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COMMENTARIES

COMMENTARY ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT, VOL 2
2 PETER

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COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT

VOL 2 HEBREWS-JUDE

HEBREWS (Apollos) — Perfection

JAMES — Practice

PETER — Fire

JOHN — Love

JUDE — Lightning

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PREACHER," ETC.*

2 PETER

CHAPTER 1

This second epistle was doubtless written at Rome, not very long after the first, and immediately preceding Peter's martyrdom.

1. Peter, as usual, like all of the apostles, in this verse subscribes himself *"the slave and apostle of Jesus Christ."* A paradoxical expression to people who have not received the Pentecostal experience, which brings us all into the unutterably sweet love-slavery, in which we think of nothing but to do our Master's will, which to us is an ineffable delight. Meanwhile we rest in perfect peace, free from every care, as the slave has no concern about what he shall eat or wear, or provide for future emergencies, since all that devolves on his master. As our Master owns millions of worlds, He is infinitely competent to supply all of our wants, and since He loves us so dearly as to die for us, we know it is His incessant delight to secure every possible interest of our immortal being.

2. *"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you in the perfect knowledge of Jesus our Lord."* This beautiful verse contains the paradoxical problem of spiritual mathematics. Conversion is addition; sanctification, subtraction; the filling of the Holy Ghost, multiplication; and soul-saving benefaction, division. We do not teach four works of grace in salvation, but only two, as in arithmetic. Multiplication is but a rapid form of addition, while division is simply a wonderfully expeditious method of subtraction. No teacher is tolerated in the public schools who does not understand the elementary rules. Well did Jesus say, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." How deplorable to find teachers everywhere in the school of Christ, *i.e.*, the churches, who have never so much as reached subtraction, *i.e.*, sanctification, to say nothing of multiplication and division. Good Lord, have mercy.

ARGUMENT 1

THE ABUNDANT ENTRANCE.

This is the glorious antithesis of the extremely difficult entrance of the justified man (⁽⁴¹⁸⁾1 Peter 4:18). This abundant entrance is for the soul who has been not only regenerated and sanctified, but who has added the beautiful, bright, and glorious constellation of Christian graces given in this chapter, constituting the establishing enduements of the Holy Ghost.

3. *“Life and godliness.”* We receive life in regeneration and godliness in sanctification, which expurgates the heart from all fear, and makes us like God. “Through the knowledge.” Greek *epignosis*, *i.e.*, perfect knowledge, sanctification, in contradistinction to *gnosis*, regeneration.

4. *“In order that through these promises you may be partakers of the divine nature,”* *i.e.*, regenerated by the Holy Ghost, *“having escaped the corruption that is in the world, through lust,”* *i.e.*, having all depraved lusts taken out of you, which is precisely the work of sanctification. *Hagiazoo* from *gee*, the world, and *alpha*, not, *i.e.*, to take the world out of you. Hence you see those people here reported by Peter are already regenerated and sanctified.

“The God of all grace, having called you into His own everlasting glory in Christ will make you perfect, having suffered a little while, will establish, strengthen and settle you.” (⁽⁴⁵⁰⁾1 Peter 5:10)

In this wonderful argument Peter specifies the graces by which people who have been regenerated and sanctified are established, strengthened and settled in holiness, so they may never fall, but secure the abundant entrance into heaven.

5. Now we reach that beautiful constellation of establishing graces which has served to fortify His people against apostasy, establish them in holiness to secure to them the abundant entrance. Virtue is first in the constellation. The Greek is *aretee*, from *arees*, the Grecian war-god who stirred up all of the battle and led the combatants in deadly conflict, delighting in rivers of blood and mountains of slain. Hence it is the strongest possible revelation of that redoubtable Christian heroism which

always seeks the hottest conflict, the front of battle and thickest of the fight. It is real bull-dog courage which never lets go. It makes you brave enough to fight a regiment of devils. Since you have to hew your way every step to the celestial gate, you must have this grace. Without it you will fall soon or late. God help you to add it. "And to heroism, knowledge." The Greek is *gnosis*, one of the spiritual gifts imparted by the Holy Ghost to the sanctified to establish and make them efficient soul-savers. ¹ Peter 1:27. You can not keep sanctified and remain ignorant. Salvation is for fools, but you can not keep it and remain fools. You must be an assiduous student in the school of Christ, sitting meek and lowly at the feet of Jesus, taught by the Holy Ghost the deep things of God. The Holy Ghost will use the saints of God and good books to teach you, yet He Himself is the Great Teacher. You in utter abandonment to God, all your creeds, means, enterprises forever abnegated, learn how to be taught by the Holy Ghost. This divine *gnosis*, knowledge, is insight into divine truth, which none but the Spirit who made the world can give. Without this grace you will never be a preacher of the Word. You may fill the pulpit and preach theology, literature, science, and Biblical history, but you will never preach the Gospel, nor receive the crown of a soul-saver. You should be *homo unius libre*, a man of one book, and that book the Bible. Of course, you should use all other books which explain the Bible in harmony with the Holy Ghost.

6. "To knowledge, temperance." The Greek is *egkrateian*, from *ego*, I, and *kratos*, government. Hence it means self-government in harmony with the will of God, *i.e.*, practical holiness. Sanctification gives you experimental holiness, but to this you must add practical holiness, otherwise your experience will prove evanescent. It is temperance in that high sense which absolutely abstains from everything that is not for the glory of God. If we are going up to live in heaven we must learn to live in this world as we will live in heaven. "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Thus is practical holiness the life we are to lead. "To temperance, patience." "Let patience have its perfect work." Without perfect patience you can not keep your experience. Sanctification takes all the fret and worry out of you. You can not keep your experience and give way to them. All sorts of annoyances and temptations will be a blessing to you, strengthen and confirm your patience, if you do not let the enemy impart impatience.

Perfect patience is not the greatest endowment of patience, but simply patience without impatience. If you can, by the help of God, keep all impatience out of your heart, your patience will grow with marvelous rapidity, reaching up into gianthood, and bidding defiance to all sorts of annoyances, becoming actually imperturbable. *“To patience, godliness,”* i.e., godlikeness. God has lived and died on this earth, teaching us the entire problem of humanity by precept and example — how to live and how to die. Four faithful historians have given us His biography. Oh, what a blessing! By the time we study Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, we all learn how to live and how to die, encompassing the entire problem of human probation, responsibility and destiny. Sinners follow Satan, not always willingly, but blinded by him, and led captive at his will.

Unsanctified Christians follow Jesus but not with a perfect heart. They very largely follow human leaders. Wholly sanctified people follow Jesus only, with all the heart. For that reason the secular clergy have always opposed the sanctification of their people, lest they will lose their hold on them. If we are going to heaven, we must get saved from human leadership, so we will follow the Lord alone. As all men are fallible, God never purposed that we should follow them. Therefore He came on the earth, lived and died, giving us a perfect example throughout, corroborated by His plain and unmistakable teachings.

7. *“To godliness, brotherly kindness.”* This word is *philadelphia* in the Greek. George Fox preached entire sanctification in England a hundred years before John Wesley. Flooded with the Holy Ghost, he quaked as he stood before the people. Hence they called him “The Quaker.” When William Penn was sanctified under his preaching with the sword buckled round him, the insignia of his office in the British Government, he asked Fox, “How long shall I wear this sword?” “Just so long as the Lord will let you,” was the answer. He soon laid it off when sent to America with his sanctified Quaker followers to found a colony. They all came unarmed. Meeting the Indian chiefs under the great elm trees, they were unutterably astonished, for the first time in their lives to see white men unarmed. Penn said, “We are all children of the same loving heavenly Father, who wants us to live together in peace. Now, where shall we found a settlement?” The savages break and weep, saying, “You are the very people we want to live with and teach us how to worship the Great Spirit as we ought. So our

land is before you. Settle where you will.” Penn choose that very spot and called it Philadelphia, the very Greek word used by the Holy Ghost in this passage and translated “brotherly love.” It means the mutual love of the white man and the Indian in case of the Pennsylvania metropolis. In our text it means the mutual love of all mankind. You see how it won the hearts of the savages. Amid the dark, bloody massacres of the pioneer ages, not a drop of Quaker blood was shed by an Indian. Experimental sanctification obliterates race, color, and sectarian and national lines, so far as the affections of the heart are concerned. Then we must faithfully live in harmony, with artesian wells of universal philanthropy, springing up in the heart and overflowing the world. Otherwise our experience will evanesce. *“And to brotherly kindness, charity,”* i.e., the divine *agapee*, a much stronger word than charity. It is not simply the *philia*, human love for all the world, but the love which God gives us. He has plenty of it, and will so flood us as to inundate us with an ocean without banks or bottom, so we will have an ample supply, not only for every human being, but for every poor animal that has feeling, and is capable of suffering.

8. *“These things are in you, in regeneration and abound”* in sanctification. Therefore you will grow in grace and bear an abundance of fruit through knowledge of God. The Greek is *epignosis*, i.e., perfect knowledge, peculiar to the sanctified, involving experimental certainty, in contradistinction to the foggy experiences so prevalent in the churches.

9. This verse reveals the sad apostasy of those who do not add these establishing graces to their experience of regeneration and sanctification. This is the great delinquency, filling up the ranks not only of church members, but of holiness people, with backsliders, bring mountains of reproach on the cause of God, laying a stumbling-block before the ignorant.

10. Here we are taught how to *“make our calling and election sure,”* i.e., get born of the Spirit, and thence sanctified, proceeding with all enthusiasm to add this beautiful constellation of establishing graces. *“For doing these things you may never fall.”* Here is the true, final perseverance of the saints, so prominent in the Calvinistic creeds. Get regenerated and sanctified; add these establishing graces. While you do these things there is no collapse. So here is a title deed to heaven, free to all who want to make heaven a certainty.

11. *“For thus an entrance shall be administered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”* Oh, what a contrast with “scarcely saved, justified man” (1 Peter 4:18). Do not risk the tight squeeze into heaven, lest you be squeezed out instead of in. God flood your heart with aspirations after the abundant entrance, in which there is no conceivable risk. Surely we can not afford to take any risk on heaven. Get regenerated and sanctified, and add these glorious establishing graces and you “will never fall” while you do them. Then rest assured you will have no difficulty, but the abundant entrance. Valentine Cook was a pioneer preacher in Kentucky, under Bishop Asbury. One day while riding along the horse-path through the primeval forest, Satan put his hand on his shoulder. “Valentine Cook, you are a great man, a big preacher,” thus doing his utmost to inflate his vanity and upset his experience. After a number of unsuccessful efforts to expel the adversary, he sees he must go to his knees, turns out the path, hitches his horse, down on his knees he falls and cries to God. Then retorts the wily enemy, “Now you get it. Don’t you see that hunter drawing a bead on you, mistaking your bear skin overcoat for a bear. Run for your life.” “Well, devil, if he shoots me, the bullet will be God’s way to open heaven’s gate and let me in. Glory to God!” Now he pours out his soul in prayer. God floods him from the heavenly ocean. He rises with a great shout and goes on his way, the devil skedaddling. The very night of his death, a venerable comrade-in-arms enjoyed a notable heavenly vision. Enraptured in contemplation of the ineffable celestial glory, gazing upon the effulgent throne, an angel comes flying rapidly from the gate, ringing the news, “Valentine Cook is dying.” Immediately God commands them to ring all the bells of heaven and blow all the trumpets. Forthwith all heaven is in commotion, processions are parading in all directions, moving toward the gate, which is thrown wide open. Meanwhile myriads of angels sweep out, shouting aloud, “Welcome home, Valentine Cook.” God grant that you and I may have the abundant entrance.

ARGUMENT 2

THE LORD'S COMING AND THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE SAINTS

12. This letter indicates a higher experience than the former. Here he addresses them as not only knowing but established in these glorious experiences.

13, 14. Peter, like Paul, had a divine presentiment of his martyrdom, which occurred very quickly after this writing.

15. Peter emphasized the great importance of having God's Word revealed through his instrumentality well circulated and faithfully preached after his departure.

16. *"For not having followed cunningly devised fables,"* i.e., human creeds and uninspired dogmata and counterfeit religions, *"have we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but having been eye-witnesses of His majesty."* The Greek *parousia*, translated "coming," literally means presence, revealing the fact that our Lord will come to stay. Of course, as in His former presence on the earth, He will appear and disappear *ad libitum*. Power, in this passage is dynamite, Paul's definition of "Gospel." ⁴⁸⁹Romans 9:16. Hence the burden of Apostolic preaching was this heavenly dynamite to blow all the sins out of the heart and completely transform the spiritual being and the great culminating fact that our Lord is coming back to this world to conquer and to reign. The scene on the Mount of Transfiguration was a prelude of the Lord's coming, when His saints will be transfigured like Jesus, Moses and Elijah, when Peter, James and John saw them on the Mount.

17, 18. This transfiguration in which Peter heard the voice of God was not only a perfect confirmation of the redemptive scheme and God's full and satisfactory approval, but the transfiguration of the saints when the Lord comes to reign on the earth. This testimony is invaluable to Christ's suffering, expectant Bride.

19. *"To which you do well, giving heed as to a light shining in a dark place."* Notwithstanding our Lord has plainly revealed His second coming

in multitudinous prophecies, yet it is all dark till the Spirit reveal it to the heart. *“Until the day may dawn and the morning star rise in your hearts.”* Everything in the plan of salvation is double, corresponding with the human and divine hemispheres of the Christhood. The spiritual Christ comes in regeneration, and comes again in sanctification, so the literal Christ came once and is coming again. Just as that second coming to the world will inaugurate the millennium, so His second coming into your heart gives you the millennium in your heart. Unsanctified people have no true and clear light on the Lord’s second coming. The sanctified experience is the dawn of the millennial day in your heart and the clear light of the morning star. The present holiness movement is the morning star preceding the glorious Sun of Righteousness, destined to rise upon the “world with healing in His wings.” It is wonderful with what rapidity the dawn, of God’s glorious millennial day is increasing, and the morning star rising in the hearts of God’s people.

20. Peter sweeps away the popular heresies of expounding prophecies by silly isolated exegesis.

21. As all prophecies have a divine origin, therefore God will attend to their fulfillment.

CHAPTER 2

ARGUMENT 2

FALSE TEACHERS IN THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION

1. In the old dispensation false prophets swarmed like locusts. If God had not spoken we never would have known that they had lived or died because they were the popular and influential preachers, much beloved and appreciated. Jesus said unto His disciples, “Woe unto you when all men speak well of you, for so they spoke of the false prophets who were before you,” thus revealing the fact that the false prophets were the beloved pastors, well spoken, while God’s prophets were the incorrigible cranks, disturbing the Church by their fanaticism, suffering terrible persecutions and sealing their faith with their blood. Were they not avowedly prophets of Baal? But Baal is a Hebrew word which means Lord, in contradistinction to Jehovah, the excarnate Christ of the Old Testament. Those false prophets claimed to be true, and they thought that God’s prophets were false. The simple fact of these false prophets is, they preached a bloodless and spiritless religion. They despiritualize the plan of salvation. Their successors are all round us, pursuant to Peter’s prophecy; their name is legion. Truly they have flooded the world with damnable heresies, which largely constitute the popular preaching of the day. *“Denying the Lord that bought them, they bring on themselves swift destruction.”* Satan fought four thousand years against the Fatherhood and broke down the divine Fatherhood, receiving full recognition before the incarnation. When God came incarnate he turned all his battering rams against the Sonship of God, dividing the Church into Arians and Trinitarians, the war sweeping hot through ten centuries. On that line he suffered signal defeat, the Christhood of Jesus signally triumphing. We are now in the midst of Satan’s last war period, *i.e.*, against the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Trinity. He is stirring earth and hell against the Holy Ghost. When he suffers defeat on this battlefield, as soon he will, the apocalyptic angel will come down and chain him, and lock him up in hell.

The false teachers of the present day are preaching a bloodless religion, and fighting holiness, *i.e.*, the personal Holy Ghost, just as their predecessors in the early centuries fought the divinity of Christ and four thousand years ago the Fatherhood of God.

2. *“Many will follow their impurities; through them the way of truth will be evil spoken of.”* They preach the doctrine of impurity, *i.e.*, a sinning religion which, of course, suits the carnal mind.

3. *“And in their covetousness they will sell you by their soft words.”* How signally Peter’s prophecy is this day fulfilled. These anti-holiness preachers please the people with an impure gospel which tolerates sin in some form, and in this way they sell their congregations to the devil for filthy lucre. The picture is awful but the fact is worse. How many preachers, if paid money enough, will let their own members slip through their fingers into hell. These are the false prophets of the present, seen by Peter’s prophetic eye, and discerned by the Holy Ghost. *“For whom,” i.e.*, these counterfeit preachers, who *“in their covetousness sell”* the people to the devil *“by their soft speeches.” “Judgment of old tarrieth not and their destruction slumbereth not.”* So surely as God is true an awful retribution is destined to overtake these men. God never forgets anything. Peter reminds us of the horrible judgments which overtook their predecessors.

4. In confirmation of the awful judgments awaiting the false preachers and teachers of the Gospel dispensation, Peter reminds us of the angels who sinned and were cast down to hell, destined to meet their appalling doom when they stand before the great white throne.

5. He portrays before us the dismal doom of the wicked antediluvians, where bloodless religion prevailed over holiness, especially after the holy people committed the sad mistake of intermarrying the wicked race of Cain, the great patriarch of bloodless religion.

6. Sodom and Gomorrah, whose very sites are now covered by the Dead Sea, are an everlasting reminiscence of divine retribution. Even Jericho, fifteen miles up the Jordan Valley, the successor of Sodom, was shouted down, and prohibited ever being rebuilt.

7, 8. Lot is here commended as a preacher of righteousness, true to God amid the iniquities of Sodom. He belonged to the patriarchal dispensation under which God called and sent His preachers, as under the Gospel.

9. Peter testifies to the perfection of the divine administration in rewards and punishments.

10. *“Especially those going after depravity in the lust of pollution, and despising lordship,”* i.e., the divine sovereignty. Dominion is *kuriotees*, from *kurios*, Lord, and means lordship, i.e., God’s government, i.e., holiness. These carnal preachers despise and reject it with contempt. *“Audacious darers, they tremble not at glories speaking evil.”* Such is their audacity that they criticize and speak evil of the glory which holiness gives.

11. The angels who are greater in power and majesty than men tremble with awe at the very thought of the slightest infringement on the divine administration.

12. *“But these (false teachers) are irrational animals, having been naturally born for capture and destruction, speaking evil of those things in which they are ignorant, shall even be corrupted in their own corruption.”* This is certainly an appalling picture, describing these false teachers as irrational animals which are brought into the world, like bears and deer, to be caught and eaten without mercy. So the counterfeit preachers, carnal, worldly, and opposed to holiness, are to be caught by devils and devoured in hell.

13. *“Receiving the reward of unrighteousness, considering luxury, which is through the day (as well as night) their pleasure,”* i.e., they make temporalities, fine salaries, and luxuriant living, their chief desideratum. *“Spots and blemishes swelling in their delusions feasting along with you.”* As they are the chief ministers, of course they are with you, not only in the sacraments, but in the church festivals, fetes and receptions, though so corrupt that the Holy Ghost anathematizes them as *“spots and blemishes.”* Satan has so wrapped them in his delusions as not only to fill them with self-confidence, but inflate them with the most imperious egotism.

14. *“Having eyes full of an adulteress, and can not cease from sin.”*

Throughout the Bible God’s Holy Church is represented by a pure virgin, while the counterfeit church is symbolized by a harlot. These carnal creatures are devout servitors, not of God, but of the fallen ecclesiasticism, here denominated an adulteress. We now live amid the awful fulfillment of this prophecy. Every young preacher is forced to face the emergency and decide between God and fallen churchism, *i.e.*, the “adulteress,” settling the question whether he will be loyal to the Holy Ghost or to some one of Babylon’s daughters. In his conservatism and rigid loyalty to the “adulteress,” *i.e.*, the fallen church, of course he can not *“cease from sin.”* *“Beguiling unestablished souls”* in the economy of grace. When regenerated people get sanctified they must move forward into the establishing grace, or get caught in some of Satan’s traps, especially those set and manipulated by his unconverted preachers, with whom the world is flooded. *“Having a heart which has been made fat with covetousness, the children of the curse.”* These preachers are actuated by the love of money, big salaries, fine houses, luxurious living, social position, pomp, pageantry and popularity. *“Children of the curse,”* is an orientalism, significant of the most appalling divine retribution.

15. *“Leaving the straight way they have wandered off.”* We see in verse 21 that these preachers were once converted, but backslid because they would not seek sanctification. Hence they have become false prophets and money lovers, like Baalam,

16. Who, despite the miraculous rebuke of the donkey on which he rode, persisted in his enterprise, cursing Israel, for Baal likes gold. Myriads are the followers of Baalam this day, who, despite all of God’s faithful warnings, persist in cursing Israel, *i.e.*, God’s holy people, in order to please the fallen churches and get their gold. Despite of all of Baalam’s good resolutions, he fell in the Moabitish war, fighting against Israel, and lost his soul. So these anti-holiness preachers, despite a thousand conscientious compunctions, providential warnings and spiritual awakenings, predominated by the love of gold, continue to curse Israel, till they drop into the pit. As in case of Baalam, of course, God turns their cursing into a blessing to His true people, causing the “wrath of man to praise Him.” It is wonderful how God uses the opposition to confirm His true people and scatter holiness over the earth.

17. *“These are fountains without water and mists driven away by the storms.”* In vain do the people look to these preachers for the water of life to revive their famishing souls, for they have not a drop. We hear them preach, but receive not a drop of water or a crumb of bread to satisfy hunger and thirst. When they rise in the pulpit the people hope they will send down a rain to save their famishing gardens and fields; but how badly are they disappointed. They have neither rain nor dew. *“For whom the blackness of darkness has been reserved.”* We see here in the clear revelation of the Holy Ghost the preacher’s hell is the blackest, darkest, deepest and hottest abyss in the dismal regions of irretrievable woe. In my humble way I have been a preacher forty-three years. Good Lord, deliver me from a preacher’s hell! I would prefer that of any other reprobate in all the gloomy dungeons of damnation. An apostle lost his religion and went to hell for money. I doubt whether any other apostle has a larger ministerial following this day than Judas. Oh, the preachers who for the love of money oppose holiness.

18. *“Speaking great swelling words of vanity through the lusts of the flesh, by their impurities they beguile those who have but slightly escaped, being exercised in the delusion.”* These are the men who preach grand, eloquent sermons, containing everything but Gospel, which Paul says is God’s “dynamite unto salvation to the believer,” thus *“speaking great swelling words of vanity,”* i.e., preaching these eloquent, despiritualized and degospelized sermons, to feed the vanity of the carnal people who pour out their gold, till they live like kings. Meanwhile their poor souls slip through their fingers into hell. If you have not been converted, sanctified and established in holiness, you are very likely to be caught by the sophisticated eloquence, soft palaver, etiquette, socialism, mannerism and galvanized diabolism of these men, led away, alienated from God, your experience evanesced, your soul lulled to sleep, till you wake up in hell.

19. *“Promising them liberty they themselves being the slaves of corruption, for to whatsoever any one has been made inferior, to this he has become enslaved.”* These carnal preachers denounce holiness as “narrow, fanatical, illiberal and cranky,” alluring the people with their generous proclamation of liberty, thus in fact teaching a broad way to heaven, flatly contradicting Jesus, amid all their boasted proclamations of liberty, themselves are the slaves of their own carnal appetites and corrupt predilections, from which

nothing but entire sanctification can deliver. They are utterly ignorant of the freedom which belongs only to God, and becomes His gracious gift to the wholly sanctified.

20. This verse justifies the conclusion that these false preachers have once known the Lord, but as hopeless backsliders are now in an infinitely worse condition than before they were converted.

21. *“For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than knowing it to turn from the holy commandments, having been delivered unto them.”* This verse furnishes us the key which unlocks the sad problem and reveals the mournful secret of the miserable condition and appalling doom of these “false teachers” (ver. 1), certifying that they backslide and become confirmed reprobates, because they *“turned away from the holy commandment which was delivered unto them,”* i.e., they backslide because they did not get sanctified; became carnal, worldly and covetous. Meanwhile they gather up great libraries, study hard, becoming able pulpit orators, standing in the front of the clerical ranks.

22... *“The dog having returned to his own vomit and the sow that was washed unto the wallowing of the mire.”* The metaphors vividly enforce the indisputable possibility and fearful probability of apostasy. The dog gets terribly sick and vomits. What a vivid picture of a true penitent down at the mourner’s bench, vomiting up his sins. How strange to see the same dog ere long go back and eat up his vomit, and still more so to see a man who has been born from above, going back and taking up his old sins, which he vomited out when he drank the bitter cup of repentance. While the preachers here described in Peter’s prophecy are backsliders for the want of sanctification, doubtless many of their comrades never did know the Lord. Rest assured we are living amid the momentous fulfillment of these terrible latter day prophecies.

CHAPTER 3

ARGUMENT 4

GOD'S MILLENNIUM SABBATH

1... *“In which I stir up your pure mind in remembrance.”* We are born into the world with the carnal mind, transmitted from Satan through Adam. In regeneration this carnal mind is conquered and grace given to hold it in subjugation, till it is utterly destroyed in sanctification, leaving in you nothing but the *“pure mind”* of Christ. The Greek *eilikrinee*, *“pure,”* is from *eilee*, a sunbeam, and *krinoo*, to judge. Hence it is a wonderfully strong adjective, describing the mind imparted by Christ in the gracious economy. It simply means a mind or heart so pure, that when illuminated by the infallible Sun of Righteousness, the omniscient eye of God discovers no impurity in it. Oh, how grandly does the Holy Ghost preach Christian perfection!

2. In this valedictory of the senior Apostle, he importunately reminds the saints of their momentous responsibility to hold pertinaciously the words spoken by the holy Apostles and prophets.

3. *“Knowing this primarily that in the last days mockers in scoffing will come forth, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since our fathers fell asleep, all things remain as from the beginning of creation.”* We are living amid the fulfillment of the prophecies. Many preachers are now mocking and scoffing at the idea of the Lord’s near coming. They stand in the popular pulpits and preach evolution (which is really the Ingersoll infidelity), proclaiming to the people that the world is growing better, whereas the Bible says, “Wicked men and seducers,” *i.e.*, the world, will wax worse and worse even to the end.

5, 6. Here Peter confirms his argument on the world’s deterioration and divine intervention by reference to the antediluvians who waxed worse and worse, till the flood swept them away. While God’s true people progress

in wisdom anti-holiness, Satan's people make similar progress in knowledge and wickedness. As the antediluvian world increased in wickedness till the flood, so the post-diluvian ages will progress in wickedness till the Lord comes. These pulpit evolutionists and progressionists, whose name is legion at the present day, are leading the people into practical infidelity by ignoring the divine administration and substituting the human. The trend of this preaching is to obscure the epochs of conversion, sanctification and the Lord's personal return to the earth, thus taking all epochs out of Christian experience, and running into gradualism, *i.e.*, humanism. Rest assured, when you leave out the epochs you eliminate God and run into infidelity.

7. *“But now the heavens and the earth have been preserved by the same Word, kept for fire in the day of judgment, and to the destruction of ungodly men.”* Thus you see Peter proves the future epochs by the past. As the earth was baptized with water when converted to God in Noah's day, so it is to be sanctified by fire, preparatory of its final restitution and celestialization at the end of time.

8. *“But let this not escape your memory, beloved, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”* This brings us the clear revelation that God's millennial day is a thousand years. Scoffing infidels bring up geology to refute the Mosaic history of creation, as they construe, in six twenty-four hour days. The fact that the sun did not appear till the fourth day does away with the hypothesis of there having been solar days. As here we learn that God's day is a thousand years, applying the schedule to creation, we have ample time for the geological period discovered by scientists. Many authorities certify to an error of one hundred years in Bishop Usher's chronology, thus winding up the sixth thousandth year with the present century. Regardless of the chronological disparity, we are certainly rapidly approaching the end of Satan's week, full of toil, sin, suffering and calamity, and denominated “night” (^{<513D} Romans 13:12), in contradistinction to the bright day of Eden, which preceded it, and the glorious millennial day destined to follow it. Oh, glory to God, for the swift retreat of Satan's long, dark night, and the glorious dawn of God's long prayed-for millennial day.

9. ⁴¹⁶³Matthew 16:28 affirms the probability of our Lord's return before the death of the living generation, involving a human contingency which did intervene, postponing the advent. Perhaps He has been waiting these centuries to give time for the accumulation of a sufficient number of charter members to organize His kingdom. It is certainly a great mercy to all who are disposed to appreciate a place in the bridehood for Him to delay till we wash and put on our white robes and get ready to meet Him.

ARGUMENT 5

CREMATION AND CELESTIALIZATION OF THIS EARTH

10. Remember God's day is a thousand years. The Lord comes as a thief, receives His bride, inaugurates the millennium and reigns a thousand years, as related by John. After the millennium, as described by John (⁴¹⁶¹Revelation 20), the final resurrection and judgment transpire.

Meanwhile the cremation of the earth will take place, *i.e.*, its sanctification by fire, putting an end to the temporal and probationary state on the earth. This final and thorough cremation of the earth will exterminate all the effects of sin, superinducing a final and complete expurgation of this entire world from all the maladies and contaminations of sin, consuming the oceans and seas and melting the frozen poles.

11. *"Therefore these things being dissolved, what part does it behoove us to be in holy deportment and godliness."* Certainly these relations constitute the greatest possible incentives to a holy experience and life.

12. *"Anticipating and expediting the coming of the day of God."* He has promised to come so soon as the "Gospel of the kingdom is preached to all nations, thus giving all a chance for the bridehood and a throne in the Coming kingdom. So we can expedite His coming by telling the nations, *i.e.*, preaching the Gospel to all the world. "Through which the heavens," *i.e.*, the firmaments, being on fire, will be melted with fervent heat. The intense heat of the cremation will not only consume the ocean, but melt the mountains and deserts and dissolve the great strata of the earth, reducing the globe to a molten plate, thus preparing it for the ensuing reformation and celestialization.

13. *“But we look for new heavens [i.e., new firmaments] and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness.”* This corroborates John. ⁶⁰¹Revelation 21:1. Harmonizing Peter and John, we see the cremation and renovation will take place after the millennium. During the final judgment, which will occupy a period of time sufficient for the magnitudinous issues destined then to transpire. Meanwhile the great Appellate Court of the universe is moving and settling all destinies for eternity. The earth will be passing through those tremendous fiery convulsions and revolutions requisite to utterly expurgate all the *debris* of sin and prepare the way for complete renovation and glorious transformation into a heavenly world, for the inheritance of saints and the occupancy of glorified spirits through all eternity. *“In which dwelleth righteousness.”* In the new celestial world into which our earth will be transformed after its complete sanctification by the fiery baptism, there will never be any more sin nor anything contaminated by sin. Transfigured saints and glorified angels will here abide forever. Doubtless this redeemed earth will ever be a favorite among the glorified inhabitants of all celestial worlds, having universal celebrity as the battlefield of God’s empire, where his Son met the powers of hell in battle array and fought the battle of human redemption. Therefore throughout celestial ages, earth will be a favorable resort as the battlefield of God’s empire. Doubtless the bright unfallen intelligences from millions of unfallen worlds, will delight to visit the scene of the most terrible conflicts in the history of the universe.

14. *“Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, hasten to be found spotless and blameless unto Him in peace.”* The true attitude of saintship in all ages has been that of constant expectancy of our returning Lord. This vivid and constant outlook is the grandest conceivable inspiration to a holy experience and life. Mark the commandment, *“Hasten to be found spotless and blameless,”* i.e., get wholly sanctified by the precious blood and the consuming fire, utterly expurgating inbred sin out of the heart. This is the only possible way to be found *“spotless and blameless.”* You must first get *“spotless and blameless,”* and then keep so, looking out constantly for King Jesus to ride down on a cloud. Foolish people think it simply depends on their conduct. A hog can not live like a sheep. First of all, you must receive the transforming grace of God, to eliminate all of the hog nature out of you, then you can live like a sheep.

15. *“Consider the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.”* Oh, how true! Salvation here means our final transfiguration at the Lord’s coming. If He had not waited long He would have found many of us without the spotless robe.

16. Peter brings in Paul’s testimony (² Thessalonians 2), to corroborate his visions on the Lord’s coming, observing that they are hard to understand and, consequently, wrested by the unlearned and unestablished to their own destruction. The Bible is a spiritual book, dealing in spiritualities and not mentalities. Peter himself is pronounced an unlearned and ignorant man. ⁴⁰¹³ Acts 4:13. Hence “unlearned and unestablished” is to be understood in a strictly spiritual sense, *i.e.*, untaught by the Holy Ghost and unestablished in holiness.

ARGUMENT 6

GROWTH IN GRACE

17. *“Therefore, you beloved, knowing beforehand watch, lest having been led away by the delusion of the ungodly, you may fall from your own establishment.”*

18. *“But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”* It is much to be lamented that a subject so transcendently important as growth in grace is so little understood, involved in fogs and clouds of theological heresies, superinducing incalculable popular bewilderment, and filling our pulpits with nonsensical twaddle. While the commandment to be holy rings throughout the inspired volume, we have but this one instance of a direct literal commandment *“to grow in grace.”* The solution of this problem becomes easy when we consider that sanctification is the one great and indispensable condition of growth. If the farmer wants his crop to grow he must clean all the filth out of it. Then it will do its own growing. ⁴⁰⁵⁰ 1 Peter 5:10. We have perfection, followed by establishment, confirmation and settlement in holiness. The growth of a tree comes on after it has been transplanted, established, rooted, and settled in the soil, so the winds, instead of blowing it down, will only loosen the roots and prepare them with greater vigor to interpenetrate the

deep interior and coil round the everlasting rocks, bidding defiance to howling tempests. Meanwhile the tree rises in his majesty, towering above his comrades, the monarch of the forest. In perfect harmony with these great facts, fundamental in the plan of salvation, Peter here administers this commandment, “*Grow in grace,*” not to the people who have the grace to grow in, but to those who have been born again, sanctified wholly and established in holiness. Now they are in fix to grow rapidly, continuously and perpetually. All this you see follows as a legitimate sequence from the statement, “*Grow in grace lest ye may fall from your own steadfastness,*” *i.e.*, establishment, which Peter locates after entire sanctification. God save the preachers from misrepresenting Peter. This they do when they use this text, preaching “*growth in grace*”, to the unsanctified. We must first meet the conditions before we can make headway in enlargement, *i.e.*, get regenerated, sanctified and established in holiness. Then growth will follow with ever-increasing rapidity through time and all eternity.

APOLOGUE

After Peter received the fiery baptism at Pentecost, with not the slightest evidence that the celestial flame ever abated, we have a right to receive his epistles as a *fac simile* of his daily ministration. You see he gives the trumpet no uncertain sound. He hits the nail on the head and makes the fire fly every stroke. No wonder he suffered martyrdom. His name means rock, which Jesus saw on the first interview, when He gave him this cognomen. Though the world never saw the “rock” till the fires of Pentecost burnt off the debris, they always saw it afterwards. What a wonderful contrast in his life before and after Pentecost. All his vacillations, oscillations and cowardice suddenly go into a total eclipse. His first sermon on Mt. Zion is a clap of thunder from beginning to end. Henceforth he lives a hero and dies a martyr. God give us the fire and heroism that flash and glow from Peter’s pen.