. M. had originated the two-stage coming theory in March of 1830 in Great Britain. [626]

It is ***all humbug*** at best.

J. N. Darby Visited the Macdonalds

It may have come as a surprise to some of JND's opposers to learn that he knew the Macdonalds, having visited them consequent on the outbreak of "tongues." The reader will find JND's opinion of them in the *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 6:284-285 -- where he said that "he went rather as deputed for others than for himself." It is well worth reading those pages.

B. W. Newton said that "Darby went at my request to see the Campbell family at Fernicary" and was there for three days. [627] He also indicated that G. V. Wigram planned to visit also. [628] There is a comment by B. W. Newton regarding what JND found at the Macdonalds which is important since it indicates that in 1830 [629] JND understood the OT prophets in the 'literal' sense:

> But what decided him when on the spot was when those who were inspired were expounding prophetic Scriptures such as those in Isaiah respecting Israel & Jerusalem they explained them as being prophetic of Christian Churches of this dispensation. [630]

F. W. Newman also remarked upon something that JND had written to him, at the time of JND's visit to the Macdonalds:

> But my friend, "the Irish clergyman," wrote me a full account of what he heard with his own ears; which was to the effect -- that none of the sounds, vowels or consonants, were foreign; -- that the strange words were molded after the Latin grammar, ending in -abus, -obus, -avi, &c. so as to denote poverty of inventions rather than spiritual agency; -- and *that there was no interpretation.* [631]

In view of the fact of what JND understood in 1827, and in the light of the two quotations just given, I wonder where Carl E. Armerding and W. W. Gasque obtained the following information?

> Darby finally, and undoubtedly reluctantly, became convinced that the gifts were a delusion, but as he left Scotland he carried with him impressions which, after some years of reflection, would play their part in the formation of the teaching of the secret pre-tribulation rapture. [632]

All of this has been manufactured out of nothing. What is *scholarly* about this? Worse, what is *Christian* about this?

Finally, Another Reason for Rejecting the Notion that MM Saw a pre-1260 Days Historicist Rapture

In Chapter 7.8 where the development of the Irvingite views are traced, we will note that in a Sept. 1832 article in the *Morning Watch*, the writer introduces the idea of the pre-1260 days rapture and concludes by admonishing the reader:

> Let not our readers, therefore, be disturbed at the idea of fresh interpretations . . .

R. Norton had MM's written "revelation" and E. Irving saw it. This was known to the Irvingites. But the pre-1260 days rapture was a "fresh interpretation" in Sept. 1832, for this historicist. We saw in Morgan Edwards an historicist, pre-1260 days rapture (Chapter 7.4). Of course, we do not know that were aware of this.

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626. *The Rapture -- a Question of Timing*, p. 43, n.d.

627. *Fry MS*, p. 208. Elsewhere he says it was a fortnight or three weeks (pp. 234, 237, 244); but that does not seem reasonable.

628. *Fry MS*, p. 264. It appears that GVW was married by the time that he went first to Scotland and then to Ireland (*Fry MS*, 264-266 -- where there is a letter from BWN to GVW, dated July 31, 1830, received at Glasgow, but returned, the letter marked "not called for." The letter says, "Give my Christian regards to Mrs. Wigram," p. 265). There is a note on p. 264 that says "Wigram was related to the Parnells. Mrs. Wigram was a Miss. Parnell." However, GVW's wife died in 1835 and he remarried.

629. Of course, we know that it was earlier than early 1830 that JND understood the prophets according to what has been styled "literal interpretation." Indeed, it was during his convalescence in Dec. 1826-Jan. 1927 that Isa. 32 opened to him the change in dispensation and he thought the Lord might come 40 years before. Thus he would have had to reject spiritualization of the OT prophets. Interestingly, as more and more facts come to light, they all point in the direction of the vindication of JND.

Observe also that this quotation gives us some idea of what the views of the Macdonalds were.

630. *Fry MS*, p. 237.

631. *Phases of Faith*, p. 119.

632. *A Guide to Biblical Prophecy*, Peabody: Hendrickson, p. 52 (1989).

Chapter 7.8

Development of Irvingite, Historicist, Prophetical Views 1826-1835

Notice of the Albury Conferences

We have seen that J. N. Darby held the immediate coming in 1827 as well as many other related truths. He saw the Bride in heaven by Rev. 4. He held a pre-Antichrist coming, realizing his heavenly position in Christ, and that there would be a Jewish remnant formed after the church was above. Nonetheless, we will trace the development of Irvingite prophetical views and by quotations of them will, hopefully, place the reader in a position to form a judgment of those views. The reader who has access to *The Bible Treasury* (vols. 17 and 18) will find therein an extensive history of the Irvingites written by William Kelly. Interested readers should also consult the index to the *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* under "Irving" and also "Newman Street" for strictures on Irvingism.

Following the French revolution, numbers of books on prophecy were written. But it was not until 1826 that a conference on prophecy, called the first Albury Conference, was convened -- at the residence of Henry Drummond. It lasted one week and "twenty men of every rank, and church, and orthodox communion in those realms" attended. [633] E. Irving wrote, concerning these meetings:

> . . . all being agreed that the 1290 days of Daniel were accomplished, and the remaining 45 begun, at the conclusion of which the blessedness will be fully arrived. [634]

As historicists, they believed that the 1260 days meant 1260 years. [635] Dan. 12 speaks of 1290 days and 1335 days. The remark about the 45 days (equals 45 years) refers to the difference between 1290 and 1335. So what is said here means that the millennium would begin in 45 years from then.

It is important to see that Irving and his followers believed that they were living in an epoch of the fulfilment of various apocalyptic prophecies. It is also important to note that date-setting for the Lord's return is part of historicism; i.e., historicism directly leads to date-setting. The recovery of the pretribulation rapture (i.e., the pre-Rev. 4 rapture) -- without intervening events -- delivered saints from date-setting. [636]

Concerning the results of the Second Albury Conference, E. Irving said:

> We have had another Albury Meeting and are more convinced than ever of the judgments which are to be brought upon Christendom . . . I trust the Lord will give you time and leisure to consider the great hope of the Church first given to Abraham: "That she shall be heir of the world." [637]

E. Miller said that this conference was held in 1827. [638] By this time JND had passed through his period of solitude (Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827) and had greatly advanced in the truth (see Chapter 3.1, etc.).

E. Miller quoted H. Drummond's *Dialogue on Prophecy* for one of the results of the fourth Albury Conference (1829), and for which unanimity was secured:

> That a great period of 1260 years commenced in the reign of Justinian, and terminated at the French Revolution, and that the vials of the Apocalypse began then to be poured out; that our blessed Lord will shortly appear . . . [639]

In July 1830 the last Albury conference was held, but E. Miller said there is no authorized record of it. [640] At any rate, in March 1830 there was an outbreak of tongues in Scotland and that matter was discussed at this conference. [641]

Interestingly E. Irving visited Lady Powerscourt in 1830. [642]

633. Mrs. Oliphant, *The Life of Edward Irving*, p. 274.
634. E. Miller, *The History and Doctrines of Irvingism* 1:39.
635. This theory is examined in the *Bible Treasury*, "Elements of Prophecy," especially vol. 11, pp. 134-137, 150-155.
636. Date-setting on the part of modern "dispensationalists" is a retrograde, inconsistent phenomenon.
637. Mrs. Oliphant, *op. cit.*, p. 338.
638. *Op. cit.* 1:40.
639. E. Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
640. *Ibid*, p. 45.
641. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
642. *Ibid.*, p. 391.

Views in The Morning Watch Up to R. Baxter's Jan 14, 1832 Prophecy of the 3 ½ Years Wait

1829-31: THE MORNING WATCH REJECTS THE FUTURISM OF S. R. MAITLAND

We will now trace some of the progress of the Irvingite prophetical scheme with citations from their quarterly magazine, the *Morning Watch*, [643] edited by John Tudor. In an 1829 article a writer, opposing S. R. Maitland's futurism, [644] claimed that the year-day theory kept believers in it in a state of watchfulness for the second coming:

> . . . for all those who interpret the 1260 days as the Papal period are kept in constant watchfulness, because they believe that "the times of the Gentiles" are nearly run out, and the coming of the Lord draweth nigh . . . [645]

What they were watching for was the end of the 45 years noted above! A writer attempted to mitigate this fact. In June 1830, there was another article regarding S. R. Maitland's futurism in which it was said:

> We must, however, tell Mr. M., that he is not yet acquainted with the belief of those whom he opposes. He has yet to learn that the coming of the Lord is the very next event of magnitude which they look for; that, so far from deferring it till 1847, they generally, and almost universally, believe that the cry is already gone forth, "behold, I come as a thief"; that the seventh angel has lifted the trumpet to his mouth, and the seventh vial is now suspended in the air, at whose effusion a great voice shall come out from the Throne, saying, "It is done," and "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." In this expectation do we watch and pray "that we may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that are coming on the earth, and to stand before the Son of Man." [646]

In March 1831 there was another article rejecting S. R. Maitland's futurism, in which it was said:

> The voice of Providence, now adding its sanction to the interpretation of prophecy, and which has roused almost every other class of believers to attention, passes unheeded by them . . . [647]

Here, the *Morning Watch* continues in its historicism and the writers understand "the voice of Providence" sanctions those views. Observe that since it was not until April 30, 1831, that 'tongues' first occurred in London, the quotation refers to sanction given elsewhere, and likely this refers to Scotland -- and we can see similarity in the teaching contained in the *Morning Watch* and the utterances of Margaret Macdonald (MM) of Port Glasgow, Scotland. Apparently the writer understood her utterances to be compatible with his views and sanctioned by 'tongues' and the accompanying 'revelations' and 'prophecies.' That is, the writer is indicating that the "voice of Providence" sanctioned his views -- which views thus existed before he understood the voice to sanction them -- and thus tells us also how those views were understood by this Irvingite. There was no pre-Rev. 4 rapture, or even a pre-1260 days historicist rapture, either -- which is not what we mean by the pretribulation rapture, i.e., the pre-Rev. 4 rapture -- in his views nor in the "voice of Providence" sanctioning them. So much we can learn from the rejection of S. R. Maitland's futurism, through March 1831.

DEC. 1829: JOHN TUDOR'S INTRODUCTION OF AN HISTORICIST, POST-ANTICHRIST, PRE-SIXTH VIAL, PARTIAL RAPTURE

In 1829, John Tudor began to develop an historicist, pre-sixth seal, partial rapture view. This may be seen in a Dec. 1829 article in *The Morning Watch*, "On the Interpretation of the Apocalypse," pp. 543-577. It takes a historicist position regarding the 1260 days. For example, commenting on Rev. 13, he wrote:

> but for 1260 days she is represented as bereft of this hope, as fleeing into the wilderness; and not then as persecuted by the dragon, but as blasphemed by that beast (13:6), to whom "the dragon gave his power and his seat and great authority" (13:2). This wilderness period of 1260 years . . . (p. 566).

He says that in previous papers,

> I did not sufficiently examine those last events to occur in the present age -- i.e., those which are now beginning, and shall be terminated by the beast and false prophet being cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone, by the remnant being slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse (19:20, 21), and the binding of Satan for a thousand years (20:1-3). This time of vengeance is called the "treading of the winepress," 14:20, 19:15: and before the act of vengeance, "the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies are *gathered*" (19:19), the vine of the earth is *gathered* (14:19), the kings of the earth and of the whole world are *gathered* to the battle of that great day of God Almighty (14:14). The elect of God have their *gathering*; beginning at the same time; completed in the "wise virgins," or those who are looking for and hasting to the coming of our Lord," at the end of the harvest (Matt. 13:43; Rev. 14:12, 15; and

643. Here are the publications of it:

Vol. 1	March - June - Sept. - Dec. 1829
Vol. 2	March - June - Sept. - Dec. 1830
Vol. 3	March - June 1831
Vol. 4	Sept. - Dec. 1831
Vol. 5	March - June 1832
Vol. 6	Sept. - Dec. 1832
Vol. 7	March - June 1833

644. In 1826, S. R. Maitland published *An Enquiry into the Grounds on which the Prophetic Period of Daniel and St. John has been Supposed to Consist of 1260 Years* and in 1829 he published *Second Enquiry* . . . He took the position that the 1260 days were literal and future. He came under much criticism for this. William Witherby had published a rejection of historicism, labeling it a "delusion" (*Hints Humbly Submitted to Commentators, and More especially to Such as Have Written Elaborate Dissertations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation of St. John*, London: Hatchard, pp. 14, 19, 41 (1821)).

645. "Review of {S. R.} Maitland on the Second Coming," *Morning Watch*, 1829, p. 515.

646. "Review of Maitland on the 1260 Days," *Morning Watch* June 1830, p. 460.

647. "Reply to M'Caul's Letter on the Review of Maitland," *Morning Watch*, March 1831, p. 237.

> completed in all the body of Christ before the treading of the winepress, or at all events before the feast of tabernacles. The note of preparation for this gathering of *both parties* is under the sixth vial . . . (pp. 572, 573).

He means by the beast the Papacy in the historicist sense. I do not wish to go into his views on these things other than to say that his view seems to be that the seventh vial is ready to be poured out. He is not speaking of a future, literal 1260 day period. The novelty here is the partial rapture view of the wise virgins, the foolish virgins also being of the body of Christ,

> . . . not having inquired into the signs of the Lord's coming, do not receive him as the "Morning Star," but who, still loving their Savior, will be ready to witness for Him even to the death, and by Martyrdom receive a place in the Millennial kingdom; being the second band in 20:4, "who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God" (p. 568).

These are strange, vain, and dangerous notions and distinctions. The Lord said of the foolish virgins:

> Afterwards come also the rest of the virgins, saying Lord, Lord, open to us; but he answering said, verily I say unto you, I do not know you (Matt. 25:12).

In John 10 He had said that His sheep hear His voice and He knows them.

We see here that the rapture (whatever their notions about it) is stated to be a reward. It is a reward for heeding the Irvingite, historicist signs. The foolish will be martyred and be raised in the resurrection that John Tudor thought would occur at the coming feast of tabernacles.

Of course, J. N. Darby, W. Kelly, W. Trotter, etc., did not believe in a partial rapture. Not only is it not part of dispensational truth and the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, it is repugnant to the recovered truth, bound up with the truth of the one body, every member of which is united to Christ in glory by the Spirit sent down at Pentecost.

In closing these remarks on this paper by John Tudor, let us observe that what we have is an historicist, pre-seventh vial, partial rapture.

MARCH 1830: EDWARD IRVING ENDORSES THE NEW HISTORICIST, PARTIAL RAPTURE VIEW

In an article, "Signs of the Times, and the Characteristics of the Church," Edward Irving wrote:

> I believe that some, who are not ripe in faith, who are not waiting for the Son of Man, shall remain to be taught by the judgments . . . [648]

He, of course, was among the deserving, though he held that Christ had taken the carnal nature!

JUNE 1830: AN ANONYMOUS WRITER ENDORSES THE NEW HISTORICIST, PARTIAL RAPTURE VIEW

In "On the Parable of the Ten Virgins," the writer takes a similar view. [649]

SEPT. 1830: REAFFIRMATION OF THE HISTORICIST, PARTIAL RAPTURE VIEW BY THE EDITOR, JOHN TUDOR

The title of the article is "On Antichrist, Its Nature and Time" (pp. 477-490).

In this article he speaks of the Antichrist during church history as the Papacy, but there shall finally be a single person (p. 481). This maintains historicism with a final antichrist answering to 2 Thess. 2, who shall "probably" act for 3 ½ years (p. 484) and "subsists, therefore, down to the coming of the Lord" (p. 484). He wrote:

> The woes which shall attend the revelation of the last Antichrist are described as unparalleled . . . (p. 485).

Quoting a number of Scriptures describing a horrible time, he quoted Matt. 24:21, 22 among them (p. 486). He also speaks of what we saw in Morgan Edwards, what amounts to a pre-1260 days, historicist rapture, just before Antichrist appears. He did not state it directly as Morgan Edwards did. To this he adds the new, Irvingite, partial rapture:

> "The first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb," "the called and chosen and faithful," are gathered to the Lord at the harvest (Rev. 14:12-15), Matt. 13:39); before the vintage (Rev. 14:20, 19:15). The vintage is trodden by the Lord himself at his second advent Isa. 43:3-6); being the last and complete destruction of his enemies (Rev. 19:21; Ez. 39:17-20); and before this time he has taken his people to himself (Rev. 19:9, 17:14; Zech. 14:5): "All the saints with thee" (Jude 14, 15) (p. 489).
>
> But some who will ultimately be saved have to endure this last extremity of trial . . . and, gathering under the last Antichrist . . . shall be persecuted by him and his adherents to the last extremity (Rev. 13:15, 20:4) . . .
>
> . . . the foolish virgins of Matt. 25 . . . are perhaps finally shut out, but may, having suffered martyrdom for their folly, be admitted to the millennial reign . . . (p. 490).

I think it quite foolish to thus contradict what the Lord said in Matt. 25:12. Such foolishness results from the foolishness of the partial rapture view.

SEPT. 1830 ARTICLE BY T.W.C.

Shortly after the death of his child on July 6, 1830, E. Irving wrote in a letter:

> Many a time I desire to be with my children, and I hope we shall all be gathered to His congregation ere long; for I believe the day of His coming draweth nigh, and that before these judgments fall out we shall be taken to Himself and receive the morning star. [650]

The judgments falling out refers to "the days of vengeance." There is not a pre-1260 days historicist rapture here, as was the case with Morgan Edwards and the above writer. In Sept. 1830, T.W.C. wrote:

> In 2 Thess. 2:8, we read that our Lord will consume that man of sin in, or by, the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him in the epiphany of his advent . . . : so that, beyond all controversy, the epiphany of our Lord is to be distinguished from his advent, or presence, at all events as

648. *The Morning Watch*, March 1830, p. 162.

649. *The Morning Watch*, June 1830, p. 368.

650. Mrs. Oliphant, *The Life of Edward Irving*, 1862, p. 391.

> a part (and that the first part of any process of successive events) is to be distinguished from the whole. And as the Lord Jesus interrupted his ascension from "the lowest parts of the earth" (Eph. 4:9, &c.), being seen of his disciples repeatedly during forty days before he proceeded on his way to the light of the Highest, where St. Stephen afterwards saw him standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55); so there can be no doubt that he purposes to interrupt his descent, or return; remaining for a time in the sky before he prosecutes his advent to the surface of our planet: and this period (whether it be longer or shorter I cannot tell) is what the Scriptures denominate his *epiphany*. [651]

This is a historicist scenario of an epiphany to be followed by a parousia. Note that T.W.C. placed the destruction of the Antichrist in the epiphany. Thus, at this point in time, he viewed the coming of Christ as a post-Antichrist coming, ***just as MM viewed it.*** The same writer, after referring to Christ's descent to the earth as the *parousia*, said:

> And, indeed, it is curious to observe, that in such a case (namely, if the earth our planet should revolve upon its axis suddenly, and in a moment), then we must of necessity find both night-time and day-time -- that is to say, *both hemispheres* of the globe simultaneously present in the scene of our Lord's epiphany, that fixed point of glory in the sky in which he sits THE ALONE UNMOVED ONE. [652]

First let us be clear as to the true meaning of 2 Thess. 2:8 which speaks of the appearing (epiphaneia) of His coming (parousia). Parousia means presence; and it may be a visible or an invisible presence. 2 Thess. 2:8 indicates this. It refers to the appearing of His presence, which would be a redundancy if visibility is implicit in "presence." There is one second coming, having two parts of the one parousia. 2 Thess. 2:8 shows that the second part is visible, which seems to imply that the first part is not.

To return to T.W.C.'s remarks; he placed the "rapture" (parousia) within the epiphany:

> But the most important event (so accurately timed in the Bible as to leave no doubt that it takes place during the epiphany) is the resurrection of the dead in Christ, and the change of them both and the then living saints, in the act of their απαυτησις or rapture unto the Lord in the air. [653]

Moreover, this epiphany is not secret, not even "secret at the first stage": [654]

> And, again, it seems impossible to affix any definite meaning whatever to these words, "*the sign* of the Son of Man in heaven," unless we understand *his visible presence there* to be what is referred to by the expression "*the sign*" . . .
>
> Hence I conclude with perfect confidence, that there shall be such an appearance of the Son of Man in *the heaven* or *the sky* . . . *an* EPIPHANY . . . or again as in Rev. 1:7 . . . [655]
>
> Now we know that when He shall appear His appearing and His presence shall be as the lightning . . . (Matt. 24:27) . . . And "every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7). [656]

We now have the broad outline of the scheme of T.W.C.

1. The man of sin will be destroyed in the epiphany of His advent as the first part of a succession of events.
2. The Lord will appear to all, visibly, in the sky. This is His epiphany. Thus his explanation how every eye shall see Him:

> . . . the sky and the earth shall flee from the presence of the Lord in our firmament; our planet reeling on its axis at His approach, and revolving upon its poles in the twinkling of an eye . . . [657]

3. The resurrection and translation of the saints, i.e. the rapture, "takes place during the epiphany."
4. Later the Lord's advent (parousia) to earth takes place.
5. He did not teach any secrecy but, rather, visibility.

This is similar to what MM had indicated; that the rapture would occur during the epiphany, or the sign of it. Modern posttribulationism makes the rapture, parousia, and epiphany occur in one day. The difference between this and the above is that T.W.C. views the parousia as part of the epiphany and sees the parousia occurring a bit later.

The Scriptures show that Christ's parousia has two phases. The first phase of the parousia will occur before Daniel's 70th week begins and it is then that all the righteous dead up to that point are raised (Heb. 11:40) and the living are caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-18). Thus we shall be with Christ (John 14:1-3). After this, there may be an interval, or not, and then Daniel's 70th week will occur and the great tribulation will commence in the middle of that week. The great tribulation will continue on for a little after the close of the week. Christ's *epiphaneia of His parousia* will then take place. It is called the appearing, the manifestation, and the revelation. This is the second phase of the coming wherein He will come in glory. It is certainly difficult to get a pretribulation rapture out of T.W.C.'s scheme. It is not even a pre-1260 days scheme.

1830-31:THE CASE OF FIDUS

In the *Morning Watch* (Sept. 1830), Fidus [658] says that the seven churches of Rev. 2 and 3 represent seven periods of history, of which I cite remarks concerning the last four:

4. The church at Thyatira expresses the testimony of the church against the Papacy during the 1260 years.
5. That of Sardis indicates the state of the church

651. T. W. C., "On the Epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Gathering of His Elect," *Morning Watch* 2:589, Sept. 1830.

652. *Ibid.*, p. 589.

653. *Ibid.*, p. 590.

654. Mr. MacPherson indicated that T. W. C. thought the first stage of the epiphany was secret (*The Great Rapture Hoax*, p. 131).

655. *Morning Watch*, Sept 1830, p. 589.

656. *Morning Watch*, Sept.1830, p. 589.

657. *Ibid.*, p. 589.

658. Mr. MacPherson's views on Fidus' views may be found in his, *The Great Rapture Hoax*, pp. 136,140,143,150,151,163,164 and in *The Rapture Plot*, pp. 8-12.

from the end of the 1260 years, until the preparation for the coming of the Lord.

6. The Philadelphian church expresses the period of that preparation, until the Lord come to the air, and be met by his saints changed and risen.
7. The Laodicean church (the only one yet entirely future) is our sad monitor concerning the history of the church on earth during that period of great tribulation which shall intervene between the coming of the Lord to the air and the establishment of his throne and rest in Zion. [659]

Note the historicism. It is not an *application* of something in the book of Revelation to a historical event, but *historicist interpretation*. Also, once again we have here the epiphany followed by the parousia, as in T.W.C.'s case, considered above.

Mr. MacPherson says that in par. 7, Fidus placed the Lord's coming into the air before the time of Antichrist; i.e., "that period of great tribualation." Here he thinks he has discovered "a combination never before seen in public print." [660] Besides Fidus not having placed the Lord's coming into the air before the time of Antichrist, we also want to know what was the view Fidus had of "that period of great tribulation." Was it the time of the 1260 days preceding the epiphany? What if it refers to the pouring out of the seven vials; or to the pouring out of the seventh vial; or to the Days of Vengeance? If this is the case, and we have seen that previous writers had held such a two-stage coming, then Fidus is merely one in a long chain of historicists that have done so.

Fidus regarded himself in the Philadelphian *era of preparation*, preparation being an Irvingite theme, and also MM's theme. There is no immediate expectation (one without the necessity of intervening events) in either case. It appears here that the Antichrist is viewed as the papacy (part of the historicist scheme). Also note that judgments will be poured out during what Fidus calls "that period of great tribulation" -- evidently the pouring out of the seventh vial. (See note. [661])

In his view cited above we can see that to him, as a historicist, almost the whole of the Revelation had passed already. He held a "two-stage" coming something like the Protestant writers cited in a note for Ch. 7.3. Christ gathers His own into the air and then certain judgments are poured out, some saying the conflagration of 2 Peter 3, some saying the seventh vial, and some saying the seven vials, and then Christ descends from the air with His own. The conclusion is that whether he called it "that period of great tribulation," or "the great tribulation," does not change the fact that what he held is a pre-conflagration view, or a pre-Days of Vengeance view, as others had done before him, though Mr. MacPherson refuses to acknowledge these facts. He sees the words, "the great tribulation," and virtually forces those words into "the great tribulation" that the pretribulation rapture sees as embracing the 1260 days, i.e., the last half of Daniel's 70 week. My impression is that that is how modern posttribulationists also understand "the great tribulation." Mr. MacPherson is continually playing a semantics game [662] -- while refusing to acknowledge earlier two-stage coming views, and even perverting Morgan Edwards' 1260 days into 3 ½ day "tiny" interval! which still is two stages, is it not?

Coming back to Fidus, in the June 1831 issue of the *Morning Watch* he continued, of course, as a historicist. He regarded the Irvingites as "our Elijah" who will be caught up, but there will be

> the people of God who are left, and who alone shall know the event that happened to their brethren . . . They shall live in the great day of wrath in fearless faith and strength. [663]

This indicates a partial rapture and those who answer to the church of Laodicea, the non-Irvingite people of God, are left behind. It is not clear if he thought that Christ and His people suspended in the air are visible to those on earth. This is another variant posttribulational scheme.

This judgment of which he speaks is:

> upon Babylon (Jer. 1); the great conquest at Meggiddo; the predicted death of Jezebel; and the extermination of the

659. "Commentary on the Epistle to the Seven Churches in the Apocalypse," *Morning Watch*, Sept. 1830, p. 510.

660. *The Rapture Hoax*, pp. 10, 11.

661. At this point in the first edition I erred in saying, "Notice also that he did not call it "*the* great tribulation.'" Several pages later Fidus did call it by that designation. On the other hand, I wrote that Fidus placed the Antichrist's manifestation into that short time Christ was supposed to be suspended in the air with His own. Actually, as did all these Irvingite writers, *Fidus expected to be on earth when the Antichrist was manifested.* Fidus presented a view of the seven churches in Rev. 2, 3 that sees in them a foreshadow of epochs in church history. Some historicists many years before him took a similar view (Joseph Mede did so). Fidus saw himself in the Philadelphian period, and the Laodicean would occur while Christ and His own were suspended in the air. He said:

> These three are, The opposition of the Jews, and, through them, of the Romans, to Messiah and his servants; the dominion of the Papacy; and the rage of the last Antichrist . . . The first was first experienced by the church of Ephesus; the second was opposed by that of Thyatira, and is abolished in God's judgment on the papacy; the last will yet be witnessed by that of Philadelphia,

(continued...)

661. (...continued)

> and abolished at the coming of the Lord by the great tribulation (*Morning Watch*, Dec. 1830, p. 764).

Thus, the Philadelphian period would witness the rage of the last Antichrist; therefore Fidus expected to witness it. The interval while the saints were in the air he called the great tribulation. In the March 1832 issue he modified his view of when the Laodicean period would occur and moved it to a place before Christ came:

> I begin however to see, that we ought to regard it as chiefly representing the period during which Antichrist runs his career resplendent with the light of hell, and peaceful under the spells of Satan, rather than the succeeding period in which Antichrist is overwhelmed (*Morning Watch*, March 1832, pp. 29, 30).

662. Thus, in *The Rapture Plot*, p. 63, he wrote:

> Fidus clearly stated that "Philadelphia" will be raptured and "Laodicea" left on earth to endure "the great tribulation" -- a pretribulation rapture.

Too bad it does not materially differ from the historicist, pre-conflagration rapture. It is the same in principle.

663. *Morning Watch*, June 1831, p. 277.

> Roman power and the abominations of Baal . . . [664]

Speaking of the Papacy, he tells us that God will have had patience with it for,

> the period of one thousand two hundred and sixty years; at the end of which that tenderness towards the system, and those who will not come out of it, gives place to judgment, mediate or immediate. [665]

Having expatiated on and on, he finally comes to his pre-Days of Vengeance rapture:

> The great and now most momentous argument for holding that the church of Philadelphia is that which is caught up to meet the Lord in the air to {not go to the Father's house (John 14:1-3), note, but rather} execute his wrath -- thus rewarded with a primordial honour before its participation with sorely chastened but repentant Laodicea in the terrestrial kingdom . . . it is plain that the vision of the angels exactly corresponds with this supposed event (Rev. 15:1). [666]

That is quite a "most momentous argument"; the Philadelphian church has to be caught up in order to execute the vial judgments! Pity these self-deceived Irvingites. Pity those who find "the pretribulation rapture," i.e., the pre-Rev. 4 rapture, in such things!

A June 1831 article, "On the Structure of the Apocalypse," signed F., speaks of:

> . . . the history of the Gentile dispensation (Luke 21:24; Rom. 11:11, 25), which the Apocalypse contains . . . (p. 470),

"the lapse of the 1260 years," etc., and contains a historicist chart. How different this is compared to J. N. Darby's 1827 view where he understood the saints were above at Rev. 4.

In the Dec. 1831 issue, speaking of Philadelphia, Fidus reaffirmed that:

> . . . the character and hope of this church in particular, and the future outpouring of the seven vials by Christ's risen and translated saints, is agreeable to the mind of the Spirit. [667]

Fidus said that the Pope was restraining (i.e., the Pope is the restrainer of 2 Thess. 2) the manifestation of the man of sin. [668] Moreover, the ten Kings were in process of receiving power:

> The ten kings are now receiving their crowns from the people, to wear them for the people against the King of kings; and they shall receive favour one hour with the beast. [669]

> . . . the church of Philadelphia will be assailed with temptations, natural and supernatural, fleshly and satanic, seductive and terrific, to forget the house of David; to despise her birthright; to yield, and not overcome; to abide in the snare, and not escape; to hear the sweet accents and glorious promises of Antichrist's consummate and all-embracing lie; to believe his prophets and evangelists and wonders; to receive his mark, or at least to come short of being his destroyer. [670]

Fidus said that it would be during "the hour of trial" (the period that Christ and the Irvingites will be suspended in the air, during which the raptured Irvingites help pour out the seven vials -- a historicist idea) that the Antichrist [671] is revealed and brought to nought.

> He shall be the vicegerent of Satan, the leader of the kings . . . and the lie which he embodies is that essence, the tribulation which he entails only the consequences which constitute the trial of the world. That a part of the church shall be so tried, I believe {Laodiceans} . . . the faith of him that believeth the words of God concerning the kingdoms of Christ and of Antichrist shall not be tried by that awful apocalypse of the latter . . .

> Now the method of this preservation is, translation to meet the Lord in the air, and thence to execute with him the outpouring of the seven vials, till he take the kingdom . . .

> And, now we see the kings beginning to reign by the commission of the people, and Antichrist just about to be revealed, whom the Lord shall bring to nought with the epiphany of his presence. [672]

This has gone further that Margaret Macdonald, who in her "revelation" had predicted trial by the Antichrist.

Having placed the Antichrist's manifestation [673] into that short time while Christ is suspended in the air on His way down to earth, Fidus is prepared to say:

> Thou mayest be translated on the morrow: behold, he cometh as a thief (Rev. 16:15). [674]

Interestingly, he said "on the morrow," not, "today." Of course, there is no any-moment expectation. There were a complex of developments that had to occur before the translation. It is also interesting to observe that John 14:1-3 does not appear to be in the thoughts of the Irvingites at all. What occupies their minds is not the coming of the Lord in grace to take His own to the Father's house above. Rather, what they are looking for is Him to come as a thief, in judgment, and their pouring out the seven vials. This may again be illustrated in an article by John Hooper in the Dec. 1831 issue:

> . . . the church's expectation, or the hope which is set before her under the present dispensation, is, THE COMING OF THE LORD TO JUDGE THE WORLD . . . [675]

Thus they see themselves caught up to be suspended in the air, either during the pouring out of the seventh vial, begun before; or, that then the seven vials would be poured out. It appears that the true character of the rapture never occurred

664. *Ibid.*, p. 278.
665. *Ibid.*
666. *Ibid.*, p. 288.
667. *Morning Watch*, Dec. 1831, p. 255.
668. *Ibid.*, p. 261.
669. *Ibid.*, p. 266.
670. *Ibid.*, p. 269.
671. In the *Morning Watch*, March 1832, p. 44, Fidus indicated that the Beast was the Antichrist.
672. *Morning Watch*, Dec. 1831, p. 277.
673. See *Morning Watch*, March 1832, p. 44 for a little more detail.
674. *Morning Watch*, Dec. 1831, p. 292.
675. *Morning Watch*, Dec. 1831, p. 317.

to them; or else, if some of them heard something about it from JND at a Powerscourt meeting, they rejected it. This failure to understand the true character of the rapture is also evidenced in partial rapture views. The truth is that Christ will come for *all* His saints and bring them to the Father's house to enjoy (not mansions big and small, near or at a distance, as dreamers may imagine) *abodes of nearness* to the Father. This never seems to have entered the thoughts of the Irvingites. In reality, the hope of these Irvingites was earthly, not the heavenly hope that JND understood and treasured during his period of isolation in Dec. 1826 -Jan. 1827. As one more example of the differences, we observe Fidus' view of the marriage of the Lamb taking place in the air and the marriage supper here on earth:

> But there is another door, which he shall cause to be opened at his second coming, after he shall have been met by his saints in the air; the door or gate of the city, the city of this world: for he is here to establish his kingdom, and eat the marriage-supper after his marriage with the bride in the air; is to judge the world in righteousness, as it is written, "The Judge standeth before the door" . . . [676]

So no amount of Mr. MacPherson's fiddling on Fidus has brought out of him the sweet song of the pretribulation rapture, the pre-Rev. 4 rapture.

JUNE 1831: ANONYMOUS ON THE FIRST-FRUITS

An article appeared entitled, "Jesus the Head over all Things to His Church" (p329ff). Mr. MacPherson says that the writer said that the first resurrection covered the firstfruits and a harvest slightly later on, on p. 330. [677] I found no such thing on the page -- nor did he actually quote, so let us pass on.

SEPT. 1831: ANOTHER WRITER

Another writer in the *Morning Watch* for Sept. 1831, said:

> The only question that can arise is, Whether the saints are "caught up to meet the Lord in the air" at the beginning, or at some other part, of the "day" {reference is to the "day of the Lord"} . . . The very expression "*meet* the Lord," implies that He should be on His way down to earth . . . [678]

This last statement became a standard posttribulationist argument against pretribulation truth, namely, that it is (allegedly) implicit in the word "meet" that the Lord is on his way to earth (this notion about "meet" is false). This Irvingite historicist scheme sees the rapture as occurring in the day of the Lord, which is inaugurated by "the days of vengeance"; i.e., the pouring out of the seven vials on God's enemies. This may be called a kind of "tribulation" which one may use if one is trying to prove an erroneous theory and has nothing better to offer, but this is really not to the issue.

DEC. 1831: JOHN HOOPER'S VIEW

There was another variant of teaching at work at the same time Fidus was expounding his views. Another article on prophecy, by John Hooper, in the same Dec. 1831 issue, illustrates again what the Irvingite historicist scheme is, namely, that the Lord's coming for His saints is a link in the chain of prophecy. (This is true of posttribulationism also). On the next page is a diagram of John Hooper scheme, as it appears to me. He wrote:

> We arrive at the conclusion *that the day of the Lord is at hand*; and which our Divine Master has taught us may be known by attending to the fulfillment of prophecy, even as the approach of summer is known by the trees putting forth their leaves; . . . We might show that the great prophetic period of Daniel and John is passed -- namely, the 1260 years, during which the Papacy was to triumph; that the midnight cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh," has been made; that the angel flying through the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach, has proclaimed that the hour of God's judgment is come; that the seventh seal has been opened, the seventh trumpet sounded, the seventh vial commenced; but it is only to this last-mentioned portion of prophecy that we shall at present direct our attention. We have, blessed be God, lived to see the commencement of the seventh vial, DURING THE OUTPOURING OF WHICH THE LORD WILL COME! (p. 321).
>
> Now these things began to take place at the first revolution in France, in the year 1792. Then the temporal head, the sun of the Roman earth, was eclipsed, and the moon turned to blood; then, too, the stars -- the lesser governments -- fell to the earth; and then was also great distress of nations, with perplexity. But we are now living in days when these events are drawing to a climax. The second great political earthquake occasioned by the French revolution, and which now strikes terror through the earth, is bringing to perfection that of 1792. These revolutionary movements, therefore, will not stop till those kings described in Rev. 17:12-14, and which have received no kingdom as yet, shall be fully established. In France we see one of these governments well-nigh formed. Now, as these kings make war with the Lamb, and as they reign but one hour with the beast, and are destroyed in the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-21), which is the great day of God Almighty (14:14), it is clear that the translation of the saints must take place during the setting up of these kings, or, at the farthest, when they shall have united together to give their power and strength unto the beast (17:14). It appears to me, however, most probable, that the translation of the saints -- i.e. their removal up into that cloud of which Noah's ark was the type -- will not take place *till the ten kings are set up*. Noah had seven days' warning, and the flood came on the seventh day, the very day in which he entered into the ark (Gen. 7:4-11). May we not therefore conclude, that the time occupied by the bestial government (17:14) is analogous to the seven days' warning which was given Noah; and that, when these ten kings are confederate and ripe for destruction, the "short space" during which they shall have power with the beast (according to strict interpretation, fifteen days; one hour being the twenty-fourth part of a day, and a prophetic day being twelve months) will be that in which the saints will be shut up in the ark, previous to the judgments. "Blessed is he that watcheth!" (pp. 322, 323).

676. *Morning Watch*, March 1832, p. 45.
677. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 66.
678. *Morning Watch*, Sept. 1831, p. 253.

> It appears to me, however, most probable that the translation of the saints, i.e. their removal up into that cloud of which Noah's ark was the type -- will not take place till the ten kings are set up (p. 325). (John Hooper, "The Church's Expectation," (*Morning Watch*, Dec. 1831).

Note well that this is a variant of the year-day theory (historicism). According to John Hooper, the Irvingites would have to wait at least until the ten kings were set up. He reversed the order of the rapture and the epiphany, contrary to what MM and some writers for the *Morning Watch* had held. He also introduced the idea of secrecy into this variant:

> The sudden and unexpected manner in which God's people will be gathered unto himself, previous to his epiphany, or manifestation unto the world, is thus described: "In that night, two shall be in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other left . . ." Now this language seems to imply that there shall be no outward or visible sign of the separation about to take place; that men will be engaged in their various occupations in life as they now are. [679]

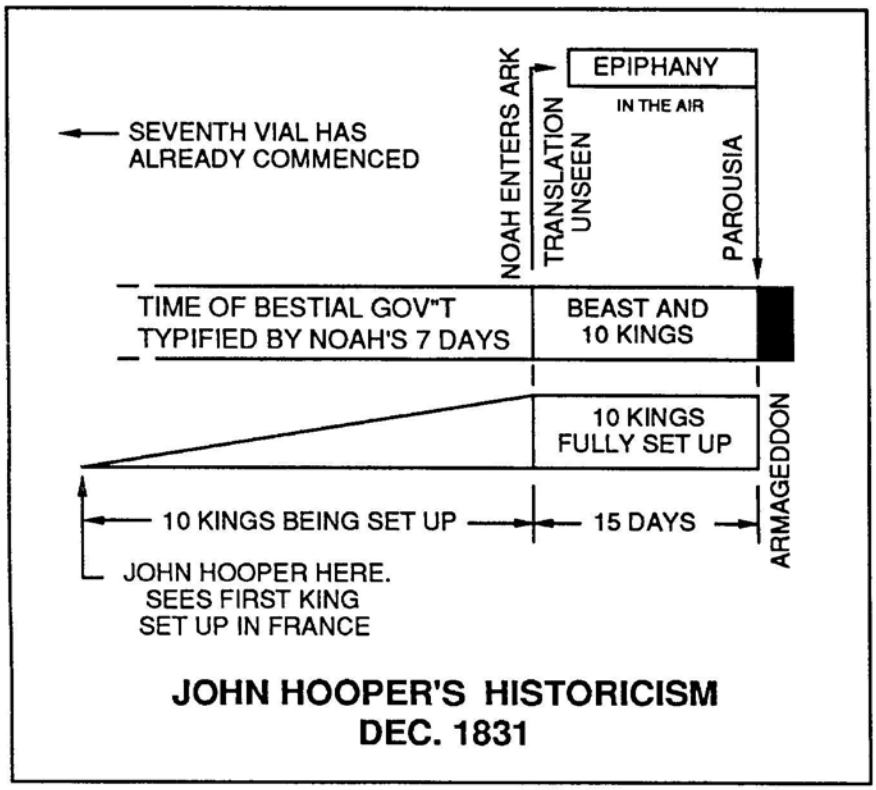
The text quoted actually refers to the Lord's coming in judgment at His appearing in glory to set up the kingdom. The 'taking' of a person refers to removal in judgment, not the rapture. MM also used this Scripture erroneously, as did the writer just quoted. It is a myth that she used the phrase to refer to a pre-Antichrist rapture. Moreover, it is a Scripture that posttribulationists quote in an attempt to refute the teaching of the pretribulation rapture. At any rate, D. MacPherson called this "a *three*-stage coming!" If the pretribulation rapture is derived from a "two stage," historicist, second coming, just imagine what might be derived from a "three stage," historicist, second coming, using the same 'ingenuity'!

OCT. 1831: NOTE ON A COMMENT BY E. IRVING

Concerning the years 1829-1831, other comments to which we could refer would not substantially add more, but we will pause for a comment by E. Irving [680] in a letter dated just before 1832, namely, Oct. 31, 1831:

> I must forsake all for Him. I live by faith daily, for I daily look for his appearing . . . Farewell. [681]

The ellipsis is in the letter. There is evidence that subsequent to this he did not believe in an any moment coming. Thus, it appears to be a 'pious' expression.



JOHN HOOPER'S HISTORICISM DEC. 1831

674. *Ibid.* p. 325.

680. Mr. MacPherson, *The Great Rapture Hoax*, p. 167, draws attention to this comment.

681. Mrs. Oliphant, *The Life of E. Irving*, 1862, p. 442.

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DEC. 1831: SOME "PURE PRE-TRIB" HUMBUG CLAIMS

There is a passage in the Irvingite journal, the *Morning Watch*, that Mr. MacPherson calls "Pure Pre-Trib!" which is neither pure nor pre-trib. The reference is to a short article, "The Hour of Christ's Appearance," *Morning Watch*, Dec. 1831, pp. 251-254, which said:

> That the Lord appears in some part of that period called throughout Scripture "the day of the Lord," is what few will deny . . . (p. 251).

The writer assumed that his readers knew what he meant by the day of the Lord, namely, the standard Irvingite understanding:

> . . . of Christ himself being personally present -- that is, within the atmosphere of this globe . . . (p. 252).

Recall that this is the interval noted by M. Lacunza (a Jesuit) and some Protestant writers before him. The Irvingite scheme was well in place at this point, as illustrated in the above diagram of John Hooper's view and in the view of Fidus, found in the same issue of the *Morning Watch*. Thus this writer could say:

> The only question that can arise is, Whether the saints are "caught up to meet the Lord in the air" at the beginning, or at some other part of that "day" (p. 252).

That is the only question here, once again showing he held the standard Irvingite view. "Pure Pre-Trib!" indeed! Actually, if John Hooper and others were teaching some form of pretribulationism, then this writer was retrogressing because he thought that the Lord might come after the Day of the Lord had begun. Perhaps this is 'Impure Trib!' This writer did not deny that Antichrist would appear before the coming, though he exhorted that the eye of Christ's people should be fixed upon Christ's appearance. In the following quotation I will underline what may be distorted into deceiving a reader that here we have "Pure Pre-Trib!" -- yet it is found in a passage that shows that the writer thought Antichrist would be present before the coming of Christ. Moreover, he did not hold an any moment coming.

> The same moment that first sees the Jews assume a national unity, will also witness the rapture of the saints into the air; because the one is the outward and visible concomitant of the invisible but equally literal fact. In like manner, the saints will be with Christ (Rev. 17:14) executing the judgments, and invisibly guiding that which the Jewish nation will be doing in the flesh.
>
> The workings of the last Antichrist shall, to the extent of Satan's power, mimic the minutest details of the mighty acts of Christ: but Satan's power is, of course, *imitation* of Christ, and therefore Christ's acts precede Satan's mimicry. Christ writes upon his people a new name (Rev. 3:12) *before* the beast causes all the earth to receive the number of his name (Rev. 13:16): the members of Christ's body are gathered to him, before the limbs of Antichrist -- the Beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies -- gather against the Lamb and His armies. Every act of Antichrist has a *precedent* act in Christ, like which, or against which, Satan immediately instigates his tools to set up a counterfeit. We must steadfastly contemplate the reality, not the counterfeit; and we miss the true object of faith and hope in the coming of the Lord, not only when we overleap it altogether, <u>but when we interpose any screen whatever; when we look for any event of persecution or tribulation, for any combination of kings, any gathering of people, any manifestation of Antichrist</u>. The immediate coming of Christ, and our preparation to meet Him, should now be the sole object of steadfast faith, and earnest desire, and constant **preparation**.

The underlined words are alleged to be "Pure Pre-Trib!" -- whereas the writer only says that those things are not the true object of hope and faith, and warned against placing them as a screen between the saints and that upon which their eye ought to fixed. In no way is this a statement that Christ would come before those events. Moreover, by the expression "immediate coming" the writer does not mean an any moment coming. He saw himself in a period of **preparation**, an Irvingite theme. There were various events impending, the Lord's return was near, Antichrist would be manifested, etc., but, he said, do not fix the eye on that; do not let that screen your view.

JAN. 1832: R. BAXTER'S PROPHECY OF THE 3 ½ YEAR WAIT

The very next month after the writings in the Dec. 1831 *Morning Watch*, we arrive at the time of R. Baxter's utterance on Jan. 14, 1832, that the saints would go up in 3 ½ years from that date. E. Irving sanctioned R. Baxter's 'prophetic utterance' as having come from one who was "in the Spirit." [682] Mrs. Oliphant's book confirms this, citing a letter of E. Irving thus:

> The Lord hath anointed Baxter of Doncaster after another kind . . . [683]

R. Baxter had thought that:

---

682. R. Baxter wrote:

> In January 14th, 1832, I became a participator in the power of utterance, and was recognized by Mrs. Caird, Mrs. J. and Miss E. Cardale, Miss Hall, and Mr. Taplin, as equally gifted with themselves. They all, on various occasions, bore testimony in their utterances to the truth of my utterances (*Irvingism in its Rise, Progress, and Present State*, p. 21, sec. ed., 1836).

On March 2, 1832, E. Irving wrote to him:

> The comfort and edification which the Lord ministered by you fills my heart with peace and thanksgiving to our God, upon every remembrance of it. You have communicated to us in the word an unspeakable gift; you have been used by the Shepherd to direct us more steadfastly in our faith towards himself. We greatly long after you in the bonds of Christ, and much desire your reappearing in the midst of us with the full power of an apostle to minister the Spirit unto us by the laying on of hands (*ibid.*, p. 24).

On April 26, 1832 R. Baxter returned and told the Irvingites that he had been deluded and that they were taken in a snare (*ibid.*, p. 26). In spite of this they continued to believe in his prophecy regarding the 1260 days but when it failed in 1835 the Irvingites tried to get out of their acceptance of it. R. Baxter wrote:

> . . . This moreover is also the fact, that on the 14th July, 1835, when the three years and a half had expired, the church in Newman Street had called for delegates from all their followers throughout England, to meet as on a holy convocation, which was extended for seven days. So much importance did they continue to attach to the literal interpretation of the days.

683. Mrs. Oliphant, *The Life of Edward Irving*, p. 449.

> our refuge in and through the days of vengeance, would be some earthly sanctuary, until the Lord should come, the dead be raised, and those remaining alive should be caught up (1 Thess. 4:17). [684]

That is like a little Zoar to hide in, as Lot wanted to do. However, in the fall of 1831, R. Baxter became convinced that before the "days of vengeance" (i.e., the pouring out of the seven vials) the saints would be caught up and be safe during the outpouring, and that Matt. 24:40, 41 and Luke 21:36 refer to this. (You may have observed that "the days of vengeance" substitutes for M. Lacunza's 45 literal day interval of the day of the Lord, involving the conflagration of 2 Pet. 3.) He said that E. Irving had advanced this opinion in some of his writings. [685] That did not refer to a pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture, nor to a pre-Rev. 4 rapture. Irving did not hold such things. He held a view expressed from time to time such as Joseph Mede's rapture to safety to be followed immediately by a "conflagration," [686] (which influenced some subsequent historicists) or as others viewed the matter, "days of vengeance."

But he experienced a further development in view. The "power" came on him on Jan. 14, 1832 and he prophesied that the Lord would come in 3 ½ years, take up the saints, and "the earth then being without a witness for God -- and then the man of sin would be revealed." [687]

The 1260 days were to be filled by the *mystical* man of sin, i.e., the "spirit of Satan" bearing rule in the visible church; and the "let" (hinderer) of 2 Thess. 2 was the Spirit now removed from the visible church. The "faithful spiritual church" being removed, the literal Antichrist would be manifested as the "final development of the personal man of sin." He would first destroy Protestantism and then the Papacy. He was subsequently declared to be young Napoleon. [688]

This must have caused quite a confusion considering the other views we have examined, including the partial rapture idea. However, R. Baxter was delivered from all this.

JUNE 1832: ANOTHER HISTORICIST SCHEME

In March 1832, an anonymous article, "Christ the Morning Star; and Lucifer Son of the Morning," appeared. Nothing was said about R. Baxter's prophecy and whether or not the writer thought his scheme would take place when that prophecy was fulfilled, we do not know. It is another variant, historicist scheme. In it, the impending day of the Lord,

> . . . is a long period, of seven or fourteen years; [689] during which the vials, which were typically fulfilled at the French Revolution, shall be poured out by the risen saints, and have a literal fulfilment (p. 5; see p. 14).

Where are the saints?

> The morning of the day of the Lord reveals Christ and his hidden ones in the clouds of heaven, and reveals on earth that wicked one, the son of perdition, whom, when his iniquity is full, the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming (p. 1).

There seems no thought of the Father's house above (John 14:1-3) in his mind. It is saints suspended in the air in this lengthened interval, compared to other pre-conflagration historicists we reviewed above, who also held that the saints would be in the air for some period. We saw that they held that Peter's prophecy of the new heavens and new earth referred to the inauguration of the millennium. This writer, remarking upon Christ's descent, with the saints, from the air to the earth, speaking of the clash with Antichrist, says:

> . . . contending against the Lamb and his followers, against Christ and his saints, arrayed in all the power and splendour of the new heavens and the new earth about to be; the prince of this world marshalled against *the world to come* (p.10).

This false prophet is occupied with "signs" (pp. 2, 3, 11). And he presses the Irvingite line of preparedness, seeing himself in a time of sifting:

> As soon as the sifting time, now begun, is over -- and we know not how soon this may be -- as soon as Christ has given full demonstration of his presence with his church, by signs of the Holy Ghost . . . (p. 13).

In this context, talk about a daily expectation is not literally a daily expectation. There were events that had to take place before Christ came:

> Christ is now adorning his bride with all the gifts and graces of the Spirit, in preparation for his coming . . . (p. 12).

JUNE 1832: A SEVEN YEAR REIGN OF ANTICHRIST

Mr. MacPherson has drawn attention to an interesting statement in the June 1832 *Morning Watch*, "The Tabernacle of God with Men; and the Feast of Tabernacles" p. 262: [690]

> The seven days of the feast typify seven years; and the thirteen bullocks, slain on the first day, indicate a confederacy of thirteen hostile powers, to be broken in the first of these seven years of the reign of Antichrist, and of his confederacy with Gog and Magog.

It is remarkable that this was based on a type, and not on the future 70th week of Dan. 9. This is still part of an historicist scheme, and has nothing to do with a belief that Daniel's 70th week was future, as we shall see below

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684. *Narrative of Facts*, p. 17.

685. *Narrative of Facts,* p. 17.

686. Joseph Mede, *Works* 4:775, 1677, wrote:

> I will add some variations of this, namely, what may be conceived to be the cause of this Rapture of the Saints on high to meet the Lord in the Clouds, rather than to wait his coming to the earth. What if it be, that they may be preserved during the Conflagration of the earth and the works thereof, 2 Peter 3:10, that as Noah and his family were preserved from the Deluge by being lift up above the waters in the Ark; so should the saints at the Conflagration be lift up in the Clouds unto their Ark, Christ, to be preserved there from the deluge of fire, wherein the wicked shall be consumed?

The utterance of Margaret Macdonald conforms to this scenario.

687. R. Baxter, *Narrative of Facts*, p. 31.

688. R. Baxter, *Narrative of Facts*, pp. 17-19, 29-31.

689. {Actually, the Day of the Lord begins when the smiting stone of Dan. 2 crushes the Gentile power of empire, and it continues during the millennium and up to the great white throne judgment. Presently, we live in man's day (1 Cor. 4:3).}

690. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 65.

To the above quotation is added another from p. 269, which I have italicised, but I will quote more largely:

> The judgment must begin at the house of God; and this is indicated in the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement: and the entrance into the most holy place on that day denotes the resurrection and translation of the saints at the period corresponding with the day of atonement . . . The Feast of Tabernacles was four days after the day of atonement; and *the bullocks slain during the seven days of the feast, denote the apostates and rebels which shall perish in that great tribulation which shall intervene between the translation of the saints to heaven and their coming down from heaven in the new Jerusalem*.

Mr. Mac Pherson then declares that this is the first time he found anyone projecting a seven year tribulation. There was no such projection except in his own mind. The writer of the article goes on to refer to a 15 day period of the saints in the air with Christ -- not seven years -- speaking of this as "the new creation shall probably occupy fifteen days" (p. 269). On the next page the writer of the article says:

> During these fifteen days of the manifestation of Christ and his saints, all the remaining enemies of truth shall be destroyed . . . (p. 270).

What we actually have here is a 15 day great tribulation during which the saints are in the air with Christ -- a two-stage, historicist coming, with judgments poured out during this interval. Note also that if Antichrist was present for seven years, the saints endured him for virtually all, if not all, of his time.

REJECTION OF THE FUTURITY OF DANIEL'S 70TH WEEK

In the June 1832 *Morning Watch*, in an article, "On the Sacred Numbers," p. 278, we read:

> . . . A.D. 30 for the commencement of the week during which the covenant was confirmed with the many of the Jewish people; A.D. 33½ the ceasing of the oblation and sacrifice of Christ; A.D. 37 the expiration of the seventy weeks . . .

I am not aware that Mr. MacPherson called attention to this or the next one. In another June 1832 paper, by F.C.B.E., "Interpretation of the Seventy Weeks," the writer says:

> . . . it probably refers to some period about the destruction of Jerusalem (p. 331).

Partial Rapture in the March and June 1832 Issues

The Irvingite historicists fell into a partial rapture view, a doctrine intended to be a warning device to produce holiness, [691] but in reality a doctrine of pride, for the perpetrators of this notion are among the holy ones that will be raptured, are they not? And some, less filled with self than these heady perpetrators of self-serving error, might dread the coming as thinking they are not worthy; whereas, we have a "blessed hope." E. Irving had indicated such a notion. [692] In the *Morning Watch*, March 1832, we read:

> But should any grains of wheat shew such backwardness as to be scarcely distinguishable from the tares, or be so entangled with them as to be left upon the field, such foolish virgins, such foolish builders, shall be exposed to the rage of Antichrist, and most generally atone for their folly by the most cruel martyrdom . . . [693]

The truth actually is that all the wheat in the parable is gathered at one time into the granary; and the foolish virgins never enter -- for they took **no** oil with them. This had developed some time after Miss MM's utterance, for she expected the saints to see Antichrist.

As one further example:

> There is a band which is counted worthy to escape the things that are coming on the earth; while others are left to witness in the furnace which Antichrist will heat seven-fold. [694]

This writer takes note of Robert Baxter, who had realized that the power of the Enemy wrought in him. The writer said:

> Mr. Baxter is a dear friend, whose *present delusion* we would gladly conceal, till the workings of God's providence, which is even now teaching us this lesson, shall have taught him wherein he *mis-represents his own utterances*; . . . Mr. Baxter is at present taken in the snare of his own self-confidence; and, because his declarations have not been accomplished in the way he himself expected, he has not only inferred that his own declarations were false, but has most unwarrantably and presumptiously inferred that all the other claims to gifts and manifestations are false also. [695]

Time has told us who is guilty of these charges.

Sept. 1832: "Fresh Interpretations"

Though the Irvingites convinced themselves that R. Baxter had mis-represented his own utterances, the translation of the saints just preceeding the millennium.

In an anonymous article in the *Morning Watch* for Sept. 1832, "Germinant Fulfilment of Prophecies," pp. 45-48. The writer concluded:

> Let not our readers, therefore, be disturbed at the idea of fresh interpretations by the mouth of his prophets; but these additions will not be substitutes for, or at variance with, what he has already taught his other servants . . . (p. 49).

The Irvingites were quite deceived by their prophets, and no doubt this writer knew he was directly contradicting R. Baxter's prophecy of the 3 ½ year wait to the Irvingite rapture. It is another indicator of the success of the lying, deceptive spirits at work in Irvingism. Moreover, meanwhile there was more and more truth coming out through God's

691. Titus 2:11-15 tells us what the teacher of holiness is.

692. "Signs of the Times , and the Characteristics of the Church," in *The Morning Watch*, March 1830, p. 162.

693. "Christ the morning Star; and Lucifer Son of the Morning," p. 12.

694. *Morning Watch*, June 1832, anon., "The Voice of God," p. 303.

695. *Ibid.*, p. 305, 306

instrumentality of J. N. Darby. The Enemy's deceptions shifted to move from direct opposition to the pre-Rev. 4 rapture to go part way -- but would not involve any of the truth of the Christian's heavenly position and the heavenly hope of Christ coming to take him to the Father's house.

I suggest that the reader review Chapter 5. 3 on the Powerscourt meetings to obtain a sense of the things under discussion.

This writer, then, said that the translation would occur at the commencement of the 1260 days (though he maintained the general validity of the historicist scheme in this article.) This was what Morgan Edwards had said -- but there is this critical difference. Morgan Edwards' presentation involved some progress in understanding, whereas what was transpiring in Irvingism involved demonic delusion. It is instructive that Mr. MacPherson is able to see a pre-1260 day rapture here, but was not able to see it in the plain speech of Morgan Edwards. Does this tell you something?

And, I suggest to the reader that it was a form of opposition of the Enemy to the recovered truth through J. N. Darby in 1827. The opposition would take a new form some years later under B. W. Newton (the details of which are documented in volume two in this series).

After pointing out that:

> the 1260 years of the Papal supremacy did begin with Justinian; and terminate with the earthquake of the French revolution: yet notwithstanding this . . . deeds may be done which shall occupy the literal time of 1260 days, or three years and a half; during which all the events of the seals and trumpets and vials shall receive a fuller and more literal accomplishment that any which have hitherto been seen . . . But if this literal fulfilment be to take place within that literal period, we have no doubt that the period does not commence till the moment of the translation of the saints; at the moment of the appearance of the personal Christ to his own in the clouds, and of the personal Antichrist to his own on the earth (p. 48).

Thus, the 1260 days would not commence until the saints were translated and in the clouds (for the duration of the time until Christ descends to the earth). That translation would be the time of the appearance of the personal Antichrist. This is a pre-Antichrist rapture at the beginning of the 1260 days, a contradiction of what R. Baxter had said, that the translation would take place 1260 days from Jan. 14, 1832.

It should be mentioned that in B. W. Newton's reminiscences we find he claimed this regarding Lady Powerscourt:

> She held very strongly Irving's view of a rapture and being seen in glory in the air during 3 ½ years of the reign of Antichrist. Darby did not give his adherence to the 3 ½ year notion. [696]

Of course, JND did not accept such notions! He was holding a pre-Rev. 4 rapture and daily expectation -- but Mr. MacPherson's thesis is that JND was a historicist at this time, influenced by the Irvingites, a necessity for his notions. Moreover, he quotes the errors of hostile critics of JND, for example, among others, George T. Stokes' article in *The Contemporary Review*, Oct. 1885:

> He was for some time curate of Calary, the next parish to Powerscourt, where he imbibed the Irvingite theories about prophecy . . . (544). [697]

Thus do scholars and other writers shamefully invent 'facts' and publish them as if ascertained, and then others quote their "scholarly" falsehoods. There is a shameful body of literature carrying just such kinds of invention, distortion, as well as calumny, during the 1800s, by clergy hostile to JND. Writers since then have relied on such writings as being accurate. This often conveniently serves their agenda, as we see demonstrated in the case of Mr. MacPherson.

The Irvingite Pre-Antichrist Rapture

Joseph Mede had used the word "rapture" for the catching up of the saints, but it was a catching up to the clouds and did not include being taken to the Father's house above. A "dispensationalist" uses the word rapture to meet the Lord in the clouds and to be directly taken to the Father's house. The translation of the saints did not mean all that to Irvingites.

During 1830 neither Margaret Macdonald or others held a pre-Antichrist coming, nor a pre-1260 days rapture. Apparently, E. Irving had seen a record of MM's "visions or revelations.

We have just seen a Sept. 1831 article in which was presented a "fresh interpretation" that Christ's coming would initiate the opening of the 1260 days. That bears on MM's "visions and revelations," showing that these did not involve a pre-1260 day rapture.

So, following the prophecy of R. Baxter concerning the 1260 days dating from Jan. 14, 1832:

> . . . the plan was adopted of assigning the present day as the time of fulfillment of the Gentile church of those Scriptures which speak of the abomination of desolation (Matt. xxiv., Luke xxi.) and as a prelude to the days of vengeance. [698]

E. Irving expounded a similar notion in June 1832,[699] when he stated that the two witnesses (possibly only the Irvingites were meant) keep the Antichrist from showing himself, but when the church is in the "cloud of Christ's glory they do together execute the seventh trumpet, by pouring out the seven vials and accomplishing the wrath of God." Interestingly, he viewed the "let" of 2 Thess. 2 as "the sealed spiritual church" (probably the Irvingites).[700] The seals and six trumpets precede this. This scheme, as does futurist posttribulationism, sees the rapture as involved with signs and a series of predicted events, which necessarily precludes an

696. *Fry MS*, p. 237.

697. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 17.

698. *Narrative of Facts*, p. 29.

699. *Morning Watch* 5:309.

700. *Morning Watch* 5:332, June 1832.

"any-moment coming."

Concerning the fact that an interval was postulated between the rapture and the return to earth, this is so. However, this scheme is both (1) too late, and (2) hardly the origin of pretribulational, and dispensational, truth and the interlocking ecclesiastical truth. We have already seen that the recovery of the pretribulation rapture, i.e., the pre-Rev. 4 rapture (an immediate coming) was intimately connected with the recovery of ecclesiastical truth and the Christian's heavenly position in 1826/1827 by JND (see Part 3).

In Sept. 1832 the year-day theory for the 1260 days was again propounded, [701] besides what we took note of above.

In the March 1833 issue of the *Morning Watch* we read:

> And the signs to this generation, given by our Lord, are immediately after the tribulation, when ". . . Matt. 24:49 . . ." Which last signs were only mystically fulfilled at the French Revolution, when the mystical period of 1260 years ran out; but shall be literally fulfilled when the literal period of 1260 days, assigned to the literal Antichrist, shall have run out. Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; because the day of grace will be then gone by, and the day of judgment will have begun. [702]

Here we are told that a literal Antichrist is assigned to appear after the literal 1260 days. It was also thought, of course, that after that 1260 days the Lord would come. This is an historicist posttribulational coming. The Irvingites held the historicist year-day theory and the above was an added part to it, as the case is with the person who proposed the pre-1260 days rapture in the Sept. 1832 article in the *Morning Watch*. (In that regard the Irvingites were catching up to the historicist, Morgan Edwards.)

Mr. MacPherson wrote:

> For a while Margaret was ahead of her time. She was teaching a Pre-*Antichrist* catching up while other two-stagers, influenced by her, were still teaching a rapture preceding only the judgment on the nations; this was the case with T. W. C. in the *Morning Watch* (September 1830, p. 591). But soon the rest of the crowd caught up with her. And some even passed her. [703]

The facts of the case regarding Mr. MacPherson's allegation are these:

1. The statement about MM is false, as we have seen.
2. If by "the crowd" he means the Irvingites, our survey of the Irvingite teachings of this era shows that they did not catch up with JND at all.
3. He admits that in 1830 T.W.C. did not propound a pre-Antichrist coming.
4. We saw that T.W.C.'s view and MM's revelation were essentially the same. Mr. MacPherson's idea that MM propounded a pre-Antichrist coming is one of a host of his allegations where the wish is father to the thought. A pre-Antichrist coming at the beginning of the 1260 days was a "fresh interpretation" in Sept. 1832.
5. The Irvingite system was a complex of epiphany / catching up / parousia / judgment of the nations. One can find such a complex in (futurist) posttribulational writers. [704]
6. I suggest that since Irvingites attended some of the Powerscourt meetings they may have picked up a few ideas from JND and adapted them to fit into their scheme.

It is most interesting to observe at this point what Robert Norton, who visited the Macdonalds, had to say in 1839:

> If, then, the second advent has been even from the apostolic age a consummation ever to be looked for as possibly and indefinitely near, with one exception, that it should not come, "except there be a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed" . . . [705]
>
> The tribulation which this fearful reign of Antichrist will bring upon the saints, and for which, therefore, we should be preparing, instead of anticipating nothing but a smooth and immediate passage into the latter day glory . . . [706]
>
> . . . we have also seen that he shall make war with the saints, and prevail against them, for the well-known period of 1260 days. [707]

R. Norton, recall, was among those who visited the Macdonalds. This is the same notion as Miss MM had propounded in 1830; namely, that the saints had to be prepared by the falling away and the man of sin; which means that the rapture would take place after these events, a thing that (futurist) posttribulationists also believe.

701. Editor, "The Book of the Church," *Morning Watch* 6:94, Sept. 1832.

702. Anon., "The Alphabet of Prophecy," *Morning Watch* 6:149, March 1833. The writer also has the same erroneous view regarding the 10 virgins as we have seen before (p. 151), i.e., partial rapture. He also speaks of the 2,300 years, on the year-day idea) at the end of which the sanctuary will be cleansed, and says, "according to the best estimate we can form, will expire between 1843 and 1847" (p. 155).

703. *The Great Rapture Hoax*, p. 135.

704. See A. Toms, "I Will Come Again," London: Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, p. 51, 1963; David Baron, *The Visions and Prophecies of Zechariah*, Grand Rapids: Kregel, chs. 12 and 14, 1975; J. B. Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, New York: Harper and Row, pp. 655, 656, 1973.

705. *Neglected and Controverted Scripture Truths* . . ., p. 245 (1839).

706. *Ibid*, p. 254.

707. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

Where Is the Any-moment Coming, and the Pre-Rev. 4 Coming, and Christ Coming to take us to the Father's House, in Irvingite Writings?

IS IT IN THE MORNING WATCH?

Obviously not. The Irvingites had to have 12 apostles first. They needed the sealing of the servants of God, spoken of in the Revelation; and etc.

IS IT IN EDWARD IRVING'S WRITINGS?

Certainly not. See above.

IS IT IN R. NORTON'S WRITINGS?

In his 1861 book we learn that the sealing for protection (found in the Revelation) began in 1847. He spoke of 10 tribes of the spiritual Israel being already sealed (p. 176). Those thus sealed are "first-fruits" (Irvingites) and will be taken away before Antichrist is manifested, while others will be translated later, having been purified during "the great tribulation" of Antichrist, for the coming kingdom (p. 185). And here we see how being taken to the Father's house above is gotten rid of. He really equates the Father's house with the kingdom:

> . . . those words spoken by our Lord regarding the kingdom of God, "In my Father's house are many mansions" (p. 185).

The Irvingite system supplanted the heavenly hope, a hope which was clear to J. N. Darby in 1827.

IS IT IN W. W. ANDREWS' WRITINGS?

Not that I am aware. He wrote a major article for the January and April *Bibliotheca Sacra*, in 1866, pp. 108-159, 252-256. In a note on p. 256 he makes a distinction between the Lord's coming for His saints and with His saints. The teaching concerning the (post-Rev. 4) sealing from judgment is here, as well as the first-fruits (post-Rev. 4) rapture (a partial rapture, really):

> which precedes and sanctifies the harvest (Lev. 23:10, 11; Rev. 14:4, 15, 16). The first-fruits are that company who are sealed with the seal of the living God while the angels are holding back the four winds. During the time of troubled calm which precedes the tempest, God seals his servants again, as in the beginning, by endowing them with the gift of the Holy Ghost, through the laying on of the hands of the apostles (Rev. 7:1-4; Eph. 1:13, 14; Acts 19 1-6). They are the first stalks of the harvest field to be ripened, and the first to be gathered into the garner of the husbandman, before the judgments of God are poured out upon the earth. There is another company *who come out of* the great tribulation (Rev. 7:9, 14), from which the sealed ones are exempted, purified by the fiery trial which they might have escaped (p. 255).

Such is the privilege for the post-Rev. 4 sealed ones of the Catholic Apostolic Church, having been sealed through the hands of their apostles. But does this delusive system say that the Lord is coming to take us to the Father's house? No, the old teaching about being in the air until returning is what we find:

> Before he sets his feet upon the earth, and while he is yet hidden in the clouds of heaven, he will gather his saints to himself, and this will be done at different times, answering to the distinct seasons of first-fruits and harvest. All this may be invisible to the world, as his own resurrection was, but he will afterwards reveal himself and his church, so that every eye shall see him (p. 256, note).

IS IT IN THE SIXTH EDITION (1888) OF *THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN CREATION AND REDEMPTION*?

Not so. We need not repeat what is similar to W. W. Andrews, but only add this indicator of post-Rev. 4 expectations, and that the Father's house was not before their souls:

> The things, then that remain to be done, as far as can be gathered from the book of Revelation, though we do not profess to give them in their exact order, or to explain them, are these: -- The carrying on and perfecting of the work of the Lord in His Church, for the gathering and ripening of the first-fruits; the preparing them to be taken out of the way to be with Him on Mount Zion (p. 262).

IS IT IN WILLIAM BRAMLEY-MOORE'S BOOK?

In the third edition of this book (1905), *The Church's Forgotten Hope* . . ., we read similarly:

> In Rev. 14 the company of the 144,000 (previously sealed) is seen standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, in a place of security and free from the subsequent troubles which surge around (pp. 69, 70).

Enough! They had no pre-Rev. 4 view of the rapture, and no rapture to be taken to the Father's house above (any more than modern posttribulationists do). They divided the body of Christ into two major parts: their own sealed Catholic Apostolic Church people, and the rest. They were filled with their own churchianity and pretensions to restoration of apostles among them, etc., etc.

We can see how Irvingism was begun in 1828 with the blasphemy that the Son took the carnal nature. The cry was for the restoration of miraculous powers and restoration of apostles. The delusive spirits came, and the Irvingites thus had the sanction of their blasphemous doctrine concerning the carnal nature in Christ. The enemy diverted these persons from the truth of the heavenly hope which had laid hold of J. N. Darby in 1827, if not already in Dec. 1826, and the interrelated precious truths. But let us pass on.

O. T. Allis' Allegation

O. T. Allis, an amillennialist who was a professor at Westminster Theological Seminary, said that E. Irving and the "Brethren" both proclaimed the "any moment doctrine." He also said:

> The Brethren Movement has its beginning, as we have seen, at a time when there was a great revival of interest in the doctrine of the second coming. About the year 1825, and primarily under the preaching of Edward

> Irving, the emphasis began to be placed on the "imminence" of that event. Irving held that the Lord might appear any day, any hour, and that He would certainly come during the lifetime of the generation then living. [708] The Brethren were opposed to Irvingism, but it cannot be denied that, however they came by it, they speedily became ardent advocates of what is called the "any moment" doctrine of the coming. In other words, they regarded the coming as imminent in the sense of *proximate*, i.e. as the *next* event in the prophetic program of the Bible; and they insisted that there is nothing in that program so far as it is revealed in Scripture which must take place before it. [709]

This is not a correct representation of the case and I trust that the reader has had placed before him enough Irvingite statements to see that this quotation is historically incorrect concerning the Irvingites.

From Scotland to England; or, How to Imagine Finding the Missing Link

Mr. MacPherson thinks that he sees "Pre-Trib" in Fidus in 1830-31 (above), who was in England. Having manufactured a pretribulation rapture from Margaret Macdonald, who was in Scotland, he erroneously thinks that he has found the link between Scotland and England for what he thinks is the pretribulation rapture (whatever he means by that phrase). Here is how he did this. In 1833 Robert Baxter's *Narrative of Facts* was published. His book explains why he left Irvingism after becoming convinced it was teaching false doctrine. Here is what Mr. MacPherson said:

> On p. 17 he wrote: "An opinion had been advanced in some of Mr. Irving's writings, that before the second coming of Christ, and before . . . the day of vengeance . . . the saints would be caught up to heaven . . ."
>
> On p. 141 he said: "It is well known, that the delusion first appeared in Scotland, and it was brought to London by Mrs. C. [Mrs. John Cardale], who was one of the speakers, and gifted at Port Glasgow. There, as far as I am informed, it has made little progress; and it was not until adopted and upheld by Mr. Irving, that it began to challenge much attention, and extend its influence."
>
> On p. 143 he added that "there must have been much error, in our view of the manner and circumstances of the coming of the Lord, or we could not have been so deceived" (*The Earliest Developers of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture*, p. 14, copyright 1991).

The reader may be excused for thinking that the middle quotation referring to "the delusion" referred to Margaret Macdonald's view of the Lord's coming being brought to London by Mrs. Cardale. That middle quotation, in fact, **does not refer to the Lord's coming** at all, but to a completely different subject. I will give the second quotation more fully:

> Whether the departure in doctrine has been the fruit of speculation, or, however it may have had its origin, this seems to be the door through which the enemy has come in upon us. The subtlety of the heresy is very great, both as it regards the humanity of our Lord, and the holiness of the believer. But the first branch of the heresy virtually annuls the test of the Spirit, by enabling a false spirit to confess an incarnation, without holding the truth of Christ come in the flesh. And the second branch challenges the possession of the Spirit, in the same fullness and power as He dwelt in Christ. Thus, whilst the Lord's Christ is set aside, believers are put on an equality with, and arrogate the anointing of Christ Himself. What greater provocation can we offer to our Lord, than to debase him to the experience of indwelling corruption, and lift up ourselves to an equality with his purity, and the exercise of greater powers than himself. It is well known, that the delusion first appeared in Scotland, and it was brought to London by Mrs. C., who was one of the speakers, and gifted in Port Glasgow. There, as far as I am informed, it has made little progress; and it was not until adopted and upheld by Mr. Irving, that it began to challenge much attention, and extend its influence. No doubt many persons, warmly attached to Mr. Irving, upheld his general doctrines, and so sustained the heresy . . .

It seems to me that an attempt has been made, in concatenating the three quotations from R. Baxter, to cause the reader to think that E. Irving and his circle received some notions on the Lord's coming from Margaret Macdonald, through Mrs. Cardale. Then one could imagine Fidus publishing what M. Macdonald said and, behold, there is the link (only, it is in the imagination). The word "delusion" that R. Baxter used does not carry all that freight. What the word "delusion" signifies is the delusion of allegedly speaking under the virtual inspiration of the Spirit, not to the doctrine of the Lord's coming. This is the way R. Baxter was using the word (for example, on p. 138, twice). *That* "delusion" was brought to London. *That* delusion in his church confirmed E. Irving's doctrine that Christ had the carnal nature, which is the subject in which the above underlined words appear. JND wrote:

> . . . the gifts among the Irvingites were founded on this doctrine of Christ's being a sinner in nature like ourselves. Mr. Irving's statement was, that he had long preached the "gifts," but there were none, because there was nothing for the Holy Ghost to testify to: but when he preached this doctrine, they came as a witness to it. His teaching moreover on the subject was confirmed by what was received as the prophetic power among them. [710]

Mr. MacPherson's quotation from p. 17 of R. Baxter's book refers to the notion of Christ and the caught up ones being suspended in the air between the alleged epiphania and the subsequent parousia. That interval was the days of vengeance. Note that Margaret Macdonald expected that the Antichrist would appear first and then the translation would occur. The Irvingites generally expected the same at that point in time.

708. {E. Irving was thoroughly imbued with the year-day theory at the time JND understood the immediate coming. E. Irving thought he was in the remaining 45 years after the 1260 years had expired.}

709. *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 168.

710. *Collected Writings* 6:285.

Mr. MacPherson engaged in this same deception in his *The Rapture Plot*, p. 13. Having said that R. Baxter gave "some details on the pretrib origin," he first quotes the remark about the delusion first appearing in Scotland, and that it did not challenge much attention until adopted by E. Irving (p. 141) and next quotes from p. 17 concerning the opinion advanced by E. Irving about the day of vengeance.

What Mr. MacPherson is doing in this manipulative concatenation of quotations is setting up an attempted proof that a rapture before Antichrist came from Miss MM. It is a sham!

* * * * *

Concerning Mr. MacPherson's deceptive concatenation of statements from R. Baxter, noted above -- apparently to try to establish a "link" between Scotland and the Irvingites in London -- I would point out that the "link" is in the quotation above from E. Irving that indicates that he had seen the "visions or revelations" in the papers of Margaret Macdonald. This "link" has nothing to do with a pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture, nor even with a pre-1260 day rapture.

As a rule, when Mr. MacPherson finds references to what is a pre-conflagration rapture, or a pre-days of vengeance rapture, or a pre-seven seals rapture, or a pre-seventh seal rapture, or to "the great tribulation," etc., he reads a pretribulation rapture (whatever that conveniently means to him) into what he is reading -- but ***only when it suits him*** as fitting in with his Margaret Macdonald manipulations, and his animus against J. N. Darby. I say ***when it suits him***, because it is clear that it does not suit him to find such things before 1830. Mr. MacPherson speaks of what he thinks was

> the first deviation in the 1800's from what was then an 1800-year-old, one-stage, posttrib view. [711]

We have already considered the historicist, two-stage, pre-conflagration rapture and coming of Christ as refuting his thesis (ch. 7.3). We have seen Morgan Edwards' historicist, 3 ½ year, two-stage rapture and return to earth [712] (ch. 7.4) as well as a two-stage coming in Lacunza (45 day interval) (ch. 7.6). His thesis just quoted is vacuous -- though supported in his mind by his obstinate refusal of the patent facts of history, which obstinacy not only does not change those historical facts, but indicates what we are dealing with. Such is the view of the discoverer of the origin of the pretribulation rapture (whatever that means when he uses the expression), the discoverer of the great rapture conspiracy theory, uncovering even the alleged "pilfering" by William Kelly.

The Scripture says that the unjust knows no shame.

* * * * *

We have seen the rejection of the historicist, two-stage, pre-conflagration rapture, emanating from a frame of mind that refuses to see the facts that unsettle his thesis.

We have seen the rejection of the case of Morgan Edwards' historicist, two-stage coming with a pre-1260 days, rapture, emanating from a frame of mind that refuses to see the facts that unsettle his thesis.

We have seen the rejection of the two-stage coming, with the 45 day interval, in Manuel Lacunza, emanating from a frame of mind that refuses to see the facts that unsettle his thesis.

This is the frame of mind from which J. N. Darby, Margaret Macdonald and the Irvingites are viewed. Why expect even-handedness?

And so we have come to the end of the silly, shallow, and shrill charges concerning plots and cover-ups conducted by JND and W. Kelly, etc. emanating from that frame of mind.

Conclusion

During the time that JND understood the nature and unity of the church, along with the proper hope of the church (1827), the Irvingites were propagating a year-day theory that was gradually modified to the confusion that we have reviewed above. In effect, it denied the recovered heavenly hope and may be regarded as the first effort of the Enemy to divert attention from what was recovered through J. N. Darby. It was connected with the evil doctrine that Christ had the carnal nature. The Irvingites received a power, claimed to be the Holy Spirit, come in sanction, E. Irving said, of the Irvingite evil doctrine that Christ had the carnal nature (though He did not actually sin, said E. Irving). It was under this "power" that tongues were spoken (1830s) and the prophecies were uttered which sanctioned the Irvingite confusion and delusion. The deluded Irvingites went on to appoint 12 apostles. Comments on this are found by W. Kelly in *The Bible Treasury* 18:57-59.

* * * * *

The Irvingites became the Catholic Apostolic Church. A recent historian of this group, Columba Graham Flegg, wrote:

> Several writers have attempted to trace Darby's secret rapture theory to prophetic statements associated with Irving, but their arguments do not stand up to serious criticsm. Such attempts began in the 1860s with an attack on Darby by S. P. Tregelles, a friend of Newton -- in *The Hope of Christ's Coming* (Bagster 1864). Others followed suit. [713]

711. *The Rapture Plot*, p. 212.

712. Seeing also his desperate attempt to get rid of it by reducing it to a 3 ½ day gap; and then even in that case, really unwilling to see a two-stage coming -- because the gap is so small! He has hidden from us the gap length that would satisfy him.

713. *'Gathered Under Apostles' A Study of the Catholic Apostolic Church*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 436 (1999).

Chapter 7.9

The Hope of Christ Compatible With Prophecy

by W. Kelly

There are few simple-minded Christians who, in searching into the prophetic word, have not felt the difficulty of reconciling the undoubtedly normal posture of the church in daily waiting for Jesus with the long train of successive events presented, e.g. in the Revelation. The principle, if not the measure, of the difficulty is the same, whether you understand the Revelation to be fulfilled in a brief eventful crisis, or to extend over a course of many hundred years. In either way, can one truthfully expect the Lord from heaven from day to day, if one is looking out for a series of numerous, and some of them unprecedented, and all of them solemn, incidents to occur on earth, the gradual and accumulative evidence of His approach.

But it is certain that in the apostolic times, when the grace of God was proclaimed in its real power and freshness, when His word was most prized and best understood, and produced its loveliest effects, the saints were habitually expecting the Lord to come. In Him they had redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins; and they knew it. They were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Were they, therefore, satisfied? Was not the Spirit Himself, blessed divine Advocate though He be, yet was not He the earnest of glorious things to come? Doubtless they received Him as the Spirit of sonship, and not as a spirit of bondage unto fear (Rom. 8). Yet far from His leading them into rest and contentedness here below in the absence of Jesus, in the same chapter it is said,

> Ourselves also, [besides the groaning creation,] which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within our selves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

It is the groaning of those who are justified by faith and have peace with God. It is the groaning of those who have the Holy Ghost dwelling in them, and bearing witness with their spirit that they are children of God. It is the groaning of the adopted earnestly yearning for the full results of adoption ; of those who, because they have known God's grace in redemption forgiving their sins, look for more, for all,-for the redemption of the body in the actual presence of the Saviour, that they may be like Him and with Him for ever.

The aim, however, of these remarks is not to prove that the personal coming of the Lord is the hope of the church -- proofs easily found elsewhere. My desire is rather to convince those who know what is and was meant to be the hope of the church, that God, by no concurrent or subsequent revelation, ever interfered with the practical power of that hope. That He might give fuller details as to the growing iniquity of man, of the Jew, and especially of the outward professing body, and as to His own judgments upon each before the millennial reign; that He might describe in greater minuteness the circumstances of that reign and the events that succeed it, is not only possible, but that which He has done. But that He, on this or any other theme, corrects in one part of His word what is affirmed in another, is that which every Christian ought surely to repudiate from the bottom of his soul, in whatever modified form it may be insinuated.

The word of our God needs no apologies from man. Unhesitatingly believed, every part of it will be found to be perfectly true, though (from narrowness and imperfection in our apprehension) patient waiting on God is needed to avoid the systematizing of the human intellect, and to discover in what order God puts things together. Haste in deciding such questions only leads to forcing scripture, which will not yield; and hence the danger of framing onesided hypotheses, which are only tenable by shutting the eye to the plainest scripture that contradicts them as hypotheses, though there may be elements of truth in them.

To apply this to the matter in hand, it is undeniable that the apostle Paul (to say nothing of others) invariably speaks of the coming of the Lord to take the church to Himself as that which might be at any moment, however He might tarry. But no necessary detention -- no chain of occurrences involving a period virtually -- no certain lapse of time -- is ever presented to the church as keeping Him in heaven. On the contrary, if he writes to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 15), it is

> Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

Admitting that " we" is a representative word, not the persons addressed merely, but those standing in the same privileges; still will any one say that the apostle or the Corinthian saints knew that the moment would be deferred till they had fallen asleep? [714] Was it not calculated, beyond all cavil, to keep

714. Nothing, it has been observed, more strongly proves the church's constant expectation of the presence of the Lord for it, uncertain when this was to be, than the fact that it needed a particular revelation to individuals (such as to Paul and Peter), about their departure first. which so far

(continued...)

them in simple, constant expectancy of the Lord ?

The Thessalonians (1 Thess. i.), who were trained, from their birth to God, in looking for their Deliverer, were they mistaken enthusiasts ? Or, did not the blessed work of the Spirit in their case consist not only in turning them from idols to serve a living and true God, but to wait for His Son from heaven? Did that wise and faithful servant, who knew what it was to mingle the service of a nurse with the affectionate care of a father, -- did he consider that blessed hope to be unsuited food for such babes? So far from it, that when he writes to them supplying some things that were lacking, the Holy Ghost impresses this great doctrine in such repeated and different modes as to demonstrate how cardinal a truth it was in the mind of God, and how influential as regards the communion and walk of His saints. It ramifies both Epistles, being not only found at least once in every chapter, but in some chapters occupying the most conspicuous place. (See 1 Thess. 1:3, 10; 2:19, 20; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-10, 23, 24. 2 Thess. 1:5-10; 2:1-12; 3:5.)

Let us weigh the facts more. They had rejoiced in this hope of our Lord Jesus Christ from their earliest Christian career; they had patiently continued it through the Spirit; and the blessedness of such patience was sweet to the absent apostle, even as their work of faith and labour of love. True, they needed further light as to its circumstances, and the Lord granted it. So immediately were they awaiting the Lord, that the decease of some of their number plunged them into deep sorrow. Not, I apprehend, that they for a moment doubted of the salvation of those who were gone. No one that had the gospel in word only (much less knowing it in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as it came to them) could have such a doubt. But they feared that death had severed their departed brethren from the glorious hope, which they had so brightly burning before them, of being caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. They were gone and doubtless were happy; but would they not be absent from that crowning joy for which they themselves were waiting?

Here was the place (may we not venture to say?), if they had been mistaken in so waiting, to have corrected it. Here was the place for the apostle to write: -- We have been all wrong in living with our eyes heavenward till the Son of God comes to take us to Himself ; He is not coming soon. We need not yet expect Him; for many ages must expire before He comes. Besides, He has already given you some, and so now adds more, signs of His advent. You have not seen these signs yet; you must wait for them, and not for His Son.

The exact reverse is the fact. The Holy Spirit deliberately keeps them in the same attitude of waiting which He had previously wrought and sanctioned in them, though He gives them a comfort of which they were ignorant as to their brethren who had been put to sleep by Jesus.

> For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [i.e. go before] them who are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with cheering shout, with archangel's voice, and with trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall arise first ; then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

But it may be said, If the Holy Ghost did not here correct the excited notions of the Thessalonians, He did in the second chapter of the Second Epistle. I answer that the true question is, Does the Holy Ghost correct Himself? He may supply that which is suited to correct the undue sorrow of the believers in one Epistle, or their fear in another Epistle; but I insist upon it in the strongest manner, that if the church is set in the position of waiting for Christ's coming in one part of scripture, no other part can possibly alter such a position. It is necessarily right, whatever increase of instruction may be given. Let us only be well established in the perfectness of every word of God, and we shall soon see how little the passage warrants the notion that the apostle Paul, in the second Epistle, dissuades them from expecting Him, Whom the first Epistle had confirmed them in expecting.

In the first place, it is generally assumed that the day of Christ (or "of the Lord," for this is the true reading [715]) is identical with "the coming (παρουσια, presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ" in the verse before. But it is a groundless idea. If it be affirmed, let proofs be adduced. It ought to be quite clear that "the day of the Lord" is a distinct though connected thing. In its full ultimate sense (and no one disputes that such is its force here), it supposes the presence of the Lord; it displays the judgment consequent upon it. But the presence, or coming, of the Lord by no means necessarily supposes judgment. Is there a word of judgment, or wrath, or destruction, expressed or implied in the full description given in 1 These. 4 of the Lord's coming for His own? So when the apostle says,

> What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy (1 Thess. 2:19, 20),

where is, the word of judgment on evil? On the other hand, when "the day of the Lord" occurs, it is, whether used in a full or a limited application, habitually connected with judgment and its consequences (compare 1 Thess. 5: 2-4; Zeph. 1, 2, 3; Zech. 14; Mal. 3, 4). One infers therefore that, though the coming of the Lord may include the day of the Lord, as the whole includes a part, the coming of the Lord is in itself presented in an aspect of grace, not of judgment. Why should the terms and the things be confounded?

In the second place, while it is true that the day of the Lord cannot come before the apostasy and the revelation of the man of sin arrive, which are to be judged in that day, yet is there a serious error in the English rendering of the last clause of v. 2, "is at hand." The word usually rendered"at hand," "near," or "nigh," is ἐγγὺς, or ἐγγίζω "come

714. (...continued)
mod:fie.i their individual apprehensions. The general expectation of the church was not affected thereby.

715. So all the critical editors such as Alford, Bengel, Griesbach, Knappe, Scholz, Lachmaun, Tiscbendorf, &c.; and this only upon external evidence.

near," as is known to scholars. The word ἐνίστημι, on the other hand, is never so rendered in the New Testament, save in the passage before us. On the contrary, occurring several times, it is used invariably in a way which excludes the possibility of such a rendering (more especially when it is, as here, in the perfect tense). The first occurrence is in Rom. 8:38. It is evident that here ἐνεστῶτα cannot mean things at hand. It is contrasted with μέλλοντα, i.e. "things to come." It signifies only and emphatically "things present," and is so rendered in the common Bible. See the same words and the same contrast in 1 Cor. 3:22.

Again, in 1 Cor. 7:26, διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην is properly translated "for the present distress." A distress not actually come, but only at hand or coming, would spoil the meaning. The next is Gal. 1:4, "this present evil world," the only possible meaning of the word here. The next world, or age, will not be evil, and therefore "at hand," or "imminent," is shut out. Compare also Heb. 9:9, εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἐνεστηκόα "for the time then present" (not "at band," which cannot be the true force).

All these, notice, are instances of the same tense as 2 Thess. 2:2. The only other occurrence is 2 Tim. 3:1, ἐνστήσονται, in the future middle. Here the English version renders it, "shall come." Still, the meaning indubitably is not "shall be at hand," which could have no point, but "shall be there." To be impending merely was little: the grave thing was, that perilous times should be actually present. It may be concluded, therefore, from an induction thus complete, that in all the other instances the authorised version {KJV} is right, but in 2 Thess. 2:2 it is wrong. It is not conceivable to uphold both; so that, if right in 2 Thess. 2:2, the version must be wrong everywhere else. But we have seen, from the intrinsic meaning of the word, as well as from the sense imperatively demanded by the context, that in all the other cases the translators are justified. They were therefore mistaken here, and the proper rendering, in conformity with their own translation of the word in the same tense elsewhere, ought to be, "as that the day of the Lord is present" {2 Thess. 2:2}. So the Revisers give, "As that the day of the Lord is now present," adding in italics the adverb, which is needless emphasis. The sense is strong and clear without "now."

The Thessalonian saints had from the first known much affliction. They had notoriously suffered from their own countrymen, and this to such a degree that the apostle, in his earnest and watchful interest about them, sent Timothy to establish and to comfort them concerning their faith, that no man should be moved by these afflictions. They knew that "we are appointed thereunto." Nevertheless they needed comfort. The apostle had warned them before, that "we should suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass, and ye know." " For this cause when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain." But Timothy brought good tidings of their faith and love, and the apostle could break out into thanks and joy for their sakes before God, and he lets them know it in his first Epistle (chap. 3).

The tempter, however, was not to be discouraged, nor diverted from his wiles. They had been already taught that the Lord Himself was to come, and the saints, sleeping or living, were all to be changed, and to be caught up together to meet Him in the air, and so be ever with Him (chap. 4). They also knew that the day of the Lord was one of destruction and terror, unlooked for by the world: "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (chap. 5).

Accordingly, Satan appears to have distracted the saints by the harassing statement that the day of the Lord was actually there, thus seeking to rob them of all profit and joy in the persecutions and tribulations which they were then enduring. Nor let any think it strange if, in a time of perplexity for the world and persecution of the.church, the fears of saints might be wrought upon; particularly as they knew that the day of Jehovah in the Old Testament by no means necessarily implies the personal presence of the Lord, though it looks onward to that anticipatively. Compare, for instance, Isa. 13, where God's judgment of Babylon and the Chaldeans is so designated:

> Howl ye, for the day of Jehovah is at hand; [716] it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty, &c.

(See also Joel 1:15, 2:1-11; Amos 5:18, 20; Zeph. 1:7, 14, 15, &c.)

In the second Epistle the Holy Ghost conveys the needed instruction. " We ourselves," says the apostle,

> glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations 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 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, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and on them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ : who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day (2 Thess. 2).

The time of retribution is not when Jesus comes, but when He is revealed.

For though at His coming the church is caught up, there is nothing yet of retributive character. It is favor, not a process of judgment; whereas the revelation and the day of the Lord are, as is manifest, associated with judgment, and hence there is the public award of God then for the first time manifested to the world;

> 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

716. The words in the LXX. are ἐγγὺς γὰρ ἡμέρα Κυρίου. Will men defend a version of 2 Thess. 2:2 which makes the Holy Spirit contradict there what He has unequivocally affirmed in Isa. 13:6? The Septuagint and the Greek Testament are in harmony here. It is the English version which is at fault.

revealed.

Doubtless there is a tribulation, and even the great tribulation in the time of AntiChrist, previous to the revelation of Jesus; as obviously there is rest to those who sleep in Jesus now; and there will be rest in a fuller sense when our bodies are changed, and we are caught up to be with Him. [717] But both are wholly distinct from the public or retributive tribulation and rest here spoken of. It is the day of punishment with everlasting destruction to the adversaries, as it is the day when Christ comes, not to present the Church to Himself, nor to take them to mansions {abodes} in the Father's house, but to be glorified in His saints, and to be marveled at in all them that believed. For "when Christ, our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" {Col. 3:4} It is the open judicial dealing (not the hidden joy or blessedness, before, then, or afterwards,) which here enters into the scene.

Next, the apostle turns to the source of their agitation.

> We beseech you, brethren, by [718] the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled {2 thess. 2:1}.

Assuredly the consolation administered here is not that Christ's coming was a distant thing! Can it be that theologian upon theologian has desired to make of this fancied long and far off absence of the Lord a balm for the tried and fearful? Can it be that the poor church has but too willingly sipped the cup, and, heedless of His words, cheers herself on the delirious career of worldliness, and folly, and faithlessness to Him? "Lord, how long?"

Not so the Thessalonians. Full well they knew that His coming was to end their sorrows and crown their joys. Under apostolic guidance they had looked, and the Holy Ghost had commended their looking, for Christ. Was it not the part of the evil servant to say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming? {Matt. 24:48}. But Paul was a blessed and faithful servant, who never says anything of the sort. He uses the fact of the coming of the Lord and their gathering together unto Him as a comfort against the anxiety created by the idea that the day of the Lord was already arrived -- nay more, as a proof that such an idea was false. His ground of entreaty is two-fold. He urges a motive founded upon the Lord and heaven, and a reason connected with earth and the man of sin. There must be our gathering above, and the falling away {the apostasy} below.

In the first place the Lord was to come, and they were to be gathered together unto Him, in order that He and they might bring in the day and appear together from heaven {Col. 3:4; Rev. 19:14; 17:14}. This had not taken place, and therefore they were not to be disturbed as if that day had come, or could come previously. In the next place, he presses the point that the evil must first be developed completely which that day is to judge.

> Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away (or the apostacy, ἡ ἀποστασία) first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth, and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or object of worship; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God {2 Thess. 2:3, 4}.

But the apostasy was not then come.

> And now (if one may translate the apostle's word a little exactly) ye know what hindereth that he might be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness [719] doth already work: only [there is] one that now hindereth until he be out of the way. And then shall that lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the breath of His mouth, and shall annul by the appearing of His coming {2 Thess. 2:6-8}.

No ! the Thessalonian believers were not mistaken in waiting for the Son of God. It is not wrong to believe that "the Lord is at hand" (ἐγγὺς), as the apostle pressed upon the Philippians when drawing to the close of his career. It is not wrong to establish our hearts because the coming of the Lord is drawn nigh (ἤγγικε, James 5:8). Nor does the language of the Spirit, in the passage before us, depict excitement from a too eager anticipation of this glorious event -- alas! that Christians should suppose we could too earnestly desire it. The expressions in v. 2 denote fright and agitation. The enemy sought to instil the idea that the day of the world's judgment was come, and themselves obnoxious to its terrors. Where then was their hope to be caught up to the Lord and to come along with Him? Would it have been sorrow and fear, if Christ had come and they had been translated to meet Him in the air? Rather would it have been the object nearest their heart since their conversion. Their faith was growing exceedingly, and the love of every one of them all toward each other abounded. Nay, far from weakening that which he had already taught, the apostle prays for them in the last chapter of the Second Epistle, that the Lord would direct their hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for

717. {The text *does not state* that the saints' rest begins at the appearing of Christ in glory. It shows that they will be resting when He comes to trouble the troublers of saints.}

718. The authorised version {KJV} appears to be substantially right in thus translating ὑπὲρ, when we bear the context in mind. Such is the rendering of the Vulgate, as well as of Luther. Professor Scholefield also, though choosing the sense "concerning," because of his ieterpretation, admits the sense "by" to be "an unquestionable one." The fact cannot be disputed that "on account of," "for the sake of," are quite common renderings: which sense of the word, connected with expressions of prayer and entreaty, is pretty nearly equivalent to our "by." None of the passages, such as Rom. 9:27; 2 Cor. 7:4, 9:3; Phil. 1:7, cited by Rosenmuller, Schleusner, Mfacknigbt, Whitby, or Elliott, is apposite, because not one occurs after such a verb as ἐρωτάω. Let an instance be produced of ὑπὲρ after a word of beseeching, where it can be rendered in any other way. In certain cases, it is used, as Phavorinus says, ὁμοίως τψ περὶ, but not, I believe, in a connection parallel to the present, where it assimilates to πρὸς, as Stephanus observes, and translates it "*per*: ut Greg. ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ δέομαι, rogo te per Christum. Sic. I1. ω. Καί μιν ὑπὲρ πατρὸς καὶ μητέρος ἠϋκόμοιο Λίσσεο, καὶ τέκεος."

719. There is a link of importance missed by the'English translators {KJV} between the mystery of lawlessness already working and the lawless one who is yet to be revealed. The germ was there in the midst of professing Christianity, which was at last to issue in so portentous a conclusion. Again, "wickedness" expresses the old and prevalent evil of man in all ages from the beginning. "Lawlessness" is the word used by the apostle, and exactly appropriate to the yet worse and special enormity, when the gospel is denied and the restraint of the law defied.

Christ. That is, he confirms them in their expectancy of the Lord.

But the deceiver had affrighted them, not of course by presenting the coming of the Lord as an imminent thing, which was what the Holy Ghost had done, and which is for the church a hope of unmingled comfort, but by the report that the day of the Lord was actually present, -- "a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness." The apostle had already told them (1 Thess. 5) that they were not in darkness that the day should overtake them as a thief. The tempter disturbs and confounds them with the thought that, as a thief, it was already come upon them; using, it would seem, some false spirit, or word, or letter {2 Thess. 2:2}, to give to it the color of the authority of Paul himself. And how does the apostle defend them from such assaults of others, and fears of their own? For, let it be repeated, it was not high-wrought feeling as though Christ were at hand, but terror arising from their giving heed to the false representation that the day of the Lord was present, and they in tribulation on earth instead of being caught up to Jesus above.

The apostle at once brings them back to the "coming of the Lord " and their gathering together unto Him as their ground of comfort and protection against the alarms of the "day of the Lord." As if he had said, The Lord Himself is coming, and you will be gathered to Him. When His day comes, you will be with Him. You are already children of the day and will come along with it, for you are to come with Him Who ushers it in. You therefore need not be troubled. Rejoice always. That day is not come. You will go to meet Him Whom the bride knows as "the bright, the morning Star" (Rev. 22:16, compared with 2:28); so that when the day breaks and the Lord appears, you too will appear with Him in glory {Col. 3:4}. He and you introduce the day together that day of retribution when those who trouble you shall have trouble, and you, the troubled, shall have rest with us, when our Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven, with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance {2 Thess. 1:7, 8}.

In harmony with this it is written in v. 8 {2 Thess. 2} that the lawless one will be destroyed, not simply by the coming of the Lord, but by a further step of it, by the appearing or manifestation of His coming. [720] This scene is given at length in Rev. 19:11-21, where the seer beholds, in the prospective vision, the heaven opened, and the rider, the Word of God, upon the white horse, issuing to judge and make war. t' And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean "-the righteousness not of angels, but of saints (compare ver. 8). The saints are already with Him. They follow Him out of heaven, as His army. Christ, therefore, must have come before this to take them to Himself; for they have been with Him in heaven and leave it together, preparatory to the battle with the Beast and the kings of the earth and their armies. This then is not merely the coming of Christ; it is Christ appearing, and we with Him in glory. It is His revelation from heaven, taking vengeance. It is the day of the Lord, when sudden destruction comes. It is the shining forth of the presence of the Lord Jesus, or the brightness of His coming, which destroys that lawless one. [721]

Matt. 24:23-31 falls in with this view.

> For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

It is His coming in connection with His earthly rights. Rejected of this generation as the Christ, He comes as Son of man (in which capacity He is never presented as coming to take the church).

> Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven ; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds.

These are demonstrably not the church, because they are gathered subsequent to His appearing. The church, on the other hand, will have been translated before. For

> when Christ, our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory {Col. 3:4}.

Our manifestation in glory cannot be after His manifestation. Christ and the church are to be manifested together.

Hence the signs specified in this chapter are demonstrably indices to elect Jewish disciples of His appearing. They are not to be regarded, therefore, as interfering with the posture

720. The word "coming" here, and frequently elsewhere, is παρουσία which denotes not barely the arrival (like the verb ἔρχομαι in scripture and like the substantive ἔλευσις in Greek ecclesiastical writers), but the circumstance or state of being present; that is, "presence." Nevertheless, as the presence of a person, who is now absent, necessarily supposes his coming, the latter is often and fairly enough given as its English equivalent, though the former is the full meaning.

721. If the reader is disposed to investigate further a subject so full of interest, he may derive much instruction, through the grace of God, by examining carefully the following Scriptures:

First as to ἀποκάλυψις, Rom. 8:19; 1 Cor. 1:7; 2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:7, 13 and 4:13, compared with the cognate verb, Luke 17:30; 1 Cor. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:5, and 5:1. Next, as to ἐπιφανεία, 2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13. Lastly, as to φανερόω, Col. 3:4; 1 Pet. 5:4; 1 John 2:28, and 3:2.

It is only needful to remark that, though (as already proved) we are not here below until the appearing of Christ, it is only then, and not before, that the result of faithfulness, or the want of it, will be manifested. The laborer is to work patiently, and it may be hiddenly, in view of that day. Though still the παρουσία, it is more than the presence of the Lord; it is the revelation, appearing, or manifestation, as the case may be. Be it noted, further, that the appearing of Christ is still His coming, although His coning does not necessarily mean His appearing. Thus, when Christ comes to take the church first of all, it is His coming, but not His appearing, save to them that look for Him. But when afterwards He is revealed in view of the world, vindicating the ways of God both as to His enemies and His friends, it is still His coming, while, as a distinctive thing, it is His day, or the epiphany of His presence, as it is termed in 2 Thess. 8. The recent Swiss version renders the entire verse thus: "Et alors sera révélé 1'inique, lui que le Seigneur détruira par 1'esprit de sa bouche, et rendra impuissant par l'apparition de son arrivée (ou présence."

of the church continually waiting for the Lord from heaven. They are signs for a remnant in special relation with Judea, who will be awaiting the coming of the Son of man. No signs of this or of any other description were ever put before the church, as such, whereby to judge of the near approach of Christ to take her to Himself. On the contrary, what the Holy Ghost taught the church is, to a simple mind, inconsistent with such indications: she was to be expecting always, because she knew not the moment of His coming.

The apostle (1 John 2:18) would have even the babes to know that it is the last time ; and this, not from the spread of the Spirit of Christ, but from the presence of many antichrists. But, although they had heard that the Antichrist should come, no signs to be seen, no evils to reach the climax, no specific tribulations, are ever put before them, as events necessarily retarding the coming of the Lord to take the church. For the Bride the one heavenly sign is the presence of the Bridegroom Himself. But for a converted remnant of Jews, of whom the Lord has graciously thought in the instructions of Matt. 24., there are signs which will be assuredly given in due time before the coming of the Son of man.

Now, it is precisely here that the Revelation affords so distinct a light, showing us the position of the glorified in heaven, Christ having come and taken them to Himself; and afterwards, during the interval of our absence in heaven before we appear along with Him, God's dealings, testimonies, judgments, and deliverances on earth. The Epistles gave us simply the fact of the rapture of those saints but did not inform as to the length of the interval before the appearing and the kingdom. That such an interval existed might have been gathered: but whether long or short, or how filled up, does not appear in the Epistles. The Revelation furnishes that which was lacking upon the subject, and connects, without confounding, the church caught up to the Lord on high, with certain witnesses to be raised up during the closing term of the age on earth before He appears in judgment.

As for the relative bearings of the different portions of the New Testament, it may be said in general, that the Gospels have a character peculiar to themselves. Certainly it is not an exclusively Jewish condition, neither is it a proper church condition, but a gradual slide, in John more marked than in the others, from the one to the other. The Lord Jesus, rejected, was with His disciples here below. The Holy Ghost, Who of course was then as ever the faith-giving, quickening agent, was not yet given, i.e. in the new unprecedented way of personal presence as sent down from heaven, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Hence the disciples, although possessing faith and life eternal (John 6:35, 47, 68, 69), were not yet baptised by the Holy Ghost into one body. (Compare Acts 1:5 with 1 Cor. 12:13). In a word, the church was not yet built nor begun to be built: "Upon this rock," says the Lord, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18).

On the other hand the Acts historically, and the Epistles doctrinally, describe a different state of things as then existing: Jesus absent and glorified in heaven; the Holy Ghost present and dwelling on earth in the saints, who were thereby constituted one body, the church. Christ had taken His place as Head of the body above, and the Holy Ghost sent down was gathering into oneness with Him there, into membership of His body, Who is Head over all things. Such is the mystery of Christ, which it was emphatically given to the apostle Paul fully to make known. And as the Gospels may be regarded as the preparatory transition out of Jewish relations to the blessed elevation on which the church rests, the Revelation answers as the corresponding transition from the church one with Christ in heavenly places, by various steps or stages, down to those Jewish relations which for a time dropped out of sight in consequence of the calling of that heavenly body.

The doctrine of the church is clearly concurrent with the one hope, which is found in the intermediate part of the New Testament. For along with the truth of the peculiar calling of the church, as the body commenced by the descent and indwelling of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and thenceforward guided and perpetuated by Him -- along with this truth, it will be found that the peculiar aspect of the coming of the Lord, for which I am here contending, stands or falls. None of the school of interpreters commonly called "the Protestant school" {historicism} understood by the church anything more, at best, than the Augustinian notion of an invisible company from the beginning to the end of time. None of them, therefore, has an adequate idea of the new and heavenly work which God began at Pentecost by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The consequence is that, if they read of saints in Daniel, in the Psalms, or in the Revelation, they are at once set down as of the church. If they read of " this gospel of the kingdom" in Matt. xxiv., or of "the everlasting gospel, " it is to their minds the same thing as what Paul calls " my gospel," the gospel of the grace of God preached now. Hence follows, and quite fairly too, a denial of any speciality in the walk and conversation of the saints since Pentecost, and a general Judaizing in doctrine, standing, conduct, and hopes. It is also a simple and, natural result of this, that all Protestant interpreters {meaning historicists}, if they admit a personal advent at all to introduce the millennial reign, present as the hope of the church that which is, in fact, the proper expectation of the converted Jewish remnant; viz. the day of the Lord, the Son of man seen by all the tribes of the earth, and coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Nor is the truth of the church unknown to the Protestant interpreters only; it is equally an object of dislike to most of the Futurist school. [722] And it is my conviction that the two baleful heresies, which have brought such shame upon the revival of prophetic study towards the beginning and the close of the years 1830 to 1850, [723] are intimately connected with the rejection of this grand truth. For an error touching the church cannot but affect Him Whose personal presence is what is so essential to it; and that which dishonors the Spirit goes far, in the long run, to disfigure or deny the person and

722. {this appears to refer to what we call posttribulationists, often, but not always holding the futurity of Daniel's 70th week.}

723. {The references appear to me to point to Irvingism and then to Newtonianism (B. W. Newton).}

work of Him of Whom the Spirit is the vicar.

In the Epistles, it is beyond doubt that the church is continually addressed, as if there were no understood, necessary, revealed hindrances to the rapture at the coming of the Lord. How could this be if the church be the same body as those saints who are described in Daniel, the Psalms, &c., as being destined to certain fiery trials still future from a little horn which is to wax greater to the highest degree, and his satellites who are yet to appear? How comes it that the apostle Paul, when he speaks of the coming of the Lord, never hints at this tribulation, as one through which the church must pass; but always presents His presence as an immediate hope which might occur at one unknown moment to another? That this inspired man understood the just application of these prophecies, better than any since his day, is that which few Christians will question. They were scriptures long revealed and familiar to Jews, and the Lord Jesus in Matt. 24 had very significantly linked His fresh revelations upon that occasion with the predictions of Daniel. Yet the Holy Ghost, in His constant allusions throughout the writings apostolic to the future hopes of the church, never once refers to those terrible circumstances as a future scene wherein the church is to enact a part. On the contrary, the way in which the coming of the Lord is put before the saints, as a thing to be constantly looked for, seems incompatible with it. We have examined the only statement in the Epistles which might appear to interpose such a barrier; and we have seen that, so far from contradicting the thought of immediateness, the apostle seeks to relieve the Thessalonian saints from all uneasiness about the day of the Lord and its troubles, by the blessed hope of His coming and their gathering unto Him, two things in his mind indissolubly bound together. It is a gathering unto Him which must be before He appears to the world, for its judgment, because He and they are to appear together. It is certain, moreover, that there must arrive the apostasy and the revelation of the man of sin, not before the coming, but before the day, of the Lord. His coming will gather the saints on high; His day will judge the world here below.

The prophecy of Daniel had already revealed the leading features of the interval during which "the prince that shall come" plays his terrible role.

> And he shall confirm a covenant [see margin and compare Isa. 28:15] with the many (i.e. of Daniel's people, the Jews) for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and on account of the protection of abominations a desolator shall be, even until the consummation (or consumption, as in Isa. 28:22), and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (Dan. 9:27).

That the desolator is not the Roman prince is manifest. He is hostile to both. The latter prince is described as one "that shall come," after the Messiah had already appeared and been cut off (as is plain from verse 26). There is also the certainty that "the prince that shall come" is the chief of the Roman people. For his people "shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." We all know who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple -- the people of this future prince {i.e., the Romans}.

The latter part of the twenty-sixth verse does not continue the thread of the history, further than the general expression,

> and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

In the last verse we are transported to the epoch of "the prince that shall come," and his actings during the last week of the age. This period is shown to be broken into two parts, during the former of which, according to a covenant, Jewish worship is resumed; but "in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."

Nor is it in Dan. 9 only. If Dan. 7 be consulted, it will be seen that there is a certain little Horn rising after the ten Horns of the fourth Roman Beast, before whom three of the first Horns fell --

> that horn that had eyes and a mouth, that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows (v. 20).

> And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High (or, of the high places) and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand, until a time and times and the dividing of time (v. 25).

Is it not evident that in Dan. 7 is a Horn or king whose blasphemous pride brings judgment upon the Beast or Roman empire; and whose interference with times and laws, that is, with Jewish ceremonial order, continues for three years and a half? and that for the same space of time, or the last half week, "the prince that shall come," the Roman prince of Dan. 9, overthrows this ceremonial worship? For the Jew is still unbelieving and unpurged.

Now the Revelation not only takes up the last half of Daniel's week (Rev. 11, 12, 13) but shows what is the place of the church during this period. This truth it was not given to the Jewish prophet to reveal; because it was that which supposed and fitly followed the revelation of the mystery hidden from ages and from generations {Rom. 16:25, 26; Col. 1:26; Eph. 3:9}. Paul had given us the church waiting for the presence of the Lord. What is it that the Holy Ghost adds by John? What is the great outline seen in the Revelation?

After the vision of the Lord Jesus in Rev. 1, we have "things that are," in epistles to the Seven Churches, so conveyed as to apply not only at that time, but as long as the church subsists on earth. Then comes the properly prophetic part, the "things which should be after" the church-condition had passed away. Throughout the prophetic portion of the book, the church is never described as being on earth. At the close of the third chapter, it altogether disappears from earthly view. Instead of the churches being any longer traced here below, a door is opened in heaven; and the prophet is called up there to see "the things which must come to pass after these," i.e. after "the things which are," {cp. Rev. 1:19 for the three-fold division} or the church regarded in the completeness of its varying phases on earth. Besides other things (the throne, and One that sat upon it being the center of the vision), John sees, not seven candlesticks, but, suited to the new circumstances of heaven, four and twenty thrones,

and upon them four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment and on their heads golden crowns.

Thus we have, in vision, the place and functions of the saints after they shall have been taken up to meet the Lord, and before their manifestation with Him in glory. Here is the simple reason. The way in which He and they are here represented emblematically is totally different from what is revealed as connected with either, when the moment comes to leave heaven for the purpose of judgment upon the beast, &c.; or from what is revealed touching the reign for a thousand years subsequent to that judgment: that is, in Rev. 19:11, and in 20:4-6. For can the scene in Rev. 4, 5 be interpreted consistently with any view, save that of the church being actually caught up and completed in the presence of God? It is a quite distinct thing from our sitting in heavenly places in Christ {Eph. 2:6}. Such is the subject of the Epistle to the Ephesians. Neither is it the same thing as the boldness which the partakers of the heavenly calling have even now to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh {Heb. 10:19, 20}. Such is the subject of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the high-priesthood of Jesus is dwelt on at length, and the liberty which we have in consequence to draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith. For it is still faith, and not actual possession, however it may be, through the power of the Holy Ghost, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

But quite distinctly the purpose of the Revelation is to disclose the dealings of God (whether the facts be expressed or understood), -- but dealings which involve a certain condition of things that was future, if considered in relation to the circumstances looked at in the seven Epistles -- "the things" in short "which must be after" those actually subsisting at this time. Nor can Rev. 4, 5 be supposed to describe the blessedness of the spirits of the saints previous to the coming of Christ for the church. How could the departed who are with Christ be in fairness symbolised by twenty-four elders? that is, by an image evidently borrowed from the full courses of Jewish priesthood. The whole church, and not a part only, is comprehended in the symbol. But this can only be after the dead in Christ rise first, then we which are alive and remain are caught up together with them in the clouds, and so to be ever with the Lord. Accordingly, here they are represented as in heaven, the Lord being also there; and although made kings and priests even when on earth {Rev. 1:6}, still the time is not yet come for the exercise of government.

In beautiful harmony, therefore, with this peculiar and transitional period during which they are removed from the world, they worship above. But the saints below are not forgotten. Those above have golden harps and golden vials full of odours, "which are the prayers of saints." And they sing a new song, celebrating the worthiness of the Lamb to take the book and open the seals, not only because He was slain and had redeemed themselves, but had made them, [724] i.e. these saints, to their God, kings and priests. And they should reign over the earth. The fulfilment is seen in Rev. 20:4-6: the reigning with Christ not merely of those symbolized by the elders, but also of the Apocalyptic suffers after that on earth.

Moreover, it is clear on the one hand, that the lightnings, thunderings, &c., suit neither the day of grace nor the millennial state. Earth is certainly not then brought under the power of the blood of Christ, when these symbols will find their accomplishment. On the other hand, it is equally clear that there are saints on earth, while the twenty-four elders are before the throne above. That is, it is neither the millennial nor the present state; but an intermediate period of a peculiar nature, in which we have the throne, not of grace as now, nor of displayed glory as by-and-by, but clothed with what has been justly termed a Sinai character of awful majesty attached to it. It is judicial.

But those above exercise their priesthood in the presence of God as the full completed chief-priests. Hence the symbol of twenty-four elders round the throne, at the time when, as all confess, earth is still unreconciled, however there maybe, in the next chapter, the anticipative song of every creature. If this be true, it follows that the Lord's coming to meet the saints takes place between Rev. 3 and 4 (if the thought be pursued, which I doubt not, that Rev. 6-19 will be fulfilled in a rapid crisis), room being left there for His coming {for us} described in 1 Thess. 4 and elsewhere.

Then the properly prophetic part begins, when of course the main action of the book goes on subsequently to the removal of the church. It is plain that another character of testimony from that of the church properly is announced. For God Himself is revealed in ways different from those which He is displaying now; that is to say, not as showing the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus {Eph. 2, but in the chastening judgments of the seals, trumpets, and vials, preparatory to the great day of the Lord which Rev. 19:11 ushers in.

On this coming state of things Daniel compared with the Revelation will be found to cast and to receive much light. For it seems plain that the saints of the Most High or heavenlies, of whom we read in Dan. 7, identify themselves with the saints who suffer under the beast, after the rapture of the church and before the Lord's appearing {in glory, in Rev. 19}. They keep the commandments of Clod and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. This, be it noted, is the Spirit of prophecy. Yet, though they are not of the twenty-four elders, they will have their blessed and holy part in "the first resurrection."

Let it be remarked, that this term has nothing to do with the question whether all are raised at the same time. It simply

724. In the text preferred by some critics which omits αὐτοὺς, "them," the sense is general, laying stress on the Lamb's having redeemed "out of every tribe," &c. It is the blessed fact so glorious to Him, rather than bringing its objects into prominence. But as most accept the pronoun, the observation founded on it is left.

describes the condition of those who rise and reign during the thousand years, as distinguished from those who do not rise till that period is ended. The truth of this seems manifest from the fact that Christ has part in the first resurrection; yet He nevertheless rose before the church more than 1800 years at least. Hence the thought is not forbidden of certain saints being raised who stand and suffer after the church is gone.

The symbol of the twenty-four elders continues unchanged throughout the course of the book, till Rev. 19. They enter into God's ways and judgments, as interested in whatever affected His glory, as may be seen in Rev. 4, 5, 7, 11, 14, 19. But in Rev. 19 there is a striking change. After the opening scene of the rejoicings over Babylon the elders no longer appear. The time for the marriage being come (and how evidently the church therefore is still viewed in the Revelation as unmarried!), the Bride, the Lamb's wife, is only then announced as made ready.

The heavenly joy and the Bridegroom and His bride being thus incidentally glanced at, He takes a new aspect, for the day is about to break upon the world; and so do we, for we will have gone long before to be ever with the Lord, and if He is about to appear, so are we along with Him in glory {Col. 3:4}. Hence, in the eleventh verse, the prophet sees heaven opened, and a white horse, and He that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. In unison, therefore, as He thus comes to smite and rule, the armies which are in heaven follow the Lord of lords and King of kings; and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful. These expressions are sufficiently clear to determine who are meant by "the armies," if any one should have a doubt. It is the glorified who were in heaven following Christ, in the capacity of His hosts, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Contrasted with the marriage supper of the Lamb, all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven are invited to the great supper of God. The prophet sees the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse and His army. The result all know, as it ought never to be doubted (vv. 17-21).

In Rev. 20 follows the angelic binding of the dragon for a thousand years, and the parenthetic revelation of the sitting on thrones, or, at least, of the living and reigning with Christ, during that period, of such as had part in the first resurrection. They will not cease to be priests of God, though their office may be discharged in a different way from what we saw as to some of them in Rev. 4 and 5. But they all reign with Christ for a thousand years {Rev. 20:6.

It is a prominent feature of the book, that in it is traced the sovereignty of God, not only in His purposes regarding the church properly so called, but in His gracious ways with an election from among Jews and Gentiles subsequently. Thus, after the glorified are seen in completeness in heaven, under the symbol of the twenty-four crowned elders (Rev. 4, 5), we hear in Rev. 6:9-11 of saints suffering, yet crying for vengeance. The announcement to them is that they should rest yet for a little, until their fellow-servants and brethren, doomed to be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. Vengeance should not arrive till then. These are evidently not the church, but saints on earth {who had been martyre} after the glorified are in heaven;, their sufferings and cries to the Lord accord much with the experience detailed in the Psalms. Still, whether Jewish or Gentile saints, it is not named here.

In Rev. 7 we have a numbered company out of all the tribes of Israel, sealed with the seal of the living God; and after this an innumerable crowd out of all nations, &c., who are characterized as coming out of the great tribulation, and as having washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. These groups are evidently distinguished from, if not contrasted with, each other; and they are still more markedly shown to be different from the glorified. For we have the facts not only of a certain defined tribulation out of which these said Gentiles come, but of the elders (i.e. the confessed symbol of the glorified) still represented as a separate party in the scene [725] (v. 11).

Under the trumpets again it is that we find the prayers of "all the saints " alluded to, who are of course supposed to be still on earth (compare Rev. 8:3, 4, with v. 8), and an implication of the sealed Jewish remnant being in the sphere, though saved from the effects of the fifth trumpet (Rev. 9:4).

Further, in Rev. 11 are seen the two witnesses, prophesying in sackcloth, and killed; in the twelfth, the woman persecuted by the dragon, who wars with the remnant of her seed that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus. This evidently is accomplished by the Beast of Rev. 13, who makes war with the saints and overcomes them.

Rev. 14 consists of a sevenfold sketch of the dealings of God, which brings the crisis to a conclusion: the hundred forty and four thousand associated with the Lamb on Mount Sion; the everlasting gospel summoning all to fear and worship God because of the proximity of His judgment; the fall of Babylon; the declaration of torment for the Bestial worshipers; the blessedness from henceforth of those dying in

725. I cannot concur in the view put forth in the most voluminous and elaborate comment of modern times upon this book, namely, that the sealed hundred and forty-four thousand are identical with the innumerable palm-bearing multitude; the latter embodying the idea of the different generations of the former in a corporate form! (for the idea of the church as one body here below by the presence of the Holy Ghost is utterly denied, and unceasingly distorted, in this system of interpretation). But Mr. {E. B.} Elliott allows that the twenty-four elders represent the church in the character of a royal priesthood. No one denies that the glorified, in different scenes, may be set forth by different symbols. But how comes it, not only that these distinct symbols are in the same scene, but that one of the elders is found explaining who, what, and whence the multitude are? and that the description is of those who, among other things, come out of a particular tribulation, and thus form a peculiar class? Nor is this denied by Mr. Elliott, who connects "the great" with the fifth seal, as the complement of the sufferers there, though another and distinct body. And if Israel, in v. 4, are to be understood symbolically, why not "all nations," in v. 9, which are plainly distinguished from the preceding company? And if the election out of Jews be the emblem of Christians, how come these same persons immediately after to be characterized as an election out of Gentiles? Where is the consistency of treating the former as symbolical, and the latter as literal? and the more so, as it is in the latter picture that various mystic personages appear, such as the four living creatures and the elders.

the Lord; the harvest of the earth (out of which were redeemed the one hundred and forty-four thousand, as the first-fruits to God and the Lamb); and lastly, the vintage of the same. The reader has only to weigh vv. 12, 13, in order to have the foregoing remarks confirmed. Even here we have the patience of saints described just before the harvest, the portion too, not of the glorified (for we shall not all sleep), but of a special class of sufferers here below, while the glorified are hidden above.

In Rev. 15 (preparatory to Rev. 16., i.e. the seven outpoured bowls of the wrath of God) is heard the song of the conquerors over the Beast, celebrating the works of the Lord God Almighty and the ways of the King of the nations. Compare also Rev.16:5, 6, 15; 17:6; 18:4-6.

Now it will not be forgotten that to those who kept the word of Christ's patience (Rev. 3:10) the promise was to be kept (not in, or during, but) "from" the hour of trial, out of the fearful tribulation which is in store for the dwellers upon earth. But in the preceding scriptures it is clear that after Christ has fulfilled His promise in the translation of the glorified to heaven, there are saints on earth, both from among Jews and Gentiles, who suffer.

And these Apocalyptic sufferers are described in Rev. 20:4 as having part, equally with those glorified, in the first resurrection. For that text discloses, first, the general place of the glorified in the millennial reign, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." Next come those killed in the earlier persecution of the book (Rev. 6:9-11), "And I saw the souls of those that were beheaded because of the witness of Jesus, and because of the word of God." Thirdly are the later witnesses for God, "and those who had not worshiped the beast," &c. (Rev. 15:2). Those saints, who were called and suffered after the rapture of the glorified are emphatically mentioned, because it might have appeared that they had lost all by their death. Not members of Christ's body before He comes for His own, they share not in the rapture; not protected from death during the prevalence of the Beast, they cannot be the living nucleus of Jews, or of Gentiles, saved to be the holy seed on earth during the reign of Christ. The two later classes suffer, are cut off, but are not forgotten. "They lived and reigned with Christ the thousand years," as well as the first general class.

Thus the truth, brought to light in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, is assumed in the view which the apostle John was the honored servant to enunciate -- viz., the blessed condition and holy employ of the glorified round the throne and the Lamb, after their removal from earth, but previous to their appearing with Christ in glory.

The central part of the Revelation then appears to corroborate, on an irrefragable basis, the truth that the glorified will be taken away and fulfil the symbols we have been noticing, previous to the day of the Lord. During that same time other saints are still groaning and shedding their blood like water here below (Psa. 74, 78).

Such seems to be the main key which unlocks an important portion of the book, and confirms the view, so bright to the renewed mind, of going to meet the Lord, without one earthly obstacle between. Thus is kept unblunted the point and energy of a truth only revealed in the New Testament. For the Old Testament spoke of His coming *with* all His saints, not *for* them; of His appearing in glory to the confusion of His enemies; not of His descending to meet His friends, when we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed and caught up together in the clouds. And hence, it would seem, the emphatic language of the apostle, conscious that God was by him revealing a new thing to faith. For in 1 Cor. 15 he says, "Behold I show you a mystery," and in 1 Thess. 4, "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord."

How sweetly do the closing appeals tell upon the heart of him who has an ear to hear!

> I am the Root and the Offspring of David; the bright, the morning Star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come.

It would be to lose or at least to misuse the prophetic sayings of this book, were we to have any other hope than that Jesus is coming quickly (Rev. 22:7) It is well to read in their light the signs of the times: knowing the awful end, we can thus detect the principles now at work.

But it is a mistake to construe of such signs obstacles to the coming of the Lord; to say, until I know the arrival of this or that precursor, I cannot in my heart expect Jesus. Blessed be God! such is not the language of the Spirit.

> The Spirit and the bride say, Come.

Are these the words of mere feeling, unguided by spiritual understanding of the mind of God? As a fact, we know that the Lord has delayed; but He is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness. He is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But who will say that it is conceivable to be looking for the Lord, wholly uncertain of the time of His advent, and at the same time to have the revealed certainty of a number of events which determine the year, or, it may be, the day?

That Jesus will arise, the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings (Mal. 4), is clear; and we know that the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13). But "this same Jesus" is far more than the supreme power of righteous government on earth. He is known to the church, at any rate, as the bright, the morning Star. Blessed light of grace, ere the day breaks, to them who watch for Him from heaven during the dark and lonely night!

> And the Spirit and the bride say, Come.

The weakest Christian too can join:

> and let him that heareth say, Come.

> He that testifieth these things saith, Yea, I am coming quickly. Amen; come, Lord Jesus.

(*The Bible Treasury* , New Series 1:349-351, 365-367, 378-380; New Series 2:12-13, 26-29, 42-44.)

Section 8:

Some Appreciation for the Truths Brought into Prominence, and Comments on JND's Writings

Chapter 8.1

An Appreciation for the Truths Brought Into Prominence

. . . Within the last half century {written in 1868} God has been pleased to raise up in His Church a much fuller testimony to His grace in the gospel of His Son. Man, in his loud pretension, has been exposed. Jesus, as Savior and Lord, has been exalted, and God's love seen to be triumphant by the cross over sin, the flesh, and Satan. Thousands of souls are the glad witnesses of the peace which the reception of this testimony has brought to the conscience and heart.

In addition to this, the Lord was pleased to awaken the attention of His saints to the dispensational structure of His word. Distinctions were seen to exist in the mind and actings of God towards the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church, which had long been overlooked; and this mode of dividing the word cleared away much obscurity from the eyes of His people. It was seen that these classifications were not only distinct from each other, but that each had a history peculiar to itself; and that intelligence as to this was the basis of communion with God, and with the government He executes {at that epoch}. An immense breadth of truth was thus opened for the instruction and guidance of faith; and as all promise and blessing were found in divine counsel to be connected with the person of the Son, so the Lord Himself became more glorious to His people, not only as the accomplisher of salvation, but the fulfiller of all their cherished hopes, whether as the "root and offspring of David," or as "the bright and morning star."

Hence, this connection of the Lord with His own by the past, present, and future, brought Him into that prominence which the scriptures gave Him in the counsels of God, inasmuch as all covenanted grace and promised blessing in the coming glory were seen to be made "yea and amen in Christ." Beyond this, there were discovered to be certain relations in which Jesus stood with man and Israel, which had not as yet been maintained according to the fulness of the prophetic word, and that these could not be displayed during His rejection from the earth and while hidden at the right hand of God. The cast-out Savior, the despised Messiah, and the rejected Lord, is gone "to receive for himself a kingdom and to return," so that the glory proper to these relations is yet future. Nor is it till His second coming that the heavens and the earth will be the scene of their display.

Many hearts, once oppressed by disappointment or perplexed with doubt, have been set at rest by these blessed disclosures of the future glory of Christ at "his appearing and kingdom." Many a saint has also been established in the certainty of the blessed hope of the Church -- its being caught up previously, to meet the Lord in the air, in view of that day when "the marriage of the Lamb is come." All these purposes of God towards His people, and their manner of accomplishment in Christ, and the believers' portion therein by grace, according to the seasons which the sovereignty of God has appointed, were opened up, and became the common ground of enjoyment with all whom He had thus separated unto Himself by His effectual calling. But there was a further revelation of His mind before the glorification of Christ and His people could take place, and consequent upon His ascension into heaven. This was to be based upon nothing less than the presence and relation of the Holy Ghost to the body -- the Church -- "the habitation of God [on earth] through the Spirit." This body, so formed and recognized, has become the new object of the Lord's special care and love, as well as of His faithful ministry as its Head. The epistles generally, and some in particular, get their very subject from these relations, and plainly reveal the mystery of Christ, and the Church -- His body and His bride, "which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."

Luther and the Reformation described its own circle for the given time, when the Papacy was dominant in Christendom ; but the grand distinction between then and now, which has just been given in outline, is immense. It is scarcely possible to overrate the value which attaches to the great cardinal truth of a believer's justification by faith in a crucified Savior and Lord. Still it was but as drops from a cloud previous to the shower of blessing which was to be poured out on the Church of God, according to the largeness of His own thoughts towards His people.

Since Luther's days, God has as surely brought into prominence some further truths connected with Christ and the Church, which had been long lost; and it is of the greatest moment for us to challenge our souls whether we know and hold them fast. Who has not been interested in observing corresponding differences when reading the history of the nation of Israel under its revival kings, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, in the days of its Tirshatha, or of its scribe? Nehemiah, as we know, was occupied with building the wall of Jerusalem; and Ezra with the re-establishment of its temple.

Luther, like Nehemiah, may thus be classified as a builder of the wall; for surely justification by faith is the great bulwark of Christianity. Ezra, with his temple work, may, in principle, be as fitly the representative of those who are now led to the acknowledgment that there is one body, and who are seeking to gather upon this ground, in the confession that "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." Wherever the Church is thus viewed, the practical effect has been manifested in the accession of thousands from the established and dissenting

forms of our times, though there has been nothing tangible or attractive to please the outward eve. All such as have been delivered in the present day from the false systems around can say, at the very least, with Ezra, "And now for a little space grace hath been shown from the Lord our God to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage, for we were bondmen." [726]

It is useless accounting for the present wide departure from God's revealed thoughts concerning the Church; but one may well say on this point, If the Jehovah of Israel was so imperative with Moses, that the tabernacle should, in the minutest things, be made according to the pattern showed to him on the mount, what must the offence of our day when the amalgamation is so complete between these establishments and the nations of Christendom, that it may be fairly said there is neither Church or world any longer visible? These terms are no more distinctive, as relating to two bodies, essentially different in their nature and destiny. If this be questioned, where is anything to be shown which corresponds to what Paul said:

> I am jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ?

Or again; to what existing body can such a scripture as this be applied:

> Ye are the epistle of Christ written in our hearts, known and read of all men?

The prophetic word by Paul and the Apocalyptic writer warn of a falling away, and of an apostasy -- and it is a reflection on Pentecost and the apostles to say these are gone by -- and more especially as they write of "the last times." But it is a proper confession for all to make, that these be the days, and that we are living in the closing hours of a present evil age.

Intelligible enough to him that hath an ear to hear is that voice from heaven --

> Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins.

Is this admonition bandied about from Protestantism to Popery, and from St. Peter's to St. Paul's? Let those who do so take heed, and rather accept the closing words of prophetic warning to the churches, before the Lord comes for His own, and before the angel with the sharp sickle does his work on "the clusters of the vine of the earth" when it is "cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God." No discovery can equal that of the man who is led by the Spirit to see what is the special and particular work that God at any time is carrying on, and particularly in these last days, by which He seeks to rescue souls from the general apostasy, and bring a remnant into His own mind and work. Can we not value the separated place which Elijah held with Jehovah in the days of Jezebel, and the bright testimony which he gave to Israel against Baal? Is this altogether a voice in the past, or is there now a Thyatira, and Jezebel and her children, in the messages to the seven churches? Is it not a present warning, when the angel says, "I will kill her children with death?"

Can any one weigh these warnings and threatenings aright, who for a moment longer stays in the thing prophesied against? Would any learn to estimate the value and sweetness of the promise, "I will sup with him," and "I will give him the morning star?" let him come out upon the authority of that word --

> I have set before thee an open door and no man can shut it.

May all who have followed in obedience these previous directions of the Lord to the churches, and have proved that "outside the camp" is to be with Jesus, remember the exhortation to such,

> Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. [727]

The Bible Treasury 7:25-47.

* * * * *

The reader may be interested in C. H. Spurgeon's view:

> *Do not be carried away with new meanings*. Plymouth Brethren delight to fish up some hitherto undiscovered tadpole of interpretation, and cry it around the town as a rare dainty; let us be content with the more ordinary and more wholesome fishery. [728]

726. {Alas, as has always been the case, blessing is frittered away and turned from, as time goes on.}

727. *The Bible Treasury* 7:25-47.

728. *Commenting and Commentaries* . . ., p. 31 (1893).

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Chapter 8.2

J. N. Darby's Writings

W. Kelly's Evaluation

Here are some comments by W. Kelly concerning JND:

> But what characterized our honored brother as a saint and servant was a deeper insight into God's mind in Scripture than any other I ever knew or heard of in any age since the apostles, approached: such was his spiritual power of bringing in Christ to decide questions great or small. None of his works are or were popular. His greatest single work is the Synopsis; his ablest critique the examination of {B. W.} Newton's Thoughts on the Apocalypse (Prophetic 3), and his chef d'oeuvre (in his own judgment) a pamphlet -- The Righteousness of God with 1 Pet. 2:24 in reply to Bonar. He is occasionally grand, here and there, but often obscure; and so entirely above ordinary readers as to be with difficulty understood. One cannot therefore say much of his style. As he said to me, Kelly, you write: I only think on paper. I am a miner, and bring the precious ore to surface, which others coin. He was unaffectedly original, but rather disdained literary polish. [729]

And JND knew how to say "I do not know." [730]

G. V. Wigram's Observation

G. V. Wigram wrote:

> It is a great thing to let those around us see and feel that conscience is in full play in us, and that we feel we must obey God rather than man. It is this spirit of obedience which has always so struck me in _____. He has a mind and intelligence, too, equal to any in his day, but they are never allowed their play by him save where conscience and the spirit of obedience have gone first. This gives such power to his papers on the Roman Catholic and Puseyite questions, and also to those on the infidel questions of the day. One of the learned men of England read his paper in the *Present Testimony*, in answer to Colenso, while he was dying, and sent me word that he had read everything which had appeared upon the subject, but that those eight pages were the clearest and best of anything he had seen. In the paper, too, on the inspiration of the Scriptures, of an early date in the history of the *Present Testimony*, conscience and obedience were like the glasses of his spectacles; but the line of thought has been owned by the educated in Europe as being unanswerable. [731]

729. Letter of Feb. 22, 1901.

730. See *Notes & Jottings*, pp. 8, 23, 26, 31, 383.

731. *Memorials of the Ministry of G. V. Wigram*, vol. 3, *Letters*, pp. 222, 223.

E. W. Rogers' Appreciation

E. W. Rogers (Open-Brethren) said:

> His writings are not easy to read, but the *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible* [732] is worth its weight in gold. It gives one the Outline of Scripture which, once grasped, is a lifelong benefit. Mr. Darby was a kind of pathfinder. He beat out the track: others follow and discover its beauties.
>
> We should not fall into the snare of idolizing this servant of God: much less should we be found defaming him. We should thank God for him and benefit as much as we can by his writings, testing all by the Word. There has not been his equal since. If only one knew where quickly to lay one's hand on the comment on any particular passage or subject, his books would be all the more valuable, but you have to look for what you want, occupying sometimes a great deal of time. And sometimes you cannot find it. Mr. Darby had a way of retaining silence on certain matters which perplex most of us.
>
> No ministering brother can afford to be without Mr. Darby's translation of the Bible, nor his Synopsis at least. His standard of spiritual apprehension will be indicated by what other of his writings have been selected by him for a place in his library. [733]

E. R. Sandeen "Almost" Did Not Understand JND

It is interesting to note that E. R. Sandeen's evaluation of JND's *Collected Writings* is that they "are almost uniformly unintelligible."[734] W. Kelly said of JND:

> He is occasionally grand here and there, but often obscure, and so entirely above ordinary readers as to be with difficulty understood. [735]

I suggest that, in effect, W. Kelly's remark is an indictment of E. R. Sandeen. Besides, how appropriate is it to say that a man's writings are almost uniformly unintelligible and then tell us what that man taught?

732. {*The Synopsis* was written in French, and was translated into English by W. Kelly. It first appeared serially in G. V. Wigram's magazine, *The Present Testimony*. JND's comments on *The Synopsis* are found in *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:118, 179, 188, 414, 480; 3:130; 2:67.}

733. *Help and Food*, May 1956, pp. 29, 30.

734. *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, p. 31.

735. Letter dated Feb. 22, 1901.

Jon Zens' Ridiculous Claim

Jon Zens claims that JND popularized the idea of piling passages of Scripture on top of one another as if this was an obviously fit way to prove a proposition. He wrote:

> Again, this was popularized by Darby, for he said, "I prefer quoting many passages to enlarging upon them." [736]

This is a citation from the *Collected Writings* 11:237, "Lectures on the Second Coming of Christ" (1840). J. Zens is guilty of extrapolating from *the purpose* of JND *on the occasion of that lecture* to popularizing this. Why do those hostile to JND's teachings treat him in this way? [737]

Wm. Reid's Appreciation

Let us hear a person who was very conversant with JND's writings. There were two clergymen named William Reid who wrote something regarding JND. One, a United Presbyterian, wrote a hostile polemic against J. N. Darby[738] and the other (also formerly a Presbyterian) wrote a 'eulogy' called, *Literature and Mission of the So-called Plymouth Brethren*.[739] I will cite some of this paper.

> Like Owen, you will find him {JND} involved, discursive, and rather hard to read; in Mr. Darby's case with far more reason, as he is incomparably more profound, as well as more learned . . .
>
> It is written by Divine Inspiration "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Of late years the enemy has been coming in like a flood and where is there anything in these lands that can be called the lifting up a "standard against him?" except it be the intensely spiritual movement and thoroughly Biblical writings of the Brethren? For, drawing only from the Holy Scriptures have they not displayed a banner because of the Truth against every great evil that has come in for the past forty years? Are they not the present day standard bearers of a recovered Christianity?
>
> Who answered F. W. Newman's "Phases of Faith?" J. N. Darby in his great work, "The Irrationalism of Infidelity" (see Vol. 6 of his Collected Writings). Others have replied to it, no doubt, but this had refuted the book. Who has answered his brother's -- Dr. {J. H.} Newman's "Apologia pro sua vita?" None, save Mr. Darby; and he has done it on its own ground, with a learning which evinces thorough competency. Who laid bare the showy skepticism of Prof. E. Scherer on his way from theological chair of Strasburg to the portfolio of the Revue des Deux Mondes? Above all, Mr. Darby in his "Lettre sur l'inspiration de l'ecriture Sainte" (translated, for the substance into his English tract On Inspiration) and a subsequent brochure "de l'oeuvre de Christ." Who has exposed the sophistries and refuted the arguments of the writers of "Essays and Reviews"? Only Mr. Darby (Vol. 9, Collected Writings), Dr. Milner's "End of Controversy" has also been met and answered by him, and so have Bishop Colenso and Archbishop Whately.
>
> He has, by anticipation, discussed and settled the Church and State question fully 30 years ago (Vol. 15, Collected Writings). The Church of God has also been defended by him in its principles, privileges, spirituality, separateness from the world, its worship, its destiny and hopes as it has been by us, one writes in modern times. The doctrine of the Holy Ghost has also been expounded with a freshness, fullness, and scripturalness in such writings as "Is the Comforter come and is He gone?" and "The operations of the Spirit of God," by J. N. Darby, and in the "New Testament Doctrine of the Holy Spirit" by Wm. Kelly, such as you will find nowhere else, and surely the giving of scriptural views on the Holy Ghost is a most vital part of the standard against the enemy.
>
> Then the great subject of prophetic truth has found the clearest expounders among the "Brethren." (Mr. Darby has at least four large volumes on it.) They have not only simplified the subject, but are at present almost the only parties who discuss and expound the prophetic word with clearness, fullness and intelligence. Sir Edward Denny has likewise spent his lifetime in the study of prophecy and has published extensively on the subject and has issued a series of prophetical charts which are unique, and full of valuable instruction. "Plain Papers on Prophetical Subjects," by the late W. Trotter, being a digested summary of all the best works on prophecy is the best book on the subject for general readers, as it contains reliable papers on the whole of the prophetic word.
>
> Whatever they teach on prophecy may, as a rule, be relied upon, and will never need to be unlearned, for it is substantially the truth. Then again, the fearful error about sin and its punishment which are abroad and have been spreading so rapidly -- such as annihilationism, not-eternity of punishment, and all the other phases of eschatological skepticism and infidelity -- have been answered by Mr. Darby as they have not been by any other man. And, since the last Oecumenical Council and the proclamation of the Infallibility of the Pope, Mr. Darby has been writing most learnedly and conclusively against the Roman dogmas, and giving an awful exposure of Popery from its own chief writers (see Familiar Conversations on Romanism) with a severe reproof of Archbishop Manning. The learned labor and research needed to accomplish what he has done in lifting up a standard against Popery in its last days is quite amazing; and, though engaged with this great controversy with Rome, and also with infidelity, he has not overlooked the little controversy about holiness that has been going on among Christians for some time back, but has settled it, too, for all subject minds, in his recent masterly pamphlet against Perfectionism a review of R. Pearsall Smith's book, "Holiness through Faith," and a letter on the practical consequences. His "Dialogue of the Wesleyan

736. *Dispensationalism: A Reformed Inquiry into its Leading Figures and Features*, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., p. 52, 1978.

737. Frank Viola absurdly wrote:

> When John Nelson Darby emerged in the mid 1800s, he built a theology based on this approach {'lift a verse out of the Bible"}. Darby raised proof texting to an art form (*Pagan Christianity*, p. 278).

He and Gene Edwards are leaders of a part of the "house church" movement. Mr. Viola endorses Mr. MacPherson (p. 63, note 153 and p. 278, note 3), thus indicating anti-dispensationalism.

738. *Plymouth Brethrenism Unveiled and Refuted*, 1880.

739. Not surprisingly, he soon left his clerical position. He edited *The Bible Herald* and also *The Bible Witness and Review* (as stated in *The Bible Treasury* 13:368, note).

Doctrine of Perfection," might also be noticed; and his standing against E. Irving and B. W. Newton repelling their false views.

Perhaps in none of his writings is the weight as well as the acumen of Mr. Darby more conspicuous than in his masterly critique of Irving's grand essay, the "Preliminary Dissertation to Ben Ezra." Irving was then in his zenith before his sad aberrations, J. N. Darby not 30 years old; yet that most outstanding hero of the day was but as a child in the hands of a man of surpassing strength, who knew how to control it for Christ's sake. Let the reader compare his "Reflections" in the beginning of Prophetic I with Irving's "Prelim. Diss. to Ben Ezra." But, his most searching and sustained criticism is to be found, probably, in his "Examination of B. W. N.'s Thoughts on the Apocalypse," which he simply and most fairly crushed to annihilation; (see his Prophetic 3).

I might have enumerated many other topics, such as the Person and work of Christ, Christian Standing and Experience, and a clear full Gospel, in which he has lifted up a standard against the enemy. (See his Evangelical and Practical Vols. 12 and 16). But these will suffice, and if anyone competent to judge will read the works referred to, he will justify our assertion that the Spirit of God is emphatically and peculiarly using "Brethren" to lift up a standard against the enemy in every form in which he is presenting himself. If you look around you will indeed find thousands of true Christians resisting the hydraheaded monster of evil that is threatening to devour Christianity, but their testimony, though good to some extent, is marred by blemishes, or halts abruptly at some point where the doctrine, want of discipline, or their ecclesiastical policy hinders it from going further; and only "Brethren" appear to have the full and emphatic testimony of God, with freedom to use it with force and precision and deadly power against the enemy, unhampered by having to stand by any denominational institution -- for they have none, but profess to walk with liberty on the divine ground of the Church of God on earth, where all the saints of God, of every shade and hue, if subject only to the Word and Spirit, may walk with them. This gives them immense advantage in warfare and testimony over all denominations who have to pull up and stop short of thoroughly going to the goal of genuine obedience, not mere reformation, for fear of bringing down rotten corners of their ecclesiastical edifices by the weight of the public testimony, as it passes shaking the foundation. The great bulk of the effort in the "Churches" is directed towards keeping the old houses in repair, and whenever this is the case, the aggressive power of the truth is neglected, and by neglect is lost; and hence, in spite of themselves "that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." By their own showing the "Churches," for some years have been losing ground and drifting into formality, worldliness, and general decrepitude -- from which the present gracious awakening is only giving a very limited and temporary arousing to souls, without touching their unscriptural denominationalism and equally unscriptural clericalism . . .

Conclusion

Whatever difficulties there are regarding the *Time-line Chart for J. N. Darby -- 1826-1827*, on p. 33, I regard the delay in the dating of JND's period of convalescence from Dec. 1826 - Jan. 1827 (or Feb. 1827) as creating many more difficulties. The year 1827 was very eventful for him. Very early in 1827 the Lord graciously showed him many truths. In mid-1827 he left the Anglican church, followed shortly after by leaving his full-time work in the mountains; and then in late Nov. or early Dec. 1827, he and a few others began to meet to break bread (see Matt. 18:20).

We have seen that the origin of what is called dispensationalism and the pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture of the saints was recovered during this period of convalescence. Indeed, the truth of what the church, the body of Christ, really is was opened up to the soul of JND. He saw what union with Christ really meant as being one body with Him, and that each saint's place is the Beloved's place before the Father. That is, the place, as Man above, that the Beloved of the Father has, is the measure of the place those have who are united to Christ by the Spirit. And so he saw that the saints and the church are heavenly in contrast to Israel. This showed him that he was to be in an expectant posture, waiting for Christ to take him above at any time; there were no intervening events that stood between Him and the rapture of the saints. Isa. 32 showed him that there was to be a change in dispensation; i.e., there is a coming kingdom of Christ. Between the rapture and Christ's coming for the kingdom, the saints would be above with Christ. This was indeed a momentous and far-reaching recovery of truth. Coupled with such truths was an understanding that the trial of the fallen, first man, to see if he was recoverable, ended at the cross. His writings are the enlargement and exposition of these and related themes.

We have seen that some historicists held that the conflagration of 2 Pet. 3:10 would just precede the millennium. Thus, they held a two-stage coming with a rapture preceding the conflagration and then a return with Christ would occur as soon as the earth was renovated. Such views do not lead to the recovered truth as occurred through JND. No, not even a 3 ½ year interval in a two-stage coming as published by Morgan Edwards led to the blessed unfolding of truth, for it was part of an historicist scheme.

We also saw that Jesuits such as Ribera and Lacunza were not the source of dispensational truth, the pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture, the subsequent formation of a godly Jewish remnant to enter the millennium, that the church is heavenly, etc., etc., and all the other interlocking truths. The recovery of the pre-Rev. 4 rapture is a thread in a beautiful tapestry of recovered truths. Since the fall of the church there never was anything approaching this even remotely.

Moreover, the allegation about Margaret MacDonald, another historicist, being the source of the "pre-tribulation rapture" (whatever that conveniently means in the minds of calumniating source-hunters) has been exposed for its hoax-like character. The calumniating propagator of this absurdity, who talks about the great rapture hoax and the rapture plot, was himself hoaxed by Robert Norton, as we saw, who clearly plotted to attribute something untrue to Margaret MacDonald, by a crafty omission in a later report of her alleged revelation. However, what is so evident does not persuade those bent on calumniation:

> He that is persuaded against his will,
> is of the same opinion still.

The fact is that in 1827 J. N. Darby understood the pre-Rev. 4 rapture of the saints, and understood that there were no prophesied intervening events between himself and that event.

* * * * *

Finally, while this book was not intended to be a biography, it necessarily does contain biographical material. Some additional biographical material concerning JND and others is found in the Appendices.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

Attitudes Towards F. W. Newman's Arianism

F. W. Newman, with others, left England for Baghdad in September 1830 to join A. N. Groves' group which had left in 1829. While there he entertained Arian notions and spoke to the others concerning this. His return to England on July 9, 1833 [1] was preceded by the report of this and it aroused the one he referred to as "the Irish clergyman," i.e., JND. F. W. Newman wrote this concerning JND:

> I will trust my pen to only one specimen of details. The Irish clergyman was not able to meet me. He wrote a very desultory letter of grave alarm and inquiry, stating that he had heard that I was endeavouring to sound the divine nature by the miserable plummet of human philosophy, -- with much beside that I felt to be mere commonplace which everybody might address to everybody who differed from him. I however replied in the frankest, most cordial and trusting tone, assuring him that I was infinitely far from imagining that I could "by searching understand God"; on the contrary, concerning His higher mysteries, I felt I knew absolutely nothing but what He revealed to me in His word; but in studying this word, I found John and Paul to declare the Father, and not the Trinity, to be the One God. [2] Referring him to John 17:3, 1 Cor. 8:5, 6, I fondly believed that one so "subject to the word" and so resolutely renouncing man's authority *in order that* he might serve God, would immediately see as I saw. But I assured him, in all the depth of affection, that I felt how much fuller insight he had than I into all divine truth; and not he only, but others to whom I alluded; and that if I was in error, I only desired to be taught more truly; and either with him, or at his feet, to learn of God. He replied, to my amazement and distress, in a letter of much tenderness, but which was to the effect, -- that if I allowed the Spirit of God to be with him rather than with me, it was wonderful that I set my single judgment against the mind of the Spirit and of the whole Church of God; and that as for admitting into Christian communion one who held my doctrine, it had this absurdity, that while I was in such a state of belief, it was my duty to anathematize *them* as idolaters. -- Severe as was the shock given me by this letter, I wrote again most lovingly, humbly, and imploringly: for I still adored him, and could have given him my right hand or my right eye, -- anything but my conscience. I showed him that if it was a matter of action, I would submit; for I unfeignedly believed that he had more of the Spirit of God than I: but over my secret convictions I had no power. I was shut up to obey and believe God rather than man, and from the nature of the case, the profoundest respect for my brother's judgment could not in itself alter mine. As to the whole *Church* being against me, I did not know what that meant: I was willing to accept the Nicene Creed, and this I thought ought to be a sufficient defensive argument against the Church. His answer was decisive: -- he was exceedingly surprised at my recurring to mere ecclesiastical creeds, as though they could have the slightest weight; and he must insist on my acknowledging, that, in the two texts quoted, the word Father meant the Trinity, if I desired to be in any way recognized as holding the truth.
>
> The Father meant the Trinity!! For the first time I perceived, that so vehement a champion of the sufficiency of the Scripture, so staunch an opposer of Creeds and Churches, was wedded to an extra-Scriptural creed of his own, by which he tested the spiritual state of his brethren. I was in despair, and like a man thunderstruck. I had nothing more to say. Two more letters from the same hand I saw, the latter of which was, to threaten some new acquaintances who were kind to me, (persons wholly unknown to him,) that if they did not desist from sheltering me and break off intercourse, they should, as far as his influence went, themselves everywhere be cut off from Christian communion and recognition . . . [3]
>
> This was not my only reason, yet it was soon a sufficient and at last an overwhelming reason, against returning to the East. The pertinacity of the attacks made on me, and on all who dared to hold by me in a certain connection, showed that I could no longer be anything but a thorn in the side of my friends abroad; nay, I was unable to predict how they themselves might change towards me. The idea of a Christian Church propagating Christianity while divided against itself was ridiculous. Never indeed had I had the most remote idea, that my dear friends there had been united to me by agreement in intellectual propositions; nor could I yet believe it. I remembered a saying of the noble-hearted Groves: "Talk of loving me while I agree with them! Give me men that will love me when I differ from them and contradict them: those will be the men to build up a true Church." I asked myself, --was I then possibly different from all? With me, -- and, as I had thought, with all my spiritual friends, -- intellectual dogma was not the test of spirituality. A hundred times over had I heard the Irish clergyman emphatically enunciate the contrary. [4] Nothing was clearer in his preaching, talking, and writing, than that salvation was a present real experienced fact; a saving of the soul from the dominion of baser desires, and an inward union of it in love and homage to Christ, who, as the center of

1. W. Robbins, *The Newman Brothers*, p. 40.

2. ". . . I did not accept the Sibboleth, Jesus is Jehovah . . .," F. W. Newman, *Contributions Chiefly to the Early History of the Late Cardinal Newman*, p. 40.

3. {This amounts to a confirmation that in 1833, JND and others acted on the principle that fellowship with leaven leavens a Christian. In other words, fellowship with evil is viewed by God as complicity with it. This was practiced, then, long before the Bethesda division of 1848. Bethesda was complicit with those coming from B. W. Newton after his evil teaching of Christ's unspeakable distance from God came to light. This is thoroughly documented in vol. 2 in this series on JND.

Note that JND wrote the paper, *Separation from Evil is God's Principle of Unity* in 1846, not 1848.}

4. {Evidently F. W. Newman never realized that there is to be no fellowship with those holding fundamentally evil teaching. Note his testimony regarding A. N. Groves -- who supported Bethesda in 1848.}

> all perfection, glory and beauty, was the revelation of God to the heart. He who was thus saved could not help knowing that he was reconciled, pardoned, beloved; and therefore he rejoiced in God his Saviour: indeed, to imagine joy without this personal assurance and direct knowledge, was quite preposterous. But on the other hand, the soul thus spiritually minded has a keen sense of like qualities in others. It cannot but discern when another is tender in conscience, disinterested, forbearing, scornful of untruth and baseness, and esteeming nothing so much as the fruits of the Spirit: accordingly, John did not hesitate to say: "*We know* that we have passed from death until life, *because* we love the brethren." Our doctrine certainly had been, that the Church was the assembly of the saved, gathered by the vital attractions of God's Spirit; that in it no one was Lord or Teacher, but one was our Teacher, even Christ: that as long as we had no earthly bribes to tempt men to join us, there was not much cause to fear false brethren; for if we were heavenly minded, and these were earthly, they would soon dislike and shun us. Why should we need to sit in judgment and excommunicate them, except in the case of publicly scandalous conduct? [5]

The reader should have noticed that he never understood rightly what salvation was, and attributed nonsense to JND concerning this (as with the absurd claim that JND said, "The Father meant the Trinity!!"). Concerning F. W. Newman's defection from the faith, see *Collected Writings* 6:315-321. [6]

The following is cited from a paper printed in 1857, not readily available, showing that F. W. Newman was rejected as well as all holding communion with him.

> Mr. F. W. Newman began to slip from the truth; wrong thoughts about the person of the Lord Jesus were manifest in his teachings; defilement was entering the habitation of God! Godly jealousy was aroused, but what was to be done? Mr. Newman was then a "brother beloved" by many. How separate from him? But the honor of the Lord was in question, the purity of His House and the Church is "the pillar and stay of the truth." Therefore Mr. Newman was separated from. The body is one; the communion of the body, if existing at all, must be by the unbroken action of the Spirit. The Lord's Table is *one*, and in the breaking of bread saint is linked to saint in fellowship {see 1 Cor. 16:16, 17}. Hence, if Mr. Newman had broken bread at any table, every table was involved; for in principle there is but one Lord's Table (though for convenience and of necessity we meet in different places); where the Spirit *rules* it is "one bread," one cup, and all partake of that same bread, that same cup, as linked by the Spirit, since the Spirit is the power of fellowship.
>
> Brethren had acknowledged all this; but truth not practically exercised is often not really known, and God will have all tested in the souls of those who are brought near to Him. The Holy Ghost used Mr. Darby in this crisis (as He had before brought out much previously forgotten truth through him), and he said that not only could he have no fellowship with F. W. N., but he could not with any brother that received him! Saints were then walking in simplicity and power and freshness of truth, *therefore* they had spiritual perception to discern, and obedience to own what was of God. With the exception of a Baptist congregation, which had not then professed to own the presence of the Spirit, Mr. Newman was withdrawn from {in 1833} by all those with whom he had previously been in communion; whether in England or Ireland, all sorrowing over him, but not *so* pitying him as to break the unity of the Spirit and sacrificing the honor of the Lord Jesus to persist in maintaining fellowship with him because he was a "dear brother." Thus Satan was baffled, and peace was unbroken. In time, Mr. Newman's open infidelity justified the conduct of God's servant and of His saints, and made it manifest that it was *God the Holy Ghost* who had judged the evil by them. [7]

F. Gill [8] says that the Baptist congregation was "Muller and Craik's Bethesda Chapel at Bristol." The above quotation was written in the context of the 1848 Bethesda division. Bethesda had received persons coming from under the ministry of B. W. Newton after there was public knowledge of his evil doctrines concerning Christ's position of circumstantial distance from God. The above writer suggested substituting B. W. Newton's name for F. W. Newman (in the above citation) to see the issue clearly. Although Bethesda was not connected with the Plymouth assembly in 1833, it is instructive to note that Bethesda was dilatory concerning this evil. And what was A. N. Groves' attitude regarding JND's letters to F. W. Newman? A. N. Groves said:

> "Dear ----'s letter, which left on my mind the impression of a Jehu-like zeal which neither pitied nor spared, led me to write the brief letter which will, I hope, accompany this: some wished to have copies of it, and therefore I had it printed . . . Surely it does become us, surrounded by and eaten up with errors as we are, to touch those of our brother gently. I have to a certain extent found the Lord leading me in the way you so much desire, that is, to all Christians; and this, I think, without sacrificing the truth to any, though of course, bearing in a measure with their infirmities . . ." [9]

Arianism is hardly an infirmity! This letter regarding F. W. Newman shows a characteristic difference between JND and A. N. Groves and what the real bearing of the latter's principles was. He wanted to treat one espousing Arianism "gently."

If we tamper with evil, or if dilatory in judging it, we expose ourselves to being overtaken by evil, in holding evil or by remaining in fellowship with it. "A little leaven leavens the whole lump."

B. W. Newton had been tutored at Oxford.[10] In connection with the rejection of F. W. Newman, B. W. Newton, in his reminiscences plumed himself in these words:

> Darby made an attack on him most fiercely and all the Brethren were severe. I continued correspondence with him & he said I was the only one who treated him in a Christian way. For two years I pleaded with him -- bringing him to Micah 5:2, but found he would not submit to its authority. [11]

5. *Phases of Faith*, pp.35-36.
6. Also see Henry Rogers, *The Eclipse of Faith; or, a Visit to a Religious Sceptic*, Boston: Crosby, Nichols, and Co., third ed., 1853.
7. "Where am I, and Why am I There?" (1857).
8. *Matthew 18:20*, p. 67.
9. *Memoirs* . . ., p. 287 (April 5, 1834).
10. *Fry MS*, p. 300.
11. *Fry MS*, p. 252.

Appendix 2:

Was A. N. Groves "the Founder of the Brethren"?

Introduction

The Open Brethren scholar F. F. Bruce stated that:

> George Muller's brother-in-law, Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853), has claims to be regarded as the first of the "Open' Brethren." [12]
>
> Though not the founder of the movement (a distinction that probably belongs to A. N. Groves) . . . [13]

I concur with only the first statement above. Chapter 3.3 has shown that A. N. Groves was not "the founder of the movement." A. N. Groves was not there for that first breaking of bread at Fitzwillian Square nor had he suggested it; JND suggested that they break bread.

Andrew Miller's Evaluation

One of the Brethren's earliest visitors from a distance, whose name has become connected with their beginnings, was the late Mr. Anthony Norris Groves. From the scantiness of dates, even in his Memoirs, it is difficult to ascertain with certainty when he first met with the Brethren in Dublin, or how often. After doing our best by comparing the dates of letters, we believe the following to be substantially correct.

This dear devoted man was a successful dentist in Exeter; but from an early period of his life his heart had been fixed to go abroad as a missionary. The following conversation, as told by himself, shows a heart of almost ascetic devotion to its object. "Mr. Bickersteth," he says, "came down, and in our dining parlour at Exeter I related to him my circumstances. I told him I had offered myself to the society ten years ago; and that my whole desire was to do the Lord's will, and the greatest good to the church at large, but more especially to that object to whose interests I had pledged myself -- *the cause of missions*. But this, I said, may be done in two ways: first, *by giving one's means*; secondly, *by personal exertions*. In the first point of view I have an increasing professional income, and have this year received nearly *fifteen hundred pounds*, and dear Mrs. G., on the death of her father, will most probably have ten or twelve thousand pounds more; the whole of which, with my present views, will of course vanish, the moment we take the contemplated step. Mr. Bickersteth's answer was, "If you are called of the Lord to the work, money cannot be set against it; it is men whom the Lord sends, and He stands in need of men more than money." I thought his judgment a wise and holy one, and I do so to this day." {From *Memoirs of A. N. Groves*, p. 23}.

Although we have no date as to when this conversation took place, we gather from a letter to a friend that it was not later than March, 1827. Writing under date April 2nd, 1827, he says, "The death of Mrs. G.'s father, about three weeks ago, has rendered our path in some respects much easier; but it has put some of that deadly corrupter of the human heart -- money -- in our way, under circumstances we have no control over. Pray for us, therefore, that we may glorify Him with every farthing of it."

But as the Church Missionary Society required that all their missionaries should have a college education and be duly ordained to the ministry, Mr. G. had to give up his professional duties and turn his attention to the study of theology. It was not necessary, however, that he should reside in Dublin during his studies, but that he should appear at the university there two or three times a year for examination as to his attainments. It was during some of these periodical visits that he became acquainted with the Brethren. As a Christian he broke bread with them in Fitzwilliam Square, the meeting being at that time in existence. This was the extent of his connection with the young community. Indeed he never agreed with

12. *In Retrospect*, p. 315.

13. "John Nelson Darby," *The Evangelical Quarterly*, 1945, p.80. The myth that A. N. Groves is "the founder of the movement" has been propagated by other Open Brethren, past and present, as in the following books, for example: D. J. Beattie, *Brethren, the Story of a Great Recovery*, p. 7, ". . . the whole movement that Groves initiated"; G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 240, ". . . it was through him that the group of ministers and others at Dublin had commenced breaking bread"; F. A. Tatford, *That the World May Know: vol. 3, The Challenge of India*, p. 79; C. D. Cole, *Roots, Renewal and the Brethren*, p. 32, after speaking of those who had met with E. Cronin (1826, 1827) erroneously says, "A second group was forming around Groves and other local Dublin people"; E. H. Broadbent, *The Pilgrim Church*, p. 350, ". . . it was there, in 1829, that he {A. N. Groves} and others finally broke bread in the absence of an ordained minister. Those who shared those early times of fellowship included J. G. Bellett, E. Cronin, Lord Congleton, J. Parnell (J. Parnell became Lord Congleton) and, later, J. N. Darby"; K. and A. Linton, *"I Will Build My Church*," p. 8; H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 40; H. Groves, *Darbyism* . . ., p. 10.

> their ecclesiastical principles, nor the ground they had taken in separation from all the religious systems around them. In the year 1828 Mr. G. had a lengthy conversation with some of the Brethren on the subject of Missions and the Church, but as to the nature of the latter they could not agree. Mr. G. warmly contended that the tares were to grow in the church to the end, which the Brethren strongly resisted as unscriptural, and necessarily opposed to all wholesome discipline; "the field is the world," not the church.
>
> This was probably the last time they met previously to his sailing for Baghdad. During these visits to Dublin a great change had taken place in his mind as to the necessity of a college education, and of a ministerial ordination, for the work of the ministry. He abandoned his connection with the college, thought his preparations and visits to Dublin a waste of time, and recommended all missionaries going abroad to avoid the dictation of the cold formalities of a committee. Mr. Groves and his party sailed from Gravesend for Baghdad on the 12th of June, 1829, and arrived after a most perilous journey on the 6th of December.
>
> . . . In several hurried and inaccurate sketches of the origin of Brethren which have come before us, Mr. Groves has been spoken of as the one who first suggested the idea of coming together to break bread without the presence of a minister. From this alleged suggestion some have called him the "founder" of the Brethren, and some the "father"; but this conclusion is not at all borne out by facts. It is quite possible that some of the early Brethren may have benefitted by the remarks of Mr. Groves, and that he may have profited by his intercourse with them, especially as to the Establishment and ordination; but they had been meeting for worship and communion before Mr. Groves knew them, [14] and we are fully assured that he never had any real sympathy with the ground they had taken. [15]

Basis of "The Founder" Claim

There is a statement in *Memoir of the Late Anthony Norris Groves*, (p. 39) by his widow, [16] that seems to be utilized as the basis for the claim that he is the "founder of the movement."

> Miss Paget remembers the occasion on which one of the party, Mr. Bellett, a dear friend of Mr. Groves, said to her, "Groves has just been telling me, that it appeared to him from Scripture, that believers, meeting together as disciples of Christ, were free to break bread together, as their Lord had admonished them; and that, in as far as the practice of the apostles could be a guide, every Lord's day should be set apart for thus remembering the Lord's death, and obeying His parting command." This suggestion of Mr. Groves was immediately carried out by himself and his friends in Dublin.

Judging by what we have seen concerning the beginnings, this last sentence, a comment by his widow, is false. This false statement seems to be the authority for regarding him as the "founder of the movement" and it appears to be believed by many. [17] W. Kelly speaks of:

> . . . the absurdity of Mr. A. N. Groves being a "founder"! (a very pardonable idea in the attached members of his own family, and especially in such as never go beyond their crude thoughts) . . ." [18]

A. N. Groves' widow remarked:

> It will be seen, by his own narrative, how he first found for himself, and mentioned to his dear friend, Mr. B. {Bellett}, the liberty they had in Christ, to minister the word of God to others, without any warrant beyond the scripture rule, "If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth." 1 Pet. 4:2. On this ground it was that Mr. B., as well as others, have spoken of Mr. Groves as the father of these principles to their minds. [19]

A. N. Groves' Principles of Fellowship

HIS PRINCIPLE STATED

Concerning the suggestion to J. G. Bellett (which A. N. Groves did not immediately act on with some friends -- who rather acted on JND's proposal), W. Kelly said that what this meant was:

> only claiming licence to act freely, but not so as to reject the false at all. [20]

This is seen in the following, concerning A. N. Groves:

> The views that he, to his death, so *strongly* held, both of the entire unity of the family of God and their liberty to unite together in worship, were, he often said, first opened to him, while searching the scriptures in Dublin. After one of their happy prayer-meetings, already mentioned, it was asked by one of the party, "Are there no principles in the word of God, which would unite all believers in worship, whatever might be their various views or attainments in the divine life?" Mr. Groves replied, "Yes, there are: **we are evidently called to know nothing among our fellow-Christians, but this one fact -- Do they belong to Christ? Has Christ received them? then may we receive them, to the glory of God."** {emphasis mine} To what happy results would these simple truths lead, among God's people. Even where they did not overthrow any mere human systems, they would help forward fellowship and intercourse among all Christians. [21]

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14. {Perhaps it would be better to say "before he knew them *all*." It appears that he knew J. G. Bellett before the breaking of bread began at JND's suggestion. Those who so met with JND were certainly breaking bread before A. N. Groves broke bread with them.}

15. *The Brethren* . . . pp. 22-25.

16. His first wife died on his first missionary journey. He remarried on April 25, 1835 (p. 356). His widow, who published the memoir, was not married to him at the time she alleges he began breaking bread.

17. See, for example, D. J. Beattie, *Brethren, the Story of a Great Recovery*, pp. 6,7; E. H. Broadbent, *The Pilgrim Church*, p. 350; G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 124; Wm. Hoste, "Rejudging the Question," p. 15. The above were with Open Brethren. W. W. Conradd has recently written:

> This they did immediately in Bellett's home (*Family Matters*, p. 10).

C. E. Bass, *Backgrounds of Dispensationalism*, p. 66, wrote, "This memorable suggestion seems to have laid the foundation of Brethrenism. The chief members of the group were Groves, Bellett, Francis Hutchinson, and Edward Cronin." -- and cites Mrs. Groves for his authority. Note how A. N. Groves has been substituted for J. N. Darby. We can see from this and note 532 how easy it is to manufacture history.

18. *The Bible Treasury* 14:284, note.

19. *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

20. W. Kelly's Annotations to W. B. Neatby's *History of the Brethren*, p. 12.

21. *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

What is emphasized must necessarily lead to indifference to evil. It omits separation from, and exclusion of, those in fellowship with evil. It also includes rejection of what some Christians call "secondary separation." Reception involves more than the fact that a person is a Christian. Here at the start we see an erroneous notion of A. N. Groves to which he steadily adhered. This notion indicates one of the streams of thought that the Lord brought to a test in the 1847-1849 troubles at Plymouth and Bethesda.

There existed, then, divergent views of fellowship. Recall JND's letter to Plymouth in 1832:

> My heart is with you, dear brethren, while you walk in order, and therefore was your letter such a comfort. [22]

The views of JND included that a Christian must be a "consistent Christian," [23] walking in holiness. For example, if a Christian came from a place where a teacher of fundamentally evil doctrine was tolerated, such a Christian was not to be received any more than the teacher himself. (You will recall that JND took a firm stand in the case of F. W. Newman, in 1833, and that the various meetings also refused F. W. Newman. See Appendix 1.)

THE "PROPHETIC LETTER"

In the Bethesda controversy (1848/1849) A. N. Groves was an ardent defender of Bethesda and its principle of fellowship, namely that association with leaven does not in itself leaven a person or a congregation. [24]

In 1836 he wrote a letter to JND which has been much publicized by followers of the Bethesda principle and it has been called a "prophetic letter" because it is alleged to show where JND's principles were leading and going astray. That letter rather shows where A. N. Groves' principles were leading. I shall cite only that part which an admirer of A. N. Groves deemed sufficient to illustrate his principles:

> We were free, within the limits of the truth, to share with them in *part*, though we could not in *all*, their services. In fact, as we received them for the life, we would not *reject* them for their systems, or refuse to recognize any *part* of their systems, because we disallowed much. . . . Was not the principle we laid down as to separation from all existing bodies at the outset, this: that we felt ourselves bound to separate from all individuals and systems, *so far* as they required us to do what our consciences would not allow, or restrained us from doing what our consciences required, and no further? And were we not as free to join and act with any individual, or body of individuals, as they were free *not* to require us to do what our consciences did *not* allow, or prevent our doing what they did? and in this freedom did we not feel brethren should *not* force liberty on those who were bound, nor withhold freedom from those who were free?
>
> Did we not feel constrained to follow the apostolic rule of *not judging other men's consciences*, as to liberty, by our own; remembering it is written, "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth; seeing that God hath received" both the one and the other? Now it is one of these two grounds; their preventing me from, or demanding from me, other than the Lord demands, that divides me in *a measure* from every system; as my *own proper* duty to God, rather than as witnessing against THEIR evils. As any system is in its provision narrower or wider than the truth, I either stop short, or go beyond its provisions, but I would INFINITELY RATHER BEAR with *all their evils*, than SEPARATE FROM THEIR GOOD. These were the *then* principles of our separation and intercommunion. [25]

W. B. Neatby gives a more extensive quotation, but does not give the last two sentences of this citation. Interestingly, neither did H. A. Ironside. Were they ashamed of it? Rex A. Koivisto certainly endorsed it. [26]

"These were prophetic utterances," said J. Kennedy. [27] Yes, prophetic of the shameful course of Bethesda (1848) and the shame of those that endorse these things.

A. N. Groves' words, "I would infinitely rather bear with all their evils, than separate from their good," says F. R. Coad, summarizes his position, using "evil" in "relation to theological opinions [28] and ecclesiastical practices." Since he says that this "letter is one of the most perceptive documents of the movement," [29] it appears that he sanctions such notions. Indeed, T. C. F. Stunt, in a sympathetic review of F. R. Coad's book, stated:

> Mr. Coad's account begins with Groves and his generous quest for a truly Biblical unity, and in many ways it is his noble vision which permeates the whole book. The failure of mere separatism was recognized very early by Groves and Mr. Coad's criticism is clearly similar. [30]

Concerning F. R. Coad's view of *separation from evil*, which he learned from A. N. Groves, it appears to be a non-existent separation:

> To exhort Christians to separate from evil was excellent, until they took the outrageous step of attaching the word to matters of sincere conviction. To encourage men to believe that this separation could be achieved by a change in their church associations was to overlook the fact that not one of us can separate, ultimately, from the real roots of evil, for evil is within us. [31]

This is as concise a statement of Groves-ism and Bethesda-ism as could be desired. It means that if an assembly of Christians knowingly insists on breaking bread with a fornicator, it is no reason to separate ecclesiastically. I have dealt with such evil

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22. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:10.

23. G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 107, directed attention to the *Christian Witness*, 1837 (really, 1834, first ed.), p. 306, where we read:

> . . . a credible profession of faith in the Lamb, and a consistent conversation is all we have a right to require . . ."

Rather than the looseness he desires to find, I see a guard in the words "consistent conversation." (My table of contents has B. W. N. {Newton} written alongside the title of the article.)

24. Some fundamentalists discuss this question under the name "secondary separation."

25. Cited by G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 112. The letter is found in the *Memoirs* . . ., pp. 538-543. It is cited in full by E. K. Groves, *Bethesda Family Matters*, Appendix.

26. *One Lord, One Faith*, p. 221.

27. *The Torch of the Testimony*, p. 227.

28. {Do not be deceived by this expression. Bethesda showed what it really means. See Chapter 9.10 in *Precious Truths* . . ., vol. 2.}

29. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 122.

30. *The Harvester*, May 1968, p. 78.

31. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 119 (1968).

notions at some length elsewhere. [32] This is what Bethesda, 1848 acted on in receiving persons coming from under the teaching of B. W. Newton, while two of the ten principal persons who signed the "Letter of the Ten" enunciating justification for such reception were themselves involved in B. W. Newton's evil doctrines. These facts are amply documented in Vol. 2. Bethesda's evil conduct is a public exposition of the issue. The principle is at the foundation of the formation of Open-Brethren in 1848 when Bethesda corporately, publically took this ground.

As others have done, James Patrick Callahan presents the matter as the difference in practice being based on Life or on Light. [33] One has but to read the letters of JND on reception and he will quickly see the true character of Dr. Callahan's self-serving characterization. The truth is that the conflict was, and is, between life and *life-and-holiness*. Dr. Callahan wrote:

> Groves advocated a restorationist hope for the contemporary church, and associated this hope with the Brethren's ecclesial piety; but Darby argued against Grove's hopefulness, against the restoration of the apostolic church, and did so with an appeal to ecclesial piety. [34]

Yes, A. N. Groves (as do all Open Brethren) denied the ruin of the church on earth, viewed in responsible testimony. Perhaps by "ecclesial piety" he refers to the issue of separation from evil. Let us be clear: JND held to separation from moral and doctrinal evil, and from those fellowshiping with such evil -- such as some Baptists who rightly approve of "secondary separation." The Bethesda matter (1848) gave a public exposition of these contrary principles; and there, ANG was on one side and JND on the other. Regarding evil, the one principle is, in reality, inclusivist and the other exclusivist. Bethesda, 1848, which A. N. Groves supported, gave a practical outworking of ANG's "ecclesial piety" which exhibited *ecclesial malfeasance*.

W. B. Neatby's opinion of ANG's 1836 letter was:

> this letter is marked by no ordinary combination of faithfulness, delicacy, and large heartedness. [35]

G. H. Lang says that "Groves' statement to Darby in the 1836 letter is distinct and was never questioned." [36]

The letter shows that in 1836 JND and A. N. Groves held opposed thoughts; but A. N. Groves claims his are the original ones. He wrote, ". . . but I thought I knew *yours*, at least your original ones." He did not know them. JND's thoughts were formed, in part, by the fact of the fall and the ruin of the church viewed in responsible testimony, truths rejected by A. N. Groves.

Concerning A. N. Groves, W. Kelly remarked:

> The late Mr. Groves went along with Bethesda warmly. This was to be expected from one whose principle it was, if principle it can be called, to bear with all the evils of Christians rather than separate from their good (p. 38). *Neither* of these things, it is evident, ought to be done by the believer, nor ever was accepted by "Brethren." -- It should be known also, that Mr. G., though often breaking bread with "Brethren," because of their receiving all Christians, notoriously *never* agreed with their principles; as I am informed by those who took that position from the very first, and adhere to it unswervingly still. The effect of his own peculiar theory of universal association was practically to leave him universally "unattached." And it is this absence of a fixed, holy, divine principle in matters ecclesiastical, which is the chief point of sympathy between him and you. [37]

A. N. Groves's "prophetic letter" was criticized by R. Beacon in *The Bible Treasury* 16:366-368, and by W. Kelly in *The Bible Treasury* 13:361-363. W. Kelly therein wrote:

> Mr. Groves seems no bad witness, however, of his mistake as to Brethren; for *he* was welcome, though *first and last* he materially differed from them. He never recognized the assembly, the body of Christ, as you know Brethren do, though in no way forcing it on or from a single member of Christ, who is received simply and solely in His name. He never understood the baptism of the Holy Spirit as distinct from the new birth, nor saw that while *this* {new birth} is common to all believers from Abel (or Adam) downwards, *that* is special to God's dealing in sovereign grace since redemption and Christ's going on high (St. John 14, 16, Acts 1, 2, 1 Cor. 12, &c.). Mr. Groves used to cite (as you may see in his Memoir) Matt. 13:30, in a way which destroys ecclesiastical purity and annuls discipline, just as Papists did against Protestants, but rejected by Chillingworth, &c. before us. So far from being a "chief originator" therefore, he was always especially opposed to those who

32. *An Exposition of 2 John with Some Comments on Gal. 5:9 and Rev. 2, 3;*
An Exposition of 2 Timothy 2:16-26, Purging Oneself from Evil associations and Its Consequences;
1 Cor. 5, Clearing the Assembly of Leaven;
Carefulness in Reception;
New Testament Directions for Correction, Discipline, and Fellowship;
The Christian, the Assembly, and Leaven;
all available from Present Truth Publishers.

33. *Primitivist Piety, The Ecclesiology of the Early Plymouth Brethren*, p. 156ff.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 157

35. *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

36. *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 112. H. H. Rowdon thinks JND issued his pamphlet "Separation from Evil God's Principle of Unity" (*Collected Writings*, vol. 1) in answer to A. N. Groves' "prophetic letter" (*The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 292). F. R. Coad is not sure if JND issued it first and A. N. Groves replied, or *vice versa* (*A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 122). R. Nelson stated that it was issued during Oct. 1846 ("Protest Against the Proceedings of Mr. John N. Darby," p. 3). W. Kelly stated concerning it, ". . . a tract written by Mr. Darby in view of the Evangelical Alliance" (*God's Principle of Unity*, p. 21, new ed.). Whether written in 1836 or 1846, A. N. Groves would have strongly disapproved, which, as a matter of fact, he did, (*Memoir* . . ., p. 483). W. Kelly continued:

> But if separation from evil be the only principle on which the unity of a holy God can be conceived to be carried out in an evil world, and if He has sent down the Holy Ghost to be the efficient agent of it, uniting us to Christ on high, I need not occupy myself with your next error, the imputing of "sad consequences" to a holy principle. It is false that the maintenance of unity according to holiness "leads to separation between true brethren." It does suppose the judgment, in the power of the Spirit and by the Word, of those who sin; but this is a blessed, not a sad, consequence, and the direct command of God. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." Separation from evil is here most unquestionably laid down as God's principle of unity: and in holiness is that unity to be guarded practically at any cost. Otherwise all degenerates into the mystery of iniquity, and a form of godliness denying the power. "From such," says the Spirit of God, "turn away."

37. W. Kelly, *God's Principle of Unity*, p. 22.

affirm that, while grace is the power, separation from evil is the necessary and spiritual principle of unity according to God. He was a unit, but never understood unity.

Mr. Groves was a devoted man, of a practical turn of mind, confused and incapable of analysis, and so he thought that separation from evil, which is another way of expressing holiness, was made by us *the power and aim* of unity, instead of being (as it must be) *its principle*, if God had to do with it. Attractive grace in Christ, the one object and center, is the power in the energy of the Spirit. Yet, though differing as to this from us, and finding out that there was a difference which he never discerned truly, either where or how it lay, he went along with Brethren who never thought of troubling him, till he went off himself with his brother-in-law {George Muller} in the unhappy Plymouth-Bethesda rupture.

But, apart from himself, what can be less intelligent than these statements of Mr. Groves'? *Not* life, as he says, *nor* light, as he erroneously imputed to us, is the bond, but *the one Spirit*, who has baptized us, whatever we might have been before, into one body. This is not a slight distinction, but fundamental. And therefore, while striving (I trust) as much as Mr. Groves to maintain brotherly love, and fully believing in God's gracious action by His servants in all orthodox denominations, I still humbly but firmly maintain that the very principle of different denominations is dead opposed to the "one body and one Spirit" of scripture; and scripture cannot be broken. The sanction of distinct communions is irreconcilable with God's word. That is the point of Mr. Groves' difference from Brethren, who stand decidedly for *the rule the Lord constitutes* with which the Spirit's order (though *I* prefer calling it His action) ought to coincide; which I feel assured is the simple truth on this subject, as revealed in the word, the only safeguard against all delusions.

I do not differ from the late Mr. Groves in abhorrence of narrow-minded arrogance and bigoted assumption, which are altogether at variance with the only becoming ways of the Christian, the lowliness and meekness and long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, in which we are called to walk together, as individually. Nor do I deny the grave occasion *we* (Brethren I mean) have given by our grievous failures in times of controversial struggle. But this is due, not to a mistaken principle, but to our state of unjudged carnality and to worldly love of party success, and to other humiliating evils inadequately watched against, which have too often tarnished the testimony of Christ in our midst. But Mr. Groves is wholly mistaken if he supposes that his laxity as to Christendom even admits of anything like the same horror of schism, of heresy, or any such sin against Christ and the church, as those brethren must feel who seize the body of Christ according to the written word as he never did.

This review shows the doctrine of A. N. Groves with respect to catholic fellowship and his influence respecting this upon H. Craik and G. Muller of Bethesda Chapel, Bristol. And this helps explain the so-called *Letter of the Ten*, a statement (in 1848) of principles upon which Bethesda acted with respect to those received from fellowship with B. W. Newton after his blasphemies concerning Christ's person came to light. Another wrote:

And now another testimony of Mr. Craik, and from Henry Groves' book once more (p. 46), which is in line with the principles of the Memoir: "Should it turn out that Mr. Newton's errors are only those of a rash speculative intellectualist, who is yet sound at heart and seeking to honor Christ, it will be no cause of regret that I have refused to have fellowship with those [38] who have been seeking to crush rather than to recover him; if, on the other hand, it should appear that, after all his long course of service he is really an enemy to the cross of Christ, it will be no cause of regret that I have been rather too slow to believe so terrible a charge!" Now the charge was not as to Newton's state of soul, but his positive teaching. Yet a course of conduct is adopted, and the evil is allowed to spread, and division is accomplished, and why? Just because -- and in full accord, note, with what A. N. Groves taught of "catholic fellowship" -- the leaders of Bethesda have charitable hopes as to Mr. Newton's state of soul. A strange catholicity this . . . [39]

This matter of considering the heart instead of the conduct is a strong echo of A. N. Groves' words in a letter "On the Principles of Union and Communion in the Church of Christ" wherein he wrote:

Should it be asked what are to be done with errors? are they not a bar to communion? No; unless they bar Christ from the temple of the erring brother's heart. While we hope Christ lingers, let us linger . . . [40]

That is clear: whatever the evil be, as long as ANG thought he could regard the evil doer as a Christian . . .

A. N. Groves' 1836 letter to JND *was* prophetic, prophetic of how he and Bethesda would tolerate the evils of Christians. Look at the above quotation again; and observe that it means that unless you are prepared to say that a person who held evil doctrine was not a Christian at all, "let us linger" with such.

A. N. Groves rejected the idea of the fall/ruin of the church as viewed in responsible testimony, which was held by JND already in 1827. Open Brethren do not accept this teaching either, with perhaps a few inconsistent exceptions.

SEPARATION FROM EVIL UNTO THE LORD

There is something that A. N. Groves wrote, in 1834, which helps us to understand his thoughts.

. . . Yet as to our liberty in Christ to worship with any congregation under heaven where He manifests himself to bless and to save, can there be in any Christian mind a doubt? If my Lord should say to me, in any congregation of the almost unnumbered sections of the Church, "What dost thou here?" I would reply, "Seeing Thou wert here to save and sanctify, I felt it safe to be with Thee." If He again said, as perhaps He may among most of us, "Didst thou not see abominations here, an admixture of that which was unscriptural, and the absence of that which was scriptural, and in some points error, at least in your judgment?" my answer would be, "Yea, Lord, but I dared not call that place unholy where Thou wert present to bless, nor by refusing communion in worship reject those as unholy whom Thou hadst by Thy saving power evidently sanctified and set apart for Thine own." Our reason for rejecting the congregations of apostate bodies is, that Christ doth not manifest Himself among them in their public character, though He may save some

38. {Well! So much for his saying that he would rather bear with their evils than separate from their good.}
39. Quoted in N. Noel, *Op. Cit.*, 1:371, 372.
40. *Memoir* . . ., p. 534.

> individuals as brands plucked from the burning. To these churches we cry, standing on the outside, "Come out of her, my people, come out of her." Among the others we stand, as the Son of Man, or rather with Him, *in the midst* of the seven golden candlesticks (Revelation 1:13), telling them to remember their first love, first purity, and first work in all holy doctrine and discipline, lest the Lord take away their candlesticks; [41] but we would rather linger, in hope that the impending judgment may be stayed, or some yet repent, than say, like Edom, in the day of Judah's sorrows, "Down with her, down with her, even to the ground." (See also Obadiah 10-14).
>
> To the question, Are we not countenancing error by this plan? our answer is, that if we must appear to countenance error, or discountenance brotherly love, and the visible union of the Church of God, we prefer the former, hoping that our lives and our tongues may be allowed by the Lord so intelligibly to speak that at last our righteousness shall be allowed to appear; but if not, still we may feel we have chosen the better part, since we tarried only for our Lord's departure; and as the candlestick retired, and its light vanished, we pronounce our sad farewell; but so long as Christ dwells in an individual, or walks in the midst of a congregation, blessing the ministrations to the conversion and edification of souls, we dare not denounce and formally withdraw from either, for fear of the awful sin of schism, of sin against Christ and His mystical body. [42]

The occasion of writing this was JND's dealing with F. W. Newman and his Arianism (discussed in Appendix 1). A. N. Groves' attitude toward evil was shown in a letter of his, dated April 5, 1834 (Quoted in Appendix 1).

These attitudes, then, underlie his 1836 "prophetic letter" to JND. And such indifference to what is due to Christ came to a public issue in 1848 when Bethesda, in the *Letter of the Ten*, endorsed by the congregation, took a public stand on denying that association with evil defiles.

Henry Groves, a son of A. N. Groves, approvingly citing someone concerning Lord Congleton (formerly J. Parnell), who strenuously resisted JND in the Plymouth matter, wrote:

> . . . he held firmly that, in order to justify excommunication, evil doctrine must be so held as to constitute the party either directly or indirectly a propagator of it. [43]

Evil doctrine is leaven (Gal. 5:9). Lord Congleton, as we can see, did not approve of excommunication for simply holding evil doctrine. Thus, 'private leaven' is tolerable! But the Judge does not approve of 'holding' such things (Rev. 2:14).

Now let us hear A. N. Groves' admirer, F. R. Coad:

> In the Plymouth teachers on the one hand and in Groves on the other, we have then two sharply contrasted positions. The Plymouth leaders gave a simple and easily-grasped call to separate from other churches: but their teaching suffered from two serious weaknesses. The first was that while it built upon a generalized and extreme image of existing church organizations, it overlooked the individual facts. It was easy for those early Plymouth leaders to show that existing church structures were not compatible with the Church depicted in the New Testament. It was easy also for them to lay their finger upon anomalies and corruptions within the historic churches. From that it was but a short step to the call to separate from apostasy, a word of frightening implications which they developed to the full. But, in the letter from which we have quoted, Groves laid his finger upon the weakness of this position. It ignored the fact that God *did* still work within those structures, and that men and women were still brought within them to a personal experience of God and to acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ. So Groves's definition of apostasy was a very different one. For Groves, apostasy existed only when Christ Himself had withdrawn: "the apostate churches, where no souls are converted under the public ministrations," where "Christ doth not manifest Himself among them in their public character."
>
> The Plymouth conception was dogmatic and, ironically, attached determining importance to the very organizational structures which its exponents rejected. Groves also had rejected those structures -- but his conception was pragmatic, and emphasized the immediate spiritual realities of the congregation. Moreover, Groves's definition was capable of a salutary turn: it could be applied as rigorously to each of their own congregations as to any of those of the historic bodies.
>
> This brings us to the second weakness of the Plymouth conception. It was essentially outward-looking, and could only lead to growing estrangement and hostility. Like all generalizations, it created a bogey in people's minds, which made them incapable of giving due weight to particular facts. To exhort Christians to separate from evil was excellent, until they took the outrageous step of attaching the word to matters of sincere conviction. [44] To encourage men to believe that this separation could be achieved by a change in their church associations was to overlook the fact that not one of us can separate, ultimately, from the real roots of evil, for evil is within us. [45]

Here we find the "Plymouth conception" condemned. Consider that condemnation in connection with the following from a history by another of the Open Brethren, D. J. Beattie. (Keep in mind that A. N. Groves left England for a missionary journey on June 12, 1829.)

> While Groves was pursuing his labors in other lands, the feeble light that had been kindled ere he left these shores [46] had not been permitted to die out. . . . The friends he had left behind in Ireland were steadily moving along lines propounded by Groves . . . [47]
>
> Suffice it to say that the principles of Christians called Open Brethren are those originally taught and maintained by the early brethren in Plymouth; from which Darby and consequently his followers departed, if not previously, certainly in 1848. [48]

Of those who composed the original meeting in December

41. {We ought to go to Paul's epistles to learn about the unity and fellowship of the church on earth, not Rev. 2 and 3 where Christ has taken the position of Judge consequent upon the fall and ruin of the church viewed in responsible testimony.}
42. *Memoir* . . ., pp. 534, 535 (Appendix D). These sentiments are approved by G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 122.
43. *Memoir of Lord Congleton*, p. 92.
44. {Apparently Mr. Coad will not separate from one who has a "sincere conviction" that Christ could have sinned, or was not Son eternally, etc.}
45. F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, pp. 119,120.
46. This is the false claim that A. N. Groves was "the founder of the movement."
47. *Brethren, the Story of a Great Recovery*, p. 10.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

1827, F. Hutchinson had died before 1848. The other three, J. G. Bellett, J. N. Darby, and E. Cronin, rejected Bethesda in 1848 (which acted on A. N. Groves' type principles), the latter person not permitting A. N. Groves to enter his house in view of his complicity with the evil of Bethesda and the papers that he wrote. *They* hardly had moved "along lines propounded by A. N. Groves"!

And here is another oft repeated myth, that JND changed his principles. [49] In contradiction to the thrust of F. R. Coad's remarks about "the early brethren at Plymouth," JND is even put in opposition to them. The truth is that A. N. Groves, who broke bread some time after the beginning, had principles that differed from JND from the true start, as well as differing from "the early brethren at Plymouth." Eventually A. N. Groves' ideas found a congenial home and expression *ecclesiastically* at Bethesda Chapel, Bristol, where it came to an issue in 1848.

DO A. N. GROVES' PRINCIPLES OF FELLOWSHIP HONOR CHRIST?

The following quotation has a direct bearing upon F. R. Coad's principles:

> All G's talk about life and accepting the good he sees in others, and not witnessing against evil, is nothing less than a plea for sin. It was bad enough to make light of ecclesiastical error in the establishment or dissent; it is far worse to justify those who, after dissociating themselves from human system, would form another and far more evil union, where Christ may be dishonored, and His glory annulled in order to keep up a human idea of brotherhood with bigger numbers, and with more or less sanction of the denominations, or "churches" as G. regards them. For he never knew what God's church is.
>
> Many expressions of desire for christian fellowship unshackled by peculiar doctrine, which seem to flow out from a heart enlarged by love to all saints, are found here at the expense of Christ's honor, and the glory of His Person. For the writer's party in the hour of trial failed to give Christ His true place (as indeed is the evil principle of this letter), and would receive in joint-fellowship those who do and those who do not regard it as of paramount importance. Now without it, as a fundamental confession, Christianity is nothing but a delusion. The immense truth -- the divine glory and the sinless humanity of Christ's Person -- is the *sine qua non* of God's glory in redemption. To this truth of Christ's Person the admirers of this letter have proved indifferent. [50]

A. N. GROVES, G. MULLER AND H. CRAIK

A. N. Groves' principles of fellowship found a congenial home at Bethesda Chapel. The two principal men at Bethesda Chapel were Henry Craik and George Muller (celebrated for the famous orphanages at Ashley Down). What was their connection with A. N. Groves? Henry Groves, a son of A. N. Groves, wrote:

> . . . It is interesting to trace the early connection between these men of God, who were subsequently to be united in the flesh, as well as in the Lord, and who were to stand together as helpers in the conflict of 1848, of which we are about to write. Of Mr. Craik it may be well just to observe that he had been between the years 1826 and 1828 in Exeter, under the roof of Mr. Groves, at the time when the mind of the latter was exercised about entering the ministry of the "Church of England," and which he was obliged to give up as the Lord had revealed to him the real character of Christian ministry, and the true grounds of Christian fellowship. These truths Mr. Groves, feeling deeply the importance of, sought to impress on the minds of those over whom he had influence; so that, as Mr. Craik said to the writer, "it was not at St. Andrew's, it was not at Plymouth, it was at Exeter that the Lord taught me those lessons of dependence on Himself and of catholic fellowship, which I have sought to carry out." On these points Mr. Muller and Mr. Craik were fully in harmony, and which, through upwards of thirty-six years, till the lamented death of the latter, they labored together to maintain. [51]

Another Open Brethren writer, G. H. Lang, told us about G. Muller:

> On October 7th next year, 1830, Mr. Muller married Mary Groves, A. N. Groves' sister, and in 1835 we find him accompanying Groves on a tour in Germany.
>
> It therefore seems clear that the river of George Muller's faith took its rise from the spring of A. N. Groves' faith; and if the latter had done nothing more than inspire and give direction to the faith of George Muller this alone would have been a memorable service to the cause and church of God. But he did, or rather God did through him, very much more. For He made him a rare saint and a brave and inspiring pioneer in matters spiritual, whose teaching and example have affected, directly and indirectly, the whole church of God for a hundred years, and the spread of the gospel over vast areas of the earth. In simple fact he was one of the most influential men of the nineteenth century. [52]

H. H. Rowdon tells how "Muller and Craik . . . followed one of the two traditions formed in the development of the Brethren movement." [53] The attitude of these two brethren (traced to A. N. Groves) he calls "the authentic 'Open' Brethren position which is still capable of providing a valid evangelical ecumenical perspective." [54]

Bethesda Chapel, Bristol, where G. Muller and H. Craik were principal leaders, was the place where A. N. Groves felt most at home. His *Memoir* says:

> It was on the 20th of March, 1848, that Mr. Groves landed in England, and joined his wife in Bristol, where he had ever experienced more sympathy and fellowship than elsewhere . . . He died in his brother-in-law's {G. Muller's} house. [55]

He was there and helped support his principles enshrined in the conduct of Bethesda in 1848/1849. His conduct explains what he meant by infinitely rather bearing their evils.

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49. Eventually as infidelity made increasing inroads among the denominations, reception was more restricted by those called "exclusives" because they refused those coming from leavened communions. This was just the issue in 1848.

50. *The Bible Treasury* 16:367. Read the whole article.

51. *Darbyism* . . ., pp. 26, 27.

52. *Anthony Norris Groves*, pp. 13,14.

53. *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 121; cp. p. 292.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 293.

55. *Memoirs* . . ., p. 506.

Appendix 3:

Further Evidence that B. W. Newton Continued to Teach His Evil Doctrine of Christ's "Unspeakable Circumstantial Distance from God"

B. W. Newton

S. P. Tregelles

B. W. Newton's Evil Teaching

Vol. 2 in this series has amply documented that B. W. Newton (BWN) continued to teach his evil doctrine concerning Christ after the 1847 exposure of it. We even found in the Fry manuscripts (Fry MS) that he said he continued to teach it, but in a modified form. Yet Open Brethren, and some others, claim that he retracted everything, and we saw the absurdity of such a claim. Since the publication of vol. 2, a letter of BWN, put in a book in 1896 (written late in his life) in order to show his soundness in the faith, shows that he was still propagating this fundamentally evil teaching. Vol. 2 showed that BWN himself was the author of the way of stating his teaching: Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God." So, of course, Christ had to work Himself to a place where God could meet Him, as BWN put it. The fullest expression of his teaching in this regard is, of course, when he was secretly spreading this teaching before J. L. Harris brought it to light in 1847. Concerning BWN's "retraction," it involved one point only. And this "retraction" of one point is seized on by palliators of evil to attempt to clear the name of BWN and make J. N. Darby out to be a terrible person. These two things, it has been noticed in the past, always go together.

Now let us examine part of his letter of his written in 1896 to W. Lancelot Holland, which was published in his work, *The "Archbishop" of Canterbury and "Modern" Christianity*, London: Lucas Collins, 1898. The defense of BWN appears on pp. 195-202 and contains the usual derogation of those who resisted BWN; and W. L. Holland, of course, lauds BWN's soundness doctrinally. Among the things BWN wrote to W. L. Holland is this; and notice BWN's characteristic disarming sentences in what is quoted:

> What careful distinction there should be made between the place of unalterable perfectness before the Father, held by the Lord Jesus personally as the Son in the Father's bosom above, and the place that He assumed circumstantially when, by taking flesh upon Himself, He descended into this lost world to be *officially* perfected through sufferings as the Captain of salvation. *Personally His moral nearness to the Father never ceased;* but, circumstantially, how different His place in them; anger at Bethlehem; His refuge in Egypt ; His tarriance in Nazareth; His rejection in Jerusalem; His place in Gethsemane; and, when bruised under the wrath of God, on the cursed tree! Circumstantially, what could be more different than the place of light and love that pertained to Him above, and that in which He voluntarily placed

> Himself as the obedient Son and Servant in the earth, that He might through sufferings work out the salvation of God's people. Did He not, from unspeakable *circumstantial* distance from God, but in *essential moral nearness* to Him, work back His way through all the appointed sufferings till God could meet Him as having finished the appointed work, and SO glorify Him? This I believe, and this I have written, and this I maintain. I have written that God could not meet Christ *as having finished His appointed work* until He had finished it, which is a truism. But year after year my words have been quoted *omitting* the words 'as having finished His appointed work,' and I have been represented as having said that God could not have met Christ because of the *moral* distance in which Christ was from God, whereas my contention is, and *ever has been,* that Christ *never was,* and *never could be,* in any moral distance from God at all.
>
> Circumstantial distance in which He was, and from which He worked back His tribulated way to God, was a part of sacrificial obedient suffering, apart from which none could have been saved, and whereby glory unspeakable redounds to God. Refuse to distinguish between circumstantial and personal condition, and close your ear for instruction for ever.
>
> I am not perfect, nor unblameable, but I am not a heretic, and my sole desire is to maintain that which the God of Holiness and of Truth has declared.

It was William Trotter who, in 1857, wrote that if one wanted to know what BWN really meant, he had but to read BWN's papers when he freely expressed his meaning just before he was exposed as the teacher of evil doctrine concerning Christ. The doctrine of ***Christ's unspeakable circumstantial distance from God*** is an evil teaching, and while BWN did not refer to it exactly that way before he was exposed in 1847, that was indeed his teaching before the division and afterwards, and lo, here it is in 1896. And those sound in the faith are called the evil ones rather than the guilty BWN. Those involved in wickedness generally reverse matters and here is another example. The truth is that the distinction between Christ's *moral nearness* to God and His alleged *unspeakable circumstantial distance* from God, before the cross, is a figment, an impossibility -- and a slanderous, evil assertion, the source of which is the Enemy of the Lord Jesus. The history of this is thoroughly documented in vol. 2 in this series of JND.

F. F. Bruce's Palliation

In a book entitled, *B. W. Newton and Dr. S. P. Tregelles Teachers of the Faith and Future*, edited by George F. Fromow, an past editor of a posttribulationist periodical (*Watching and Waiting,* a "Strict Baptist" publication) with teachings in line with BWN's views, there is included a paper called "The Eternal Sonship of Christ" and on p. 91 of the book, we read:

> Did he not, from unspeakable *circumstantial* distance from God, but in *essential moral nearness* to Him, work back his way through all the appointed sufferings till God could meet Him as having finished the appointed work, and SO glorify Him? This I believe, and this I have written and this I maintain. God could not meet Christ as having finished His appointed work until He had finished it, which is a truism.

Of course it is a truism, but a truism based upon a vile, loathsome, and wicked view of Christ: namely, Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God." [56] All the emphasis is BWN's. The reader will find the truth of BWN's blasphemies documented in vol. 2 in this series. But what did F. F. Bruce (of Open Brethren) say in the Foreword to this book?

> Newton, indeed, may still be looked upon as a heresiarch (for ought I know to the contrary) by some representatives of the Darbyite tradition: it is an amazing testimony to the perverse capacity of the ecclesiastical mind that such a charge should stick to a teacher whose whole career proclaims his absolutely uncompromising orthodoxy.

Rather, it appears that there is a perverse capacity of the "open" mind.

Benjamin Wills Newton ~ Maligned but Magnificent

It was long ago noted that two things that go hand-in-hand are the exoneration of BWN and the maligning of JND. Here is another example. The tile of this section is the title of an address "written by the Rev. Dr. Ian R. K. Paisley, MP, MEP, and delivered in his absence by his son, the Rev. Kyle Paisley, at a meeting of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony on 26 June 1999 at 'Calvary' Free Grace Baptist Church, Feltham, Middlesex, England, and printed in *English Churchman*, July 16 & 23 1999. You will detect in the following quotation his similarity in view with BWN that OT saints are part of the church, etc., while he judges the motives of JND regarding the controversy with BWN:

> The jealousy of J. N. Darby, his dogmatism concerning The Second Advent of Christ, and his view of the church, which excluded all believers but those in the so-called parenthesis, (the era between Pentecost and the Lord's second advent) and the jealousy of the grace, gifts and success of Mr. Newton's ministry, fired a pyre on which Mr. Newton was to burn (p. 6).

This is but a sample of the absurdity of this lauding of BWN, and again illustrates the perverse capacity of the human mind.

A Comment from W. Kelly

Perilous Times was a periodical with the same thrust as *Watching and Waiting* referred to above. In April 1905, W. Kelly, editor of the *Bible Treasury*, made some comments on issues 70, 71 of the *Perilous Times*, in New Series 5:254:

> The statement in 71, p. 3, col. 2, near the bottom is the direct reverse of the facts. *Before* 1848 Mr. B. W. N. was rejected by brethren as fatally heterodox, and was deserted by his chief fellow-laborers save Dr. Tr. {Tregelles} his cousin who held his Semi-Irvingite tenets subversive of "the doctrine of Christ." Before that evil

56. BWN's words about Christ being in "*essential moral nearness*" is a smoke-screen; for the wicked doctrine does indeed affect that moral nearness.

> scheme was discovered, Mr. N.'s followers had been treated with grace; but from 1847 they were rigidly refused. And the late Dr. Scrivener, whose word I believe, has recorded in print that Dr. Tr. before his death avowed his turning to the English Establishment: that is, he (not N.) went back to one of the most worldly of religions in the estimate of the Editors of "Perilous Times," as full of superstitious men as now of sceptics.

The reader should keep in mind that W. Kelly was among the "brethren" when these things transpired.

George Muller's Appreciation of B. W. Newton

It is well known that George Muller was a posttribulationist, as was B. W. Newton. The Jan/Mar 1998 issue of the posttribulationist magazine, *Watching and Waiting*, has advertised a pamphlet by G. Muller, *The Second Coming of Christ* in which his posttribulationist views are in evidence. More interestingly, the magazine quoted a statement by G. Muller containing the most astonishing statements regarding the soundness of B. W. Newton. Here it is.

George Muller's Appreciation of Mr B W Newton:

> I consider Mr Newton's writings to be most sound and scriptural, and my wife and I are in the habit of reading them, not only with the deepest interest, but great profit to our souls. His books are certainly most valuable, for they exalt the person and work of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ to the very utmost. As we are receiving a larger number of orphans into our Ashley Down Orphan Homes than usual, as I am now writing the annual report of the Institute, and my time is exceedingly occupied, nothing would induce me to enter into a controversial correspondence with Mr Beaumont. I must therefore request him to refrain from writing to me on this subject, but if he honestly wishes to know what Mr Newton's views really are, let him carefully and attentively read some of his principal writings through, such as 'Salvation by Substitution,' 'Atonement and Its Results,' 'Gospel Truths,' etc., from which he will clearly see, not only that Mr Newton is sound in the faith, but also that his teaching is of a most valuable character. I regard Mr Newton as the most accurate writer on religious themes of the nineteenth century.

Of what real worth were G. Muller's remarks in late 1848 condemning some teaching of B. W. Newton at the time of the Plymouth/Bethesda controversy (1847-1848)? He had treated the charges against BWN with indifference. After the Bethesda division, BWN published some papers and, these having been read by G. Muller, he declared that if what BWN wrote was true, Christ Himself would have needed a Savior (see vol. 2 for documentation). The sequel showed that it was nothing more than the frustration of the moment, not holiness. The settled view of G. Muller is given in the above quotation. It is palliation of evil.

Henry Varley's Appreciation of B. W. Newton

Henry Varley's appreciation of B. W. Newton is transcribed in Jonathan Nathan Burnham's Oxford doctoral dissertation.:

> "Unknown and yet well known" may be said of this man of God. It is not surprising that he was misunderstood; and spoken of by some as dogmatic and severe. He was an uncompromising opponent of all error. His faithfulness to the word of God, coupled with his profound intelligence, both spiritual and intellectual, made him mighty alike in the setting forth and defence of revealed truth. His varied writings, so clear and luminous, have enriched the whole Church of God. Far and away beyond any power of influence recognized by men, his sphere of influence has continually increased.
>
> He was pre-eminent in seclusion, wielding for years, both in writing and public ministry among select circles, marvellous power. He shrank from the public gaze that he might drift into the deep and great currents of God's mind . . . Truth was to B. W. Newton sovereign and supreme. [57]

Jonathan David Burnham's Palliation

In a thesis submitted for a Ph.D. at Oxford in 1999, Jonathan David Burnham wrote:

> Long after Newton's secession from the Brethren, he remained an object of derision within the various assemblies: his Christology was pejoratively labelled 'Newtonianism' -- a term which quickly became synonymous for heresy. The attacks of his opponents were as ruthless as they were incessant. Indeed, even after acknowledging his doctrinal transgressions, the 'Darbyites' continued to denounce Newton as a heretic who must be shunned. According to his various enemies, Newton never fully -- or sincerely -- repented of his errors. When viewed retrospectively, it seems astounding that such charges could cling to Newton for so long. After all, he not only went to embarrassing lengths to correct his earlier errors, but consistently articulated a theology which reflected a clear identification with historic Christianity.
>
> With few exceptions, English evangelicals eventually came to recognize Newton's orthodoxy. Indeed, even leaders of the Open Brethren came to view him in a more positive light, accepting his modified Christology. [58]

Dr. Burnham admits BWN taught his *evil* after the retraction (alleged by Open Brethren like F. Roy Coad, F. F. Bruce, and Harold Rowdon to have cleared BWN), yet his dissertation ends in clearing BWN from 1858, when BWN published *Christ, our Suffering Surety*, when BWN shifted on the application of the word "vicarious." But, as I had noted in vol. 2, this did not get rid of BWN's blasphemous doctrine of what he called Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God." Dr. Burnham has my books in his Bibliography but it appears that he does not want BWN to be guilty after 1858 (pp. 236, 237). However, he *has* moved a little beyond the views of the three Open Brethren noted above, clearing

57. *The Controversial Relationship Between Benjamin Wills Newton and John Nelson Darby*, p. 248, 1999.
58. *The Controversial Relationship Between Benjamin Wills Newton and John Nelson Darby*, p. 239, 1999.

BWN after 1858 instead of after1847 -- but criticizes those connected with JND, those who continued to regard BWN as a teacher of evil doctrine. Interestingly, I did not notice any critiques by him of those who exonerate BWN from 1847 and on. Thus, it is those persons that he connects with J. N. Darby who are the ogres. It seems to me that his dissertation has the objective of putting JND in an unfavorable light while ending with this exoneration of BWN. In the letter by BWN written in the 1896, quoted above, we see an additional proof that he continued to hold the blasphemous doctrine concerning Christ's person.

Since we saw that he thinks BWN was no longer guilty after 1858, let him produce BWN's confession of the evil held until 1858. I suggest that he can produce no such thing. His statements are logically incompatible:

1. BWN cleared himself (but the only "retraction" (and that, of one point only) was in 1848).

2. BWN was sound after 1858.

And I may add, so much the worse for "English evangelicals." It was in view of the Evangelical Alliance formed in 1846 that JND wrote his paper, *Separation from Evil God's Principle of Unity*. Even C. H. Surgeon, who objected to such a teaching, was at last driven to leave the Baptist Union because of the downgrade movement.

* * * * *

While this whole matter has received its fullest documentation in vol. 2 in this series, some extracts follow:

B. W. Newton Said That He Subsequently Taught It

In some remarks by BWN, wherein he takes note that E. K. Groves (a son of A. N. Groves; and both of them supporters of Bethesda) had published a book in 1885, we find some very relevant comments regarding his views after the controversy. Speaking of his 1835 paper in the *Christian Witness* that opposed Irvingism, he commented,

> Some time afterwards it was reprinted as a tract, and to that reprint I added a preface, in which I inadvertently said that Christ came under the imputation of Adam's sin. Now I couldn't have *meant* that, because the whole tract was against that very thing. What I meant was the consequences of Adam's sin. That expression, however, I ought not to have used, and as I am and have been particular about the expressions of others, I retracted it and expressed my unfeigned sorrow. [59]

That is, he let stand his teaching that *Christ was under the consequences of Adam's sin!* Here, then, is proof from BWN that he continued to hold the evil teachings. But there is more. To quote:

> Then there were two other Tracts in 1847, which, when the attack was made on me about the sixth Psalm {by J. L. Harris}, I wrote hastily and not in that theological precision and care . . . it is not to be wondered at that they were not comprehended by persons who were not accustomed to such subjects {pitiable, arrogant self-delusion}. Still they are substantially sound and I adhere to them. Christ never endured damnatory wrath in His lifetime, but to say that in His lifetime He endured no wrath at all, is wrong. [60]

Well that certainly is proof he never gave up these doctrines. BWN went on in the Fry MS in a patronizing way concerning the two papers he published in 1847:

> I am not however surprised at their failure to convince. I knew it would fail at the outset, because persons were not competent to judge what they set themselves to judge. **The above mentioned retraction had nothing whatever to do with these tracts, but only with that expression in the reprint of the article on Irvingism**, which reprint had a large sale and circulation in India especially . . . . My withdrawing them was simply as if I said, "You don't understand these publications, then I will state it for you afresh." And I issued the "Letter to a Friend in Cork" {1850} and "Ancient Truths" {1857} and the "Fifteen Propositions" and "Christ our Suffering Surety" wherein the same things are stated more simply . . . Tregelles blamed my writing that retraction [61] very much. [62]

The "Reprint" is a reference to the *Christian Witness* article. Observe that BWN said that his "retraction" (the *Acknowledgment* -- see Vol. 2, App. 1) had only to do with an expression in that article and nothing to do with his papers. Thus he retracted an expression -- *just as JND and others pointed out*. There is one more startling comment that I will transcribe from the above quotation from BWN's statement.

> Bethesda [63] seems to want to unite the two sections of Brethren. And I am to be sacrificed to cement it. If they *really* believed that I held such things they should not stand aloof from the exclusives, but have joined heartily in my excommunication [64] -- which they did not. [65]

A letter of BWN, dated June 1, 1885, says,

> During the last forty years, I have, I believe, done every thing in my power to remove misapprehension, and to explain the doctrines I hold on all subjects, clearly and precisely. My doctrines are fully unfolded in the Tracts and Books of which I subjoin a list. They extend over a period of forty years. [66]

That remark takes us back to 1845, two years before his evil system of doctrine concerning Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God" was brought to light.

BWN's "last words . . . to his circle of Christian friends not long before he died," include this:

> . . . that if I had my time over again, I would maintain the same testimonies that I have done, only *more strongly*. [67]

Regarding BWN's paper *A Letter on Subjects Connected With*

59. *Fry MS*, p. 375.

60. *Fry MS*, p. 381.

61. {I suggest that the phrase "Tregelles blamed my writing that retraction very much" means only that one point to which BWN alluded. Vol. 2, ch. 8.5, tells us that BWN did not write the *Acknowledgment*. Also S. P. Tregelles remained fully implicated in the evil. And, afterwards, he continued to support BWN's teaching (*Collected Writings* 10:95).}

62. *Fry MS*, p. 375, 376. The emphasis is mine.

63. {Bethesda refers to the assembly in Bristol, England, which received partisans of BWN during April 1848, the history and results of which will occupy Section 9 in Vol. 2. By "the two sections," BWN referred to the opens and the exclusives.}

64. {This statement is false.}

65. *Fry MS*, p. 376.

66. Cited in G. H. Fromow, *Teachers of the Faith and Future*, p. 159.

67. *Fry MS*, p. 444 (the last page).

the Lord's Humanity, published July 1848, i. e., after his *Acknowledgment*, J. M. C. [Code?] wrote, in 1850:

> In "Letter on the Humanity" p. 15 [July 1848], the author speaks thus of his two tracts -- "Remarks, &c." [1847] and "Observations," [1847] -- "such then are my principles, and I may add, the principles on which my two recent Tracts are based." And again in p. 17, he disowns any intention "of shrinking from the explanation or defence of more minute statements in those tracts," so that in this last "Letter" the doctrine of the foregoing tracts is fully confirmed and re-asserted. [68]

BWN'S Writings Show That He Continued to Teach His Evil Doctrines

Listen to this from himself:

> My withdrawing [69] them {several of his papers} was simply as if I said "You don't understand these publications, then I will state it for you afresh." And I issued the "Letter to a Friend in Cork" and "Ancient Truths" and the "Fifteen Propositions" and "Christ our Suffering Surety" wherein the same things are stated more simply.
>
> In the face of these four last named publications it is most wicked to pretend that I am to be charged with a misunderstanding of former tracts. [70]

As an example of how BWN continued to teach his evil system, [71] let us review what he taught regarding the fires of Sinai burning against Christ and scorching Him. On Sept. 1, 1847, BWN wrote:

> Israel had formally taken their stand before God, under a covenant of law, and therefore the very first moment of disobedience was found amongst them, they were brought "*under curse*." The fire of Sinai began instantly to burn against them, and therefore, even if every deserved infliction had been withheld from that moment to the time when Jesus was born, yet still he would have been one of the nation that was exposed to all the terrors of Sinai. They were all set in array against Israel. [72]
>
> . . . and that Jesus became by birth one of that family -- and that that nation because of Sinai and the Law which they had broken, was under *peculiar* inflictions from God, the same reason that has led the Author {whom BWN is trying to refute} to admit, that Jesus drank of the cup of human sorrow, would lead him also to admit that he drank the cup of Israel's woe. And if the sorrow and inflictions which had fallen on Israel are said in Scripture to have been the result of "curse" and of "wrath," then Jesus would have drunk of a cup of sorrow which was the result of such wrath and such curse. This would necessarily follow, as a result of the Author's own principle, if once he admitted, as I think, on reflection he *will* admit, that Israel was under such inflictions when Jesus became an Israelite. He would then see that there is a peculiar class of sufferings, added to those which flowed from drinking of the general cup of human sorrow -- sufferings which resulted from special inflictions on a peculiar people, and which yet were not the vicarious sufferings of the cross. [73]

In 1858 one could read:

> And although it is true that the fires that burnt on Sinai did not envelope Him in their full devouring power until Calvary, yet those fires burnt against Him as the sinner's Surety always, and from time to time sent forth as it were, their lightning flash, scorching though not consuming. [74]

J. N. Darby's thoughts on the subject of the sufferings of Christ are examined in Vol. 3 in this series.

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68. *Remarks on Mr. Newton's Doctrines on the Sufferings of Christ* , p. 2, note.

69. {Withdrawal is not repudiation.}

70. *Fry MS*, p. 376.

71. Allow me to add here another matter from his *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*, that the glorified saints will participate in omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. This fell under JND's stricture in *Collected Writings* 8 in 1844, and was noted by W. Kelly in *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 4:285 (June 1903). I have examined the second and third editions of BWN's *Notes on the Apocalypse* and he has this in each edition. W. Kelly remarked:

> *Is this, or is it not, heterodox and even blasphemous? Was it ever retracted?*

72. *Observations on a Tract Entitled "The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered*," p. 15.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

74. *Christ, Our Suffering Surety*, p. 58. Cf. *Collected Writings* 15:119 where JND says he did not withdraw such doctrine in his *Acknowledgement*, but maintained it. In after years, he taught it more subtly.

Appendix 4: An 1842 View of those Gathered Together to the Lord's Name

In the following article I have interspersed a few explanatory remarks in braces { }. Lack of an explanatory comment does not, however, mean acceptance of the writer's expression. He is writing from a Gospel Standard Baptist viewpoint. The writer of the article may be J. C. Philpott. Besides the interest of the descriptions, this paper illustrates the legal atmosphere of the time. Recall how JND spent six or seven years in a state from which he experienced "deliverance."

The Christian Witness

We laid before our Readers, a short time ago, a sketch of *Puseyism*; we propose, in our present number, to present them with a similar outline of the views of the *Plymouth Brethren*, and have therefore placed at the head of our present article the name of a periodical which is one of the organs of the party, and which was sent us some time ago for our review. It is probable that many of our readers may not know them even by name, although there are few localities into which they have not more or less penetrated. We shall, therefore, *first* give a slight sketch of their origin, and *then* a short account of their views.

They are called, then, *Plymouth* Brethren, from the place of their head quarters, that town being the residence of the originators of the party; and as they disclaim every thing of a sectarian nature, and will not allow themselves to be called by any name descriptive of views of doctrine, modes of Church government, opinions of an individual, or other usual sources of a distinctive denomination, they speak of themselves as *Brethren*. Their chief originators were members of the Church of England, some being seceding ministers, and others educated at the University, but never ordained, as the term is, by a bishop.

Their leading heads are, or were, (for we have no very recent information,) Mr. Wigram, Mr. Newton, and Mr. Darby. The two former were educated at Oxford, but not ordained; and the last is an Irish clergyman, who has seceded from the Establishment some ten or eleven years {15 years}. All three are men of talent, and the latter of a mind peculiarly original, reflective, and penetrating. Pallid in countenance, emaciated in figure, careless even to shabbiness in dress, disregardful of the common conveniences of life, possessed of martyr courage, liberal, even to the utter wasting of all his property, to the poor, and full of kindness and benevolence, Mr. Darby is well fitted to draw admiration from all who look much to the externals of religion. And when to this we add, that he possesses a mind deeply reflective, a memory remarkably conversant with scripture, a life spotless, an energy unwearied, a devotedness to one object rarely equalled, and a power to influence inferior minds not often found, we shall not wonder that, though not the first originator {but he was, of course}, or the most known, he is the real leader of the Plymouth Brethren. Our limits will not permit us to sketch, in a similar manner, the other two whose names we have mentioned, though we have materials for the purpose; nor to do more than enumerate Sir A. Campbell, Mr. Harris, and Capt. Hall, as also leaders of the party, of whom the former is a Scotch baronet, the second a seceding clergyman, and the third late a captain in the navy, and a son of Dr. Hall, the late Dean of Christ Church, Oxford. To these names we may add that of Mr. Beverley, so well known some years ago as the author of several clever and satirical pamphlets against the Church of England, and that of the Hon. Mr. Parnell, the eldest son of Lord Congleton, lately Sir Henry Parnell, and one of the late ministry. We have mentioned these names, not to gratify carnal curiosity, but as presenting a remarkable feature. Nearly every name that we have mentioned is in some way allied to the aristocracy of this country. [75] Movements really of God have rarely commenced with the high-born and the well-bred. Fishermen and tent-makers, tanners, tinkers, cobblers, weavers, and coal-heavers have been more usually called of God to be apostles and ministers. We will do the Plymouth Brethren the justice to acknowledge that they disclaim any such title to worldly esteem, but that they have such a hold upon the natural prejudices of men is a *fact* which their disclaiming it cannot alter. At any rate, it cannot be said that God has chosen the poor of this world to commence that spreading movement which originated at Plymouth. And again, they are nearly all men of education, and some of considerable talent and learning, which further throws a suspicious hue over them. This advantage (if such it can be called) they do not disclaim, nor cast aside with the preceding one. Appeals to the original languages, quotations from Church history, and a general strain of learned allusion are frequent in their writings. The *Inquirer* {1837-1839}, a periodical which, from internal evidence, is clearly in their hands, contains articles which show the highest cultivation of mind, and written not only in a most forcible and eloquent style, but full of expressions and allusions which, to ordinary readers, would be almost unintelligible.

It does not seem to be in unison with God's usual modes of dealing, that he should choose the wise in this world to

75. Mr. Wigram is the son of a baronet who died worth half a million of money ; Mr. Darby is the brother of the member for East Sussex; and Captain Hall is the grandson of a peer.

originate or accomplish such a revolution as the principles of the Plymouth Brethren, if carried out, would effect in the churches.

These things are important elements in enabling us to arrive at spiritual and scriptural judgment upon them. [76] Many of the children of God have been much tried and perplexed what view to form of them. In making an estimate, all the items must come into the account; in drawing a portrait, all the features must be taken of the face. This has been our motive in presenting the two prominent points in them that we have named -- aristocratical connections, and cultivated minds. That they are laborious, self-denying, separate from the world, devoted to one object, none can deny. That they are divinely instructed and spiritually taught is to us very questionable.

But we will proceed to a brief account of *their views*. With respect to doctrine, they cannot be said to have any clear or consistent opinions beyond such views of the Trinity, &c. as orthodox Christians hold. That is, however clear some of them may be in doctrine, they consider consistency in this point of secondary importance. For instance, with respect to the important point of the extent of redemption, Mr. Wigram holds it to be particular, Mr. Newton that it is universal, and Mr. Darby is, or certainly was, undecided which it was {hardly}. So with respect to baptism, some believe it to be by immersion, others by sprinkling, and some by neither. All are certainly opposed to strict communion, and denounce it, in no measured terms, as inconsistent with Christian charity. Thus much for their agreeable non-agreement, their points of amicable difference. Their points of union are as follows.

1. They set aside the ministry of the Gospel as resting in certain individuals specially called by God to that work {they rejected clerisy}. Their creed is that all Christians have an equal right to preach {*if* gifted for it}. They allow, indeed, such a thing as a spiritual gift, but they hold that this does not give an individual any title to preach to, or to be maintained by, a congregation. Thus they have a special antipathy to a pulpit, and do not allow one in their chapels. But they profess to receive all ministers who call themselves servants of Jesus Christ, with this limitation, that two or three "that sit by" (i.e. the leaders of the party) "judge"; and if their judgment be against the preacher, he speaks there no more. This would seem to be a means of keeping down too forward speakers of their own body; but it also acts as a preventive to men of truth being heard, and keeps the preaching in the hands of the leaders themselves {He seems to describe Plymouth when B. W. Newton was there.}

2. In their congregations they make an unusual separation between the Church, i.e., members of their own body, and the world, i.e., the unconverted hearers. They occupy different parts of the building; they assemble at different hours, that is, for special meetings; and the mode of preaching to them, and we believe even the name, differ.

3. Election, we believe, they universally hold; the difference of the Mosaic and Christian dispensation they much dwell upon; the abrogation of the law as a covenant and as a rule of life is with them a prominent feature; deadness to the world, and an utter indifference to all its maxims, comforts, and honours they much inculcate; love to the brethren, and liberality to the poor and needy they sedulously teach; implicit obedience to the gospel precepts, and what they call "service" they much insist upon; and we are bound to add, that what they teach they for the most part practise.

4. Their leaders are, for the most part, deeply imbued with what are termed prophetical views, and make these a prominent part of their teachings; and as they write much, and, for the most part, very ably on all their points of belief, and circulate tracts very widely, in which they handle all their main features of doctrine, as well as establish causes wherever an opening is afforded, we cannot wonder that they are spreading widely and rapidly.

Having said thus much of them, and spoken things, if not in their favour, at least impartially declaring what we know of them, we will now mention where their weakness and rottenness, viewed as a party, chiefly lie.

1. They set aside the first work of the Holy Spirit in condemning and bringing in a sinner guilty before God. And this necessarily flows from their views of the law. We observed just now that they set aside the law as a covenant and as a rule of life; but they do more than this, they set it aside also as a ministration of condemnation. They do not believe it to be necessary for the law to condemn and curse a sinner, before be can or will come to Christ for mercy and pardon. Their creed is that the law of the ten commandments is entirely abrogated, [77] that the Gentiles never were and never are under it, and that the law contained in Exodus 20 has no more to do with a Gentile than the laws of China have to do with an Englishman living in this country. Thus they say in one of their Tracts, "*Antinomianism and Legalism*," p. 4, "The law is spoken of in Scripture as one thing, 'The law was given by Moses.' It is true that the word law is used in a less definite sense; but when the law is used, it generally means the whole Mosaic economy, which was not partially but entirely superseded by that which was introduced by Christ. In no place of Scripture is that distinction found which is commonly insisted on between the moral and the ceremonial law."

If the word "the law" means, as they contend, the whole Mosaic dispensation, and if therefore the moral law is as much abolished and superseded as the ceremonial law, the ministration of condemnation can have no more existence than the law of sacrifices. [78] Now we will ask them one question. If the moral law was utterly abolished and superseded, it was so when Christ fulfilled it, and died under its curse. Now, was not the law, that is, one of the ten commandments, applied to Paul's conscience *after* Christ had died, risen again, and ascended into heaven? He declares plainly that "the

76. {Could the Roman Catholics have said this about the Reformers?}

77. {The Mosaic system is abrogated. The law is not dead, but the Christian is dead (Rom. 6, 7, 8). This is JND's view of the matter.}

78. {The reader should keep in mind that the writer is looking at the "Plymouth Brethren" through his own views of the law and deduces some things which are not accurate.}

commandment came," that is, with killing power to his conscience, for he "died" under it; and he adds expressly that it was the *tenth* commandment, "Thou shalt not covet." (Rom. 7: 9, 7.) Now here is a most undeniable proof that the law was not abolished, as a ministration of condemation, by Christ's death, for *after* his death the Holy Ghost applied it to Paul's conscience. Would that blessed Spirit have revived an abrogated and superseded statute? Had the moral law been as much superseded as the ceremonial law, the Holy Ghost would no more have revived it than he would have restored the Levitical sacrifices. Thus setting aside the work of the law, they believe that a man may be drawn by the gospel without ever knowing guilt, wrath, bondage, or condemnation {how would Paul's case, Acts 9, bear on this?}. Not that they say there are no such feelings as guilt and condemnation {for the believer}, but they say there *ought* to be none, that the gospel is a proclamation of pure mercy, and that there is no prerequisite to its reception. We can easily understand how suitable this doctrine is to all unexercised souls, and how palatable. to those in whose hearts the Spirit of God has never made Jehovah known as a consuming fire.

2. Connected with this is their view of faith. They bold that there is no salvation but by faith, and that justification and sanctification are dependant upon faith. But the faith that they advocate is altogether Sandemanian. [79] {This allegation is really so absurd. Faith is a gift from God, not mental assent.} All we have to do, say they, is to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. This they consider the first step in the Christian life, and hold that he who credits this is a believer, and that he who does not so believe is an unbeliever. The doubts, the fears, the exercises, the hopes, the risings, the sinkings, the conflicts and struggles of quickened souls, who would believe, but cannot, they cut off at a stroke, and will not allow such to be believers {they are regarded as quickened, having the "inner man," but not delivered (see Rom. 7, 8)}. As a consequence, they represent the assurance of faith as the first step in faith; for if faith be a mere assent of the mind to certain facts or evidences, there can be no weak faith where the fact is certain and the evidences clear, as the person of Christ and the truths of the gospel are. Such speeches as the following are not uncommon amongst them : "Oh! I was just as you are," speaking to a spiritual mourner, "but I believed in Christ, and have been happy ever since." "But how did you believe?" would be the inquiry. "How? I believed that he was the Son of God." No account do they give or require of deliverance, manifestation, or application. They believed, and that was all.

3. From this Sandemanian faith springs not only their rejection of all experience in the first coming of the sinner to Christ, but their discarding also of all subsequent experience after a deliverance, or after faith in Christ. Our friend Warburton, with his "heaviness in the heart of a man maketh it stoop," they would hardly consider a believer, or would certainly set him down as a very weak and unestablished Christian, and very inferior to one of their newly-fledged birds that had just issued forth from the Plymouth nest. All his exercises, trials about his debts, conflicts with the devil and his own heart, they would deem the very dregs of legality. So that all the fluctuations and ever-varying frames, the cries, the sighs, the tears, the mournings over Christ's absence, and the enjoyments of his presence, the hungering and the feast, the thirsting and the sippings of mercy, the darkness and light, deadness and life, barrenness and fruitfulness alternating in a Christian {reformed theology views Rom. 7 as normal Christian experience, whereas Rom. 8 is}, are all virtually discarded by them.

4. They therefore really reject all the sweet consolations of the gospel, as much as they discard all the dark and distressing parts of experience, for these are intimately and inseparably connected. The afflictions of the gospel are in proportion to the consolations, and the consolations to the afflictions. To reject, then, the one, is to reject the other. With this they must also, to be consistent, reject all the application of the promises, for the promises are valueless to all but the afflicted, tried, harassed, and tempted. And with the promises they must reject all deliverances, for deliverances presuppose straits and difficulties, which they either deny to exist, or, if they do exist, attribute them to weakness of faith, and therefore not to be cured by a special manifestation, or a particular deliverance, but by acting faith.

5. Out of this spring, too, their setting aside of the Old Testament as a model of believers' present experience, and their creed that the Psalms are not a manual of experience now, but of what Christ experienced upon earth. We heard one of their chief leaders say that "he knew more than David, and had been where David never was"; and when asked to explain himself, replied, "that David did not know Christ as he knew him, nor had David ever been in heavenly places with Christ, where he was sitting with him." Thus, in their Tract, "*The contrast between the Jewish dispensation and the present one*," they distinctly assert (pp. 11, 12) that "the blessings of the last" (that is, the Mosaic) "dispensation were carnal and earthly"; and that "the hope of a Jew, as a Jew, was blessings upon earth; riches, long life, abundant fruit of the land were his portion; they were to be tokens of God's favour to him." With this they contrast the hope of this present dispensation; "His hope" (that is, the believer's) "is the redemption of the body, the seeing of Jesus as he is, and being made like unto him." Now we would ask, had Job no hope but what rested in sons and daughters, sheep and camels, oxen and asses? Why, be declares the expression of his hope in words almost similar to that which they give as the hope of the believer. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, etc." They thus make hopes, blessings, and promises altogether dependant, not upon the Spirit's special revelation of them to the soul, whether before or after Christ, but upon the difference of the dispensation. And as they defraud the Old Testament believers of new covenant blessings, so they deprive New Testament believers of Old Testament experience. Thus their most deeply taught Christian would not

79. As this word may not be intelligible to all our readers, we will explain it. Sandeman was a Scotch preacher in connexion with Dr. Glasse, and taught that faith was a mere assent of the mind, and that we are to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God just in the same way as we believe there was such a person as Julius Cesar, or that there is such a country as America. Hence all such mere natural faith has been called Sandemanian.

be he that had known most of temptation and most of deliverance, most of the bitters and most of the sweets in the divine life, most of the creature's helplessness and ruin, and most of the Saviour's sweet manifestations; but he whose judgment was best informed as to the difference of the two covenants, who walked most at liberty from legal shackles, (a liberty, it is to be remarked, not proclaimed in the conscience by the Holy Spirit as an individual blessing, but assured as a general privilege to all believers,) and who practised the most self-denial, not so much on account of the workings of a tender conscience, as because this world, in its present state, is not the believer's home, but is to be so when it has undergone the purification of the general conflagration.

Thus, the system of the Plymouth Brethren, which, at first sight, and to unenlightened eyes, bears great marks of truth, and appears a revival of primitive days, when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, is manifested as a refined and specious form of natural religion. It possesses, in many of its leading features, the aspect of truth. Election, justification by Christ's righteousness {not a correct statement}, the abrogation of the law as a rule of life {the Christian is dead to the law (Rom. 6, 7)}, separation from the world, self-denial and crucifixion of the flesh, love of the brethren, an uncompromising hostility to Establishments -- in these and other points the Plymouth Brethren are on the side of truth. And these truths being set off by much creature holiness, devotedness, and amiability, as well as backed by talent, learning, and great liberality, we need not wonder that they lay hold of such minds as are dissatisfied with the general tone of worldly religion prevalent in the Establishment, and the great mass of Dissenters.

There is a large class of persons in this country who, without divine teaching, are seeking after some kind of religion to satisfy conscience, and ease the painful thoughts of eternity. Some of these are attracted by the showy forms and imposing rites of Popery; others by the specious claims to primitive antiquity held out by Puseyism; and to others more meditative, and more deeply imbued with scriptural knowledge, the system of the Plymouth Brethren holds out a harbour of refuge. There are in that system many points of attraction.

It has great attractions *naturally*. 1. There is in it *an aristocratic atmosphere*, a kind of Madeira climate, which suits the tender lungs of gentility. Gentlemen and ladies dissatisfied with the forms of a carnal Establishment {reference is to the Church of England} can join the Plymouth Brethren without being jostled by "vulgar Dissenters." Baronets and hononrables throw a shield of protection over the meaner refugees. If a young lady, for instance, professes a dislike to, and separates from the Establishment, it much averts the paternal frowns when she comes home on a Sunday afternoon, and says, "Pa, Sir Alexander Campbell, or the Hon. Mr. Parnell preached to-day." But if Miss had said that she had been bearing a poor cobbler, or a Calvinistic stocking weaver in a cottage, the clouds upon the parental countenance would have gathered blackness.

2. *The creature-holiness and self-denial* that they practice is very attractive to ascetic minds. Mahogany chairs and tables, as well as carpets, are discarded from their houses; their dress is plain even to shabbiness; and "service" and obedience are strictly inculcated. This falls in well with those who know little or nothing of the ruins of the fall by painful soul-experience, and cannot distinguish between spiritual and fleshly obedience.

3. *The great liberality shown to poor members* is a strong attraction to that numerous class of professors who love that religion best which does most to pay their rent, clothe their backs, and feed their bellies. Some of them are men of considerable property, and most liberal in the distribution of it. We need not wonder if many of the poorer class are drawn by such motives.

4. *Their great kindness and benevolence* have a powerful hold on minds not to be swayed by filthy lucre. No cutting speeches, no harsh suspicions how people came by their religion, no inconvenient questions as to what they have felt, and we must add, no railing at each other, or unkind sneers and reflections on those who are in the same bonds of brotherhood, chill or disgust the tender and peaceable minds of those who shrink from every blast. Love is one of their grand doctrines, and to their views of it their actions are usually conformable.

But besides these *natural* sources of attraction, they have what we may term several strong religious attractions.

1. As a law work is discarded as quite unnecessary, it suits those who have never felt a burden of sin. 2. As faith is with them an assent of the mind, which every one is invited in the Scriptures to exercise, it suits those who have never been harassed with unbelief, and, as such, can take a bold onward step at once, without waiting for the Spirit's application. 3. As their system discards all doubts and fears, it suits all unexercised, unplagued professors. And as, 4thly, they consider it quite an unscriptural practice to ask for any account of a person's experience, it fits in admirably with those who have none. To those who attend much to the letter of Scripture there is the additional attraction of a strict compliance with the word of God. The ordinance is received every Lord's day; every brother is allowed his psalm, his doctrine, his interpretation; the titles of brother and sister are the only recognized ones; to a certain extent, an intercommunion of goods is practiced; the Scriptures are much read and expounded, and the strictest adherence to the New Testament rules and precepts enforced.

In a word, the whole system appears to us to be one of the most refined systems of natural religion that have as yet been witnessed. But here is the fatal mark stamped upon it; that it is form but not power, the strict letter but not the Spirit, the husk but not the kernel, the bone but not the marrow of Christianity. The faith that they inculcate stands in the wisdom of men, not in the power of God; the light which they hold forth is the mere reflected light of the dispensation, not the immediate light of the Spirit's communicating; the liberty that they boast of is the liberty contained in the letter of Scripture, not that which is breathed into the soul by God himself; and their knowledge is an acquaintance with the genius and tendency of New Testament doctrine, not the light of the

knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Their grand, their fatal defect lies here, that theirs is not the religion of the Holy Ghost wrought as a sovereign act of love and power, as when and where he will, in the hearts of the elect, but the embracing of and acting upon a scriptural creed, as such, independent of a divine supernatural work upon the conscience.

In offering this sketch of the Plymouth Brethren, and in thus analyzing their system, we by no means intend to convey that there are not gracious characters amongst them. Our remarks are directed, not against the individuals, but against the system. We cannot but believe that there are God-fearing persons amongst them, nor would we say that some of the leaders are not. But those who are such are so, not in accordance with their system, but in spite of it, and contrary to it. Just as in the Establishment, and among the Arminians, there are doubtless some gracious characters who are so in spite of the system with which they are mixed up, so we believe that there are among the Plymouth Brethren gracious persons, whose experience contradicts what their acknowledged creed professes.

A Complementary, Different View!

James Patrick Callahan, of Open Brethren sympathies, I suppose, and a non-dispensationalist, has a chapter in his book, "Chapter 6: The Piety of Brethren Primitivism," and in a footnote wrote:

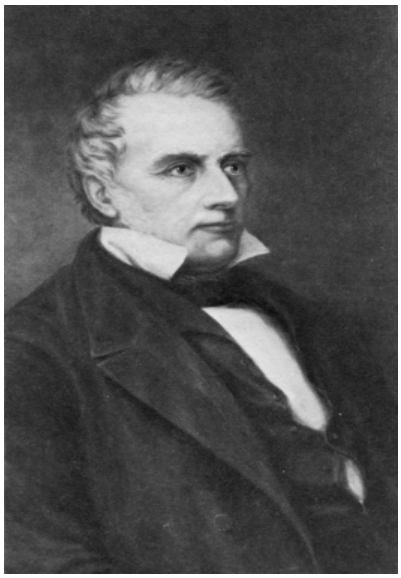
> Their reputation for immoderate piety was noted as early as 1841: "an overweening conceit of their own extraordinary spirituality and purity is one of the marked characteristics of the Brethren." Cited in J[ohn] E. Howard, *A Caution Against the Darbyites: with a Word to the Authors of two Recent Pamphlets and the Testimony of Lord Congleton* (London: G. J. Stevenson, 1866), 11. [80]

So now we can see how really awful the "brethren" appeared to be around 1841, 1842. The article above did not complain of their piety but of their doctrines. But with J. E. Howard's denunciation we see that their "piety" was really "an overweening conceit." We may now leave the matter with both the doctrines and the piety of the "brethren" assailed.

80. *Primitivist Piety, The Ecclesiology of the Early Plymouth Brethren*, p. 153.

Appendix 5: J. N. Darby Personally

The book, *John Nelson Darby*, by W. G. Turner, contains many interesting vignettes regarding JND, which the interested reader may consult. I will cite a few observations regarding JND not available in that source.



Some Comments by W. B. Neatby

In spite of the fact that we shall have before us a few remarks about JND's character that are favorable to him, keep in mind that W. B. Neatby's *A History of the Brethren*, is a vicious polemic against JND and the distinctive doctrines associated with his name. His book was morally answered by W. M. Sibthorpe of Tunbridge Wells, in 1903. He wrote:

> Mr. Neatby also says that he "would be thankful if this [his] work should in some measure serve as a humble obstruction" to Mr. Darby's life's work. If the writer of this Defense needed anything to convince him that the truths and principles Mr. Darby taught and maintained were of God, Mr. Neatby's book would exactly serve the purpose. [81]

Let us proceed to some of W. B. Neatby's comments.

> Other leaders indeed have been equally absolute, but seldom in face of equal obstacles. Wesley, for instance, exercised an unchallenged autocracy over the Wesleyan Methodists of his own lifetime, and avowed it with the most engaging frankness. But his followers were, on an average, men of far less striking personality than Darby's; and his sect, up to the time of his death, was far less widely ramified. Nor was Wesley compelled to exercise the reality of absolutism while disdaining its forms. His frankly voluntary association might adopt what legislation it pleased; but on Darby's peculiar High Church theory, all legislation for his followers had existed in the first century, and was divine and immutable. His legislation was therefore bound down to the forms of Scriptural interpretation, and he would have found it hard to produce Scriptural authority for him to imitate Wesley's avowed absolutism.
>
> The result was that he found himself to a very great extent thrown back on his simple personal ascendancy; and this availed for more than thirty years to hold together a worldwide confederacy united by no other bond that was not of the most shadowy description. His followers were in fact without written code or constitution, without denominational history or traditions; they had no national or provincial synods; and they possessed as their distinctive tenet only an ecclesiastical formula of a most subtle and impracticable description. Yet, till within a year of Darby's death, they cohered so perfectly that every minutest act of discipline that was recognized in any part of the world was recognized in every other. This is surely almost a unique fact. [82]

81. *A Defense of the Truth. . .*, p. VI.

82. {We may suppose that the writer knows nothing about keeping the unity of the Spirit . . . Eph. 4:3.}

Darby's influence was built up on a base of enormous enthusiasm. We must dismiss from our minds once for all any idea of Darby as a man that availed himself of an enthusiasm that he did not share. Even his overweening jealousy for his own supremacy would naturally clothe itself to his own mind in the guise of zeal for the one institution upon earth that embodied a divine idea. After all, it is nothing very new that a man should be profoundly convinced that he is doing God's work on a great scale, [83] and be filled in the depths of his soul with an answering enthusiasm, yet condescend at the same time to actions that would compromise much less lofty pretensions.

Fundamentally, the conception to which Darby devoted his enormous energies for more than fifty years was a High Churchism that should disdain the common accompaniment of Ritualism, and should borrow from Protestantism an intensely Biblical element. Fully as we must recognize the gigantic failure of the attempt to embody it, we may yet admit that the conception is a striking and original one. But it is certain that nothing less than a monumental enthusiasm could have initiated -- or, still more, could have sustained -- a movement that aimed at realizing so impracticable an ideal. [84]

It has been often observed that, through a life of ceaseless controversy, devotional literature still remained Darby's favorite occupation. It was always natural and delightful to him to turn aside, whether from the pressure of controversy or from the absorbing study of unfulfilled prophecy, to the simple beauties of Philippians, or to the perennial calm of the contemplations of St. John. Of all the hymns of the Brethren -- and no one can deny the exceptional beauty of very many of them -- Darby's are unequaled (I had almost said unapproached) for depth, force and grandeur; though Darby put himself at a serious disadvantage (especially in comparison with so exquisitely graceful a writer as Sir Edward Denny) by his involved and uncouth style of composition.

I have often heard people who were not blind to Darby's faults say with immense emphasis, "He was *a great man*." If a magnanimous simplicity makes a man great, they were right. He might be a scholar, but he wore none of a scholar's trappings; he might be supreme in his own little world, but his habitual bearing showed no trace of self-consciousness. To his social inferiors and to young men he was genial and hearty, and he kept his well-known brusquerie for more influential people, and especially for his sycophants -- who were many. If he was ruthless in his ecclesiastical conflicts, [85] he had at other times a singularly kindly and sympathetic nature. In the act of addressing a meeting he would roll up his greatcoat as a pillow for a sleeping child whose uncomfortable attitude had struck him. I have heard that, on one of his numerous voyages, he might have been seen pacing the deck all night with a restless child in his arms, in order to afford the worn-out mother an opportunity of rest; and I doubt whether many children were more tenderly nursed that night. The incident is the more interesting for the fact that Darby was never married. Was it the breaking forth of this tenderness, deep-hidden in his lonely heart, that bound men to him in so pathetic a fidelity of devotion?

In the hills of Eastern France or of Switzerland he would often on his pastoral tours receive the hospitality of humble mountaineers. When the materfamilias went out to her work in the fields, half his active mind would suffice for his studies, and with the other half he would help the children that sat about him either with their work or their play. We may cease to wonder that the Continental poor, accustomed to resent the *hauteur* of the Englishman abroad, should have idolized the great man who was amongst them so genially "as one that serveth."

Indeed no one ever took fewer airs. The following anecdote I can vouch for. A certain couple had just joined the Exclusive fraternity, and were receiving their first visit from the great man. They had risen from the supper table, and Darby, kneeling close beside it, was offering a prayer with which his hearers were greatly impressed. But whatever the excellence of the prayer, the lady of the house, an old-fashioned housekeeper, was painfully distracted by the unmistakable sound of the cat feasting on the remains of the supper. Nothing but awe of her distinguished guest could have restrained her from interfering. As they rose from their knees she cast a glance towards the remains of the cold fowl. His eyes followed hers. "It's all right," he said reassuringly; "*I took care that she got nothing but the bones*."

Another story, which I can relate with equal confidence, illustrates not only this fine simplicity of character, but also the readiness of resource by which he was no less distinguished. He had arrived at the railway station of a Continental town where he was expected to make some little stay, and found himself, as he stepped from the train, face to face with a formidable contingent of the local Brethren. Several ladies of good position were there, all zealous for the honor of becoming his host. Here was a delicate situation, but Solomon could not have been more equal to it. "Qui est-ce qui loge les frères?" [86] said Darby. All eyes turned upon a very humble-looking brother, who had hitherto kept modestly in the background. Darby immediately went up to him, saying, "Je logerai où logent les frères." [87] And the entertainer of obscure itinerants became the host of the great man himself.

83. {Perhaps in JND's case it was God's work. How would this affect our judgment of W. B. Neatby's remarks?}

84. {Perhaps it was Scripture rather than monumental enthusiasm.}

85. {As is JND's dealings with the heresiarch, B. W. Newton and with Bethesda (see Appendix XXX, and vol 2 in this series) which W. B. Neatby disapproved of. This explains the writer's hostility.}

86. *I.e.* "Who [generally] puts up the [ministering] brothers?"

87. *I.e.*, "I will stay where the {ministering} brothers are in the habit of staying."

An Extract from "The Christian Commonwealth," 11th May, 1882

There has recently passed away one of the most remarkable servants of Christ that this country has produced. We refer to Mr. John Nelson Darby, whose decease at Bournemouth we briefly chronicled last week. It would have been too much to expect that any lengthened notice of this remarkable man should have a place in the daily papers, or that he should find a sepulchre amongst the great men of our national history. Nevertheless, it is true to say that the movement of which he was, at once, one of the principal leaders, was most distinguished for vitality, force, and widespread influence . . .

It is not generally known that the Brethren with whom Mr. Darby has been so long associated, refuse all application to the Press to advertise their assemblies, or to make known their work. Who can recall any answer to the unkindly, and often ignorant, criticism of opponents, which, in nineteen cases out of twenty, remain unnoticed by them until this day. It is only true to say that their places of assembly are difficult to find; and, when found, are of such simplicity of character that no fictitious aids exist to attract the popular ear. Nevertheless, many of the great principles of truth advocated by them -- their close adherence to the word of God -- their remarkable and widespread literature, and their wonderful association during the past thirty-five years -- justly entitle them to a high position in the real Church history of our times.

The spiritual power of the Church of Christ -- the perception of the true meaning of God's word -- has seldom been seen to advantage in mere denominative institutions. Spiritual perception -- the power of the Holy Ghost -- the wonderful influences of Divine truth, whether upon individuals or masses -- has never been largely identified with church organizations, as such; the power has been with the individual rather than the corporate body.

We are not insensible to the widespread influence of the teaching represented by such writers as J. N. D, . . . and C. H. M. The principles of interpretation advocated -- their clear spiritual perception -- their suggestive analysis of the "deep things of God" -- their calm and intelligent defence of the great doctrines of the reformation, and their vigorous testimony concerning the premillennial advent of our Lord -- have given them a position for true and discriminating exposition which is recognized and firmly believed by a very large portion of the spiritually-minded students of the Word of God in this and other lands. What is commonly known as the literature of the Brethren is familiar everywhere. Intelligent men and women by thousands, in all parts of the world, are not only associated with the Brethren, but they maintain a reality of worship and testimony at once powerful, resolute, and blessed -- "Building themselves up on their most holy faith." There is a fibre about the Christian life of the Brethren that can and does stand the strain of trial in the army, navy, the civil service, and the uncivil world. We venture to say that amongst the English in India, today, may be found large numbers of Brethren, who are Christians indeed; yea, burning and shining lights in the kingdom of our Lord.

Anyone acquainted with the men of God in England, who, as pastors and evangelists, stand opposed to the rationalism and Socinianism of certain professedly Christian journals, knows how valuable and welcome are the varied publications, papers and tracts that have been so intelligently written and industriously circulated by the Brethren. Few libraries but readily, if in some cases quietly, appropriate the productions of the well known writers whose initials we have mentioned, as well as other names which we need not enumerate. Hundreds of clergymen and nonconformist ministers turn instinctively from the nothing-arianism of many writers whom the Press is wont to praise, to the rich and varied and spiritual utterances of these "Masters in Israel."

The higher truths preached by the Brethren 30 years ago were practically unknown, and to them mainly has the great honor accrued of making known to the Church the "manifold wisdom of God." Of the Brethren it may in truth be said, "By honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as unknown and yet well known," for of them, as of the Church of God in Rome (Acts 28:22), it may be said that they have the honor of being "everywhere spoken against."

John Darby's "Synopsis" is becoming a standard work of reference, and will take its place amongst the productions of the highest and best exegesis. His life has been one abundant labor and abounding success. He has now heard the welcome, "Come up higher," from the Lord, Whose honor was so dear to him, and Whose service consumed the great energy of mind and body that he possessed.

(Cited in *The Last Days of J. N. Darby,* pp. 26-29.)

Some Open-brethren Evaluations

Some Open-Brethren are among those who have expressed themselves in a quite hostile manner also. E. K. Groves (son of A. N. Groves) wrote:

> But if, as I firmly believe, the mischief wrought by Mr. Darby among the children of God is largely the result of a mental *infirmity* not unknown in the sister island -- I mean a quality of mind, however richly endowed, which wholly disables it from taking evidence in a case when passion has once been roused. [88]

A. Murdoch approvingly quoted someone saying "He was a Pope in all but name." [89]

Mr. Boardman commented upon ". . . all the pretentiousness of a kind of '*Secondary*' Apostleship and Prophetship, (see 'Operations of the Spirit,' by JND). . ." [90] Well, read the paper and judge for yourself. G. H. Lang represents JND in regards to Bethesda this way: "While he was cursing it the Lord was blessing it." [91]

F. R. Coad has the dishonor of being among the most vehement Open Brethren in this way against JND. He says that "he was arrogant" (p. 112); "used disingenuous tactics" (p. 143); "descended to the disreputable" (p. 145). Much of this applies to the controversy with B. W. Newton where JND was "dangerously unbalanced" (p. 141); used "semantic and doctrinal juggling" (p. 150). He was -- "more ruthless" than B. W. Newton (p. 146); and is guilty of a "long and viciously worded attack" (p. 149). On p. 162 he says of JND, "Psychologically, he was obviously abnormal: but so have been many geniuses," while, interestingly, on p. 113 he says "Yet, small as were his powers of self-analysis, Darby's personal counseling had about it something of those deeper insights into human nature which characterize the psychoanalysts." And what think you about "Darby's was a mind impossible to bring to objective debate" (p. 136)? I suggest that F. R. Coad has not helped at all to understanding JND, but he has helped us to understand F. R. Coad.

The next item is from Donald L. Norbie:

What is a Darbyite?

> James exhorted long ago, "So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2:12). The lives of believers will be judged by the Lord and this includes their words. Be careful, dear Christian, of your words and how you speak of other Christians.
>
> Today some seem to love to accuse others of being Darbyites. This has become a pejorative term, a way to slander another.
>
> So what is a Darbyite? John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) was a well-educated man who became a prominent Bible teacher in England. He traveled widely, spoke often and wrote voluminously. He knew Greek and Hebrew and translated the Scriptures into English, German and French. He also wrote some beautiful hymns. He had a massive intellect and a very real love for the Lord.
>
> Darby was one of several prominent brethren in England and Ireland who was interested in a revival of New Testament simplicity for the churches. Sadly a division erupted and Darby became a founding father of an exclusive branch of the assemblies. [92] Through his labors these spread to Europe and North America.
>
> What were some of this interesting and controversial man's ideas? First of all, he believed the church was in ruins and could not be recovered to function as it did in New Testament days. Only Apostles could appoint elders. Therefore, no church today should have elders. [93] The men in such groups function as a body, with perhaps one man dominating the work. Those who believe churches should have elders are not Darbyites. Muller, Chapman and Groves were among early brethren who opposed Darby in this.
>
> Darby also believed in a confederation of assemblies. [94] Only those who were part of that association could break bread (the Lord's Supper) in their churches. [95] Those who welcome all true believers at the Lord's table are not following the tradition of Darby.
>
> Mr. Darby also systematized and propagated a strongly dispensational view of Scripture. Along with this he was an avid student of prophecy and taught a pre-tribulation rapture of the Church. This teaching was encapsulated and popularized in the Scofield Bible. Again many of the early brethren disagreed with Darby on his views. [96]
>
> John Nelson Darby has been with the Lord for over 100 years. By now we can be sure that all of his theology is perfectly orthodox, as ours will be one day!
>
> Christians of various persuasions hold all, some or few of his views. Very few of the men called Darbyites today would accept all of his ideas. Darby was a Christian who loved the Lord, a godly man. Why vilify his name today even though one may disagree with some of his theology?
>
> And let us guard against slandering believers. It is better to spell out specific doctrinal differences than to cast guilt by association. One's tongue can destroy a brother's reputation. "Beloved, let us love one another" (1 John 4:7). [97]

Some Open-Brethren have grudgingly allowed that there was truth recovered through JND and help given by him. Other Open-Brethren have been more generous. Perhaps the fact that they accept the eschatological teachings associated with the name of J. N. Darby, especially the truth of the pretribulation rapture, accounts for this. Keep in mind,

88. *Conversations on "Bethesda" Family Matters*, p. 186.
89. A. Murdoch, *Life Among the Close Brethren*, p. 70.
90. *Darbyism*, p. 1.
91. *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 171.
92. {The inverse is the fact. In 1848, George Muller, Henry Craik, and eight other leaders drew up, and signed, a statement, read to the congregation, which was endorsed by the mass, and acted upon, taking independent ground. This statement became known as "The Letter of the Ten." It is the founding document of Open Brethrenism, which began at that point. Vol. 2 details these matters.}
93. {There is much left out in this statement that will therefore prejudice the mind of the reader.}
94. {This statement shows that he does not understand JND on the subject of the one body and its expression in practice. JND did not believe in a "confederation of assemblies" nor in membership in a local assembly -- because in Scripture membership is only in one body and in Christ.}
95. {This is an untrue statement.}
96. {Note that George Muller was a posttribulationist.}
97. Norbie, Donald L., "What is a Darbyite?, *Watch and Pray,* vol. 3, p. 1, 1991.

however, that his understanding of eschatology is interlocked with his ecclesiastical teaching.

Dr. F. A. Tatford (Open-Brethren) wrote:

> The effect of J. N. D.'s written and oral ministry, particularly on eschatological teaching can never be overestimated. The reawakening of interest in the subject of the Lord's Coming and the revival of the hope of the Church may be traced, not merely to the little group of men of which he was a member, but very largely to Darby himself.
>
> It is the character of the man, however, which has had a far greater effect than his ministry. Darby has been criticized for harshness, but at the same time, stories are told of his tenderness -- particularly towards children; he has been condemned for a dictatorial spirit, yet his hymns are quoted as illustrative of his graciousness; he has been arraigned for spiritual pride, but incidents are related of his care for the lowly and his companying with servants. Like many great men, he was complex in character and both repelled and attracted.
>
> If he paid little regard to personal appearance, he cared nothing for the honors of this life. Born into a well-connected family, he discounted both money and society. Originally trained for the legal profession, his outstanding talents led to the forecast that he would probably attain theposition one day of Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. But Darby deliberately turned his back on the bar and the glittering prizes of the law and took orders in the Church. For over a year he lived as a curate in a peasant's cottage on a Wicklow bog, devoting himself to the service of the poverty-stricken peasants under his care.
>
> Faced with the teaching of Scripture, he again chose the path of renunciation and resigned from the church to live in dependence upon God.
>
> When later, Lady Powerscourt's attitude seemed to indicate that the affection of a godly woman and all the comforts of home were available to him, he deliberately turned his back upon the possibility and chose the path of loneliness for Christ.
>
> Whatever one's opinion of J. N. Darby's ecclesiastical views and controversies, here was a man among men: one who esteemed the reproach of Christ above all the treasures of this world. In the manner in which he followed his Master, J. N. D. might well be a pattern for others today.

Anna Loizeaux's Description

The following description of a conference, and JND's attendance, and character, will interest all who have an appreciation of JND. From a typed manuscript, Anna M. Loizeaux, *Sketches for My Grandchildren*, New York, 1915.

General Conferences

These are not peculiar to Brethren, for every church or denomination has its conferences; but, I think, among us they have a distinctive character. They are not gatherings of ministers or delegates to represent their several churches, or for discussion of various matters concerning their pastorates. With Brethren, conferences are simply gatherings of the children of God to study His word and to seek the blessing and edification of His people. Of course there are among them pastors, teachers, evangelists, -- fathers, children and babes, as in the epistle of John. Always these occasions are of deep and widespread interest and of great refreshment and blessing.

I remember two at the farm of father Loizeaux at Vinton, and three at Plainfield, on the large ground and under the beautiful trees at Uncle Paul's. Both here and in the West, it was your Uncle Paul who took charge of the necessary preparations.

First, notices were sent out some time in advance in order that those who wished to come might make arrangements to do so; but especially that all who had it on their hearts might pray for God's guidance and blessing.

Large tents or wooden barracks were provided; one for the meetings, one for dining, and perhaps one for sleeping. Then there must be a kitchen tent adjoining the dining tent. At Uncle Paul's, the grounds were so spacious, that everything was arranged beautifully. The tent for meetings was in a quiet corner, near the entrance, removed from the house where there was frequent coming and going and talking; also away from the unavoidable noise of the kitchen quarters.

The house was filled with cots in every possible place, for women and children. The meeting-room in the town was arranged as a sleeping place for the brethren. Also some interested Christian families offered their houses for guests.

At the farm, they built two wooden barracks, one for the meetings and one for men's dormitory. The house accommodated the women, and all who lived near returned to their homes, some taking guests with them. I believe that the meeting barrack, quite near the house, served as dining-room; and I think all the cooking was done in the large farm kitchen, of which I have told you elsewhere, and under the direction of your capable aunties.

The food was simple, but excellent:

> Breakfast: Oatmeal with plenty of milk and cream, bread, rolls, butter and coffee.
>
> Dinner: Meat and vegetables, bread and butter, tea and coffee.
>
> Supper: Cold meat, bread and butter, pickles and such berries as were in season, tea, milk, cocoa.

Dear Mr. Howard Sanderson so enjoyed the food that he said to his wife, "When we go home, let us live as simply as we do here." At their first dinner after going home, for some reason, there was no dessert. Mr. Sanderson did not fold his napkin, but sat waiting. Presently he said, "Where is the dessert, Louise?" "Why, Howard, I thought you wished to live as we did at the conference." "Oh! Yes! But I did not think we would begin so soon!"

The meeting barrack had a long table of boards, extending from end to end, with chairs all around. At the sides were board seats, and spaces were filled with chairs,

as needed. It was good to see the brethren around the table, with open Bibles, and the seats around filled with men, women and children, most of them with Bibles also. These were "reading meetings." No one was especially in charge -- save the Holy Spirit. All were free to ask questions, and any one might answer, as the Lord led. Such were the morning and afternoon meetings. In the evening, a lecture or gospel address, or an "open meeting" [98] in which several would take part. Among so many "laborers" [99] there were always many whom we felt it a privilege to hear.

On the Lord's Day morning was the "breaking of bread" -- a worship meeting. What a foretaste of heaven were these seasons! The coming of brethren from the north, south, east and west, and sometimes from across the ocean, greatly enhanced the interest.

"With fellow pilgrims meeting -
As through the waste we roam
'Tis sweet to sing together:
We are not far from home."

The afternoon and evening of the Lord's Day were devoted to the gospel, and many came from the country round about.

At the conferences at the farm, dear Mr. Darby was present; also, Dr. Christopher Wolston, [100] Mons. Ponge, Captain Dunlop [101] and many whose names I cannot recall.

As I am not able to speak worthily of dear JND as a teacher and servant of God, of his long years of devoted ministry, of his many and valuable writings and translations of Scripture, I must content myself with telling you a little of him as a man, and especially of those things which appeal to the young. Mr. Darby was a grand old man, in the vigor of manhood, although his hair was almost white. When, after one of the meetings, the barracks were being taken down, his hammer rang with the rest. When a young brother said to him: "This is too hard work for an old gentleman," Mr. Darby replied with a twinkle in his eye: "Come out on the lawn and I'll show you which is the old man." His features were rugged, but noble. He would have made a kingly king, so great was the dignity of his bearing; and yet, he was as simple as a child, and had a fine sense of humor.

Mons. Ponge was a quiet, elderly French gentleman. He was very much attached to Mr. Darby and often went about with him. The brethren, knowing this, always left the chair next to Mr. Darby's for Mons. Ponge. One day, the latter was late; coming in and seeing the chair unoccupied, he felt embarrassed, and began to say to Mr. Darby, "Really I am ashamed to have this seat." "There! There! Ponge; it is too late to be ashamed of me," Mr. Darby quickly replied. The humor of it was only for those, however, who understood French, in which it was said.

Your Aunt Anna (Mrs. Fleming) was not three years old. She was a little mischief, running all around and quite at home all over the house. Mr. Darby occupied the parlor bedroom. Going there after a meeting, he could not find his keys. At once he thought of Anna. Taking her by the hand, he began to hunt in the grass, where he had seen her playing. He soon found them -- and then! Such a funny scolding he gave her, while she stood laughing all the time.

I have heard that he was great at playing bear with little folks, running after them on all fours, and growling to their delight and terror.

All who knew Mr. Darby honored him, yet the lowliest might feel at home in his presence. But woe to any one who, filled with pride, made a show of learning in opposition to the truth.

An Irishman, working in the field near by, came to see Mr. Darby about whom he had heard much in his own country. He was barefoot, but not abashed. "And are you the great John Darby I heard so much about in Ireland?" And, continuing, he made quite a little speech -- evidently prepared for the occasion. Mr. Darby replied not a word. Looking at him, he said quietly, "Tell me, is Christ in you?" As quickly as possible, the man turned and went away.

These conferences lasted a week or ten days, and always there were some to remain at the farm or in Vinton, over the next Lord's Day. The many returned to their homes, taking the precious things they had made their own, to share them with those who could not come.

98. {For two or three prophets -- in the non-revelatory sense -- 1 Cor. 14.}
99. {Brethren who traveled about full time in evangelization, and teaching, and pastoring.}
100. {Brother of Dr. W. T. P. Wolston, an evangelist, while Dr. C. Wolston was a teacher.}
101. {Evidently this refers to James Buchanan Dunlop (1840-1928). He relinquished his commission in 1868: *Memoir of James Buchanan-Dunlop*, p. 9.}

John Nelson Darby in the Cevennes

(A Reminiscence by Samuel Levermore)

R. L. Stevenson, in his charming travel-talk of a journey in the Cevennes with a donkey, [102] tells in his inimitable way of his meeting with an old Cevenol as he was approaching La Vernède, and how, as they walked together, the old man broke in with, "Connaissez-vous Le Seigneur?" (do you know the Lord?), and how, upon arriving at the little town, R. L. Stevenson found that this dear old man was a "Darbyiste."

What the great R.L.S. did not tell, however, is how that great and good man John Nelson Darby tramped those mountains and valleys in the forties, without flourish of trumpets or beating of drums -- a lonely man, as we speak; yet, had the eyes of the Cevenols of his day been opened, they might have seen those mountains ablaze with flaming horses and chariots, even as Elisha and his servant saw, and as King Joash saw, the horses and chariots of the Lord God Almighty.

Wherever he went men were born again. His method -- or absence of it -- was divinely simple. There was no "Gospel Mission," no singing of choruses -- no perfervid appeal or exciting anecdote -- no gathering of crowds. No, no, he just "went about" as his Master before him, and spoke to them the good Word of God. And the hand of the Lord was with him. And thus, more than twenty years after R.L.S.'s visit, I found the daughter of that same old "Darbyiste," and many more like her, serving her father's God. And similar fruit from the seed sown in those days in dependence upon God can be found in many a valley, and upon many a mountain side of the Cevennes.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" -- Psalm 126:6.

And if my spiritual reader is feeling depressed by reason of the burden and heat of the day, let him turn to JND's beautiful song of Heaven, "Rest of the saints above," or "Oh! bright and blessed scenes"; or, when footsore and weary, his pilgrim heart grows faint, and his spiritual pulse low, let him read that most inspired of all pilgrim songs, "Rise, my soul, thy God directs thee."

And when, in holy meditation, with earth's distractions shut out, and all discordant voices hushed, he gets a view of the rainbow-circled Throne, whilst with bursting heart and faltering tongue he cries out for words to express his feelings, then let him try the most heavenly and spiritual outburst of worship to be found in any language, "Hark! ten thousand voices crying!" And these strains from the celestial lyre shall rapture his spirit into that sphere whose atmosphere is bliss -- whose energy is rest -- whose worship is service that never tires -- and whose center is the Lamb as it had been slain; evoking ceaseless, adoring gratitude, and unutterable and endless love. May those glorious Cevennes never lack a successor -- however humble -- of that heaven-sent and heavenly man, to tell forth the story of free grace and dying love.

John Nelson Darby, although one of the greatest men of the Victorian era, whether considered from a literary, scholarly, or, above all, a spiritual point of view, has no bust in Westminster Abbey, nor is likely to have -- but his name holds high rank among those "of whom this world was not worthy, who counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, for Whom he suffered the loss of all things that he might win Christ, in Whose blissful presence he now realizes that which, amid a life of suffering service comparable only with that of Paul, he wrote, in a moment of holy rapture --

"Oh! bright and blessed scenes,
Where sin can never come,
Whose sight my longing spirit weans,
From earth, where yet I roam.
And can I call my home,
My Father's house on high?
The rest of God, my rest to come,
My place of liberty?
Yes! in that light unstained,
My stainless soul shall live;
My heart's deep longings more than gained,
When God His rest shall give."

From *Fellowship*, 1927, pp. 206, 207.

102. {See *The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*, vol. 5, New York: The Dovos Press, 1906.}

W. Kelly's Reminiscences

The following is part of what was supplied to W. G. Turner by, I believe, W. Kelly.

As you wish for some personal reminiscences of the late JND, I go back to my first intercourse with him in the summer of 1845 at Plymouth. For though I had been for years in communion before this, it had not been my lot to see him for whom above all others I had conceived, because of his love and testimony to Christ, profound respect and warm affection. I was then living in the Channel Islands, in one of which I began to break bread with three sisters in Christ, before ever looking a 'brother' in the face. It was in J. B. Rowe's shop, Whimple Street, that we met, and very cordial and frank was his greeting. [103]

I was unable to attend the Conference at Liverpool in the forties, but was present at that which was held in London in 1845. Only on the afternoon of the third day did JND rise to speak, and this, after a well-known friend had alluded to his silence in singular terms. Mr. D. explained that he had not spoken because so many brothers had a great deal to say. It was a most impressive discourse; for after many, and not leaders only, had spoken with considerable power and unction, he gave a terse summary, which set their main points in the best position, and then brought in a flood of fresh light from Scripture on the whole theme. During the same Conference a noble personage, who resented D.'s exposure of a foolish and injurious tract by himself, gave way to vehement spleen. But JND answered not a word. Another, who was no less unreasonably offended, came into the hall while Mr. R. M. Beverley was telling us what had helped him to what he regarded as the chief truth he had long wanted. The old brother (very deaf) entered, and went as near the speaker as he could, and heard him read a page of his own book, affirming the very doctrine of the Spirit's presence and working, which he himself was abandoning, and for which Mr. Darby had censured him. This incident made no small impression on me of a living God's ways. [104]

Mr. Darby was deliberate and prayerful in weighing a scripture; but he wrote rapidly, as thoughts arose in his spirit, and often with scarcely a word changed. He delighted in a concatenated sentence, sometimes with parenthesis within parenthesis, to express the truth fully, and with guards against misconception. An early riser and indefatigable worker, he yet had not time to express his mind as briefly and clearly as he could wish. 'You write to be read and understood,' he once said playfully to me; '*I* only think on paper.' This made his writings, to the uninitiated, anything but pleasant reading, and to a hasty glance almost unintelligible; so that many, even among highly educated believers, turned away, because of their inability to penetrate sentences so involved. No one could be more indifferent to literary fame; he judged it beneath Christ and therefore the Christian. He was but a miner, as he said; he left it to others to melt the ore, and circulate the coin, which many did in unsuspected quarters, sometimes men who had no good to say of him, if one may not think to conceal the source of what they borrowed. To himself Christ was the center of all, and the continual object before him, even in controversy; nor is anything more striking, even in his hottest polemics, than his assertion of positive truth to edification. He was never content to expose an adversary, where not only his unfaltering logic, but instant and powerful grasp of the moral side, and above all of the bearing of Christ on the question, made him the most redoubtable of doctors. Yet the same man ever delighted in preaching the glad tidings to the poor, and only paid too much honor to those whom he considered evangelists more distinctively than himself. Indeed, I remember one, who could scarcely be said to be more so than he was, happening (to his own discomposure) to preach in his presence at one of the Conferences in the past (Portsmouth); and for months after, this dear, simple-minded servant of the Lord, kept telling brethren in private, and not there only, 'Ah, I wish that I could appeal to the people as So-and-so does!'

That he exercised large and deep influence could not but be; but he sought it not, and was plain-spoken to his nearest friends. To one whom he valued as a devoted man, he said, 'Come, -- 'not so much of the gentleman.' Another, dear to him from an early day and an admirable pastor, a good teacher and preacher, had got married to a worldly-minded lady (his second wife), though an Evangelical of the Evangelicals. This brother (an ex-clergyman) grieved him by running down the simple few gathered to the Lord's Name in the village where he lived. The complainant was no longer the laborer he had once been among the poor, but was as a half-squire and half-parson drawing back to a long-abandoned social intercourse with county folk. 'Ah! -- ,' said Mr. Darby, 'it is not the brethren but the wife.' That this was true made it the less palatable; and the wife did not fail to make it a rupture never healed. Nor was it only such cases that gave him pain. A lady I knew, when he paid a visit to Guernsey, invited a company to meet him in private, but exclusively of those who were in a good position. Had it been an Anglican Christian, or one with the Denominations, he would have made allowance and expected nothing else; but he was vexed that one in fellowship should be so far from the word and will of the Lord as to fail in giving an opportunity to lowly saints, rich in faith, who would have enjoyed it exceedingly. When asked to give thanks, he begged me to do so, meaning it as a quiet sign that he was displeased.

It was my privilege, being actively engaged, to hear him very seldom, and this at great meetings in which he ordinarily took a large part; but I remember once hearing him preach (on Romans 5:20, 21) to a small company of the very poor; and to a more powerful and earnest discourse I never listened, though in the plainest terms, exactly suited to his audience. The singing was execrable; and he did his best to lead them, for his voice was sweet, and his ear good; but the barbarous noise of others prevailed, with which he bore in a patience truly edifying, going on with his message quite unmoved.

Yet was he anything but self-confident. Being asked once to preach in the open air, he begged the younger man to take it; for, said he, 'I shrink from that line of work, being afraid of sticking in the midst, from not knowing what to say.' He ungrudgingly delighted in the bold preacher with a heart full of the love of souls. He overlooked many faults, where he credited anyone with devotedness (sometimes at their own valuation). An intense admirer of his used to say that in this respect, and others

103. W. G. Turner, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
104. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

too, 'he was the most gullible man in England.' This of course was extreme exaggeration; nevertheless, it occurred often enough to embarrass his fellow-laborers. I remember once in Bath remonstrating with him because of his apparently unbroken confidence in a brother who was behaving very ill to his own mother and sister, whom he drove out of the meeting as a veritable 'Diotrephes,' to gratify his mad and unbelieving father. Mr. Darby soliloquized as we walked along, 'Strange thing, that my pets should turn out scamps.' I fear that so it evidently was with this person; for not long after he furnished the most defamatory scandal ever written, printed and circulated, against his blindly generous benefactor.

The upshot of this case is instructive. The railer, who of course vanished, not only from fellowship but to another land, had great kindness shown him by a Christian man there, an Irish gentleman. Having occasion afterwards to visit Ireland, he enquired if any of his friends knew of one, Mr. Darby. Oh, yes, to be sure! everyone knows of Mr. Darby. `Well,' said he, 'I received -- and his large family for a long time, during which he was habitually abusing Darby. But I found *him* out to be worthless; so I came to the conclusion that the object of his abuse must be a very good man.' It smacks rather Hibernian; but it was a sound instinct, and true in fact.

The same readiness to believe the best, even of untoward souls, showed itself not seldom when persons drew on his purse, or, what was of more moment, sought fellowship through his mediation. Not a few even now will recollect an excessively turbulent man, who espoused the cause of one who had to be put out of fellowship; and being himself no less guilty, he fell under the like sentence. This man never appeared till Mr. Darby returned to London from his long journeyings, but repaired to him forthwith on his arrival. Then followed the renewed appeal: 'How is it that -- is still outside?' Thereon a dead silence ensued, easily understood; for every one would have gratified Mr. Darby, had it been possible. At last a brother (now deceased), noted for his downrightness, said, 'Mr. Darby, we know --; but you do not.' Yet were some weak enough to call him a Pope who would have his way, and bore no contradiction.

A similar case, only more disreputable, of one excommunicated for outrageous profanity, etc., occurred much later. Mr. Darby's heart somehow was touched, because he came to the meetings, and indeed forced himself to the front, and tried, while unrestored, to appropriate the Lord's Supper. Yet our beloved friend looked leniently on what was very painful to most. He was as far as possible from the ogre which so many fancied, but inflexible against those who assailed Christ. So he himself used to say, 'I ought never to touch matters of discipline; for I believe the first person, brother or sister, that tells me about things. It is quite out of my line.' So much was this felt, that I used to pray the Lord that only a true account might first reach his ear. But every considerate Christian must be aware that the faithful were as slow to spread evil tidings to gain a point, as the light and party-spirited were quick to plead for those they favor, and especially with one so influential as JND Also, when one of his position and character took up a cause in this one-sided way, as might and did happen, all can conceive how difficult it was for others to convince, or for himself to revise. Do any blame me for giving these amiable drawbacks? I humbly think that even in a brief sketch it is hardly truthful to omit what has been here touched with a loving hand, and what he himself would have frankly owned. It is not for me to say one word of what is best left in the grave of Christ, where my own failures lie buried.

No man more disliked cant, pretension, and every form of unreality. Thos. Carlyle loudly and bitterly talked his detestation of 'shams,' JND quietly lived it in doing the truth. He often took the liberty of an older Christian to speak frankly, among others to a brother whose love, as he thought, might bear it. But sometimes the wound however faithful only closed to break out another day. 'What were you about, --, hiding among your family connections, and not once seeing the brethren around?' On the other hand, reliable testimony is not wanting of his ready love in so lowly a way as to carry him where few would follow, especially where known. In early days, among the few at Plymouth a barber brother fell sick; and as no one else thought of his need, JND is said to have gone in his absence and served as well as he could in the little shop.

Thoughtful for others he was indifferent as to comforts for himself, though he did not mind buying costly books, if he believed them of value for his work. Then he was habitually a hard worker, from early morn devoted to his own reading the Word and prayer; but even when most busily engaged, he as the rule reserved the afternoons for visiting the poor and the sick, his evenings for public prayer, fellowship, or ministry. Indeed, whole days were frequently devoted to Scripture readings wherever he moved, at home or abroad. But his clothes were plain, and he wore them to shabbiness, though punctiliously clean in his person, which dressy people are not always. In Limerick, once, kind friends took advantage of his sleep to replace the old with new, which he put on without a word, as the story went.

In middle life he trudged frequently on foot through a large part of France and Switzerland, sometimes refreshing himself on the way with acorns, at other times thankful to have an egg for his dinner, because, as he said, no unpleasant visitors for certain could get in there! In his own house, or lodging, all was simplicity and self-denial; yet if invited to dine or sup, he freely and thankfully partook of what was set before him.

His largeness of heart, for one of strong convictions and of practical consistency, showed itself in many ways. After he left the Anglican Establishment he preached occasionally at the call of godly clergymen who urged it; but he only appeared for the discourse and was not present at the previous service. So in France afterwards he preached for pious ministers of the Reformed Church; nor did he refuse the black gown as an academical dress; but when they brought the bands, 'Oh! no,' said he: 'I put on no more.' Again, he did not spare, but warmly rebuked the zealots among half-fledged brothers, who were so ignorantly bitter as to apply what the Apostle said of heathen tables to those of the various Denominations. It was only fundamental error which roused his deepest grief and indignation. Then, as one of these (a heterodox teacher) said to me, JND writes with a pen in one hand and a thunderbolt in the other.

As a more public instance, take his letter from Barbados to Archdeacon Stopford, when cast down by Mr. Gladstone's disestablishment and spoliation of the Irish Protestant Church, to assure him of his sympathy. If the Protestants trust God, this will remain their position. Let them, because of the Word of God, and in honoring it and what is called Protestantism, as owning it cordially, coalesce with the Presbyterians, as you have noticed they did in the best times under Bramhall. . . . Only be yourselves, and trust God. Have done with the State, reject it, making no terms for a little money and much subjection; if you do, you are lost.' But none the less, when the pious

and learned Dr. O'Brien, Bishop of Ossory, who had married his niece, wrote a defence of Baptismal Regeneration, which he had long rejected, Mr. Darby wrote a vigorous reply, and proved that the argument on the formularies as well as Scripture was simply and grossly a begging of the question.

Even in his own circle his forbearance towards prejudice was as great as his decision in momentous things. He often worked with another, when he did not shrink from preaching in the open air so much as later. Once his companion was a man of singular eloquence, but slow to learn fuller truth and addicted to form. So the naval ex-commander read a petition from the Common Prayer selection, and the ex-clergyman made the Gospel appeal. Perhaps one such experiment sufficed. Incongruities happened in those days. At a later date he became more chary of preaching in so-called churches or temples' (as they call them abroad), when superstition crept in and rationalism. The recent indifferentism that prevails also curtailed in practice the readiness with which outside Christians were received, though the principle abode as ever; but its application could not but be abridged, when some wished to break bread who were insensible to notorious and grievous error taught where they usually attended.

It will interest many to hear that his paper on the *Progress of Democratic Power, and its Effect on the Moral State of England*, immensely struck the late Sir T. D. Acland, who was Mr. Gladstone's intimate friend from Oxford days till death. In acknowledging the gift of *Miscellaneous I*, which contains the sketch, he wrote to me that it was (though written many years before) the most wonderful forecast and just appraisal he ever read of what is come and coming.

This then is my conviction, that a saint more true to Christ's Name and Word I never knew or heard of. He used to say that three classes, from their antecedents, are apt to make bad brothers: clergymen, lawyers, and officers. He himself was a brilliant exception, though a lawyer first and a clergyman afterward.

A great man naturally, and as diligent a student as if he were not highly original, he was a really good man, which is much better. So, for good reason, I believed before I saw him; so taking all in all I found him, in peace and in war; and so, in the face of passing circumstances, I am assured he was to the end. Do I go too far if I add, may we be his imitators, even as he also was of Christ?

(*John Nelson Darby,* 1926, ed. by W. G. Turner, pp. 48-56.)

Was JND an Imperious Ecclesiastic?

JND pointed out somewhere that our judgments indicate our state of soul. After quoting a number of JND's letters at length, [105] W. G. Turner rightly remarked:

> This selection from his correspondence throws a new light upon the character of the man, whom those who knew him little and loved him less, persistently misrepresented as a turbulent ecclesiastic who delighted to live in the midst of religious strife and discord. [106]

W. B. Neatby was one who called him an imperious ecclesiastic. [107] S. Cheetham (Anglican) remarked:

> Darby was certainly one of the most extraordinary religious leaders of his time. While he had the most untiring energy and bodily strength, he was capable of very severe asceticism and of the highest flights of mystical {hardly} devotion. He was also a man of considerable learning. His great fault was that he never seemed capable of believing that he might be mistaken -- a fault which no doubt contributed to his success. [108]

That caricature of JND comes from those who, opposing JND's teachings, blacken him. That does have the appearance of a worldly polemic that blackens a man in order to undermine the doctrine he brings, instead of dealing with the teachings. Of course, JND was insistent upon certain doctrinal matters and repulsion of evils. Interestingly, he commended reading which was not in accordance with his own thoughts. [109] He affirmed that he had no love of controversy [110] and desired no dominion over the faith of others, [111] which, of course, does not mean that he would walk with everyone. He remarked that he could have stayed with thousands for peace, [112] but peace at any price was never his principle. He liked to be with the poor. [113] He was not at all enamored of society and social position [114] and tended to be a solitary soul. [115]

Insight into the practical aspect of his character may be gleaned from his comments on an incident concerning glasses. He spoke of this in a reading meeting, it having a practical bearing, which, sadly, I fear many today would mock.

> It is not merely a question of open sin that everybody can judge, but it is a slippery thing.
>
> A straw shows which way the wind blows; they used to put up texts on the walls, and at first they were in black and white, but now they have all kinds of beautiful things, and so on. We ought to be careful about such things. Though only a personal matter, I name it to show what I mean: I had slipped in Canada and broken my spectacles, and someone kindly gave me a gold pair of glasses. I took them and thought no more about them, for one does not look a gift horse in the mouth, as the saying is. But in Barbadoe the brethren meet in rather a dark place, and I used my glasses there. Well, the other day, I got a letter from dear S -- telling me he had spoken to a brother about the rings on his fingers -- as they are apt to wear them, for they are naturally full of vanity -- and at once he answered, 'Oh, they are not a bit worse than Mr. Darby's spectacles.' Got another pair since! This is very practical truth. There is a young woman, say, in a family, and her parents insist

105. *John Nelson Darby, A Biography*, pp. 59-64.
106. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
107. *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 51.
108. *Op. Cit.*, p. 306.
109. *Letters* 3:255, 256.
110. *Letters* 1:350.
111. *Letters* 3:382.
112. *Letters* 1:195.
113. *Collected Writings* 10:277. The reader should read this passage.
114. *Letters* 1:205. The reader should read this passage.
115. *Letters* 3:152.

> on her wearing a certain kind of dress, but others see it, and to them it becomes a snare. All this, however, is not like an open kind of sin that everybody can judge. "Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you." [116]

Commenting on Clarence B. Bass' polemic against JND, [117] Paul Wilson wrote:

> In contrast to all the unsavory things that Dr. Bass collected against Mr. J.N. Darby, we recently found a book published by Pickering and Inglis of England and Scotland, which, while giving a biography of Alfred H. Burton, B.A., M.D., happens to throw a little light on Mr. Darby. Dr. Burton edited the *Advent Witness* until 1934, and was chairman of the Prophecy Investigation Society. The book is authored by F. W. Pitt, a close friend and colleague of Dr. Burton's.
>
> Mr. Pitt said, "I know that Mr. Darby is regarded by many as a sort of religious dictator, but Dr. Burton and others who knew him well have told me that he was the most courteous and humble of men, gracious and sympathizing, counting the fame and riches of the world as naught . . . J. N. Darby died in 1882 holding Dr. Burton's hand" (pp. 27, 28). [118]

116. J. N. Darby, *Notes and Jottings*, pp. 420, 421.
117. *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960.
118. *A Defense of Dispensationalism*, Oak Park: Bible Truth Publishers.

A. Reese and Sir Robert Anderson

A. Reese (posttribulationist), a hostile critic of JND, snidely wrote:

> Darby was a great and good man, but far from infallible on ethics and truth. [119]

The right hand giveth and the left hand taketh away! And in connection with this incongruous statement, he further wrote:

> The late Sir Robert Anderson, whose duties at Scotland Yard, and association with successive statesmen at the Home Office between 1876 and 1901 brought him into contact with many of the great ones of the land in Church and State --Lord Rosebery, Gladstone, Balfour, Asquith, Chamberlain, Salisbury, etc. -- remarked to the present writer in 1906, that "Darby was the greatest man he ever met." [120]

119. *The Approaching Advent of Christ*, Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids International Publications, 1975, p. 318. I wonder where he found out that JND "sponsored a doctrine of a secret, pre-tribulation rapture, brought from the West Indies by a godly clergyman" (p. 316). His comment, "Darby superimposed a thoroughly Jewish principle -- 'Separation from Evil: God's Principle of Unity,'" tells a tale (p. 319).

120. *Ibid*

Appendix 6:

J. N. Darby's Translation Work

W. Kelly was a highly capable scholar, textual critic of the Greek NT, and expositor of Scripture. Except for Matthew, Mark and Luke, his translation [121] of the NT is found in his books; [122] and his critical comments on the English Revised Version are available in *The Bible Treasury*, which he edited. [123] Responding to a critic of JND, W. Kelly wrote:

> It is to be hoped that but few professors of the Lord's name on earth could descend so low in the blindness of ill-feeling. No man is infallible; but the translator {J. N. Darby} thus recklessly assailed contributed to present the Scriptures in English, French, and German beyond any man that ever lived; and no wonder, as he had adequate power, commanding knowledge of all helps, and spiritual acumen unequaled. [124]

Elsewhere we cited W. Kelly in speaking of JND's "linguistic skill ancient and modern." He knew English, German, French, Italian and Dutch, as well as Greek and Hebrew, (and perhaps Sanskrit) and, no doubt, Latin. JND visited for a short time in New Zealand (Sept. 15, 1875 - April 1876) and learned Maori:

> During his stay at {J. G.} Deck's home in Sandridge, Moteuka, it is said that Darby also preached to the Maoris of the district, and when he left he had learnt enough of the language to preach to them without a translator. [125]

We will now turn to A. D. Ehlert's papers on JND's translations (for which I have received from him a copyright permission) to which I will add footnotes in braces { } with additional information.

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121. F. F. Bruce (Open-Brethren) remarked:

> Translation is not simply a matter of looking up a word in a dictionary and selecting the equivalent which one would like to find in a particular passage. It is this manifest mastery of Greek usage which makes William Kelly's New Testament commentaries, especially those on Paul's epistles, so valuable. 'And you know what is restraining him now,' says the RSV of 2 Thessalonians 2:6, following some earlier interpreters. This construing of 'now' with 'what is restraining' Kelly describes as a solecism, pointing out that the 'now' is 'simply resumptive.' Kelly is right. But how did he discover that the construction of the adverb with 'what is restraining' is a solecism? No grammar-book or dictionary would tell him that; it was his wide and accurate acquaintance with Greek usage that made it plain to him, an acquaintance which is the fruit of long and patient study (*In Retrospect*, p. 293).

122. Present Truth Publishers has published a parallel JND and W. Kelly New Testament including a large collection of W. Kelly's comments on textual matters and translation difficulties: D. Ryan, *Two Nineteenth Century Versions of the New Testament.*

123. See also, for example, his *The Revelation of John, edited in Greek . . .*," London: Williams and Northgate, 1860.

124. *The Bible Treasury* 18:32.

125. P. J. Lineham, *There We Found Brethren*, p. 54. This was when J. G. Deck was recovered to the truth that fellowship with leaven leavens a person and an assembly.

The Darby Translations

BY ARNOLD D. EHLERT

We doubt that it could be said of another man that his name is attached to the whole Bible in three languages and the New Testament in two others, and that they are all in print! This can be said of John Nelson Darby (1800-1882). One publisher advertises a New Testament under his name in yet another language, Italian; but we have not been able to confirm that he did this work, even though this edition is used by the Italian Brethren. These will be taken up in turn . . .

It is from his *Letters* (published in three volumes) that we get part of the story of his translations. He was a diligent student of the original Greek. In May, 1870 he wrote from London, "Most of the day I am poring over Greek editions and MSS."

FRENCH [126]

For the French speaking Swiss he translated the New Testament into French in 1859, with subsequent editions in 1872, [127] 1875, and 1878.[128] The whole Bible was published in 1885 with a triple imprint: La Haye, Pau, and Vevey. A lengthy introduction of some twenty pages precedes the text. [129] The early French translation was known as the Pan Bible [probably a misprint for Pau] (Henry Pickering, *Chief men Among the Brethren*, 2d ed., London, p. 13).

GERMAN

In 1853 Darby first visited Elberfeld, Germany. There he worked with others in the translation of the New Testament into German. (The story is told briefly by the publishers in our issue no. 9 (Jan.-Mar.). According to them Darby's German New Testament appeared in 1855. [130] The *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* says he translated it in 1854; both dates may be correct. [131] The whole Bible appeared in 1871 (In Commission bei W. Langewiesche). [132] This first edition of the Bible carries also a Vorwort to the third edition of the New Testament. [133] In the eleventh edition, published by Brockhaus, we learn that the first edition of the Old Testament was the one being published with this third New Testament. There had been a second edition of the Bible in 1891. it mentions a second edition of the New Testament in 1865, and seventh and eighth editions in 1891.

There are differences in the text of the first and eleventh editions, which I have examined. Brockhaus has issued a 33rd edition in 1962. With the first edition of a Perlbibel in 1905, they switched to Roman type. Darby's name nowhere appears in the German Bible, which is commonly known as the Elberfeld Bible. E. E. Robertson apparently errs in calling the 1871 the third edition of the German Bible, as it is only the third edition of the New Testament which is bound with the first edition of the Old Testament (*New Translations of the Bible*, London, Naperville, 1959).

DUTCH

The story of the printing of the Dutch New Testament after the Darby pattern is told by H. Medema of Apeldoorn, Holland, publisher of the latest edition. He says that the first Dutch version appeared in 1877 after a year of labor. At that time almost the only Dutch version was their equivalent of an 'authorized' version, known as the States General. The Darby Dutch Testament was done by his followers, and was patterned after his French and English versions. A second edition appeared in 1917, with attention given to new manuscript evidence. Theile's Greek text corrected by Darby, and the latest edition of Nestle's Greek text, were used.

A third edition appeared in 1931, with very few changes from the second. The fourth bears the date 1966. The title reads: *Het Nieuwe Testament, Nieuwe Vertaling, Vierde, Herziene Druk*. It represents a major revision in order to conform to recent changes in the Dutch language. It contains a five-page introduction and the text contains 444 pages. There are footnotes containing cross references and explanations of renderings.

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126. {W. J. Lowe was an English brother who was highly capable in the French language and assisted JND in proofreading. "A Brief Account of the Life and Labors of W. J. Lowe," *Letters of Interest*, 1927.}

127. {He was working on it in June 1866 (*Letters* 1:451) and in Nov. 1869. *Letters* 2:46. See also 2:56. In July 1871 he noted it was all but complete, *Letters* 2:131.}

128. {He was working on the French OT when he was 81. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:188. See also 3:1, 7, 51, 52.}

129. {Found in English in the *Collected Writings* 13:187-203.}

130. {JND wrote:

> Though the translation was a great exercise to me, undertaken as a needed service for them, I can commend it to God and trust it to Him. I am not content with it as a work done carefully enough, but I believe we have in it the best and truest translation to be had, and the poor brethren find it very plain and easy to understand -- far more so than anything they had (*Letters* 1:243 (Elberfeld, April 20, 1855).}

131. {*Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:241. A letter dated about Jan. 25, 1855 in the *Present Testimony* says it was half done. Concerning the progress of the work, see *Ibid.*, 3:292.}

132. {A description of how this work was being done is found in *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:60, 61, 63, 65, 67.}

133. {See *Collected Writings* 13:167 ff. The preface to the German Testament and to the second edition was done by G. V. Wigram, and appeared in *The Present Testimony* 15:466-482. JND's attitude about this work is found in *Letters* 2:86 and 358: "a hewer of wood and a drawer of water." JND repeatedly said that it was for their benefit ["the poor of the flock"] more than anything else that the arduous task was undertaken." ("A Brief Account of the Life and Letters of W. J. Lowe," *Letters of Interest*, 1927.)}

ENGLISH [134]

It is rather strange that Darby's English translations appeared after his first French and German versions. [135] His English New Testament was first issued in parts, later apparently bound together into two volumes, without title page. These parts were issued by George Morrish in London. In 1868 he wrote, "I have completed my work in the New Translation." [136] In November of the same year he wrote from Duro, "The old edition renewed several times in parts was exhausted, and I wanted to get the new ready before I left England." This two-volume edition is apparently quite rare, as the British and Foreign Bible Society did not have a set until 1966, when I was able to supply them with one of the volumes. The Biola Library picked up a set from a British secondhand booklist for a very reasonable figure. It was advertised without identification, merely as "a new translation," the phrase which characterizes Darby's translations.

The dates of these parts is not known, but in his *Letters* he states that he completed them in 1878. Peculiarly, in the Introduction to a "new edition, revised," published by Morrish without date, it is stated that the original edition was dated 1871. In a letter from Elberfeld, Germany, dated January 3, 1870, Darby wrote, ". . . I have the English New Testament to complete a new edition of, in which I have examined for myself all the readings far more accurately. In the translation, save a few passages made clearer, there is no change." This discrepancy I cannot explain. [137]

Morrish issued a third edition in 1884. [138] It contained full notes, using Greek type for the words in the original, and there is a general index to the notes consisting of five pages. The text of this edition is boxed by rule lines. Loizeaux Bros. of New York issued this edition under their own imprint in 1890. Morrish put out a "new edition, revised" after 1900, but undated, with a slightly different arrangement of the index, and with addenda. His fourth edition is dated 1904. One printing of this edition states that it was "Printed in Great Britain by the Campfield Press, St. Albans." The binding is rexine. These were all unpaged. Another printing of the New Testament was issued without imprint, with the title changed to: *The New Testament from the Greek Original*, by J. N. Darby. It is paged [1145-1510] (The square brackets indicate that the first and last pages were unnumbered, but calculated.) Another unpaged printing bears the date 1920.

Darby did not himself complete the Old Testament. Most of the work was by his followers on the basis of his French and German Old Testaments. He did some revising of it. It likewise was also issued in parts, but in four bound volumes. [139] The Title is: *The "Holy Scriptures"; Commonly Called the Old Testament; a New Translation from the Hebrew Original*. Volume 4, Isaiah to Malachi, bears the date 1888. This came out in at least two different bindings. These were again gathered into one volume, which was issued in at least two printings, one in 1889 and one in 1890. My own copy is the 1890, and it carries two title pages, the first one being for the whole Bible. Apparently this was to be volume one of the Bible in two volumes, but it was bound and issued separately. The Biola Library has an 1889 printing. [140] Apart from the British Museum copy, these are the only two copies I have seen recorded.

The whole Bible in one volume dated 1872, was advertised once by a dealer named Madison, but it was sold before my order was received. It may be an error. [141]

SWEDISH

In 1961 appeared a Swedish version of the New Testament bearing J. N. Darby's name on the title page. It reads: *Nya Testamentet; en ny Översättning fran det Grekiska originalet* av J. N. Darby. The publisher is A. B. Petersons Förlag in Goteborg, who also issues a Brethren periodical, *Ordets Tjänst*. It is also sold by Stow Hill Bible and Tract Depot in Kingston-on-Thames, England. Inquiry of the Swedish publisher and the British supplier failed to draw any reply as to who did the work on this version, which I have not seen mentioned in any literature, and which of course Darby never saw. An additional note on the title page reads: "Översättning till Svenska från de Engelska, Franska och Tysda upplagorna."

ITALIAN

Two writers, Ironside and W. G. Turner, state that Darby translated the New Testament into Italian, but Mr. Abele Biginelli, a brother who has worked in Italy for over forty years, contends that Darby never did translate the New Testament into Italian. The version in use among the Italian Brethren at the present time is one entitled *Il Nuovo Testament, Nuova Versione dall' Originale Greco*, published by Presso "Il Dispensatore," in Novi Ligure. Bignelli says it was done by a Mr. Bevir Carruthers. One printing is dated 1930 and one is undated. The preface indicates that it is a revision of the Versione Nuova of Milan, 1891, done for the most part by

134. {"Mr. C. Pridham, who helped not only in that English version, but also in the Englishman's Greek Concordance, and in the late Sir C. L. Brenton's (a deceased P. B.) Septuagint, as well as in some of the best Bagster works, is also an excellent Biblical Scholar" (Wm. Reid, *Literature and Mission of the So Called Plymouth Brethren*, 1875).}

135. {This may be because he thought the need was more pressing in those languages. Cf. *Collected Writings* 14:16,17n.}

136. {*Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:535. Cf. 2:58.}

137. {Evidently he decided after completing his translation to make a more detailed enquiry into the variant readings. In July 1871 he wrote that it had been printed two or three months before, *Letters* 2:131.}

138. {The introductory notice says:

> The edition of the New Testament now put into the reader's hand is printed from a corrected copy of the second edition (1871), entirely completed by the translator before his death, and revised while going through the press, as carefully as circumstances would permit, from his own notes.}

139. {*The New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia*, article, "Whitfield, Edward Elihu," says that he edited JND's "English version of the O. T. (4 parts, London, 1883-1889)."}

140. {I will give part of the introduction later from my own copy of the 1890 edition.}

141. {There was unhappiness concerning the publication of JND's translation. For example, from *Sword and Trowel*, 1874, there is "Darbyism and Its New Bible." Another example is an anonymous paper, *The Recent Doctrines of the Five and Mr. Darby's New Bible*. Compliant was also printed in *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, 1862, pp. 293-295, by T. R. (probably Thomas Ryan), "Mr. J.N.D.: A Sketch of Some Recent Doctrines and New testament Emendations, &c."}

E. L. Bevir, and completed by his collaborators. Whether these two men are the same, I cannot say. Darlow and Moule have a note that this 1891 version was apparently promoted by the Plymouth Brethren. It was done from a critical Greek text, with reference to Diodati, which was Darby's method. He may have collaborated with Italian brethren in this version. His *Letters* state that he did study Italian and carried on Bible readings in it, [142] but do not indicate any Scripture translation in it, according to the index. Some of his works were translated early into Italian.

CHARACTERISTICS

The order of books in the Darby English Bible is normal. The text is broken into paragraphs with side verse numbering. The volume of notes varies with different editions. Poetry is shown in metrical format. Italics are used. It is not the normal practice of this journal to evaluate translations, but we think it worthwhile in this case to pass along some notes on the Darby English Bible. E. H. Robertson calls it "a rather dull but faithful rendering . . . scholarly, with useful notes" (*New Translations of the Bible*, London, Naperville, 1950, p. 64, 65). W. G. Turner in his *Brief Sketch of the Life and Labors of John Nelson Darby* (London, 1901) writes of it, ". . . an entirely free and independent rendering of the whole original text (using all known helps) . . . The revisers who used his N. T. were astonished at the amount of painstaking research exceeding that of most, if not all, as two of the best in the Company wrote to Mr. Kelly" (p. 41).

Robert Dennett of Great Britain in his *Graphic Guide to Modern Versions of the New Testament* (London, 1965), says, "If there were not the Revised Version of 1881 to recommend so strongly, [143] then the older version of J. N. Darby might well take its place for the careful student of Scripture . . . the treatment of synonyms, tense of verbs and of the definite article is generally good. Here and there the style is inclined to be heavy" (pp. 38, 39).

There is an extensive criticism of the Darby New Testament in Spurgeon's *Sword and Trowel* for November and December, 1872. The articles are unsigned, but designated as "communicated." [144] Here the Darby New Testament is called "a faulty and pitiable translation of the sacred Book" (p. 514). Three main charges are leveled:

1. Where the Authorized Version is needlessly changed, and for it a harsh and uncouth phraseology substituted.

2. Where the force of the original verb, in that which professes to be revised translation, is wholly disregarded, even in places where special stress should be laid upon it.

3. Where interpretations are put for translations even in vital passages, and supported by the aid of false renderings of Scripture.

* * * * *

Ischebeck, Gustav. *John Nelson Darby: seine Zeit und sein Werk*. Witten a. d. Ruhr, Bundes-Verlag, 1929. 191 pp.

Sturgeon, Howard E. *The Life of John Nelson Darby*. Th.M. thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1957. vi, 66 pp. [145]

Turner, W. G. *Brief Sketch of the Life and Labors of John Nelson Darby*. London, Thomas Weston, 1901. 43pp. [146]

142. {JND wrote a book on Acts in Italian, which was "translated from the Italian." So states my G. Morrish edition.}

143. {JND took strong exception to the Revised Version in "Letters on the Revised New Testament," *Collected Writings* 33:85-117. W. Kelly ran a series on it in the *Bible Treasury* vol. 13, 14 and 15. See also *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:162, 163, 180.}

144. {I think this communicator's comments indicate that he can find nothing right with the translation of JND. His introduction prepares us for it. The *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, 1862, pp. 293-295 complained bitterly also. The anonymous writer of *Mr. Darby's New Bible* compared JND's translation with a unitarian version because of places where he used the word "homage" instead of "worship." W. Kelly responded to such criticism in the *Bible Treasury* 7:191, 192.}

145. {My judgment is that this paper is of little value.}

146. *The Bible Collector*, April-June 1967, pp. 3-7.

www.presenttruthpublishers.com

The History of the Origin of the Elberfelder Bibel

GERMAN TEXT BY VERLAG R. BROCKHAUS

TRANSLATED BY REINHARD J. BUSS

The Bible translation named the "Elberfelder Bibel" is the most important work initiated by F. W. Brockhaus (1822-1899). In the entire German speaking evangelical Christendom, especially among the Evangelical Fellowship Circles, it has consistently found increasing importance. The prefaces to the First and Second editions of the New Testament, [147] the explanations of certain difficulties in translation, the footnotes, the register of the more important deviations of the text at the end of the Bible, all give insight into the magnitude of the task to which Brockhaus devoted himself. According to the preface, the purpose was not to render a scholarly work for scholars. An exact translation was intended for the simple uneducated reader.

Karl Brockhaus, who did not enjoy a higher philological or theological education, and who did not know the ancient languages, recognized through intensive research into the Word of God and through comparisons between the Dutch and English Bibles and the Luther Bible [148] many discrepancies. The conviction grew strong roots that a relatively exact word for word translation of the Bible was necessary for a true understanding of the thoughts of God. It was to be a translation which was accomplished by scholars who were believers and who based their work on the unwavering conviction of the absolute authority of the Holy Scriptures (1 Corinth. 2:11-13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

Brockhaus soon got acquainted with John Nelson Darby, a minister from England, who was a thorough scholar of the older languages. Filled with deep reverence for the living Word of God and endowed with unusual keenness of mind, Darby had for many years researched the Holy Scriptures. Darby, however, was English (Irish), and he understood little German. These two men, who were in many respects different from each other, had the same inner intentions and brought their requests to God in prayer.

God had led a young man Julius Anton von Poseck [149] to them. He was originally a lawyer and had studied Greek. At first they only considered the translation of the New Testament.

As much as can be determined today, Darby returned for a short visit to Elberfeld at the end of 1853 or beginning of 1854, in order to begin the planned work with his assistants. The work was carried out with such enthusiasm, that already in the year 1855 the New Testament, which was translated by a number of Christians from the original text, could appear in its first edition in the C. Brockhaus Publishing House, a firm commissioned by F. Hassel of Elberfeld. In view of the circumstances it is understandable that this work contained the weaknesses of a first translation to a special degree. Nonetheless, the new translation brought forth its blessings. It had the effect of a pioneering work upon the discipline of modern German Bible translating.

The New Testament was followed by the Psalms, for the translation of which Brockhaus lived for a longer period of time in England at J. N. Darby's home. The first printing of the Psalms appeared in the year 1859.

Only in the year 1869/70 was it possible for J. N. Darby to come to Elberfeld for the translation of the entire Old Testament. Also another coworker, the well-known Dutchman H. C. Voorhoeve of Rotterdam, changed his home for this reason to Elberfeld. Work was carried on with such industriousness, that already in the year 1871 the type for the entire Bible could be set.

Dr. A. Rochat of Stuttgart has earned merit for the revision of the text of the Old Testament. Apart from the routine improvements of the text, the New Testament has been completely reread by Dr. Emil Dönges, formerly at Elberfeld and later at Darmstadt. [150]

* * * * *

We have here reached the end of the quotations from the *The Bible Collector,* quoted by permission.

147. {"Preface to the German Testament," *Collected Writings* 13:167-186.}

148. {JND referred to Luther's as "the very worst translation I know," *Collected Writings* 14:16 note.}

149. {J. A. Von Poseck wrote:

> Many years ago an honored servant of Christ was engaged with a few brethren in some important translation, which the Lord had laid on his and their hearts, and at which they assisted him in their little measure. One morning, on beginning their work, he noticed a little spot of ink in his book. He took out his penknife, and whilst erasing with the greatest care the little blot, so that hardly a trace of it could be discerned, said, as if speaking to himself rather, than to those with him: "*I hate spots*." The writer of these lines, who was one of them, never forgot the lesson conveyed, though perhaps never intended by those three words. They were the most practical interpretation of the divine injunction, "hating even the garment spotted by the flesh," and "abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good," which, amongst the rest, formed the subject of their translations (*Light in Our Dwellings*, London: Morrish, n.d., pp. 209, 210).}

150. *The Bible Collector*, Jan. - Mar., 1967, pp. 7, 8.

Further Comments

The translations by J. N. Darby were made by one not only 'technically' competent, and who believed in the inerrancy of the Scripture, but by one profoundly taught in the mind of God and used by Him to revive much lost truth. It is commonly said that a translation reflects the views of the translator, hence committee translations are better and safer as minimizing this. Observe that the valued KJV translates that "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4) yet sin was in the world before the law (Rom. 5:13)! "Sin is lawlessness" (JND and WK), i.e., acting without reference to the will of God, whether before or after the law was given. Only, when the law came, sin became exceedingly sinful (Rom. 7:13) and took the form of transgression. The KJV reflects "reformed" notions concerning the law. [151] On the other hand, the NIV, a committee translation, really contains the Arminian notion that a child of God can be lost again.

JND's translation is also informed by dispensational truth. This is an immense gain. [152] And, except for translations of Matthew, Mark and Luke, W. Kelly's able translation is available, which essentially renders a second testimony in English. [153] Students of God's Word have much to be thankful for in these translations.

Concerning JND's translation of the NT, W. Kelly, probably referring to F. H. A. Scrivener, said:

> But the most learned men of the English Establishment have recorded their judgment of this English translation, which one of them, inferior as a textual critic to none in this country, recommended to his divinity classes. [154]

JND and W. Kelly did not adhere to the notion that the *textus receptus*, (the Byzantine text) which underlies the KJV *must* be followed. On the other hand, as E. E. Whitefield noted:

> W. Kelly to the end of his life shared [Dean] Burgon's conviction as to the inordinate respect in which the most ancient copies have in general been held, whilst feeling, perhaps yet more strongly than the late Dean of Chichester, that the text was really tampered with here, as was always the lecturer's belief with regard to another dozen verses in the fourth Gospel (7:53-8:11). [155]

W. Kelly well said,

> . . . I believe not merely in Providence (not at all in critical infallibility), but in the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who is not infrequently forgotten, and especially, I must say, by editors. Few have followed in the path of that godly pioneer, Bengelius. [156]

With such a view it is not surprising that years later W. Kelly was critical of Westcott and Hort. [157] In his "Letters on the Revised New Testament," of 1881, JND remarked, "I do not doubt the value of the Sinaitic and the Vatican manuscripts, but I do not accept their authority as conclusive," [158] nor did he accept the textus receptus as conclusive. [159]

It seems to me that any textual theory that excludes Mark 16:9-20 [160] and John 7:53-8:11 [161] is as wrong on one side as is a theory of the providential preservation [162] of the text that includes 1 John 5:7. [163] Both JND and W. Kelly did not share either view. It seems to me they are closer to the views of F. H. A. Scrivener. For example, F. H. A. Scrivener rejects Acts 8:37 as do JND and WK. But, then, so do Z. C. Hodges and A. Farstad for their majority text of the Byzantine tradition.

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151. W. Kelly remarked:

> "Now are we" children of God. It has been already pointed out that "sons" is not the term that the apostle here applies to us, but "children." Our translators were admirable scholars; but we require the truth in our soul to translate scripture properly, and constant dependence on the same Spirit who wrote it. If they had had to do with any other book, they would have translated it correctly; but their theological prejudices hampered them here and there as to the Bible. Their mistakes seem to have chiefly arisen out of habit. Their failure lay not in lack of learning but in traditional bias. They had found others of name before them translating in a certain way, and they followed in the same rut. "Children of God" -- what can be a nearer relationship to Him? (*First Epistle of John*, p. 188).

152. See W. Kelly, *Lectures Introductory to . . . the Minor Prophets*, pp. 414, 415.

153. D. P. Ryan, ed., *Two Nineteenth Century Versions of the New Testament*, available from Present truth Publishers. This 8 1/2" by 11" book of over 750 pages is composed of JND's translation in parallel with W. Kelly's translation work, and nearly half the volume consists of W. Kelly's notes on translation difficulties regarding many texts.

154. The *Bible Treasury* 6:235.

155. E.E.W's note in W. Kelly, *An Exposition of the Gospel of Mark*, p. 276.

156. *The Christian Annotator* 4:108 (1857).

157. *Bible Treasury* 15:208.

158. *Collected Writings* 33:115. See also *Letters* 3:129.

159. *Collected Writings* 13:188.

160. JND appreciated Dean Burgon's work, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*. See W. Kelly on Mark 16:9-20 in the *Bible Treasury* 16:335, 336.

161. See W. Kelly, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*, London: F. E. Race, 1908, pp. 173, 174, 511.

162. "We must not confound original perfectness as given of God through inspired men; and providential preservation in man's hands, spite of his feebleness and unfaithfulness in detail" (*The Bible Treasury* 7:254).

163. W. Kelly dealt with the textual criticism of 1 John 5:7, 8 in *Lectures Introductory to . . . Acts, The Catholic Epistles and the Revelation*, pp. 337-347. Z. C. Hodges and A. Farstad, *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (Nashville: Nelson, 1982), reject this verse.

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Appendix 8:

Hymns Written by J. N. Darby

These hymns and notes are from the fourth edition of *Spiritual Songs*, London: James Carter, 1918, fourth ed., a 112 page book. Necessarily, the format is changed, which included moving notes at the end of the book to the hymn for which the notes were written. Also, consecutive numbers have been added to the hymns. Note that all references to the Collected Writings of JND are for the Morrish edition.

Spiritual Songs

J. N. Darby

Fourth edition revised.

London:

James Carter, 13, Paternoster Row.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

Reissue 1918

Preface

The early Hymns in this Collection, with the exception of the first one, are already well known. The later Hymns, from pp. 45 to 76, {numbers 11-22} were bequeathed by Mr. Darby, and would have been brought out by themselves, but that the wish was expressed, that those already made public, with any others that might be obtained, should be printed with them. Hence the Hymns in their present form.

No absolute or undeviating rule has been followed in determining the text, which varies considerably, both in the manuscripts, and in the different printed issues. It may be stated generally, that, unless some after-departure has special claims, preference has been given to the form as originally completed. The original manuscripts have only slight indications of punctuation. That which seems to give the best reading has therefore been adopted. Some of the titles have appeared elsewhere: a few only are found in the original manuscripts. These are noted as "Author's Titles." The remaining titles are added for completeness.

The first Hymn, and the last four (two of which were finished, the other two being fragments), were found among Mr. Darby's papers, after his departure. One of these fragments is most interesting, as an example of his sympathy with children, which was such a sweet trait in his character. The first Hymn was quite unknown till thus found. Now, however, that the Lord's faithful servant is no longer with us, there is no further reason for its being withheld.

This Collection will afford rich enjoyment and blessing to every spiritual mind; but the Hymns being the free utterance of what the heart learned with God, are without that careful finish that would have been given to mere composition. This, however, increases their reality, and, hence, their attractiveness, for all who will appreciate their intrinsic excellence. On giving the MS. book of his later Hymns to the Editor, the Author said,

> There is one thing in all those: they are real. They are not composed; perhaps one.

Hymns such as these will only be profitably read when, in communion of spirit, careful perusal and meditation are bestowed.

It was remarked in a letter,

> It is sweet, now to think of the beloved servant at rest! How often, in his Hymns, that word 'Rest' occurs!

This is true. But though he earnestly desired this rest, [165] and could truly write of his "arduous and varied life and labor," [166] yet he never wearied of the Lord's service. Thus he wrote --

> Though thy way be long and dreary,
> Eagle strength He'll still renew
> Garments fresh and foot unweary [167]
> Tell how God hath brought thee through.

Thus, also, he wrote, on Feb. 21, 1882, just before coming to Bournemouth, during his last illness,

> I am (through mercy) better: at my age shall never be well, till all sickness is over: but through mercy work half

165. e.g. p. 6, second and two following stanzas {hymn 1, vv, 22, 25 and 26}..
166. "The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby." London; G. Morrish, 20, Paternoster Square. Vol. vi, p, 5.
167. See Note, p. 14. XXX

the day.

He had then entered his 82nd year. It was not rest only that he longed for, but the "Rest of God"; and to this his Hymns frequently refer.

In this life of labor, it was the whole Church of God which he desired to serve and feed; nor will its obligation for this service be known until the Day declares it. Christ, in supremacy in his soul -- and thus, Christ's interests in all that which related to him -- formed, as we know, his heart, and directed all he did. Hence, as his peaceful call approached, he could say,

> Christ has been the only object of my life. It has been Christ to me to live.

During his last illness, he often referred to the need of the affections being in exercise. On one occasion, within a few weeks of his departure, which took place on April 29, 1882, he remarked as follows:

> It is not the mind, but the conscience, which is the link between us and God. Yes: and when that is in a proper condition, it makes way for the affections. When we own the authority of God, *then* the affections can come into play. The Lord give us the consciousness of this, that thus His joy may be in us, and our joy be full.

May God, to this end, graciously use these beautiful Hymns, to deepen abundantly in us those divine affections towards Christ, the formation and fostering of which in the saints was always the aim of the beloved Author's ministry.

Sundridge House, Bournemouth,
October, 1883.

Preface.
To the Second Edition

In issuing a Second Edition, the opportunity has been taken to revise the punctuation.

The Preface to the First Edition is reprinted, with some alterations in form, and some slight additions.

It will be seen that the Editor has introduced a few extracts from Mr. Darby's writings, explanatory of expressions, or illustrative of the text. *He will be grateful for any reference to Mr. Darby's writings of a similar character*.

Grateful acknowledgments are here made of indebtedness for the assistance of kind friends, in this, as well as in the previous Edition.

May, 1893.

To the Third Edition

The only alterations in this Edition are some corrections in the Indexes and footnotes, and some further revision of punctuation.

Note for the Present Edition

The Notes that were at the rear of *Spiritual Songs* have been placed in footnotes to the respective hymns. The following statement headed those notes:

> The following notes, amongst other details and incidents of interest, give the grounds upon which the dates have been assigned. The earlier dates are only approximately given. The later Hymns, with the exception of "The Hope of Day," were all written during Mr. Darby's residence in Pau {France}, in the years 1879 to 1881, when the thought of Hymns addressed to "The Father" was much present to his mind. Hymns from pp. 44 to 83 {numbers 11-24 in this edition}, inclusive, are given in the order in which they were written in Mr. Darby's manuscript book.

Besides this, there is a note which indicates that Hymns 13-19 "were all written at Pau, in the same year, 1879."

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> Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain (John 15:16).

1. The Call

[1832] [168]

What powerful, mighty Voice, so near,
Calls me from earth apart --
Reaches with tones so still, so clear,
From th' unseen world my heart?

'Tis solemn: yet it draws with power
And sweetness yet unknown:
It speaks the language of an hour
When earth's for ever gone.

It soothes, yet solemnizes all!
What yet of nature is
Lies silent, through the heavenly call;
No earthly voice like this.

'Tis His. Yes, yes; no other sound
Could move my heart like this::
The Voice of Him that earlier bound
Through grace that heart to His, --

In other accents now, 'tis true,
Than once my spirit woke
To life and peace, through which it grew
Under His gracious yoke.

Blest Lord, Thou speak'st! 'Twas erst Thy Voice
That led my heart to Thee --
That drew me to that better choice
Where grace has set me free!

Then would'st Thou that I should rejoice,
And walk by faith below --
Enough, that I had heard Thy Voice,
And learnt Thy love's deep woe,

Thy glory, Lord. -- This living waste
Thenceforth no rest could give:
My path was on with earnest haste,
Lord, in Thy rest to live.

Yes! then 'twas faith, -- Thy Word: but now
Thyself [169] my soul draw'st nigh --
My soul with nearer thoughts to bow
Of brighter worlds on high.

And oh! how all that eye can see
To others now belongs!
The eternal home's so nigh to me --
My soul's eternal songs.

For Thou art near: Thou call'st me now
In love I long have known,
While waiting on Thy will below; --
Till Thou my hopes should'st crown.

168. The date of this Hymn is, it is thought, somewhere about the year 1832; but being uncertain, is placed in brackets.
169. "It is a *Person* whom we know, and not merely a doctrine." ("Synopsis of the Books of the Bible by J. N. Darby," London: G. Morrish, 20, Paternoster Square. 3rd ed., revised, vol. 3, p. 20.)

And Thou would'st have me soon with Thee;
Thou Lord my portion art:
Thou hast revealed Thyself to me --
Thy Nature to my heart!

My happiness, O Lord, with Thee
Is long laid up in store,
For that bless'd day when Thee I'd see,
And conflict all be o'er.

Yes! love Divine in Thee I know;
The Father's glories soon
Shall burst upon my ravished view --
Thyself my eternal crown!

Thou mak'st me brighter hopes to prove,
Because Thou nearer art;
With secrets of eternal love
Thou fill'st my longing heart.

How shall I leave Thee, Lord? This joy
Is from Thyself: it is
My brightest hope without alloy,
My pure, eternal bliss.

With Thee, O Lord, I all things have,--
Unclouded joy divine
In Thee, who first these "all things" gave
For ever to be mine.

Yet I will wait, in labor still
In Thy blest service here:
What Thou hast given me to fulfil --
Thy will -- to me is dear! [170]

I well can wait! Thou waitest yet
The word of that dread hour,
Which shall Thy foes for ever set
As footstool of Thy power.

Yet, Lord! were once Thy will fulfilled,
How better far with Thee,
With Thee, my joy, my strength, my shield,
In cloudless light to be.

O endless joy! how shall my heart
Thy riches all unfold:
Or tell the grace that gave me part,
In bliss no tongue hath told.

Lord! let me wait for Thee alone
My life be only this --
To serve Thee here on earth, unknown; [171]
Then share Thy heavenly bliss.

Lord, be it soon! Thou know'st our heart,
In this sad world, no rest
Can find nor wish but where Thou art:
That rest itself possessed!

Soon shall we see Thee as Thou art:
O hope for ever blessed!
Thou'lt call us, in our heavenly part --
The Father's house -- to rest.

O rest! ineffable, divine,
The Rest of God above
Where Thou for ever shalt be mine;
My joy, eternal love!

His counsels, all, fulfilled in Thee;
His work of love, complete: --
And heavenly hosts shall rest, to see
Earth blest beneath Thy feet!

---

170. "Yes, I rejoice in this light; I love to obey it. It is my meat to do the will of Him I serve; and I am glad to know it, because it is His -- glad He has deigned to communicate it to me -- glad to have it perfect as He gives it." ("Collected Writings," vol. 6, p. 104.)

171. The Church, . . . a lowly heavenly body, . . . has no portion on earth at all, as it was at the beginning -- suffering as its Head did, unknown and well known -- an unearthly witness of heavenly things on earth. ("Collected Writings,' vol.18, pp. 238, 239.)

2. The Endless Song [172] (1835)

Oh! the joy of the salvation
We possess around the throne!
Countless thoughts of admiration,
Mingling, leave that joy but one.

Hark! Ten thousand voices, crying
"Lamb of God !" with one accord:
Thousand thousand saints replying --
Bursts, at once, the echoing chord!

Long, with free and glad devotion,
Universal praise prevails,
Till, blest fruit of deep emotion,
Voice by voice in silence fails.

Now, in wondrous adoration
Dwelling on His matchless love,
Swayed with power of that salvation --
Silence fills the courts above.

Then, their richest thoughts unfolding,
Each to each, with joy divine
Heavenly converse blissful holding,
Tells how bright His glories shine.

Some on God's high glories dwelling,
Brightly beaming in His face;
Some His first-born greatness telling --
Ordering all things in their place:

These -- of Godhead's counsels deep
Him th' Accomplisher proclaim;
These -- how Jesus' self could weep, --
Of Godhead's love the witness came! [173]

All, on love surpassing rest,
That clothed in flesh the great I AM;
Till, from one heart, [174] divinely prest,
Bursts forth at length the loud exclaim,

"Praise the Lamb!" At once awaking
The gathered hosts their voices throng;
Loud and wide -- each tongue partaking --
Rolls renewed the endless song

Grateful incense this, ascending,
Rises to the Father's throne;
Every knee to Christ is bending,
All the mind in heaven is one;

All the Father's counsels claiming
Equal honours to the Son;
All the Son's effulgence beaming --
Glory of His Father's throne.

By the Spirit, all-pervading,
Radiant hosts, unnumbered round,
Breathing glory never-fading
Echo back the blissful sound!

Joyful now the wide creation
Rests in undisturbed repose;
Blest in Jesus' full salvation,
Sorrow, now, nor thraldom knows!

Rich the streams of bounty flowing --
Common blessings from above,
Life and holy joy, bestowing --
Tell of God's unwearied love,

Hark! the heavenly notes again!
Loudly swells the air-borne praise
Throughout creation's vault, "Amen!"
"Amen!" responsive joy doth raise.

---

172. This Hymn was dictated by Mr. Darby, to a friend, while confined to his bed in a dark room, during the intervals of a severe and prolonged attack of gout in the eye, about the year 1835.

A selection from it was published, in the following year, in "The Christian Hymn Book, 2nd Edition (J. B. Rowe, Plymouth), 1836," but with considerable variations, introduced by Mr. Wigram (as in other of Mr. Darby's Hymns), to make the Hymn more suitable for singing purposes.

These variations are shown *by the italics*, in the following text, which is taken from "The Christian Hymn Book"; the printing and punctuation being given as there found: --

* * * * *

"Hark! ten thousand voices crying
'Lamb of God!' with one accord,
Thousand thousand saints replying,
Wake at once the echoing chord.

'Praise the Lamb,' *the chorus waking*,
All in heav'n together throng,
Loud and *far* each tongue partaking,
Rolls *around* the endless song.

Grateful incense this, ascending
Ever to the Father's throne,
Ev'ry knee to *Jesus* bending,
All the mind in heav'n is one.

All the Father's counsels claiming
Equal hon*our* to the Son,
All the Son's effulgence beaming,
Makes the Father's *glory known*.

By the spirit all pervading,
Hosts unnumber'd round *the Lamb*,
*Crown'd with light and joy un*fading,
Hail Him as the great 'I am.'

Joyful now the *full* * creation
Rests in undisturb'd repose,
Blest in Jesu's full salvation,
Sorrow now, nor thraldom knows.

* * * * *

"Hark ! the heav'nly notes again!
Loudly swells the *song of* praise,
Throughout creation's vault, Amen!
Amen, responsive joy doth raise."

The complete Hymn, as given in this Collection, was not published in its original form, till it appeared in "The Present Testimony, vol. 9 (Groombridge, 5, Paternoster Row, London), 1857."

* "Full" in "The Christian Hymn Book," is changed to "*new*" in "Hymns for the Poor of the Flock (1, Warwick Square, London), 1838," to avoid the recurrance of the word "full" in the 3rd line; this is followed in other Hymn Books.

173. See note to Stanza 4, line 2, p. 58 {hymn 15, "Rest"}. -- Ed.

174. "One heart." Compare "With one harmonious voice," p. 62, st. 5, 1 {Hymn 16 st. 13, lines 1 and 3}. Mr. Darby, speaking of the Acts, writes, "We find a work of the same character in the description given in chap. 2, there was but *one heart*." (" Collected Writings," vol. 25, p. 501.) "Worship is the employment of heaven rendered *in common*." (" Collected Writings," vol. 7, p. 134.) See "*one heart*." Acts 4:32. -- Ed.

3. God in the Wilderness [175]

1837

Rise, my soul! Thy God directs thee;
Stranger hands no more impede:
Pass thou on; His hand protects thee --
Strength that has the captive freed.

Is the wilderness before thee --
Desert lands, where drought abides?
Heavenly springs shall there restore thee
Fresh from God's exhaustless tides.

Light Divine surrounds thy going;
God Himself shall mark thy way:
Secret blessings, richly flowing,
Lead to everlasting day.

God, thine everlasting portion,
Feeds thee with the mighty's meat; --
Price of Egypt's hard extortion
Egypt's food no more to eat!

Art thou wean'd from Egypt's pleasures?
God in secret thee shall keep:
There unfold His hidden treasures,
There His love's exhaustless deep.

In the desert God will teach thee
What the God that thou hast found;
Patient, gracious, powerful, holy --
All His grace shall there abound!

On to Canaan's rest still wending,
E'en thy wants and woes shall bring
Suited grace from high descending; --
Thou shalt taste of mercy's spring.

Though thy way be long and dreary
Eagle strength He'll still renew:
Garments fresh and foot unweary [176]
Tell how God hath brought thee through!

When to Canaan's long-loved dwelling
Love Divine thy foot shall bring,
There, with shouts of triumph swelling,
Zion's songs, in rest, to sing,

There no stranger-God shall meet thee!
Stranger thou in courts above
He who to His rest shall greet thee
Greets thee with a well-known love.

175. This Hymn was written in Switzerland, when a large number of Christians left the Swiss Free Church ("L'Eglise Libre"), after some lectures given by Mr. Darby on the Book of Exodus.

It was first published in "The Christian Hymn Book, 3rd Edition, 1837."

176. "We should be in the spirit of waiting pilgrims, not weary ones." ("Collected Writings," vol. 25. p. 168.)

4. The Saints' Rest [177]

1845

Rest of the saints above,
Jerusalem of God!
Who, in thy palaces of love,
Thy golden streets have trod

To me thy joy to tell?
Those courts secure from ill,
Where God Himself vouchsafes to dwell,
And every bosom fill!

Who shall to me that joy
Of saint-thronged courts declare --
Tell of that constant, sweet employ,
My spirit longs to share?

That rest, secure from ill,
No cloud of grief e'er stains;
Unfailing praise each heart doth fill,
And love eternal reigns.

The Lamb is there, my soul!
There God Himself doth rest
In love Divine -- diffused through all --
With Him supremely blest.

God and the Lamb! 'Tis well
I know that source Divine
Of joy and love, no tongue can tell --
Yet know that all is mine.

And see! The Spirit's power
Has oped the heavenly door,
Has brought me to that favored hour
When toil shall all be o'er.

There on the hidden Bread
Of Christ once humbled here,
God's treasured store, forever fed, --
His love my soul shall cheer.

Called by that secret name
Of undisclosed delight
(Blest answer to reproach and shame)
Graved on the stone of white,

There in effulgence bright,
Savior and Guide, with Thee
I'll walk, and in Thy heavenly light
Whiter my robe shall be!

There, in th' unsullied way
Which His Own hand hath dressed
My feet press on, where brightest day
Shines forth on all the rest. [178]

But who that glorious blaze
Of living light shall tell --
Where all His brightness God displays,

177. This was first published, on Mr. Darby's return from Switzerland in 1845, in the form of a leaflet (T. B. Bateman, 1, Ivy Lane, London); and afterwards, in "The Prospect, vol. 1 (S. Barber, Smith Street, Guernsey), 1848."

178. That is, on the whole realm of the Saints' rest. -- Ed.

And the Lamb's glories dwell?

There, only to adore
My soul its strength may find --
Its life, its joy for evermore,
By sight nor sense defined.

God and the Lamb shall there
The light and temple be;
And radiant hosts, forever, share
The unveiled mystery!

5. Unchanging Love [179]

1845

O LORD, Thy love's unbounded!
So sweet, so full, so free:
My soul is all transported,
Whene'er I think of Thee.

Yet Lord, alas! what weakness
Within myself I find;
No infant's changing pleasure
Is like my wandering mind.

And yet, Thy love's unchanging,
And doth recall my heart
To joy, in all its brightness --
The peace its beams impart!

Yet sure, if in Thy Presence
My soul still constant were,
Mine eye would, more familiar,
Its brighter glories bear:

And thus, Thy deep perfections
Much better should I know,
And, with adoring fervor,
In this Thy nature grow.

Still, sweet 'tis to discover,
If clouds have dimmed my sight,
When passed, Eternal Lover,
Towards me, as e'er, Thou'rt bright.

Oh guard my soul, then, Jesus,
Abiding still with Thee;
And if I wander, teach me
Soon back to Thee to flee;

That all Thy gracious favor
May to my soul be known,
And versed in this Thy goodness
My hopes Thyself shalt crown!

179. Written on the top of a coach, while trying to recall a Hymn by Mr. Deck, beginning with the same words, well known to many.

It appeared on the same leaflet with the above {Hymn 4, above}; and in "The Prospect, vol. 1, 1848."

6. A Song for the Wilderness [180]

1849

This world is a wilderness wide:
I have nothing to seek or to choose --
I've no thought in the waste to abide --
I've nought to regret nor to lose.

The Lord is Himself gone before;
He has marked out the path that I tread:
It's as sure as the love I adore;
I have nothing to fear nor to dread.

There is but that one, in the waste,
Which His footsteps have marked as His own;
And I follow, in diligent haste,
To the seats where He's put on His crown.

For the path where my Savior is gone,
Has led up to His Father and God --
To the place where He's now on the throne:
And His strength shall be mine on the road.

And with Him shall my rest be on high,
When, in holiness bright, I sit down,
In the joy of His love, ever nigh --
In the peace that His Presence shall crown.

'Tis the treasure I've found in His love
That has made me a pilgrim below;
And 'tis there, when I reach Him above,
As I'm known, all His fulness I'll know.

And, Savior! 'tis Thee, from on high,
I await, till the time Thou shalt come
To take him Thou hast led by Thine eye
To Thyself, in Thy heavenly home.

Till then, 'tis the path Thou hast trod
My delight and my comfort shall be:
I'm content with Thy staff and Thy rod,
Till, with Thee, all Thy glory I see.

180. Author's Title.

The manuscript of this was given by Mr. Darby, to a friend, at Montpellier, in 1849.

It was first published in "The Prospect, vol. 1, 1849": and is called "A Song for the Wilderness," in "The Present Testimony, vol. 1, 1849."

In the previous Edition, the Title "A Song for the Wilderness," was, in error, attached to the Hymn which commences, "Rise, my soul! Thy God directs thee" (p. 12). It belongs, however, to this Hymn, "This world is a wilderness wide."

7. Patience of Hope [181]

1856

O Jesus, precious Savior,
Oh! when wilt Thou return?
Our hearts, with woe familiar,
To Thee, our Master, turn.

Our woe is Thine, Lord Jesus!
Our joy is in Thy love:
But woe and joy all lead us
To Thee, in heaven above.

We ponder the long story
Of this world's mournful ways;
We think on holy glory,
With Thee, through endless days.

We see God's gracious order
All spoiled by man below --
See all around disorder, [182]
Meek hearts beset with woe.

Where'er we ope the pages,
In which -- Thy wondrous word!
Man's path through varied ages
Is given us to record, --

Of failure, ruin, sorrow,
The story still we find:
God's love but brings the morrow
Of evil in mankind.

To Thee we look, Lord Jesus,
To Thee, whose love we know;
We wait the power that frees us
From bondage, sin, and woe.

We look for Thine appearing --
Thy Presence here to bless;
We greet the day that's nearing,
When all this woe shall cease.

But oh, for us, blest Savior,
How brighter far the lot,
With Thee to be for ever,
Where evil enters not!

To see Thee, who'st so loved us,
Then face to face above,
Whose grace at first had moved us
To taste, and know, Thy love!

With Thee, O Lord, for ever,
Our souls shall be content;
Nor act, nor thought, shall ever
Full joy with Thee prevent.

Thy Father's perfect favor
Our dwelling-place shall be;
And all His glory, ever,
Shine forth on us and Thee.

Oh, come then soon, Lord Jesus;
In patience still we wait
(Await the power that frees us)
Our longed-for heavenly seat!

8. The Upward Way [183]

1856

Sing! without ceasing sing
The Savior's present grace;
How all things shine
In light Divine,
For those who've seen His face!

He's gone within the veil,
For us that place He's won;
In Him we stand,
A heavenly band,
Where He Himself is gone.

There all's unsullied light;
My heart lets in its rays:
And heavenly light
Makes all things bright,
Seen in that blissful gaze!

Such here on earth, I am,
Though I in weakness roam;
My place on high,
God's Self, so nigh;
His Presence is my home.

My heart is filled with bliss --
Heaven's own eternal joys
My soul at rest --
Of peace possessed --
That world its strength employs.

Thus, in divine delight
Of love so richly known,
God's works below
With beauty glow;
His hand, His grace, I own:

And stayed by joy divine,
As hireling fills his day, [184]
Through scenes of strife,
And desert life,
I tread in peace my way.

That way is upward still --
Where life and glory are;

181. First appeared in "The Present Testimony, vol. 14, (Groombridge, 5, Paternoster Row, London), 1862."

182. "He sees around him a confusion, a disorder, in the condition of those set as masters over the lower part of this creation, which tells a tale of their moral position before God, which no wit of his can solve; . . . which shows some mighty moral relationship in disorder, proving by its very greatness that it must refer to God, and hence that it is only His coming into it which can give the key to all, or set it right in fact." ("Collected Writings," vol. 6, pp. 46, 47.)

183. First came out in "The Present Testimony, vol. 14, (Groombridge), 1862."

184. "All is a vain show around us; but that which is inside abides. When the heart gets hold of this fact, it becomes like one taken into the house to work for the day; performs the duties well, but passes through, instead of living in the circumstances . . . The Lord keep us going on in simplicity, *fulfilling as a hireling our day*, till Christ shall come, and *then* shall every man have praise of God." Aug. 7, 1863. At the Priory tea meeting, before leaving for America. (Fryer, 7, Byron Place, Bristol.)

My rest's above:
In perfect love
The glory I shall share: --

For ever with the Lord,
For ever like Him then, --
And see His face
In that blest place,
My Father's house in heaven!

9. Home [185]

1867

Oh! bright and blessed scenes,
Where sin shall never come:
Whose sight my longing spirit weans
From earth, where yet I roam.

And can I call my home,
My Father's house on high?
The Rest of God, my rest to come,
My place of liberty?

Yes! In that light unstained,
My stainless soul shall live;
My heart's deep longings more than gained,
When God His rest shall give!

His Presence there -- my soul
Its rest, its joy untold,
Shall find: -- when endless ages roll,
And time shall ne'er grow old.

My God the center is:
His Presence fills that land;
And countless myriads -- own'd as His --
Round Him adoring stand.

My God, whom I have known --
Well known in Jesus' love,
Rests in the blessing of His own
Before Himself above.

Glory supreme is there --
Glory that shines through all;
More precious still that love to share
As those that love did call!

Like Jesus, in that place
Of light and love supreme, --
Once Man of sorrows, full of grace;
Heaven's blest and endless theme!

Like Him! O grace supreme!
Like Him before Thy face!
Like Him -- to know that glory beam
Unhindered, face to face!

O love, supreme and bright,
Good to the feeblest heart, --
That gives me now, as heavenly light,
What soon shall be my part!

Be not to me, my God,
As one that turned aside
To tarry for the night, and trod
His onward path. Abide

With me, as light Divine
That brings into my breast
Those gladdening scenes e'en now, as mine, --
Soon my eternal rest.

10. The Man of Sorrows [186]

1867

O ever homeless Stranger,
Thus, dearest Friend to me;
An outcast in a manger,
That Thou might'st with us be!

How rightly rose the praises
Of heaven that wondrous night --
When shepherds hid their faces
In brightest angel-light!

More just those acclamations,
Than when the glorious band
Chanted earth's deep foundations, --
Just laid by God's right hand.

Come now, and view that manger --
The Lord of Glory see,
A houseless, homeless Stranger,
In this poor world, for thee --

"*To God, in the highest, glory,*
And peace on earth" to find;
And learn that wondrous story,
"Good pleasure in mankind."

*How blessed those heavenly spirits,
Who joy increasing find,
That spite of our demerits
God's pleasure's in mankind;

*And chant the highest glory
Of Him they praise above,
In telling out the story,
Of God come down in love!

* The insertion of these two verses was left doubtful in the original manuscript. -- Ed.

185. Author's Title.

In "Present Testimony, a new series, vol. 1, (Groombridge), 1867"; and called there, "Home."

186. This was written during a severe illness, in Canada, in which it was thought he was dying, and when medical aid had been in vain pressed upon him. He got up, although weak; wrote the Hymn; and was then obliged to go to bed again, for the remainder of his illness.

First printed in "Words of Truth, vol. 1 (R. L. Allan,. 75, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow), 1867"; where it is called "The Man of Sorrows." It was thence copied into the "Present Testimony, a new series, vol. 1, 1867," with acknowledgment.

Oh, strange, yet fit beginning
Of all that life of woe,
In which Thy grace was winning
Poor man his God to know!

Bless'd Babe! who lowly liest
In manger-cradle there;
Descended from the highest,
Our sorrows all to share:

Oh, suited now in nature
For Love's Divinest ways,
To make the fallen creature
The vessel of Thy praise!

O Love! all thought surpassing!
That Thou should'st with us be:
Nor yet, in triumph passing;
But human infancy!

We cling to Thee in weakness --
The manger and the cross;
We gaze upon Thy meekness,
Through suffering, pain, and loss;

There see the Godhead glory
Shine through that human veil;
And, willing, hear the story
Of Love that's come to heal!

My soul in secret follows
The footsteps of His love;
I trace the Man of sorrows,
His boundless grace to prove.

A child in growth and stature,
Yet full of wisdom rare:
Sonship, in conscious nature,
His words and ways declare.

Yet still, in meek submission,
His patient path He trod,
To wait His heavenly mission,
Unknown to all but God.

But who, Thy path of service,
Thy steps removed from ill,
Thy patient love to serve us,
With human tongue can tell?

Midst sin, and all corruption,
Where hatred did abound,
Thy path of true perfection
Was Light on all around.

In scorn, neglect, reviling,
Thy patient grace stood fast;
Man's malice unavailing
To move Thy heart to haste.

O'er all, Thy perfect goodness
Rose blessedly Divine;
Poor hearts oppressed with sadness,
Found ever rest in Thine!

The strong man in his armor
Thou mettest in Thy grace;
Did'st spoil the mighty charmer
Of our unhappy race.

The chains of man, his victim,
Were loosened by Thy hand,
No evils that afflict him
Before Thy power could stand.

Disease, and death, and demon,
All fled before Thy word --
As darkness, the dominion
Of day's returning lord!

The love, that bore our burden
On the accursed tree,
Would give the heart its pardon,
And set the sinner free!

Love, that made Thee a mourner
In this sad world of woe,
Made wretched man a scorner
Of grace -- that brought Thee low;

Still, in Thee, love's sweet savor
Shone forth in every deed;
And showed God's loving favor
To every soul in need.

* * * * *

I pause: -- for, in Thy vision,
The day is hastening now,
When, for our lost condition,
Thy holy head shall bow;

When, deep to deep still calling,
The waters reach Thy soul,
And -- death and wrath appalling --
Their waves shall o'er Thee roll.

O day of mightiest sorrow,
Day of unfathomed grief;
When Thou should'st taste the horror
Of wrath, without relief: [187]

O day of man's dishonor!
When, for Thy love supreme,
He sought to mar Thine honor,
Thy glory turn to shame: [188]

O day of our confusion !
When Satan's darkness lay,
In hatred and delusion,
On ruined nature's way.

---

187. "For Him, death was death. Man's utter weakness, Satan's extreme power, and God's just vengeance, -- and alone, without one sympathy, forsaken of those whom He had cherished, -- the rest, his enemies, -- Messiah delivered to Gentiles and cast down, the judge washing his hands of condemning innocence, the priests interceding against the guiltless instead of for the guilty -- all dark, without one ray of light even from God. ("Collected Writings," vol. 7, p. 258.)

188. "For His faith the cup is already given Him . . . Jesus having bowed to this, men availed themselves of it to trample on Him." ("Collected Writings," vol. 7, p. 353.)

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Thou soughtest for compassion
Some heart Thy grief to know,
To watch Thine hour of passion --
For comforters [189] in woe:

No eye was found to pity --
No heart to bear Thy woe ;
But shame, and scorn, and spitting, --
None cared Thy Name to know.

The pride of careless greatness
Could wash its hands of Thee:
Priests, that should plead for weakness,
Must Thine accusers be!

Man's boasting love disowns Thee;
Thine own Thy danger flee;
A Judas only owns Thee --
That Thou may'st captive be.

O man ! How hast thou proved
What in thy heart is found ;
By grace Divine unmoved,
By self in fetters bound.

Yet, with all grief acquainted,
The Man of sorrows view,
Unmoved -- by ill untainted --
The path of grace pursue.

In death, obedience yielding
To God His Father's will,
Love still its power is wielding
To meet all human ill.

On him who had disowned Thee
Thine eye could look in love --
'Midst threats and taunts around Thee --
To tears of grace to move.

What words of love and mercy
Flow from those lips of grace,
For followers that desert Thee;
For sinners in disgrace!

The robber learned beside Thee,
Upon the cross of shame --
While taunts and jeers deride Thee --
The savor of Thy Name.

Then, finished all, in meekness
Thou to Thy Father's hand
(Perfect Thy strength in weakness,)
Thy spirit dost commend.

O Lord ! Thy wondrous story
My inmost soul doth move;
I ponder o'er Thy glory
Thy lonely path of love!

But, O Divine Sojourner
'Midst man's unfathomed ill,
Love, that made Thee a mourner,
It is not man's to tell!

We worship, when we see Thee
In all Thy sorrowing path;
We long soon to be with Thee
Who bore for us the wrath!

Come then, expected Saviour;
Thou Man of Sorrows come!
Almighty, blest Deliverer!
And take us to Thee -- home.

11. The Tree of Life [190]

1870

Soon we taste the endless sweetness
Of the Tree of life above;
Taste its own eternal meetness
For the heavenly land we love!

In eternal counsels founded --
Perfect now in fruit Divine;
When the last blest trump has sounded,
Fruit of God for ever mine!

Fresh, and ever new, are hanging
Fruits of life on that blest Tree;
There is stilled each earnest longing --
Satisfied my soul shall be:

Safety -- where no foe approaches;
Rest -- where toil shall be no more;
Joy [191] -- whereon no grief encroaches;
Peace -- where strife shall all be o'er!

Various fruits, of richest flavor,
Offers still the Tree Divine:
One itself, the same for ever,
All its various fruits are mine!

Where deceiver ne'er can enter,
Sin-soiled feet have never trod,
Free, our peaceful feet may venture
In the paradise of God;

Drink of life's perennial river,
Feed on life's perennial food --
Christ the fruit of life, and giver --
Safe through His redeeming blood!

Object of eternal pleasure;
Perfect in Thy work Divine;
Lord of glory ! Without measure,
Worship, joy, and praise are Thine!

189. (" Ditto," ditto, pp. 290, 291: the whole passage.)

190. Author's Title.

First published in "A Voice to the Faithful, vol. 4, (24, Warwick Lane, London), 1870." It is called "The Tree of Life," in "The Streams, (Tract Depot, Warwick Lane)."

191. "In spirit, we are in heaven. We are in Christ, who fills it with His Glory and His perfections ... Holiness and love and joy characterize the land. They are the fruits which grow there spontaneously, as are the thanksgivings that arise in the hearts of those who are there through redeeming power." ("Collected Writings," vol. 7, p. 185.)

But, my soul ! hast thou not tasted
Of that Tree of life on high?
As through desert lands thou'st hasted,
Eshcol's grapes been never nigh?

Ah! that Tree of life was planted,
Rooted deep in love Divine,
Ere the sons of God had chanted
Worlds where creature glories shine!

Love Divine without a measure
Godhead glory must reveal;
In the Object of its pleasure [192]
All its ways of grace must seal.

As a tender sucker, rising
From a dry and stony land,
Object of man's proud despising,
Grew the Plant of God's right hand!

Grace and truth, in love unceasing,
Rivers on the thirsty ground --
Every step to God well pleasing --
Spread their heavenly savor round.

He the Father's Self revealing, --
Heavenly words none else could tell,
Words of grace, each sorrow healing,
On the ear of sorrow fell.

Yes ! that Tree of life is planted;
Sweetest fruit e'en here has borne!
To its own rich soil transplanted,
Waits alone the eternal morn:

Fruits that our own souls have tasted
By the Spirit from above,
While through desert lands we've hasted: --
Fruits of perfect, endless love!

12. The Hope of Day [193]

1872

And is it so? I shall be like Thy Son!
Is this the grace which He for me has won?
Father of glory! Thought beyond all thought;
In glory to His Own blest likeness brought.

O Jesus Lord: who loved me like to Thee?
Fruit of Thy work! With Thee too, there to see
Thy glory, Lord, while endless ages roll,
Myself the prize and travail of Thy soul.

Yet it must be! Thy love had not its rest,
Were Thy redeemed not with Thee fully blest;
That love that gives not as the world, but shares
All it possesses, with its loved co-heirs!

Nor I alone; Thy loved ones all, complete
In glory around Thee, with joy shall meet!
All like Thee: for Thy glory like Thee, Lord !
Object supreme of all, by all adored!

And yet it must be so! A perfect state,
To meet Christ's perfect love -- what we await ;
The Spirit's hopes, desires, in us inwrought,
Our present joy -- with living blessings fraught.

The heart is satisfied; can ask no more;
All thought of self is now for ever o'er:
Christ, its unmingled Object, fills the heart
In blest adoring love -- its endless part.

Father of mercies, in Thy Presence bright
All this shall be unfolded in the light;
Thy children, all, with joy Thy counsels know
Fulfilled; patient in hope, while here below.

13. Sons [194]

1879

Father! Thy Name our souls would bless
As children taught by grace;
Lift up our hearts in righteousness,
And joy before Thy face!

Sweet is the confidence Thou giv'st,
Though high above our praise;
Our hearts resort to where Thou liv'st
In heaven's unclouded rays.

There, in the purpose of Thy love,
Our place is now prepared,
As sons with Him who is above --
Who all our sorrows shared.

Eternal ages shall declare
The riches of Thy grace
To those who with Thy Son shall share
A son's eternal place.

Absent as yet, we rest in hope,
Treading the desert path --
Waiting for Him who takes us up
Beyond the power of death.

Unchanging glory fills the place
Where Jesus dwells on high;
But brighter joy our spirits trace
With Him, for ever nigh!

We joy in Thee; Thy holy love

192. "God Himself must have an object worthy of Himself to be the subject of His purposes, and in order to unfold all His affections. This object is the glory of His Son -- His Son Himself." ("Synopsis," 2nd ed. Revised, vol. 5, p. 69.)

193. Author's Title.

In "A Voice to the Faithful, vol. 4, (24, Warwick Lane, London), 1872."

Entitled, in Mr. Darby's manuscript, "The Hope of Day."

194. Written at Pau, in the South of France, 1879. Mr. Darby first concluded this hymn thus;

"In holiness Thou keep'st us here,
With all a Father's love;
As Jesus loved -- we have no fear,
Taught, led, by Thee above."

Our endless portion is;
Like Thine Own Son, with Him above,
In brightest heavenly bliss:

His Father Thou,-- and ours thro' grace, --
We taste the same delight --
Blest in the brightness of Thy face,
In heaven's unclouded light.

Father! Thy love my portion is,
As son -- like Christ -- with Thee;
Oh, who can tell of love like this,
So sov'reign, full, and free!

O Holy Father, keep us here
In that blest name of Love;
Walking before Thee without fear,
Till all be joy above.

14. Echo of Songs in the Night [195]

1879

To live of Thee -- blest Source of deepest Joy!
To hear e'en now by faith Thy voice of love --
Thou living spring of bliss without alloy,
Bright inlet to the light of heaven above!

Come, fill my soul! Thy light is ever pure,
And brings from heaven what Thou alone canst give,
Yea, brings Thyself, the revelation sure
Of heaven's eternal bliss: in Thee we live.

I hail Thee, Lord! Of Thee my song shall speak, --
Poor and unworthy strains, yet still of Thee:
Yes, fill my soul! 'tis this my heart doth seek --
To dwell in love, and God my dwelling be.

Thou'st made the Father known: Him have we seen
In Thy blest Person: infinite delight.
Yes, it suffices: though we here but glean
Some foretaste of His love -- till all be light.

O! dwell with me; let no distracting thought
Intrude to hide from me that heavenly light:
Be Thou my strength! Let not what Thou hast brought
Be chased by idle nature's poor delight.

Father, Thou lov'st me. Favor, all divine,
Rests on my soul: a cloudless favor! There
Thy face shines on me, as it still doth shine
On Thy blest Son! His image I shall bear!

But now, e'en now, Thy love can fill my soul --
That love that soars beyond all creature thought --
In spirit bring where endless praises roll;
And fill my longing heart till there I'm brought.

Thee will I hail, O Lord! in whose blest face
Gcd's glory shines unveiled! Thee will I praise,
Whose love has brought me nigh in righteous grace;
And soon wilt come, eternal songs to raise!

* * * * *

And oh ! how deep the peace, when, nature gone,
Thy Spirit fills the soul strengthened with might
With love divine; and God, as Love, is known!
Lord! keep my soul, and guide my steps aright.

* * * * *

Praise be for ever His who giveth songs by night!

15. Rest

1879

There is rest for the weary soul --
There is rest in the Saviour's love;
There is rest in the grace that has made me whole --
That seeks out those that rove.

There is rest in the tender love
That has trodden our path below;
That has given us a place in the realms above,
But can all our sorrows know!

There is rest, in the calming grace
That flows from those realms above;
What rest in the thought! we shall see His face,
Who has given us to know His love!

There is rest in the midst of grief --
For grief's been the proof of love; [196]
'Tis sweet in that love to find relief,
When the sorrows of earth we prove.

There is rest in the Savior's heart
Who never turned sorrow away,
But has found, in what sin had made our part,
The place of His love's display.

There is rest in the blessed yoke
That knows no will but His;
That learns from His path, and the words He spoke,
What that loving patience is!

Where He too has gone before,
Is the path which we have to tread;
And it leads to the rest where sorrow's o'er --
To the place where His steps have led.

195. Entitled, in Mr. Darby's manuscript book, "Echo of Songs in the Night."

196. The "Christian . . . sees in the *sorrow*, such as none ever had (for who could have such?), of God come down to carry man's" [sorrow], "and redeem and bring him out of it, *the proof of that love* which makes God known, alike in its greatness, and its nearness, -- in its height above sin, and its condescension to those sunk in it." (" Collected Writings," vol. 6, p. 49.)

"In this world of sin and misery Christ necessarily suffered -- suffered also because of righteousness, and *because of His love*. Morally, this feeling of sorrow is the necessary consequence of possessing a moral nature totally opposed to everything that is in the world. *Love*, holiness, veneration for God, love for man, -- everything *is essential suffering here* below." ("Synopsis," new ed. Revised, vol. 4, p. 176. See Luke 19:41-44; John 11:35, 36. -- Ed.

16. Fulness of Joy

1879

Oh! bright and blessed hope!
When shall it be,
That we His face, long loved,
Revealed shall see?

Oh! when -- without a cloud --
His features trace,
Whose faithful love so long
We've known in grace; --

That love itself enjoy --
Which ever true
Did, in our feeble path,
Its work pursue?

O Jesus, not unknown --
Thy love shall fill
The heart in which Thou dwell'st,
And shalt dwell still!

Still Lord! to see Thy face, --
Thy voice to hear --
To know Thy present love
For ever near --

To gaze upon Thyself
(So faithful known)
Long proved in secret help
With Thee alone --

To see that love content
On me flow forth;
For ever Thy delight,
Clothed with Thy worth!

O Lord! 'twas sweet the thought
That Thou wast mine:
But brighter still the joy
That I am Thine!

Thine own, O Lord! the fruit,
The cherished fruit,
Of Thine all perfect love! --
No passing root

Of evil, e'er, will dim
Thy cloudless rays;
But a full heart pour forth
Thine endless praise!

Nor what is next Thy heart
Can we forget: --
Thy saints, O Lord, with Thee
In glory met

(Perfect in comeliness
Before Thy face --
Th' eternal witness all
Of Thine Own grace),

Together then their songs
Of endless praise,
With one harmonious voice,
In joy shall raise!

O joy supreme and full!
Where sunless day
Sheds forth, with light Divine,
Its cloudless ray!

17. The Father's Love [197]

1879

Blest Father! infinite in grace!
Source of eternal joy!
Thou lead'st our hearts to that blest place
Where rest's without alloy.

There will Thy love find perfect rest,
Where all around is bliss;
Where, all in Thee supremely blest,
Thy praise their service is!

Eternal love their portion is,
Where love has found its rest;
And, filled with Thee, the constant mind
Eternally is blest!

There Christ, the center of the throng,
Shall in His glory shine;
But not an eye those hosts among
But sees that glory Thine!

Thy counsels too in all Thine own
Fulfilled by power Divine
Spread wide the glory of Thy Throne --
Where all in glory shine.

Yet deeper if a calmer joy
The Father's love shall raise;
And every heart find sweet employ
In His eternal praise!

---

197. (1.) Other manuscript readings of verse 2, given under one view, are as follows; --

"Thy love will find its perfect rest,
{Where all around is joy;
{Where all around is bliss;
Where, all in Thee supremely blest,
{Thou'llt all}
{Thou shalt} their powers employ.
{Thy love their portion is."

(2.) Another form of this verse runs thus: --

"Adoring love its fulness finds
In Thee who that love art,
And, perfect there, our heavenly minds
Live in what fills the heart."

(3.) v. 4. lines 1, 2, in Mr. Darby's MS. book, read; --

"There Christ, the center of the throng,
Himself shall in it shine."

(4.) In place of the two last verses given in the text, the following verse, with a variation, occurs in the manuscripts; --

"Yet more than all -- a Father's love
{Doth deeper joy recall;
{Runs as one thrill through all;
And is, where all is bliss above,
The chiefest song of all!"

Nor is its sweetness now unknown --
Well proved in what it's done:
Our Father's love, with joy, we own
Revealed in Christ the Son!

18. The Father's Grace [198]

1879

Father! in Thine eternal power --
Thy grace -- and majesty Divine --
No soul, in this weak mortal hour,
Can grasp the glory that is Thine!

E'en in its thoughts of sovereign grace
It leaves us all far, far behind;
The love that gives with Christ a place
Surpasses our poor feeble mind!

And yet, that love is not unknown,
To those who have the Saviour seen;
Nor strange to those He calls His own --
Pilgrims in scenes where He has been.

In Him Thy perfect love, revealed,
Has led our hearts that love to trace
Where nothing of that love's concealed,
But meets us in our lowly place!

But grace, the source of all our hope,
From Thine eternal Nature flows:
Could to our lost condition stoop,
And now through Christ no hindrance knows;

Has flowed, in fullest streams, below;
And opened to our hearts the place
Where, in its ripened fruits, we'll know
The eternal blessings of that grace!

And here we walk, as sons through grace,
A Father's love our present joy:
Sons, in the brightness of Thy face,
Find rest no sorrows can destroy!

Nor is the comfort of Thy love,
In which we "Abba, Father" cry,
The only blessing that we prove;
Because that love is ever nigh --

A holy Father's constant care
Keeps watch, with an unwearying eye, --
To see what fruits His children bear,
Fruits that may suit their calling high;

Takes ever knowledge of our state --
What dims communion with His love --
Might check our growth -- or separate
Our hearts from what's revealed above.

Oh, wondrous Love! that ne'er forgets
The objects of its tender care:
May chasten still, while sin besets,
To warn and guard them where they are --

But ne'er forgets; but feeds them still
With tokens of His tender love;
Will keep, till, freed from every ill,
They find their rest with Him above!

Oh! wondrous, infinite, Divine!
Keep near, my soul, to that blest place,
Where all those heavenly glories shine
Which suit the brightness of His face!

O lowliness, how feebly known,
That meets the grace that gave the Son!
That waits, to serve Him as His own,
Till grace what grace began shall crown!

19. Waiting for the Glory [199]

1879

I'm waiting for the glory:
Are your thoughts with me too?
It is the old, old story,
But all most sweetly true.

I'm waiting for the glory:
Jesus Himself is there;
He's gone on high before me --
Calls me with Him to share.

Jesus, the Lord, did love us --
Will love us to the end;
And lifts our hearts above us,
To love that will not end!

For the day is nearing, nearing,
When we shall see His face;
Each step the way endearing,
Which leads to that blest place.

For Jesus comes with power --
To change these bodies vile,
Or raise them (in that hour)
From where they rest awhile.

Then shall His soul's deep travail
Find its love-fraught reward;
Nor joy, nor promise shall fail,
With Him, like Him, their Lord!

But who's this all-glorious Lord,
To whom each knee doth bow?
The Sorrower, once abhorred!
The Lord in His glory now!

Art waiting for the glory?
Thy thoughts go with me too!
Yes! 't is the old, old story
But all most sweetly true!

198. This Hymn was written for an invalid who was in great suffering.

199. Entitled, in Mr. Darby's manuscript book, "Sonnet."

20. Love Divine [200]

1880

Father! Thy sovereign love has sought
Captives to sin, gone far from Thee:
The work that Thine Own Son hath wrought
Has brought us back -- in peace, and free!

And now, as sons before Thy face,
With joyful steps the path we tread,
Which leads us on to that blest place
Prepared for us by Christ, our Head.

Thou gav'st us in eternal love
To Him, to bring us home to Thee --
Suited to Thine Own thoughts above;
As sons, like Him, with Him to be

In Thine own house! There Love Divine
Fills the bright courts with cloudless joy;
But 'tis the love that made us Thine
Fills all that house without alloy!

Oh, boundless grace! What fills with joy
Unmingled all that enter there --
God's Nature, Love without alloy --
Our hearts are given e'en now to share!

God's righteousness with glory bright,
Which with its radiance fills that sphere,
E'en Christ -- of God the power and light --
Our title is that light to share.

'O Mind Divine! so must it be,
That glory, all, belongs to God!
O Love Divine! that did decree
We should be part, through Jesus' blood!

Oh, keep us, Love Divine, near Thee, --
That we our nothingness may know;
And ever to Thy glory be
Walking in faith while here below.

21. Hope [201]

1881

And shall we see Thy face!
And hear Thy heavenly voice,
Well known to us in present grace!
Well may our hearts rejoice.

With Thee, in garments white,
O Jesus! we shall walk;
And, spotless, in that heavenly light
Of all Thy sufferings talk.

Close to Thy trusted side,
In fellowship divine,
No cloud, no distance e'er shall hide
Glories, that there shall shine!

Fruit of Thy boundless love
That gave Thyself for us --
For ever we shall, with Thee, prove
That Thou still lov'st us thus!

And we love Thee, blest Lord!
E'en now, though feeble here,
Thy sorrows, and Thy cross record
What makes us know Thee near.

We wait to see Thee, Lord;
Yet now within our hearts
Thou dwell'st in love, that doth afford
The joy *that* [202] love imparts.

Yet still we wait for Thee,
To see Thee as Thou art!
Be with Thee, like Thee, Lord! and free
To love with all our heart!

22. Unfoldings [203]

1881

O Lord! Thy glory we behold,
Though not with mortal eyes:
That glory on the Father's throne,
No human sight descries!

But though the world can see no more
Him it cast out with scorn,
The eye of fresh-born faith can soar
Above -- where He is gone.

'Tis not for human eye to see
Nor human ear to hear,
Nor heart conceive what it may be,
Or bring the prospect near:

But God, in love, has freely given
His Spirit, who reveals
All He's prepared for those, in heaven
Whom here on earth He seals.

'Tis thence, now Christ is gone on high,
Redemption's work complete,
The Spirit brings His glory nigh
To those who for Him wait.

Blest gift! As sons we look above
And see the Savior there;
And, fruit of God's now well-known love,
We shall His glory share.

200. Written at Pau, 1880.
201. The manuscript is on the back of a letter sent to {by?} Mr. Darby in February, 1881.
202. Author's italic;. -- Ed.
203. Written, it is believed, in 1881.

God has been glorified in Man;
Man sits at God's right hand:
Obedient in the race He ran,
Can now all power command!

In lowliness on earth, as Son,
The Father He made known;
And now in heaven, His work all done,
He sits upon His throne.

And we our great Fore-runner see
In His Own glory there;
Yet not ashamed -- with such as we,
As First-born, all to share.

For we, as sons through grace, are owned
And "Abba, Father," cry;
Heirs too, so rich did grace abound,
Joint-heirs with Him on high!

The Father's love, the source of all,
Sweeter than all it gives,
Shines on us now without recall,
And lasts while Jesus lives.

The new creation's stainless joy
Gleams through the present gloom;
That world of bliss without alloy
The saint's eternal home!

23. Love Displayed [204]

1881

We'll praise Thee, glorious Lord!
Who died to set us free:
No earthly songs can joy afford
Like heavenly melody!

Love, that no suffering stayed,
We'll praise true love Divine;
Love, that for us atonement made;
Love, that has made us Thine.

Love, in Thy lonely life
Of sorrow, here below;
Thy words of grace, with mercy rife,
Make grateful praises flow!

Love, that on death's dark vale
Its sweetest odours spread,
Where sin o'er all seemed to prevail
Redemption glory shed.

And now we see Thee risen
Who once for us hast died,
Seated above the highest heaven,
The Father's glorified. [205]

Soon wilt Thou take Thy throne;
Thy foes Thy footstool made:
And take us with Thee for Thine own
In glory love displayed!

Jesus, we wait for Thee!
With Thee to have our part:
What can full joy and blessing be
But being where Thou art!

24. The Soul's Desire [206]

1881

I'm waiting for Thee, Lord;
Thyself then to see, Lord!
I'm waiting for Thee,
At Thy coming again:
Thy glory'll be great, Lord,
In heavenly state, Lord,
Thy glory'll be great
At Thy coming again!

Caught up in the air, Lord,
That glory we'll share, Lord!
Each saint will be there,
At Thy coming again:
How glorious the grace, Lord,
That gave such a place, Lord;
It's nearing apace,
At Thy coming again.

We'll sit on Thy throne, Lord,
Confessed as Thine own, Lord;
Of all to be known
At Thy coming again!
But glory on high Lord,
Is not like being nigh, Lord,
When all is gone by
At Thy coming again!

The traits of that face, Lord,
Once marred through Thy grace, Lord,
Our joy'll be to trace
At Thy coming again:
With Thee evermore, Lord,
Our hearts will adore, Lord;
Our sorrow'll be o'er,
At Thy coming again.

204. This Hymn was given by Mr. Darby to a sick friend, in March, 1881. In stanza 4, line 2, later MS., for "Its," reads "The."

205. That is, Christ, the One whom the Father has glorified, according to John 17:5, and 13:31, 32. -- Ed.

206. This was sent by Mr. Darby to a friend, in November, 1881. In the letter accompanying it, he says; -- "I send a hymn, suggested by one you like: but that brought you down to being 'often weary.' This goes up to where there is no weariness. I don't quite like it, -- as there is a certain levity about the meter. But it is Christ!"

The manuscript is roughly written, on a very small piece of paper, in single triplets. Now that it has been arranged to correspond with the Hymn of which it is a paraphrase, an unfinished appearance is, thus, accidentally given to it. The Hymn, however, is complete.

But, better than all, Lord,
To rise, at Thy call, Lord!
Adoring to fall,
At Thy coming again:
With Thee, clothed in white, Lord,
To walk in the light, Lord,
Where all will be bright,
At Thy coming again.

For ever with Thee, Lord,
And like Thee to be, Lord
For ever with Thee,
At Thy coming again:
I'll live in Thy grace, Lord,
I'll gaze on Thy face, Lord!
When finished my race,
At Thy coming again.

I'll talk of Thy love, Lord,
With Thee there above, Lord
Thy goodness still prove,
At Thy coming again.

25. A Child's Enquiry [207]

Jesus! canst Thou receive
A feeble child like me?
My little heart can scarce believe
That I may come to Thee!

With children I can go,
And all I think can say;
With those I've often seen, and know,
I do not fear to stay.

But Lord of heaven art Thou,
And dwell'st far off on high!
Though at Thy Name I'm taught to bow,
Can I to Thee draw nigh?

That Name is far above
My thoughts, howe'er I try:
How can I know Thou dost me love?
Nor fear before Thine eye?

26. The Road [208]

It is not with uncertain step
That we tread our homeless way;
A well-known Voice has called us up
To everlasting day!

The Voice of Him who, whilom,[209] trod
Alone the trackless way
(And marked the road that leads to God),
Where we once, as lost, did stray:

Nor leaves us now alone, to trace
Our path across the waste;
But leads us still, with living grace,
To the home to which we haste.

See! open stands the heavenly door,
Whence the glory shines below --
To light the path where He's gone before,
And the bliss, that awaits us, show!

In patience then we may tread the path,
Marked out by His footsteps here,
Who has freed us from the coming wrath,
Who has freed our hearts from fear;

May abide His will, for the longer road
Where patience and faith are tried;
And count on a love which bears each load,
And our hearts from trial may hide.

He will still be there, be it long or brief,
Our strength in every need:
Himself our joy, our sure relief,
Till from care, in His Presence, we're freed!

27. Expectation

Lord Jesus! Source of every grace,
Glorious in light Divine,
Soon shall we see Thee face to face,
And in that glory shine;

Be ever with Thee; hear Thy voice;
Unhindered then shall taste
The love which doth our hearts rejoice --
Though absent in this waste.

In peaceful wonder we adore
The thoughts of Love Divine,
Which in that world for evermore
Our lot with Thine entwine!

207. Entitled, in Mr. Darby's manuscript, "Part of a Hymn."

208. Entitled, in Mr. Darby's manuscript, "To Georgie L."

209. "Whilom," i.e. "formerly, -- of old." -- Ed.

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Preface to A Few Hymns and Some Spiritual Songs Selected 1856 for The Little Flock

Revised 1881 by J. N. Darby

A new edition of this Hymn Book being required, the present Editor was asked by the publisher to take charge of it. Of course the responsibility of its new contents and form must rest with him, but as it was meant for all, he took counsel with brethren in various places who came in his way, who he thought would be likely to aid in the work -- a work far more difficult than those imagine who have never undertaken it.

Three things are needed for a hymn book: a basis of truth and sound doctrine; something, at least, of the spirit of poetry, though not poetry itself, which is objectionable, as merely the spirit and imagination of man; and thirdly, the most difficult to find of all, that experimental acquaintance with truth in the affections which enables a person to make his hymn (if led of God to compose one) the vehicle, in sustained thought and language, of practical grace and truth which sets the soul in communion with Christ, and rises even to the Father, and yet this in such sort that it is not mere individual experience, which, for assembly worship, is out of place. In a word, the Father's love, and Christ developed in the soul's affections, rising in praise back again to its source. God alone can give this so as to meet the wants of an assembly. Like assembly prayer, it must not rise too completely beyond the state of the assembly, yet must reach up to God, and raise the assembly's affections up to Him, so that what He is in grace developed in the affections of the soul should be jointly proclaimed. It is not mere wants -- that would be a hymn for a prayer meeting. A basis of truth has been spoken of, or, to speak more justly, the truth; this is evidently fundamentally necessary, but much more is. There is based on this truth a large sphere of scriptural thoughts, feelings, experiences, and hopes, in which the soul moves, which ought to be scriptural.

Now in a vast number of hymns there is real piety in the affections, but connected with statements which may not touch any great foundational truth, but are unscriptural, and thus the best affections are connected with unscriptural thoughts, and this is a very real injury to the soul. Thus, suppose uncertainty as to salvation, the absence of the spirit of adoption, a bright hope of being in glory when we die; these are merely taken as instances, for it applies to very many points, and souls are quite angry at losing a hymn which their piety has enjoyed, but which has connected their hopes and affections with what is not scriptural. Many such have been eliminated heretofore from the collection, but there remained still something to do. Hymns should be simple, full of Christ, and the Father's love, unaffected, and in some measure elevated, so as not to be mere prose. The singer must be there, but the singer associated in his thoughts with God filled from on high; yet not individualize himself and leave the assembly behind him. Many most sweet hymns are too individual, too experimental, for an assembly. In this collection an Appendix is therefore added, where there may be as beautiful hymns, but the assembly has been less thought of. Where possible the hymns for the assembly are in the plural. There are hymns which suit prayer meetings, home devotion, even the gospel; though there the difficulty is very great. Abstractedly you are making people sing as having certain feelings, and then preaching to them because they have not.

But in actual Christendom things are not so sharply defined, and there are hidden souls and hidden wants which the hymn may give expression to, and set a soul free or make it apprehend God's love sometimes more effectually than the sermon; still there is very great danger of widespread delusion and loose apprehension of sin and grace, and the difficulty is very real. You may often find the loudest singers where the conscience is the least reached.

Only about fifteen hymns were at first excluded by the Editor, but others pruned with a far more unsparing hand -- they had not to get good ones to fill their places. Some forty or more have been struck out, but many of those that have not maintained their place in the first part will be found in the Appendix. Their places have been supplied from searching a great many collections, but which, for reasons stated above, furnished but few that could be introduced. A good number are original, from various quarters, these have been submitted to different brethren before being put in. Many authors may be comforted by knowing their hymns were sometimes very nice, but not suited to an assembly of saints; several have gone into the Appendix, not necessarily as inferior, but of a different character. Many hymns have been corrected on the principles referred to. These corrections were also shown to different brethren, but it is not expected that every one will be satisfied, certainly more might have been, and may be, done. The Editor has done the best he could, and, though none, unless he undertake it, can feel the difficulty, he believes the Lord has been with him. More may be added to the Appendix by further research, or original, but this will require time.

For convenience, the number of the hymns which remain are the same, new hymns having been substituted for the excluded ones, with the exception of 148 (now 341), and 84 (now 264).

Finally is added what perhaps should have come first: the great principle in selecting and correcting has been that there should be nothing in the hymns for the assembly but what was the expression of, or at least consistent with the Christian's conscious place in Christ before the Father.

The reader will kindly remark that there are changes necessitated by putting "we" for "I," which, but for that, there would have been no occasion for.

The book is commended to Him who alone can give songs in the night, trusting that a hymn book, already the best known to the Editor, may be still more useful to brethren; sure that the Spirit, who alone can indite a genuine hymn, can alone enable it to be sung aright.

Appendix 9:

A Letter written by J. N. Darby in 1835 to His Brother, Horatio; and, A Bit of JND's Descent in the Flesh

Used by permission of Marigold Freeman-Atwood (*Leap Castle A Place and Its People*, Norwich: Michael Russell, 2001, pp. 175, 176).

This is an interesting book that the reader might like to acquire.

J. N. Darby's Letter to Horatio Darby

5 October 1835

My dear Horatio

I cannot help longing that you should be partaker of the blessings we enjoy tho' I do not mean there are no trials in them but we are taught to respect them and they serve to keep one humble. What led to this was our labours now drawing round and so near you and many having decided of our way of thinking about things. The Clarkes and Walshes & others coming decidedly not among a despised remnant as weak as you please but seeking to be separate from evil and serve the Lord therewith by regular preaching I trust? at Birr [indecipherable] & Kane & Walsh Park now & I believe at Castle Willington & the neighbourhood. I admit the weakness of their instrument but our experience has been that wherever they have been weakest if humble the most blessing and that the very thing the Church wants is to have to [indecipherable] from man to cease from having confidence in the flesh, this is not pleasant to the flesh to have but 12 to listen. This has been the case with us when all I believe have been brought to the Lord & are now breaking bread together & more may win others among them tho' of men young & not 11 miles thence we have had 150 or 200 sometimes to hear as constantly 100 devoted Christians the [indecipherable] the [indecipherable] when I am not aware that by the preaching one person has been brought to the Lord thus we learn tho' [indecipherable] does not hurt in the flesh nor [indecipherable] the day of small things [indecipherable] get a principle right in whatever measures and you must find God helping tho' he may exercise his patience. The world's all [indecipherable]. I rejoice when you say pray God to make me more faithful to him. This is what we want for this only abides in its fruit and all the rest perishes in the using. May you find the comfort and joy of living thoroughly out for the Lord. I am sorry you did not see Arthur. It was want of perfect acquaintance on his part with [indecipherable] partly and ill arrangement as to the rest his simple Godliness tells by a most blameless & devoted life with God tho' a man of no pretensions & other [indecipherable] in these days of [indecipherable]. I am at present at Cork where we have a house for the Saints Arthur having half it is a good large one and very soon I shall have indeed I might say now I have a plan to you if you should be inclined to pay us a visit might it in [indecipherable]. I am waited for & must be off. Pray the Lord to make you very faithful ever my dear Hoo

Yr very affectionate brother JND

A Note Concerning Horatio Darby

For the following extract concerning JND's brother, Horatio, keep in mind that William Henry Darby was JND's eldest brother, and inherited Leap Castle.

> It is clear that William Henry Darby of Leap, who had inherited eleven years earlier, was among those landlords who did his utmost for the suffering people. When the workhouse at Birr was overflowing, he caused a fever shed, as these auxiliary houses were named, to be erected in the village at Leap, to give succour to those not only incapacitated by starvation but also, in some cases, a prey to the cholera epidemic which swept the area in the summer of 1849. His brother Horatio also worked tirelessly for the alleviation of suffering in the district: there is a letter extant dated 15 March 1846 in which Horatio requests the authorities, who were in receipt of a shipment of Indian corn, to allow him to purchase 'a few for the the labourers in this district.' [National Archives, RLFC/1/756/2/441/23.] Furthermore, *The King's County Chronicle* of 21 October 1846 carries the typescript of a long address to the Parsonstown Agricultural Society in which Horatio urges the members to practise self-denial, to give as much employment as possible and to pull together to make the best use of such strategems for survival as could be devised. His speech radiates Christian compassion and exhortation, as might be expected from the brother of John Nelson Darby, but is laced with practical propositions (*ibid.*, pp. 87, 88).

This reminds me about what I read concerning Sir E. Denny, who also was an Irish landlord. When the Irish land reforms were enacted, his tenants complained that they then did not have as good a situation as when Sir E. Denny controlled everything.

The above book also contained the following chart. The "others" on the left side of the line where John Nelson, Horatio, and William Henry are would include Susannah, who married E. Pennefather, in whose house JND recuperated from the injury that occurred in Dec. 1826.

William H. Darby

JND's eldest brother, William Henry Darby, was referred to By JND: *Letters* 2:270; 3:304.

LIST OF PRINTED PAPERS BY WILLIAM HENRY DARBY

The Union of Believers, 24pp., 1873.

Baptism and Conflict with Indwelling Sin, 12pp., 1859. *

[Two tracts] *Faith and Works* and *Canon of Truth*, London, [1859], British Library 4256.a.34. *

Die Irvingianer und ihre Lehre. Von William Henry Darby. Aus dem Franzüsischen übersesst von J. v. Poseck, Berlin 1850, 22pp.

WILLIAM HENRY DARBY'S PAPERS IN *THE CHRISTIAN WITNESS*

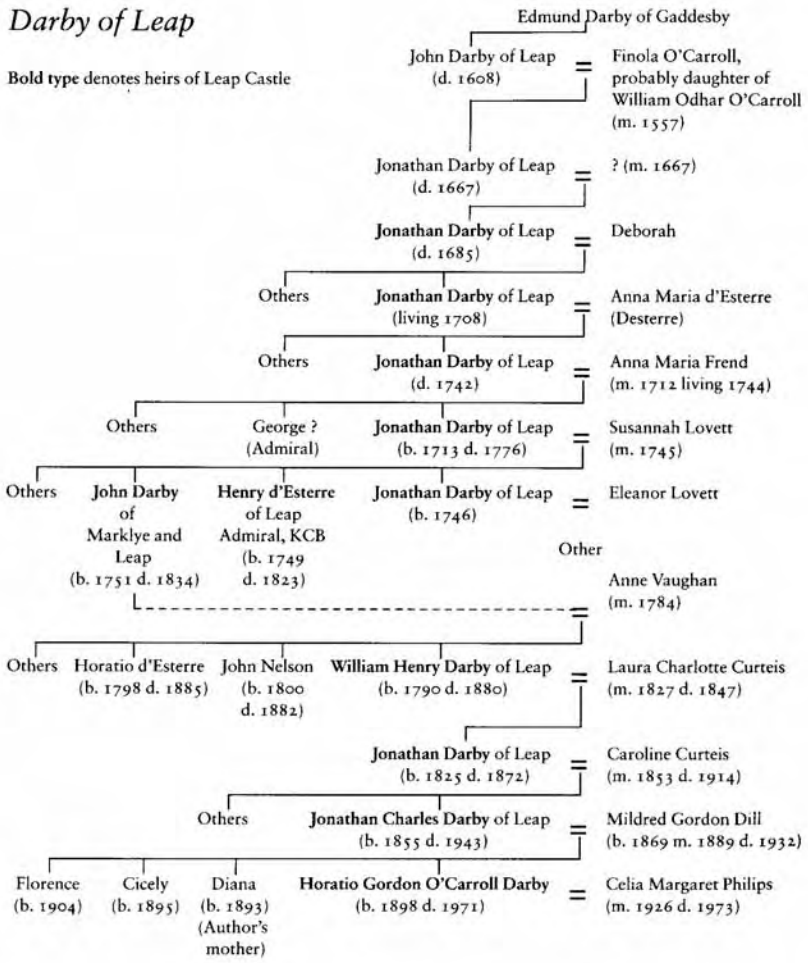
These paper are attributed to W.H.D. as handwritten into the index in my copy of *The Christian Witness*:

(A letter) "Trials of the Christians at Nice," in *The Christian Witness* 4:394-397, pp. 394-397, 1837.

"Matthew 16:18. 'Thou Art Peter: and Upon this Rock I will Build my Church,'" in *The Christian Witness* 6:168-180, 1839.

"A Few Observations on the Right Use of Ministry," in *The Christian Witness* 7:333-342

* It would be appreciated if a reader would arrange to supply me with a copy of this paper.



Anne Vaughan married John Darby of Marklye and Leap in 1784 (she died in 1847). She bore eight children, of whom Sussanah, born in 1785 (died in 1862), the eldest, married Edward Pennefather in 1806, in whose house JND recuperated from his accident.

Years ago, Max Wermchuck sent me a copy of a document held in the Public Archives of Canada in Ottowa: *Darby family, c. 1600 to 1967. Typescript. 2 inches. Genealogical check-list of the Derby, (Darby) families of the United States, England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and Canada. Presented in 1967 by W. B. Derby of Chicago*. On pp. 333, 334 there is the following information:

> Z- 202 JOHN DARBY, b in 1751, was of Marklye, co Sussex, of Great George Street, Westminster, London, England, and afterwards of Leap Castle, King's co (now co Tipperary), Ireland; d in 1834; m in 1784 Anne Vaughan (NB X-1192) who d in 1847 and was daughter of Samuel Vaughan; and had:
>
> Z- 211 Susannah, b in 1785; d Apr 6, 1862; m Jan 8, 1806, Rt Hon Edward Pennefather who was Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland, d Sep 6, 1847, and was son of William Pennefather and ____ Moore.
>
> Z- 212 Jonathan, b in 1787; died apparently before 1834; unm.

Z- 213 WILLIAM HENRY, b in 1790.

Z- 214 CHRISTOPHER LOVETT, b in 1792.

Z- 215 Sarah, b in 1794; died in 1877; unm.

Z- 216 GEORGE, b in 1796.

Z- 217 Horatio d'Esterre, b in 1798; d in 1885; unm.

Z- 218 John Nelson, b Nov 18, 1800, in London, England; in 1825 was called to the Irish Bar; then was ordained and served a curacy in Wicklow until 1827; in 1828 published THE NATURE AND UNITY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST; one of the founders of Plymouth Brethren . . .

Z- 219 Letitia Lovett, b in 1802.

The ancient castle of the Darby's, Leap Castle, was destroyed in 1922 by 30 bombs and 20 cases of petrol.

Appendix 10: George Vicesimus Wigram

Personally

George Vicesimus Wigram (1805-1879) was given his unusual middle name, which means twentieth, because he was the twentieth child of Sir Robert Wigram and his wife, who had 10 boys and 10 girls, [210] although I have read that the total was twenty-four; besides which, the *National Dictionary of Biography* says that he was the fourteenth by his father's second wife. GVW had married Fanny Bligh, who died in 1834, and subsequently married Cathrine Parnell.

T.C.F. Stunt says that GVW's father was a wealthy merchant having warfs and warehouses, and supplying service to the British government during the Napoleonic wars. He had also been a member of Parliament and used his influence for obtaining commercial concession. [211]

GVW was wealthy and used his money in the service of the Lord.

We turn now to an account of his conversion:

> Good instruction as to the contents of the Bible were mine at school, at seventeen, under a John the Baptist ministry; but I never knew the gospel till, at nineteen, I went abroad, full of the animal pleasures of a military life. I and my comrade spent a long and tiring day on the field of Waterloo in June, 1824. Arriving late at night at . . ., I soon went to my bedroom. It struck me, 'I will say my prayers.' It was the habit of childhood, neglected in youth. I knelt down by my bedside; but I found I had forgotten what to say. I looked up as if trying to remember, when suddenly there came on my soul a something I had never known before. It was as if some One, Infinite and Almighty, knowing everything, full of the deepest, tenderest interest in myself, though utterly and entirely abhorring everything in, and connected with me, made known to me that He pitied and loved myself. My eye saw no one; but I knew assuredly that the One whom I knew not, and never had met, had met me for the first time, and made me to know that we were together. There was a light, no sense or faculty my own human nature ever knew; there was a presence of what seemed infinite in greatness -- something altogether of a class that was apart and supreme, and yet at the same time making itself known to me in a way that I as a man could thoroughly feel, and taste, and enjoy. The Light made all light, Himself withal; but it did not destroy, for it was love itself, and I was loved individually by Him. The exquisite tenderness and fullness of that love, the way it appropriated me myself for Him, in whom it all was,

210. A. T. Schofield, M.D., *Behind the Brass Plate*, London: Sampson Low, 1922, p. 59.
211. *From Awakening to Seccession*, p. 198.

> while the light from which it was inseparable in Him, discovered to me the contrast I had been to all that was light and love. I wept for a while on my knees, said nothing, then got into bed. The next morning's thought was, 'Get a Bible.' I got one, and it was thenceforward my handbook. My clergyman companion noticed this, and also my entire change of life and thought.
>
> We journeyed on together to Geneva, where there was an active persecution of the faithful going on. He went to Italy, and I found my own company -- stayed with those who were suffering for Christ.
>
> I could quite now, after fifty years' trial, adopt to myself these few lines, as descriptive of that night's experience:
>
> Christ, the Father's rest eternal,
> Jesus once looked down on me,
> Called me by my name external,
> And revealed Himself to me.
> With His whisper, light, life giving,
> Glowed in me, the dark and dead;
> Made me live, Himself receiving,
> Who once died for me and bled. [212]

Edward Dennett remarked:

> His ministry, like his conversion, was of no ordinary kind. Like the precious stones on Aaron's breastplate, it sparkled with the varied beauties and glories of the Person of the living, glorified Christ -- Christ as Son of man and Son of God. The Christ of God was his one theme. Whatever might be the Scripture preached from, the truth unfolded was always exhibited as some ray of His glory. This was the feature of his earlier, whatever his larger spiritual apprehensions in after years, as well as of his later ministry. It was, on this account, ministry of the highest kind -- of the highest kind, because it bore the evident stamp of the Holy Spirit, who (said our blessed Lord) "shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:14).
>
> Nor can it be forgotten that his life (as those who knew him most intimately testify) equally with his ministry was characterized by the power of the Spirit of God. In one of his addresses he says, "The first impression on my heart when converted was, 'Enoch *walked* with God.' That was my start. 'Now then,' I said, 'I will walk with God.' Beautiful as far as it went; but I very soon found, as Luther said to Melancthon, 'You will find old Melancthon stronger than young Philip.' I came to my wits' end, for I wanted a fund whence to draw so as to live it out." He found that fund; for he goes on to say, "You are unable to live out of resources in yourself -- you must not act as though your life is separate; CHRIST must be the fountain." [213]

There are two remarks GVW made which have struck me very deeply, and bows the heart in adoration and thanksgiving:

> But for the incarnation of the Son of God, I should be ashamed to be a man. [214]
>
> . . . a Man upon the throne of God. Is it possible? [215]

Having been saved while in the army, in 1826 GVW entered Queens College, Oxford, intending to become a Church of England clergyman. The Lord had other plans for him. There he met J. L. Harris and B. W. Newton of Exeter College. He also met JND and was instrumental in the beginnings at Plymouth. He initiated like meetings in London between 1832-1838.

I am under the impression that GVW had one child, a daughter. She died of illness, caught while nursing brethren in Christ. Hear the man of God, oh my soul, and learn from it:

> It has pleased Him, verily, to permit me to be called upon to pay back a loan of His love to me. And the way in which He has wrought has been most merciful and pitiful, saying, as it were, to herself, If you *know* love, in that He laid down His life for you, do thou also lay down thy life for the brethren. This hindered its being an accident, as many call it. "My steps, thy steps" involves, and grows up out of, the privilege of having been made, through grace, one with Himself.
>
> The reality that she is gone before remains, however, and through grace, by the Spirit, I justify Him in every step of the way, and cannot call it hard that He should have permitted her to go on high through nursing the sick. [216]
>
> We are hardly up to the mark as to walking with God down here; walking as the Lord walked.
>
> I see this abundantly in myself as to, and under, the privileged departure of my daughter. The iron may enter into the soul -- and it does in my case, and that of us all in this departure -- but there should be no surprise. For two or three years she has been in work as a nurse, and been exposed in worse forms to that which the Lord was pleased to remove her by. I think she had counted the risks, and this was not the one she deprecated.
>
> Perhaps it is my want of girdedness which makes me feel that others are not girded up, ready to depart at any moment. She and I had a talk, after I had spoken at North Row, on 1 John 3:16, and I found her mind thoroughly made up, at least so far as the theoretic and practical parts of the question.
>
> "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." [217]
>
> You may both have heard that it has pleased the Lord to call my child to Himself, and to have appointed the nursing of the sick poor, as her chariot of fire. The last Monday in April she went, hoping to save M. C. --, a nursemaid, from being overtaxed in nursing a case of malignant scarlet fever; on Tuesday night she saw she was ill; Wednesday was ailing, but about; Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, ill, and departed at 7.30 that evening. When HE told me, Saturday, 5.30 a. m., "Pray not, for I take her," I said, "Not my will, but thine be done. Only enable thou me to glorify Christ therein, so shall I neither repine nor wish her back." He has been faithful as ever, and His grace perfects itself in weakness. Sorrow is selfish, and makes us turn in on self. I know that, and know too *who* has touched me herein. But not one single thing is displaced in heaven, but the Lord's loan to me, through 39-1/2 years, being moved up there. Till she was gone I had no idea of what she was to saints, and to many of the laboring ones too. She had got quietly into work, and had grown in grace and truth perceptibly to all around her. To

212. Preface to *Memorials of the Ministry of G. V. Wigram*, vol. 1, p. vi.
213. *Ibid.*, p. v.
214. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, *Letters*, p. 258
215. *Ibid.*, p. 320.
216. *Memorials of the Ministry of G.V. Wigram* , vol. 3, *Letters*, Fifth ed., p. 254 (March 12, 1871). See also *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:117.
217. *Ibid.*, p. 343.

> me the way of her departure was a great grace, not disease accidentally contracted, but in service, and in one of danger, known danger; but her mind was made up that 1 John 3:16 meant what it did. And, grievously too, the danger on that one occasion seemed nothing compared with the other cases she had met. But the Lord's mercy is perfect. I have not the will, if I had the power, to alter one item. Thank God, I feel *what* He has done! but surely the Lord Jesus is welcome to the best of what He has given me, to take it back at any moment; and for herself, how much has she gained! I know many of you will sympathize with me . . . [218]

It appears that there are two hymns by his daughter, F. Theodora Wigram, in *Hymns for the Little Flock*, 1881.

A. T. Schofield said GVW was at his wedding and also commented about GVW's brother, Octavius. He wrote:

> I soon came over to Ireland again, and we were married in 1871, at Cheltenham, and our wedding was graced by the presence of an old friend of my father's, a very remarkable man. His name was George Vicesimus Wigram, so called because he was the twentieth child of his mother, ten boys and ten girls. [219]

T. F. C. Stunt quoted the following from W. Kelly, found in W. G. Turner, *John Nelson Darby*, p. 70 (1944):

> The same visit of his [Darby's] I acted more privately (not on Mr. W. E. Gladstone, who saw and heard him then,) but on G. V. Wigram, Sir L. C. L. Brenton, B. W. Newton and W. Jarrett [sc. Jarratt] as well as others too halting in faith to make a decided stand and endure the consequences. It was characteristic of those young men that, when once at a *conversazione* some one remarked, 'May the Lord give me a living in the beautiful country' (and he had more than his desire in a Scotch bishopric), Mr. Wigram immediately exclaimed, 'May he give me to follow and serve Him at all cost.'

T.F.C. Stunt comments:

> Allowing for elements of prejudice and pious hagiography which may have found their way into this account . . . [220]

G. V. Wigram had a prominent role in resisting Bethesda in 1848 and wrote numerous papers on that matter. [221] I wonder if this accounts for TFCS's tendentious remarks about those who rejected Bethesda?

Hymn Book Work

Regarding GVW's role in developing hymn books, A. Roach wrote:

> Various hymn books were at first used among them until 1838, at which time G. V. Wigram compiled a book called "Hymns for the Poor of the Flock" (Zech. 11:7). This book had a special arrangement of hymns by category such as "Baptism," "Lord's Day," "Lord's Supper" etc. Mr. Darby makes reference to "The Poor of the Flock," in his letter of October 25, 1879 (*Letters of J.N.D.*, Vol. 3, p. 45). It contained many hymns written by the gathered saints as well as others of the Lord's people. Apparently other books were also in use among the gatherings. In 1856 Mr. Wigram was called upon to review the whole matter of hymns. We shall let him tell in his own words what took place:
>
> > Upon this let the compiler's private account of his labors be heard. I was asked in 1856 to examine carefully some hymn books which were in common use. To do so was easy; to express my judgment faithfully, and yet not invidiously, was difficult. After consideration I determined to give my judgment by this attempt at a book more suited for present need than any I know of. It rests with others to decide how far I have or have not succeeded. I may add that my rules while working were these:
> >
> > 1. Retouch as little as possible, and with as light a hand as possible; -- But
> > 2. Allow to remain (1) no false, no faulty, no defective doctrine -- cost what it might; (2) no dispensational incongruities; (3) no want of keeping in the truth or truths stated; (4) no ambiguities between that which is and that which is not true, And
> > 3. Add as many new hymns as the Lord might enable me. I now leave my labor with the Lord.
> >
> > G. V. Wigram.
>
> This book was entitled "A Few Hymns and Some Spiritual Songs (selected 1856)". It was published by Groombridge and Sons of Paternoster Row, London, England.
>
> In the years just prior to 1881 Mr. J. N. Darby gave his attention to a revision of the 1856 hymn book. He was chiefly concerned about the lack of hymns to the Father. On June 10, 1880, he wrote:
>
> > I had been going through the hymns that we have, for a new edition, and the question of hymns to the Father presented itself, and the study of our relationship with the Father was much blessed to me, developing it to my heart. How gracious He is! (*Letters*, Vol. 3, p. 93).
>
> Again in July 1881 he wrote:
>
> > Take hymns and see how many you have addressed to the Father, or which continue to have Him and not ourselves for their subject after the first verse, etc." (*Letters*, Vol. 3, pp. 173-174).
>
> He therefore included in the new book these hymns to the Father: #25, 41, 50, 178, 331, and App. #7 and 48.
>
> This edition was completed soon before his going to be with Christ, which took place April 29, 1882. It is known as "A Few Hymns and Some Spiritual Songs for THE LITTLE FLOCK" (Luke 12:32). [222]

One of the hymns (# 330) written by GVW is this:

> What raised the wondrous thought:
> Or who did it suggest?
> That we, the church, to glory brought,
> Should WITH the Son be blest.
> O God! the thought was Thine
> (Thine only it could be)

218. *Ibid.*, pp. 255, 256. His wife had died in Sept. 1867. See pp. 229, 230 and 334-336 concerning this.
219. *Behind the Brass Plate*, London: Sampson, Low, Marston and Co., 1922, p. 59.
220. *Op. Cit.*, p. 219
221. See *Precious Truths* . . ., vol. 2.
222. *The Little Flock Hymn Book -- Its History and Hymnwriters* , Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, pp. 2, 3 (not in print).

Fruit of Thy wisdom, love divine
Peculiar unto Thee:

For, sure, no other mind,
For thoughts so bold, so free,
Greatness or strength, could ever find
Thine only it could be.

The motives, too, thine own,
The plan, the counsel, thine!
Made for Thy Son, bone of His bone
In glory bright to shine.

O God! with great delight
Thy wondrous thoughts we see,
Upon *His* throne in glory brought,
The bride of Christ shall be.

Sealed with the Holy Ghost,
We triumph in that love,
Thy wondrous thought has made our boast
"Glory WITH Christ above."

Scholarly Work

Regarding the production of the *Englishman's Greek Concordance* (1839; sec. ed. in 1844) and the *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance* (1843), N. Noel remarked:

> The plan of these Concordances was determined on, after conference with the Rev. William DeBurgh, who became the chief constructor of this invaluable work, finding the workers for the same; whilst Mr. Wigram, who was a wealthy man, provided the money for the same.
>
> The extraordinary completeness and perfection of detail, was the result of TEN years spent in its revision by the ripest scholars in the United Kingdom; the principal Editor of the Hebrew being Dr. Bialloblotzky; a Polish rabbi of great learning; and the principal Editor of the Greek, was Dr. Tregelles.
>
> Ten thousand pounds were spent in carrying out plans, which, for some defect, were afterwards abandoned; and upwards of FIFTY thousand pounds (approximately $250,000 {in 1840 dollars]} had been freely bestowed by Mr. Wigram in biblical research, before he found himself in possession of the finished result.
>
> Mr. Wigram, *in a truly humble way*, simply referred to this amount expended on this work as *only passing through his hand*; so truly did he regard himself as *God's Steward* in the matter.[223]

The British *National Dictionary of Biography* says:

> In 1867, with W. Chaulk, he edited 'The Hebraist's Vade Mecum,' the first attempt at a complete verbal index to the contents of the Hebrew and Chaldee Scriptures.

Editorial Work and Travels

He also was the editor of the magazine, *The Present Testimony* (1849 - 1881). There are 18 vols.; the last three are New Series, the last being dated 1871-1881,[224] two years after his death on Jan. 11, 1879 in London. The *Synopsis* by JND, written in French, was translated by W. Kelly and appeared serially in this magazine.

He also traveled overseas in the Lord's service as indicated in his Letters: West Indies (p. 310), Switzerland (p. 191), Quebec (p. 227, 246), Georgetown (p. 278), Boston (p. 228, 229), France (p. 257), Barbados (p. 237), New York (p. 224), New Zealand (p. 283, 317), [225] Demarara (p. 258), and Jamaica (p. 266).

P. J. Lineham (with Open Brethren) recounts an interesting incident regarding GVW's visit to New Zealand (Jan. 14, 1874 - Jan. 20, 1875, except for a visit to Melbourne in March 1874):

> It is said that when Wigram was disembarking from a ship during his visit one of those on board commented how "that man is very like the Lord Jesus" both in his demeanor and actions.[226]

His Expository Writings and Letters

Articles by GVW appear in the *Christian Witness* (1834-1841). It is likely that some of the unsigned articles in *The Present Testimony* (1849-1881), which he edited, were written by him. A translation of the Psalms, using the names of God (El, Elohim, Jehovah, etc.) is found in New Series, vol. 2, which was written by him.

Edward Dennett collected together some of GVW's papers, printed under the title, *Memorials of the Ministry of G. V. Wigram* (three volumes), which includes *Letters of G. V. Wigram*.

One of his printed lectures is: *"The Coming Kingdom": being an Outline of the Revelation. Notes of Three Lectures, Delivered in Georgetown, Demarara, on the 11th, 18th, and 25th January 1876*, London: Morrish.

He also wrote the following:

Abraham believed God.

A Cry from Bochim.

A Few Thoughts on Confidence.

A Word on the Fellowship of Saints, . . . re Bethesda.

Christ, Not Brethren.

Death is ours.

Gleanings from the teaching of G.V.W.

Heavenly.

Is it Thus with You?

Notes of three lectures. By G.V.W. Delivered in Georgetown . . . 1873.

Ministry of the Word.

On Heresy

On Ministry in the Word.

---

223. N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:58, 59.

224. These dates are printed in the last bound vol., New Series 3 (that I possess).

225. For an account of this visit from an Open Brethren perspective, see P. J. Lineham, *There We Found Brethren*, pp. 52, 53. See also N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:392 and also references to JND's visit to New Zealand in his *Letters*.

226. *There We Found Brethren*, p. 52, "Told by Harold St. John," *Treasury, 37*, 53 (1935).

Our Extremity is God's Opportunity.

Remarks and Notes on John's Writings.

Remarks on Thoughts on the Ruin of the Church. Two Letters, by A. Jukes

The Church: its Present State and Prospects.

The Coming of the Comforter.

The Cross, the Blood, and the Death of Jesus Christ: Their Uses and Applications by the Spirit in Scripture.

The Seven Churches.

Letter dated Mar. 8, 1846 and commencing, "My Dear Brethren," 7 pages. *

A Protest Against the National Establishment of England (1831) *

Lessons from Scripture, or Recollection of Statements Once Heard with Enjoyment *

The Lord's Supper, Ordination, . . . No. 1: Jan 1842 and others in this Series *

The Kingdom of Heaven with Diagram *

Why Four Gospels? *

* These papers I do not have. Please contact me if you can supply any.

Resisted Newtonism and Open Brethrenism

In a biographical sketch of GVW, E. E. Whitfield wrote:

> In the years 1845-1850 Wigram was prominently concerned in the upheaval, with its melancholy result, which, originating in Plymouth, in spreading affected Bristol in particular. His sincerity was never questioned, his motives always recognized by the late G. Muller, much to the credit of this venerated brother. [227]

The likelihood of the last sentence being true is virtually zero. Yes, GVW was quite prominent in resisting the unfaithfulness of Bethesda and its two leaders, George Muller and Henry Craik. And how was Betheda, Bristol "affected"? by receiving partisans of B. W. Newton in spite of opposition and warning. In volume 2 it is shown that, rather than "his motives always recognized," George Muller wanted G. V. Wigram *disciplined*.

As a matter of fact, GVW moved to Bristol for a period during the second half of 1848 and met with those who withdrew from Bethesda because of Bethesda's receiving BWN's partisans and for Bethesda's enunciation of a new principle of fellowship in the infamous "Letter of the Ten," signed by ten leaders at Bethesda and endorsed by most of the congregation. GVW wrote a number of valuable papers regarding these problems and volume two gives some extracts, as well as a documented history of these events.

Regarding the troubles in Plymouth, re B. W. Newton, he wrote:

Plain evidence Concerning Ebrington Street, as to the Nature of the System Now Pursued Thereby.

To those who have read Lord Congleton's tract entitled "Reasons for leaving Rawstorne Street Meeting, London."

To the saints meeting to break bread in Rawstorne Street, Camden Town, Orchard Street, Etc.

A reason for withdrawing from Ebrington Street, Plymouth. (London).

A Letter to Lord Congleton.*

Remarks on a Paper Entitled "A Statement from Christians Assembling in the Name of the Lord in Ebbrington St., Plymouth. *

Some remarks on a Recent Letter from Plymouth. *

* These papers I do not have. Please contact me if you can supply any.

* * * * *

Regarding the troubles in Bristol, England (at Bethesda) caused by reception of partisans of B. W. Newton, he wrote:

The present question; 1848-1849.

An answer of G.V.Wigram, to "Mr. H. Craik's letter, dated 15th November, 1848."

An appeal to saints that remain still in Bethesda and Salem, as to certain bad doctrine.

A word on the fellowship of saints, to any who are puzzled about the English Bethesda question.

* * * * *

J. G. Deck had fled from England to new Zealand to escape the Bethesda aftermath, but through a visit to New Zealand by both J. N. Darby and G. V. Wigram, he was recovered. [228]

This matter accounts for GVW writing of the following papers:

A Word on the Fellowship of Saints, to any who are Puzzled About the English Bethesda Question

A letter to Mr. J.G. Deck of Motueka, Nelson, from G.V.W.

227. *Chief Men Among the Brethren*, p. 42.

228. The following remarks are quoted from vol. 2 in this series:
J. G. Deck, who fled to New Zealand in 1852 from the troubles in England, when recovered from running from his responsibility, wrote this in 1873:

> . . . in a work of Satan *neutrality* is impossible; and that if there is an attempt to shun the responsibilities and sorrows of a path of entire decision for Christ, the spiritual senses become deadened, the heart hardened, the conscience torpid, the judgment perverted, and soon even hostility to the witnesses against the evil succeeds indifference to the truth (*Copy of a Letter from J. G. Deck, of New Zealand* . . ., p. 14).

This analysis is right on the mark. We have seen these things illustrated over and over in this book. Note that he said this regarding his own state of soul while many were being saved through his evangelization which resulted in many congregations being formed. God is sovereign and we are responsible.

> There is nothing to be more cordially abhorred than the pretence of love and unity being used to dishonor Him who is the center, life, and sole object and title of it. There is no devil so bad as the devil that clothes himself with charity [love]. It is the spirit of the day -- latitudinarianism. "Charity is the bond of perfectness," but Christ is the test of all this, as of all else, and He makes it so. "The poor ye have always with you, and me ye have not always." Thus we must judge -- I mean our own conduct . . . Local unity, founded on abandonment or indifference to the truth, is a miserable hostility (in sparing oneself) to gathering with Christ, the only true and universal unity . . . I do not know what is meant by unity, if the foundations of all unity that is worth anything are denied (*The Girdle of Truth* 2:444, 1857).

Marks whereby the assembly of God and the table of the Lord were and are to be known; being a letter to J.G. Deck of New Zealand, from G.V.W.

The Disciple and the Assembly: a Letter to Mr. J. G. Deck …,

To the Christians in New Zealand.

Independent Churches Versus the Holy Spirit * [229]

* This paper I do not have.

There are two interesting comments regarding GVW found in Peter J. Lineham's book regarding a visit to New Zealand by GVW, Jan. 14, 1874 - Jan. 20, 1875:

> From Darby's point of view he was a very suitable emmisary for he always showed "blind loyalty" to J.N.D. [230]

On the same page he wrote:

> It is said that when Wigram was disembarking from a ship during his visit one of those on board commented how "that man is very like the Lord Jesus" both in his demeanour and actions. [231]

The virtual juxtaposition of the two remarks is interesting, is it not? The complaints about GVW result from his success in New Zealand in showing many the necessity of rejecting Bethesda, 1848, and open-brethrenism. He also engaged in evangelistic work, lectured on ecclesiastical and dispensational truth, endowed a young assembly with money to build a meeting place, etc.

Not having a copy of his 1874 paper published in New Zealand (*Independent Churches Versus the Holy Spirit*) I will here give his paper:

"Inclusive" and "Exclusive"

There is but one holy universal Church. It was formed by God at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit (the promise of the Father) was sent down by Jesus (Lord and Christ in heaven) to form it, and to dwell in it. He makes all its parts to be one body, from Pentecost to the Lord's return. He works everything that is of God in them and by them, and is Himself that which makes them to be fitted for the Head glorified on high. [232]

Our marks, as members in particular of Christ, and also as a society or fellowship, are to be both "inclusive" and "exclusive." "Called out from evil and to be filled up with good," is every child of God, and it is such only who are *in position* in the body.

When first taken up we were all badness, and the good alone in God. But He shined into us the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ, sealing it with His Spirit, who formed in us an incorruptible seed, and made us partakers of the divine nature. The evil was covered and met to faith by Rom. 6; the good found and made ours in spirit by Eph. 2:4-10. The Church, however, is on earth, in a wicked world, and all and each individual in it has the law of sin and death {Rom. 8:2} in the vessels into which the treasure has been put. We have to bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus therefore; and are always delivered unto death. For two reasons:

1st, we have sinful flesh, and Satan is near;

2nd, because God would have it hourly tested, and seen that the excellency of the power of keeping us is of God and not of us.

His way is the way of *resurrection from the dead*, in life-long application. If evil breaks out, He judges it, for He is holy. God separates us from ourselves by forming and keeping Christ in us, who are changed into the same image from glory to glory.

The Church is, then, and each member of it must be, both *inclusive* and *exclusive*; and the excluding of evil by the including of the perfection of good, God in Christ, sealed home by the Spirit, as marking us to be Christ's through His quickening power.

God used the Christ in humiliation (Rom. 6) to meet and free us from all that was contrary to us in nature, and to give us power over sin. God used the Christ in Eph. 2:4-10 to separate us unto the very highest blessing in pure goodness. *Included* and *excluded* were in God's mind; let *included* and *excluded* be in your minds and in mine.

I was an atom, in perhaps the two hundred and fiftieth generation from Adam and Eve; six millenniums nearer the great white throne than was the hour of shutting out from Eden. *I am* now part of a company fitted for, espoused to, Christ; about to be the Bride, the wife expectant, of the Lamb.

Sin and its torrents of woe saved from! A loving Savior, my portion and my home! Sin and death judged; righteousness and life eternal gloried in!

In PRACTICE -- the first duty down here, as to others, is to own and to confess and maintain the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and the Church as God set it up. According to that I am to *include* myself and all that are Jesus Christ's, and are walking as saints -- as those that are to exclude both all sin, and those that will walk contrary to the blessed truth we have received. The God-made church did so while intelligently under the rule of the Spirit and the Word. Many a man-made church cannot do so. Its self-made laws prevent it; or man-ruled, it sees not why it should do so, or how it can, as having members of its ownself, receive those who are not such.

The Church, object of faith, in the Word, counts that every true child of God is, to God's mind, a member in particular of Christ, that his place therefore is at the table, and that, to God's mind, he is subject to all the discipline of the Church, and of

229. Referred to in *Memorials of the Ministry of G. V. Wigram*, vol. 3, p. 106, but p. 287 in the fifth ed., Bible Truth Publishers. He wrote, "And I have had a storm of abuse for it . . ."

230. *There We Found Brethren*, Palmerston: G.P.H. Society, p. 52, 1977. He referenced F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, Exeter, p. 159, 1968.

231. *Ibid.*, citing Harold St John, *Treasury, 37*, 53 (1935).

232. It is the promise of God, the Holy Spirit dwelling down here on earth among the quickened sons of God, which fits them and constitutes them the one Church -- the body of that glorified Man, born of the Virgin Mary by the overshadowing, to whom it was said,

> The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).

There is a unity of the Spirit and a unity of the faith (Eph 4:3, 13).

the house of God on earth. We must do likewise; *include* all such as on the muster-roll of God's Church, and as those who are excluded from sin's and world's and Satan's way.

Unholiness in theory, morality, doctrine, or practice, puts anyone under discipline (various in measures), for the chaste virgin espoused may not walk heedlessly. And discipline comes in correctively.

We cannot give up the faith as to the unity of the Church, nor act as if we did by going there where it has been and is denied; and we are bound by God's rules as to holiness, and can recognize no child of God who is unholy, save as being under the Father's or the Lord's discipline.

It is asked, "Would you receive a godly member of an independent church to 'occasional communion?' or of one of the national establishments?"

Faith answers: "A child of God is a member of Christ, and is of the Church militant. All such we receive, because Christ has received them; they are permanently members of His body, though they know it not. If any such come, who are walking as the Word enjoins, receive them." If they come on that ground, all their own practical inconsistency rests with themselves. If I accepted them on the statement to "occasional communion," *I* make myself guilty as sanctioning that which the Word does not. It is one's duty, however, to them in love to explain to them, that all who are at the table are equally included under the doctrine and discipline of the written Word. This, I have found, has deterred many. But discipline is of the Lord and the Father, and many shirk owning themselves subject to it.

Again, in the fifty *isms* of the day there are some, the error and principles of which would forbid, by the fear of the Lord, any one who is of it being received. A Jesuit might be indeed a child of God, and wish to come. Faithfulness would say, "No; your avowed principles justify 'doing evil that good may come.'" So of Romanism. Socinianism denies Christianity.

A congregation ("Independent of the Independents," as its form is called in England) in Bristol {England; i.e., Bethesda, 1848} acted, and persisted in acting, as if neither it nor its (so-called) members were responsible as believers to avoid indifferentism to the glory of Christ. Faith says, "Touch not the unclean thing, accredit not its letters commendatory, receive none such; they are not clean." Often there is leaven working and making itself manifest in the conduct, and that might exclude; and, alas! often does.

It is very kindly of denominational congregations to receive, or to be willing to receive, to the communion any who, not having their names in the book of "the members of it," might wish or be willing to be there; but they are not consistent in doing so, or if they have a clause in their rules to sanction it, that is a second departure from Scripture, as much as is their constitution.

But faith is consistent; it sees every child of God to be a member of Christ, and if not otherwise disqualified, it can receive him or them without difficulty. [233]

This is what one writing against the special member-ship of dissenting and self-made churches, assigned as one argument against their position:

> If I am a member of the whole body, I am a member of the parts of this body, which meet in divers places; it is not a question of becoming such -- I am such already. This is the principle I have always maintained, and on which I have insisted and acted. By the very fact that I am a Christian, I have all the claims of a member of the body wherever I may be found. It is not a right which I acquire by joining any particular body; it is a right which I possess as a member of the body of Christ. [234]

Strong ground for the one who is acting as honoring the holy universal Church of God, and not man-made national, or dissenting churches. But this existent fellowship with the sons of God everywhere in God's Church *universal*, which forces [Peter saw that he must either accredit Cornelius and the work of God in his house, or give up his own standing, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gifts as unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts xi. 17)] me to own them, does not obliterate that other word, "*Holy*." It grows out of it, to say the truth. The holiness is the parent of the universality. Our holiness is our separation from evil by the power of good revealed in us.

Receive therefore, I should say, every child of God who is walking with God.

But do not let your own distinctive position or ground be lost sight of or covered over; to quote a favourite text, "Let them return to thee, but go not thou to them." And insist too, I should add, upon discipline as being over all. [235]

{The ever-increasing leavening by toleration of evil teachings and evil conduct has continually reduced the opportunity to receive persons in the way described. RAH.}

The Funeral of G. V. Wigram

(From N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:60-61)

On the afternoon of January 7, 1879, wrote the "Daily News" representative, a large number of persons assembled at Paddington Cemetery, Willesden-lane, situated about a mile from the Kilburn Railway Station on the North Western line, to witness the interment of the remains of Mr. George Vicesimus Wigram. It had been raining for some time before the hour fixed upon for the burial, viz: 3 o'clock; but, in spite of the bad weather, several hundred people, including a large proportion of ladies, were present. The little chapel of the cemetery, which is used in common by all religious bodies, was thronged early; many persons having to remain outside. The coffin was borne into the center by several friends of the deceased, amid signs of deep, affectionate emotion, following upon silent prayers, which had been offered up, to the moment of its arrival; and,

233. Wherever the special membership of a humanly made and arranged church (as in nonconformity and national churches) is owned, the universality of God's Church is ignored so far forth; and their reception (as they say for occasional communion) of one not a 'regular member' is a practical inconsistency with them. Not so with those who, acting in faith of the universal church, can and ought to receive all who are holy {in walk}. Holiness may not be compromised. Better walk alone all one's days than grieve the Holy Spirit.

234. *The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*. (Ecclesiastical.) Vol. 1. G. Morrish, 24, Warwick Lane, London.

235. *Memorials of the Ministry of G. V. Wigram*, vol. 2, pp. 80-85.

immediately after, the ceremony (if such a word can be applied to what took place) commenced.

Not only was there nothing like a set formula, but there was absolutely no pre-arrangement; anything of that kind being directly opposed to one of the leading principles of a body which has no forms, no ministers, and no public or social worship, except what is carried on in private rooms, or in the houses of brethren, or of sisters (?).

A silence, almost painful, was first broken by Dr. Edward Cronin, who, in a short prayer, marked by great fervor and elevation, referred, with touching simplicity, to "George Wigram" as having followed Christ for nigh fifty years; and as "no mean man" amongst his brethren. Two or three minutes having then been passed in more silent prayer, some one read the 139th hymn in a little book, compiled many years ago by the late Mr. Wigram, premising that that hymn must be felt by all of them to be, in reality, a photograph of the deceased's soul. The hymn began with the words: "*This world is a wilderness wide*"; the third line being "*I've no thought in the waste to abide*," and the next one, *"I've nought to regret nor to lose*."

After another pause, came another spontaneous prayer from the lips of Mr. Christopher McAdam, one of the oldest friends of the deceased; and this was followed by the singing of two verses of a hymn composed by the deceased himself, No. 201 (this hymn was omitted in the revision of 1881) in the book already mentioned, beginning,

"Nothing but mercy'll do for me."

Another prayer was then offered by Mr. J. B. Stoney.

Twenty minutes having thus passed, the coffin was carried from the chapel to the grave. Here, in close proximity to a large fir tree, were gathered probably not less than seven or eight hundred persons, to witness the actual interment. They evidently belonged almost entirely to the middle and well-to-do classes.

A tone, at once sympathetic and devout, pervaded the mass (among whom we observed a private of the Guards, an interested spectator).

The coffin, having been lowered without any utterance, there followed brief prayers; indeed, all the prayers were very short -- from Mr. William Kelly, Mr. T. B. Baines, and Col. R. F. Kingscote. Mr. J. Beaumont then read a few verses from the New Testament, concluding with the closing verses of the Book of Revelation. Mr. Coleman afterwards offered the last prayer; which was succeeded by the singing of a verse beginning, "For ever with the Lord."

The oak coffin, a view of which was eagerly pressed for, was inscribed "George Vicesimus Wigram, died 1st January, 1879, Aged 73."

Addendum

A brother in Christ, in Germany, provided the retranslation into English a letter by JND not available to me at the time for the biographical notes on G. V. Wigram in *Precious Truths Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby*, vol. 2, "Appendix 11: G. V. Wigram."

Extract from a letter of J. N. Darby from 1827

This afternoon sister F. brought a believer along for having tea with us. A certain Wigram, not older than 22 years, who is preparing to become a clergman. His spirit and his conversations have deeply touched me. I ask God that his mind and his words I shall never forget. So much is given to him of the Spirit that the sanctifying presence of the Lord we felt amongst us.

During tea he read to us Psalm 67 and 23, with so much gravity in his voice and demeanor as if he felt that each word was God's word. Our conversation was on the following subjects:

that we do not pray enough.

that we may be convinced that we may lift up our hearts the whole day and walk with God as a Friend whom we can tell everything

that we loose much, if, after our praying, we do wait on Him and think that the salvation of a friend is dependent on us; let us remember this during the day.

that we may be assured that the closer we walk with Him the more light we will enjoy from His face.

that in our ordinary (common) conversations it is the outpouring of prayer, the lifting up of the eyes and the realization of the fact that the eyes of God are continually upon us, which is the great secret of a spiritual mind.

Brother Wigram sees that there is a great lack of spiritual mind concerning these inward state of things. By contacts with busy, active people … the soul becomes stunted, surrounded by a feeling of all kinds of obligations. Yesterday brother Wigram came also and sat with us for one and a half hour. I can not tell how his prayers are but every word of his makes obvious that he is aware of the presence of Him before Whom the angels cover their face . . . so sanctified, so happy, as if we were in the drawing-room (reception-room). Until this moment I experience the impression of his two visits and I shall never forget the messages that the Lord gave to my soul through him.

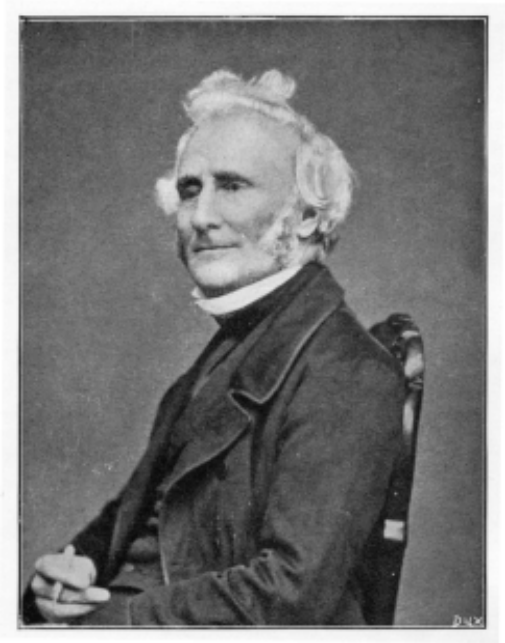
From: *Uit het Woord der Waarheid*, vol. 30, 1975/76, p. 76, editor, H. L. Heijkoop.

* * * * *

The above letter was translated from the original English into Dutch -- from which, in the absence of the original, the above translation was made. I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the translation into Dutch.

Appendix 11: John Gifford Bellett

There are some accounts of J. G. Bellett that have intertwined with them errors concerning the early dating. I have sought to avoid repeating those errors here. Part of the problem has been created by a systematic misdating in the paper, *Interesting Reminiscences*, misdating found in JGB's reminiscences. It has caused me to wonder if the dates were tampered with before the reminiscences were published. Be that as it may, here is some biographical material.



July 19, 1995 - Oct. 10, 1864

In 1895 the daughter of J. G. Bellett published *Recollections of the Late J. G. Bellett*, from which we will look at some extracts, etc. Following is a quotation which she took from *Memoir of the Rev. George Bellett: An Autobiography and Continuation by His Daughter*. George was a brother of JGB and remarked on him as follows:

> John, whose talents began to develope themselves, was spent to the Grammar School at Exeter, to be under the care Dr. Lempriere. I was very proud of him, for his abilities and diligence were making him a good scholar, and he was much in esteem with his master. He was making great advance in scholarship, always taking the lead of his friend, W. Follett, who afterwards became one of the most eminant lawyers of the day, and Attorney-General under Robert Peel's Government.

My uncle also writes, referring to school days at Taunton:

> They (their school-fellows) were delighted with John's singing. I can recollect even now the surprise and delight I felt in hearing him ; for, as in early childhood, anything which seemed to distinguish him, or do him honour, brought joy to me.

After a few years the brothers entered Trinity College, Dublin, and my uncle writes:

> John thought he might venture on the entrance examination without much preparation, and he passed. I rejoiced indeed. The first examination after this, he carried off the classical prize, which was considered a great honour, for, having entered late in the year, he was thrown among the Sitars, who being generally the best scholars, to carry away an honour from them was quite a feather in his cap. He obtained in the January following a prize for general answering. After this he did nothing to distinguish himself. What the reason of it was I do not exactly know. It is likely that the strong religious feelings which he afterwards, through God's mercy, so deeply imbibed, may not only have made him indifferent to honours of this sort, but have caused him to look upon them as unlawful.
>
> For the first two years in which we were in college we were frequently at parties. I remember well the disappointment I used to feel, on coming home from lecture at college, at not finding on our table an invitation to a dinner, or to a ball, but the invitations were very frequent. Dear John was an acceptable guest at most places, he was so agreeable, and his power of conversation very great.

The next few paragraphs, also taken from the Memoir, and connected with some remembered words of his own, indicate that it was soon after this time (pp. 9-10).

When JGB finished at Trinity College, Dublin, he went to London to study law. His daughter does not know exactly when thoughts of eternity pressed upon him when he was in London, but a letter by JGB to his brother George shows that the Lord brought JGB to Himself. It appears that he was helped at the chapel of Mr. West.

He returned to Dublin to work as a barrister and a year or two later married the fourth daughter of Admiral Drury, Miss Mary Drury.

Four of his children died when very small and another, a son, when older.

JGB's daughter remarked that in a letter to his brother George, Mr. Darby's name appears for the first time; and in this letter, dated Jan. 31, 1827, he wrote:

> I hope on Friday to see John Darby. You will be grieved to hear that he has been laid up for nearly two months from a hurt in his knee. His poor people at Calary miss him sadly (p. 27).

It is noteworthy that JGB's daughter raised no question concerning the date of this letter.

Immediately after this letter is quoted, she wrote:

> My father used to say, "If I deserve any credit it is that I early discerned what there was in John Darby!"

Also, on page 27 there is a footnote, saying:

> It is perhaps needless for me to say that Mr. Darby was

> one of my father's dearest friends. They had been contemporaries at College, and afterwards they were almost entirely of one mind on the subjects prized by both. I never knew a time when Mr. Darby was not a visitor in our house -- sometimes for weeks together; and well do I remember the rapt attention with which his preaching was listened to by my father, and the pleasure with which he would afterwards tell Mr. Darby how it had delighted him.

During his last illness:

> Mr. Darby came to see him, and the meeting of the two friends was very touching. Dear John held him in his arms, and expressed in ardent terms his great affection for him (p. 119).

He went home to be with the Lord on Oct. 10, 1864.

N. Noel wrote:

> As to his last moments, it is said that, clasping his thin hands together, while tears flowed down his face, he said, "My precious Lord Jesus, Thou knowest how fully I can say with Paul, 'to depart and to be with Thee, which is far better.' Oh, how far better! I do long for it! They come and talk to me of a crown of glory -- I bid them cease; of the glories -- of heaven -- I bid them stop. I am not wanting crowns! I have HIMSELF, HIMSELF! I am going to be with HIMSELF! Ah, with the Man of Sychar; with Him who stayed to call Zacchaeus; with the Man of John 8; with the Man who hung upon the Cross; with the Man who died! Oh, to be with Him before the glories, the crowns, or the kingdom appear! It is wonderful! wonderful! With the Man of Sychar alone; the Man of the gate of the city of Nain; and I am going to be with Him forever! Exchange this sad, sad scene, which cast Him out, for His presence! Oh, the Man of Sychar!" [236]

E. E. Whitfield has written two pages regarding J. G. Bellett, which is found in *Chief Men Among the Brethren*, pp. 10-11. I feel obliged to state that, speaking generally, I am less than impressed with EEW's biographical notes. Be that as it may, he makes this statement:

> Bellett's public ministry, as described by one who had the privilege of enjoying it during his residence at Bath, was that of one who "talked poetry," so sweet and chaste were the sentiments and expressions. The late R. Govett, of Norwich, a very good judge, who had read all the published writings of the leaders of the movement, gave as his opinion that Bellett was the most spiritual.

Well, I do believe that JGB's writings are spiritual and heartily recommend them. But I certainly do not share Robert Govett's opinion. Why? because Scripture states that "the spiritual discerns all things . . ." (1 Cor. 2:15). I hardly believe that was R. Govett's criterion for his judgment about this. Well, JGB did have the spirituality to see in J. N. Darby what many did not, including R. Govett, who opposed JND's teachings in print numbers of times. Below we will see JGB's last letter to JND, and the reader might apprehend a little of JGB's appreciation for JND.

JGB was slow regarding the evil teachings of B. W. Newton, [237] but I think JND was a help to him. The same slowness -- diliatoriness -- was evident regarding the Bethesda matter in 1848, [238] but once again the Lord preserved him. Subsequently, he wrote in no uncertain terms regarding Bethesda's failure. For example, examine his paper in *The Bible Treasury* 15:25-28, "A Letter on Neutrality as to Christ, or B ___" {Bethesda, of course.} Here is a short extract:

> But acts, dear brother, are not the only ingredient in the case. There have been standards lifted up. And B ___'s standards put her on wrong ground. I am sure of it. Principles avowed by public writings, after the most solemn sanction of the whole assembly, are (in my eye) standards. And those writings are not to be cancelled by acts or by any private communications.
>
> They must be cancelled by writings of equal dignity with themselves. If the assembled brethren sanctioned them, let the brethren be assembled to annul them, with confession too of the error they were betrayed into. I allude to "The Letter of the Ten."

These are most excellent principles for Christian conduct. The matters of which he wrote are thoroughly dealt with in vol. 2 in this series.

Here is a letter of JGB's given in *The Witness* 60:11:

> (A copy of a letter from this honoured saint of God written shortly before he departed to be with Christ, to a beloved brother, now also with the Lord.)
>
> MY VERY DEAR ____ Your letter was very welcome to me. The attack I am under is pleuritic pneumonia, and it is now a simple question between the disease and the constitution.
>
> I own to you my mind is not encumbered by thoughts either of priesthood or sympathy. My simple attitude is to look across the border at the Lord Jesus, who, I believe, is the ONE we are to meet in Paradise. All New Testament Scriptures which speak of the state of the spirit "absent from the body" is this -- that it is "present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5. 8). I do not like the religious fiction of hymns which speak otherwise. It is poetry, not Scripture. I am more and more blessedly satisfied with the thought of being with Himself *alone*.
>
> My soul was never happier, because of a closer, personal sense of His love to me. I do not feel that my strength is making much struggle with the disease, but I desire grace entirely to leave that with the Lord. The Searching of Scripture which has been so long my delight would be now too much for me, save in a searching for His own beauty and moral glory in the incidents of the four evangelists. I am put in company simply with Himself.
>
> The Lord bless you, my long loved brother. Ever yours in the one life and the one blessedness.

---

236. *The History of th Brethren* 1:28.

237. Interestingly, B. W. Newton thought that JGB was "docetic." This is in a context referring to Whately writing on "Person" and Whatley's "old principle" meeting Whately and saying that:

> "Its heresy, it is Sabellianism! {to which BWN added} So with Bellett. -- He wrote on this subject and quite in the Docetic heresy; saying that there was one sense in which it might be said that Christ did not really die (*Fry MS*, p. 377).

It was BWN himself who was the heresiarch. See Appendix 3 herein and vol. 2 in this series.

238. W. B. Neatby made the most of this that he could: *History of the Brethren*, p. 239ff, 251.

Last Letter of J. G. Bellett to J. N. Darby and JND's Response

Dublin, Sept. 1, 1864.

My Dearest John,

It seems to myself I am quietly sinking under the effects of pleuristic pneumonia, as the faculty speak. I may never see you again, my dearest brother, but I would tell you as from a dying bed, how deeply from my heart's soul I bless the Lord that He ever revealed to me the truth which Brethren have received from Him (Luke 10:23,24). I was quickened (it was a feeble operation) in the year 1817, as I was reading a book for my next examination. But how did my soul battle on for years? I came to know you, not as slightly before, but in an appreciation that instinctively bound me to you, and this now for forty years has never abated. What do I owe the God of my eternal life for feeding and strengthening that life -- enlarging its capacity through your ministry in secret and in public. I have loved you, as I suppose, in a certain sense, I have loved none other; and now, after so long a time, we are bound (in the bundle of life with the Lord our God, 1 Sam. 25) together still in the dear fellowship of the same confession. I need not tell you of the love of the brethren, of the care I get at home from the servants, and my dear child. So, as to that, I am in a wealthy place. Nor will I speak much of myself, but I cannot say less than this, I never had the same peaceful, happy rest in Christ. To depart to be with Him, I count to be far better. I am happier than I ever was. I have reviewed my ministry and I surely have detected vanity and self-pleasing. But oh, He has told me He has forgiven it all. But it is a poor thing to have no fruit of service to take to Him, at least, so to speak. I told a Church of England saint how I still held to the truth as most precious, which I learned some thirty years ago, and, dearest John, only think in contrast with it, of offices, ordinances, prayers and clergy. The Lord be with you, dearest brother, while you assert and adorn the doctrine.

J. G. Bellett.

Reply of J. N. Darby to J. G. Bellett

Sept., 1864.

Dearest Bellett, --

I was for some days back, waiting the moment to write you, moving about from meeting to meeting in the Jura, moved by the same motive which brought me yours, for which I heartily thank you, and am so far glad that mine was delayed, as I had yours, without even one from me. If your strength be spared a little, I hope to see you. I purpose, on my way to Canada, instead of sailing from Liverpool, to go and see you in Dublin, and get on board at Cork. I trust the Lord will so order it, but His way I am sure is best. Oh! how truly I feel that I am a stranger here. I have ever found in you, dear brother, everything that was kind; nor be assured was it lost up on me, though I am not demonstrative.

Besides the value I had for you, it was not a small thing to me, that you, with dear Cronin and Hutchinson, were one of the first four, who with me the fourth, through God's grace, began to break bread in Dublin, what I believe, was God's own work in much weakness, I own, in carrying it out, little faith to make good the power, which was and is, in the testimony. Be assured, in every respect, even as to the Gospel to sinners, what He was doing, I knew for myself, in no wise, the bearing and importance of what I was about, though I felt in lowliness we were doing God's work.

The more I go on, the more I see of the world, the more of Christians, the more I am assured that it was God using us for His testimony at this time, I never felt it as I do now, but it is not my purpose to dwell on it now, and I fully own our weakness.

It is to you, dear brother, my heart turns now, to say how much I own and value your love, and to return it. I rejoice while I have been the object of many kindnesses on your part down here, it is one which will never cease, which has had Jesus, our Master, for its bond. But oh, what joy to know one's self united to Him, it adds a joy to every sweetness, and it is the source of it, too. He is all.

For me, I work on, until He calls me. I thought it would seem a strange Dublin without you, yet I go on my way, serve others, say little and pass on. Not that I do not dearly love others, but this will come out in its truth in heaven, perhaps on one's deathbed, but I have committed my all to Him till that day.

My hope is still to see you, my beloved brother; should I not, be assured, there is none who has loved you more truly and thankfully than myself. It can hardly be unknown to you, though with me, there is more within than without. Peace be with you! May you find the Blessed One ever near to you, that is everything. Faithful is He withal and true. In His eternal presence how shall we feel that our little sorrows and separations, were but little drops by the way, to make us feel we were not with Him. And when with Him, what is it to be there? Oh, how well ordered all is! I ever long more to be in heaven with Him before the Father, though I desire to finish whatever He has for me to do, and if it keeps me a while out, it keeps me out for Him, and then it is worth while, and grace. Kind remembrances to Letty. I trust the Lord will sustain and strengthen her, in this exercise of heart.

[Later.] I am glad to have a moment to finish my letter. I am full 500 or 600 miles from where I began it, and somewhat with a child's joy, embrace unexpected leisure. I have thought too, of little fruit. I find that while specially happy in evangelizing, my heart ever turns to the church being fit for Christ. God knows, I suppose, I was too weak and cowardly for the other, but I reproach myself sometimes with want of love for souls, and above all for want of courage, and love would give that, it always does, but in the consciousness of my short coming, I leave all with Christ. He does, after all, what He pleases with us tho' I do not seek to escape blaming myself through this, and if He is glorified, I am heartily content with anything, save not to love Him. May His peace and joy be with you, dearest Bellett, again thanking you for your letter, which was true delight to me.

Ever yours affectionately in our blessed Master.

(Signed) J. N. Darby.

I draw the reader's attention to JND's remark about the first four who began to break bread together. Do you really think that JND was lying to his dear friend and brother in Christ, who was there when it happened?

Appendix 12: Francis Hutchinson

This biographical material is taken from *Chief men Among the Brethren*, pp. 57, 58

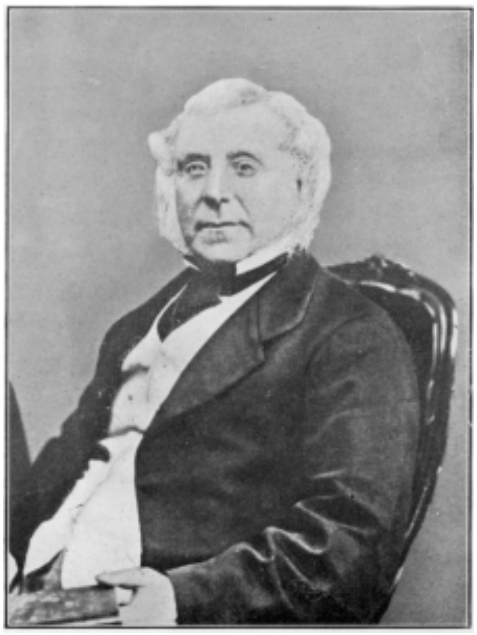
Francis Hutchinson was the son of Rev. Sir Samuel Synge, Archdeacon of Killala (who assumed the additional surname of Hutchinson on succeeding his uncle). He was born on 18th January, 1802, and fell asleep in Jesus on 3rd April, 1833. He married the sister of the Earl of Donoughmore and left two sons and one daughter. His eldest son succeeded his grandfather in the Baronetcy.

Francis Hutchinson deserves a special niche in any work of reference to the "Chief Brethren," for not only was he one of the first who met together for "the breaking of bread, " according to primitive custom, on the first day of the week, but it was at his house, No. 9 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin, that the little company were led to come together in the Name of the Lord Jesus {this is not the first}, owning the presence and sovereign action of the Holy Spirit in their midst. The brethren continued to meetfor some time in Fitzwilliam Square, and others were gradually added to their number. The Gospel was preached with a clearness and fulness and power unknown since the days of the apostles. Books and tracts were written and widely circulated. The grand doctrines of the Church, the operations of the Holy Spirit, the blessed hope of the Lord's speedy return were brought out with great freshness and power to the uplifting of many hearts, and to the eternal blessing of hundreds of precious souls. Great interest was awakened, and those who ventured to their meetings were struck by the fact of hundreds of people assembled together without a minister, so-called, and yet there was no confusion, but "all things were done decently and in order."

One after another becoming affected by the truth, were received into communion. The numbers so increased that in little more than a year the house of Mr. Hutchinson was found to be unsuitable for the meetings, and a large auction room in Aungier Street was hired for the purpose.

{Anon.}

Appendix 13: Dr. Edward Cronin



(1801 - Feb. 1882)
Unusual picture in I. G. Sieverking, *Memoir and Letters of Francis W. Newman.*

The following is from *Chief Men Among the Brethren*, pp. 16, 17. The writer's erroneous comments about the earlier meeting that E. Cronin attended is examined in Section 3.

Dr. Cronin was born in Cork in 1801. His father was a Romanist, and he was brought up in that Church, but his mother was a Protestant. He was educated after school at Dublin University. How or when he was converted is not known, but Mr. Andrew Miller says: "He came up to Dublin as a medical student about the year 1826. He applied for communion as a visitor, and was readily received by the Independents, but when they learnt he had become a resident this liberty was refused. He was then informed that he could no longer be admitted to the table of any of the congregations without *special* membership with some one of them.

This announcement made a deep impression on his mind, and was no doubt used of God to turn his attention to the truth of the 'One Body.' He paused, and after much exercise of conscience and prayer, he refused to submit to their Church order. It was a time of trial, . . . but the Lord overruled it for blessing. He and a Mr. Edward Wilson, Secretary of the Bible Society, after studying the Word for some time, began to see their way clear to come together on Lord's Day morning for the breaking of bread and prayer.

They were speedily joined by several others. They were no doubt forced into the place of separation by the mistaken conduct of the Congregational body, but they were also led to fall back upon the sure Word of God, to act under their Divine instincts and the unerring guidance of the Holy Spirit. The little meeting never formally broke up, but they united at once with those who began to break bread in Fitzwilliam Square.

Dr. Cronin's name is always associated with Mr. Darby, Mr. Bellett, and Mr. F. Hutchinson, as coming together in the winter of 1827-28, after much conference and prayer, on the Lord's Day morning for breaking of bread as the early Christians did, counting on the Lord to be with them.

Later on Dr. Cronin, together with his mother and sister, went out with John Parnell (Lord Congleton) and F. W. Newman, to Bagdad, to join A. N. Groves in mission work. They had a terrible journey across the Mediterranean to Aleppo, and thence through the desert to Bagdad. Lord Congleton married Miss Cronin at Aleppo, but owing to the fatigue and unhealthy condition she died there. Mrs. Cronin died later in Bagdad, when the party arrived in June, 1832. On one occasion they were stoned out of a town and Dr. Cronin left for dead. The work of Bagdad proving barren of results, Mr. A. N. Groves went to India, where he spent many years, and the others returned to England to stir up the Church to faith and prayer that great signs and wonders should follow in the mission field.

Dr. Cronin addicted himself to ministry of the saints and took a leading part in oversight in the London meetings of Exclusive Elder Brethren, until his independent action at Ryde in 1879 led to their deciding that they had no fellowship with his act.

Dr. Edward Cronin died at Brixton in February, 1882, aged 81, still holding firmly to the Scriptural principles which had governed his life, and, above all, with a simple and happy trust in the Savior whom he had loved and served so faithfully for so many years.

C. E. F.

T. F. C. Stunt remarked about E. Cronin that he was:

> finally excommunicated by Darby in 1879. [239]

It seems that the more loose that some Open Brethren become, the more bizarre things they say, and which seems to indicate a desire to prejudice minds against JND -- taking what are sometimes called "cheap shots" against him. The fact is that E. Cronin was excommunicated by *the assembly*, as such, at Kennington, London, a matter which will not be considered here. However, I will note that while F. Hutchinson died in 1833, E. Cronin, J. G. Bellett, and G. V. Wigram all stood against B. W. Newton, and against Bethesda in Bristol, England, in 1848. Not so A. N. Groves, who supported Bethesda.

239. *From Awakening to Secession*, p. 396

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